CONDITIONS OF USE FOR THIS PDF

The images contained within this PDF may be used for private study, scholarship, and research only. They may not be published in print, posted on the internet, or exhibited. They may not be donated, sold, or otherwise transferred to another individual or repository without the written permission of The Museum of Modern Art Archives.

When publication is intended, publication-quality images must be obtained from SCALA Group, the Museum's agent for licensing and distribution of images to outside publishers and researchers.

If you wish to quote any of this material in a publication, an application for permission to publish must be submitted to the MoMA Archives. This stipulation also applies to dissertations and theses. All references to materials should cite the archival collection and folder, and acknowledge "The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York."

Whether publishing an image or quoting text, you are responsible for obtaining any consents or permissions which may be necessary in connection with any use of the archival materials, including, without limitation, any necessary authorizations from the copyright holder thereof or from any individual depicted therein.

In requesting and accepting this reproduction, you are agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless The Museum of Modern Art, its agents and employees against all claims, demands, costs and expenses incurred by copyright infringement or any other legal or regulatory cause of action arising from the use of this material.

NOTICE: WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Castelli

Matta, Patricia O'Connell, Gorky – p. 5

Going to galleries with Greenberg + Kiesler – p. 5-6 – DeKooning selling Kandinsky to Baroness Rebay

Blue Poles; Excavation – p. 7 – Gorky's Summation (see also p. 76)

Influence of MOMA – p. 7; 94

Janis – 7-8; 52 (intro)

Ninth St. Show – 8; 66 (66 R.)

Graham – 8; 26; 70

Starting the gallery – 9; 26-27; 32; 34; 56 (Bluhm); 88

Rauschenberg – 10, 11, 13; 28; 35; 64 (RR intro); 80 (Berg); 92; 97

Johns – 10, 11, 12; 28; 64 (Johns intro); 76 (Miller); 91; 92

Stella – 13; 39; 67 (Stella intro); 69 (Bluhm intro); 77

Early client – 14, 15 (Peters, Fensaines, Scull, Barr); also 40-42

Ivan Karp – 17; 37-41 (intro); Dick Bellamy – 53-4;

Alan Solomon – 17-18

Panza di Biumo – 19

Ludwig – 21; 86 (Ludwig intro)

Sale of Dante drawings – 21

Bob Morris – 22

Spirit of Pop – 22; 43 (Ivan);

Move to Soho – 24

Ileana in Europe – 29; 40 (Ludwig); 77-78

Lichtenstein – 38 (Ivan); 63 (Roy intro); 99 (bad reviews)

Rosenquist – 21; 39;

Jean Kramlich – 41

Scull – 42; 53; 65 (Johns on Map incident); 76; 81 (Scull intro)

Gallery network – 48; 59 (Fee)

Judd – 49; 62

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Castelli (cont)

Video – 91; 98
Warhol – 56-7 (Blum)
Serra – 74
Bill Rubin mmm – 75
West Coast – 79 (Hopps); 89
Minimalists, second wave – 91
"It's not a business" – 95
Sale prices – 96
Photorealism & Conceptual – 98

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Leo Castelli - Bio

Born Sept 4, 1907 (Virgo), in Trieste, which then belonged to the Austro-Hungarian empire - was in fact it's principal seaport, a thriving international city. The children of the educated classes learned to speak German in school for commercial reasons, but they spoke Italian at home - it was a completely Italian city. (also Triestine dialect).

His mother had been born in Trieste, and her family went back several generations there. His father, Ernest Krauss, was born in Hungary, came to Trieste at about age 18; his family had a large vineyard in Hungary, and Leo remembers happy times spent there visiting his grandmother. Krauss adopted his wife's family name after (1919) they married. Trieste had become Italian then, and everyone was Italianizing. Hence, Castelli. The father worked for a branch of the leading Austrian bank, and rose rapidly to manager and then to one of directors. They led a comfortable life. When Leo was four they moved into a nicer villa with a garden - "I remember also it was on a steep slope, too steep for the horse carriages to go, so the carriage would wait at the corner below. That street was called the Via Michelangelo."

His parents had absolutely no interest in the arts. They had nice furniture in contemporary, art nouveau style, but no taste for paintings. There was no central heating; each room had a tile stove for wood or coal.

The war broke out when Leo was seven. Italy didn't enter it right away, so they stayed in Trieste. But when Italy declared war on Austria the family moved to Vienna, where his father continued to work for the same bank. They stayed there until the end of the war, 1916-1918, and Leo attended German schools. Back to Trieste at age 11, same house.

At this point his father became much more successful. He shifted over to the Banco Commerciale Triestina, main Italian bank, and became a financial power in the city, on the board of 20 or more companies. This time of prosperity lasted until the Depression, altho Trieste was becoming less important as a port city. They sold their villa on the Via Michelangelo and built a much more luxurious one with a bigger garden, good imitation Chippendale furniture etc. "Life was very pleasant, with lots of pretty girls, and tennis and swimming, and things like that." Fascist agitation was beginning to disrupt things, but not for Leo. His interests were mainly literary - he neglected his school work to read: French literature especially, also German (Mann, Kafka, Freud), and English, which he was also learning. Not classics but current literature, including James Joyce, whose brother still lived in Trieste and taught at the university there. Leo's school record was not brilliant; he got by on very little work.

"I knew very little about art, about painting and sculpture. But there was a good course in my last years of high school on art through the ages, especially Italian art, so I got a good superficial grounding there. I sort of discovered contemporary painting thru a book that fell into my hands in the early twenties by Clive Bell, 'Since Cezanne,' which revealed to me the existence of post-impressionism. But my knowledge of art didn't go much further than that."

"After graduating from high school, I was not exactly a playboy, but I didn't feel like having the sort of career my father had. I had sort of an idea of becoming an architect. But, as is the case usually when you don't know what you want to do, I went to law school, in Milan. I attended very infrequently, and got a degree, but without displaying any great interest in the profession. I finished

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Addenda: "I forgot to tell you -- my great ambition for years was to shine at sports." In his late teens and early twenties he did a lot of serious climbing in the Dolomites, rock climbing with ropes and pitons, and before that he had climbed in the Alps with his family year after year, from Courmayeur. Also a lot of skiing. His major ambitions were sportif and literary - not to write, but to know everything - "it was more than entertainment for me."

Family: Leo has an older sister, Silvia, about a year and a half his senior. Very pretty and vivacious, a flirt who was having too good a time to settle down to marriage; their father, feeling it was overdue, took her to live in Budapest where she did indeed marry a Hungarian banker. They were in Budapest during the war, came to US soon afterward and now live in Riverdale. Leo says he doesn't see her very often, tho he would like to, and that they are on good terms.

His brother, George (Giorgio) is four years younger, and always had a strong scientific bent. He came to US before the war, in 1939, on a research grant from the Ford Foundation - medical research (he was still in med school then). Went into the army and served thru the war as a medic, landing at Normandy. Postwar, unmarried, he got interested in psychiatry, worked in a mental hospital, then entered the Karen Horney School and later practised privately for a few years. Got interested in drug therapy for mental patients, and had a government research job in that field for many years. Recently he left Washington and moved to North Dakota, where he runs a hospital and teaches. Leo can't remember the town he lives in. George took the name Craig when he came here - George E. Craig -- he wanted something as American as possible.

Nina - a brilliant, intellectual child who was headed for great things but who married too soon, a non-brilliant teacher of English literature. They have three children, and live in Washington DC. Husband's name is Michael Sundell. Leo feels that the marriage blighted an important career, and he is bitterly resentful. Significantly enough, he hardly ever sees his three grandchildren -"I hardly know them."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

2

Bio - 2

law school at the age of ~~29, in 1930~~, and my father ~~xxxx~~ said what do you want to do now? I didn't know. So he placed me in one of the big insurance companies. I was very bored there, and didn't do much. I was still reading a lot. After a year or so at insurance, I told my father I would like to do something else, such as studying literature. He was a kind man, and he said he would let me do it, but first he would like to send me abroad, to change my ideas.

"There was a branch of the insurance company in Bucharest, so I was transplanted to Rumania in the spring of 1932. I was as bored as ever with the insurance business. But there was a very lively social situation there, and I had a good time. I met Ileana's family, altho not Ileana at first -- she was off travelling somewhere. I met her older sister, Evy, whom I found very beautiful, and a whole group of young people who were very amusing. Later that fall I met Ileana, and we got married in 1933." (Ileana was brighter and more interesting than Evy, "so I rapidly switched allegiance").

Ileana's father, Mihail Schapira, was a very wealthy man, one of the three leading industrial magnates of Rumania. His companies built railroad cars, bridges, ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ airplane parts, and he also dabbled in oil. He set the young couple up handsomely, in a beautiful apartment, and little by little they became interested in collecting antiques. They roamed the countryside looking for furniture and ceramics of the 18th and 19th century, often finding things in peasant houses in the German parts of the country. They also travelled a lot, going to shop for clothes in Paris, ~~xxx~~ to ski at St. Moritz, etc. Had a Chrysler convertible to drive. Still no interest in paintings - Schapira had the sort of pictures a solid bourgeois would have, nothing more. ~~The~~ His house was central focus, and a place of great events, dinners, many servants.

But Leo was sick and tired of insurance, and had an idea that he was interested in economics. So he changed jobs, and ~~xxxxxx~~ went to work for one of his father-in-law's banks. Still he didn't do too well. There was a lot of travel and general pleasantness. Everyone spoke French, although it was becoming chic in some circles to speak Rumanian. This easy life went on until his father-in-law, anxious for Leo to find himself, got him a new job in Paris with the central Italian bank there - Leo was to promote the tourist lira in France. He and Ileana met an interesting group ~~xx~~ and he learned a lot about economics and politics. They had a pleasant apartment, ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ in Neuilly, and a car, and many friends. One of their friends was Rene Drouin, who had married a friend of Ileana's in Bucharest; Drouin was a designer and interior decorator, who did Leo's apt.

Banking was still not the focus of Leo's life. He spent a lot of time with Drouin and his friends, and made no secret of his dissatisfaction with banking. Drouin said why didn't they do something together, ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ such as starting a gallery. Father-in-law was leaving Rumania then because war seemed imminent; he decided that this really might be something Leo would enjoy, so he gave them a substantial sum of money, with which ~~xxx~~ Leo and Drouin rented and renovated a magnificent space on the Place Vendome - lobby, staircase with two large columns, and at least five rooms upstairs each the size of his present gallery, with walls covered in faded velvet. It had once been a Knoedler showroom. Their idea (pure art deco) was to show furniture designed by Drouin, antique furniture altered for modern taste (Renaissance tables painted white, Louis XVI chairs covered in modern fabrics, etc), and objets d'art.

One of their friends then was Leomore Fini, who told all of her friends

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

Drouin Gallery was between the Ritz and Schiaparelli's. Surrealists included Dali, Ernst, Tchelitchew, Fini. First show (before opening) was one large painting by Tchelitchew, lit by candles, called "Phenomenon." Second and last was group.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

about the new gallery - Max Ernst, Dali, Meret Oppenheim, etc. -- stalwarts of the dying Surrealist movement. They more or less took over for the first show, which was of paintings, sculptures, and especially objects by Surrealists, with Drouin's furniture. Fini did a marvellous armoire with doors like swan's wings. Eugene Berman did another armoire that looked like a picturesque ruin, with decaying pieces of cloth hanging from it. Meret Oppenheim did a gilded mirror surrounded by flowing hair, so that when you looked into it you saw your own face framed in the golden curls. Even before the opening, they had shown single paintings by Ernst and others, lit by candlelight. The opening was a sensational event, and tout Paris was there; according to Leo it was not much aesthetically speaking. Dali wanted to do a chair that breathed, but it never got built. "Drouin and I were pretty innocent, we didm't know very much about contemporary art then; we just sort of got involved in it almost accidentally, with all that chic social nonsense side." The show was in late spring of 1939. They closed the gallery, went on vacation, and that summer the war started.

Leo went to join Ileana and their daughter Nina (born 1936) in Brittany, to decide what to do. Fortunately, her father-in-law had a house in Cannes, so they went down there and lived comfortably until the German breakthrough in 1940. Uncertain about what would happen, Schapira went to Biarritz, intending to go from there to Spain and US, and told the others to follow - he took Nina and her English nanny. He got papers for the others, and they came to Biarritz to find enormous confusion everywhere. The Germans were expected any day, and thousands were lined up waiting to cross the frontier. Schapira decided to go to another crossing point and just walk over - he started out carrying a suitcase, then thought better of it - this was not the way for Schapira to leave. They all went back to Cannes, which remained unoccupied for some time. Eventually Schapira got his visa and left. It took Leo and Ileana much longer, but they continued to live a comfortable life, with plenty of food and friends.

As conditions worsened, tho, they decided to make a determined effort. They got first to Algieria - Casablanca, where they stayed two months trying to get to Spain. (Meanwhile doing some tourism, going to Marrakech and other spots). Morocco was occupied by Germans, and nobody knew when they would crack down. "It was a very strange life, but fortunately we had plenty of money, and things could still be bought -- passports -- anything could be bought." As a shot-in-the-dark, Leo bought the tickets of a family that had passage on a ship to US but no visas, so unable to use them. He didn't have visas at that point, either, but he found a woman lawyer who really pulled every trick, and got them. They went by train to Tangier, and early the next mirning, in a violent storm, took a small boat across the straits to Algeciras (carrying much baggage), and from there by train to Madrid, then another train to Vigo, northern Spain seaport, where they embarked on an old, creaky ship called "Marques Comillas." The food was miserable, but they made it to Cuba and then NY early in 1941, March.

Schapira, who was already well established in NY, installed them in a suite at the Hotel Weylen. Nina was six, with her nurse, in one room; Leo and Ileana in the other. The rent was $150 a month. But soon they took an apartment at 1215 Fifth Ave. Then, in the summer or fall of 1942, they moved to the fourth floor at 4 East 77th Street - Schapira had bought the building, a town house, and had it done over into apartments for the whole family - he lived there, as did Leo's sister Silvia and her family. Leo and Ileana furnished theirs with heavy Victorian pieces, one

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

When Leo came to NY first he found himself "unwittingly a famous person" because of his show with Drouin. He met the people around Peggy Guggenheim, and Julien Levy suggested that they do things together, but nothing came of it.

That first year, Leo bought a grey Packard for $1200 and they went to the Adirondacks for the summer. That fall, he registered at Columbia to go grad work in economic history. He wrote a thesis on an obscure Italian polticial writer of the 17th cent named Botero. This continued from fall of 1941 until the end of 1943, when he was drafted,

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

of which he would eventually give to deKooning, who still uses it in his studio (table). They started going to Long Island in the summers. But as an Italian citizen, Leo was technically an enemy alien, and there were some restrictions:

He was drafted in 1943, and a month later, as was customary, received his citizenship. Sent to Fort Bragg, N.Car, for basic training in artillery -- because that was the branch he had done his military service in years before, in Italy. But a captain there decided his talents were being wasted, and had him transferred to Intelligence - Camp Ritchie in Maryland, where he was trained as a member of a small team that was to go to France and mingle with the civilian population. But by this time - late summer 1944 -- this was no longer a necessary sort of mission, so Leo became an instructor at Camp Ritchie. One day he was asked if he would be willing to go overseas, and he said of course - no idea what for. Leo and three others were then sent to Washington DC, and since two of them spoke Rumanian and two spoke Russian it was obvious to them that they were going to Rumania. They got there by way of Casablanca, Tunis, and Caserta, then flown to Bucharest where they joined the Allied Control Commission. Leo was annoyed because, when he had been training to go to France, they had promised him a commission, but now he was just a private. He was the interpreter for a general, and didn't have much to do, altho they were splendidly lodged in the first rate hotel there. After many complaints, he was elevated to tech sergeant. Soon enough the Russians took over completely, and it became impossible to deal with them -- they had a million troops in the country. From then on Leo's was simply an observation post. He had a good time, naturally.

Leo had had no news of his own family since 1939. But in Bucharest he got a letter from his sister. She and her husband and Leo's parents had spent the war in Budapest, where both his parents had died of natural causes. Leo got a furlough to Paris in 1945, and stopped off in Budapest to see his sister. Then to Paris, where he found Rene Drouin still in operation at the Place Vendome. Paris was cold and disagreeable. What should they do? Leo said he thought he would return to the US, and be American representative there. "It was not really clear to me what I would do." But Drouin had gathered a rather impressive stable of artists - the gallery was now a straight painting and sculpture gallery -- including Kandinsky, Dubuffet, Wols, de Stael, Pevsner. He had no funds, however, and of course nobody was buying pictures.

Leo returned to Bucharest, where he was offered a commission after all and a military career in Washington. He hesitated, but opted for the gallery. Passing thru Paris again on his way home, in March 1946, he completed the arrangements with Drouin, then sailed for NY aboard the troopship Ernie Pyle. He was on the threshhold of his real career, at age of 39.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bio -5

Postwar
Returning from Europe, Leo tried half heartedly to complete his course of study at Columbia, but soon he became seriously involved in the art world. A key figure in his life at this period was Matta, whom he met thru Peggy G. and Julien Levy. He and Ileana spent their vacations then in Amagansett, with the artist crowd. "I had a real crush on Matta -- for me he was the real prototype of the intelligent, dynamic artist."

The abstract expressionists were just surfacing then. But Motherwell was a friend of Matta's -- Matta considered Motherwell sufficiently aristocratic, altho Gorky didn't quite make the grade. "Matta had the great quality of a man who knew how to live. He was married then to Anne Clark, and their twins had just been born -- he got so distressed about this that he just left. To me it indicated his freedom of spirit. He'd been a friend of Garcia Lorca. Then he got involved with Patricia O'Connell, who later married Pierre Matisse; and he lived in Snedens with her. I was also involved with Patricia - it was a strange relationship."

Gorky's wife Agnes also caught Matta's eye. Gorky was very sick with cancer of the intestine, and had been in an auto accident with Julien Levy in which he cracked a vertebra. He had to wear a neck brace afterward. He had two daughters, Maro and Natasha. Leo remembers a lunch there during which Gorky was very sweet with his children (one of whom later married Stephen Spender's son). Everything was collapsing around him, he was afraid he couldn't paint any more. Soon afterward he hung himself.

Matta was in a great state of agitation all the time-- very theatrical about all these events. He is part Basque.

Leo's first real physical contact with modern painting had been with the Surrealists in Paris, so he thought very highly of Matta, Wilfredo Lam, and others. He felt they were the two great white hopes of modern art. But his Matta period lasted only from mid-1946 to the fall of 1947 when Gorky committed suicide (check) and Matta left the country (and Patricia). Pierre Matisse, who represented Matta and Lam, was also very much in love with Patricia, and so was Leo, but she chose the more substantially fixed Matisse.

Matta lived in the editor's apartment at 4 E 77 for a while - used to walk Leo and Ileana's long-haired dachshund, Piccina. When all this emotional drama started, Leo and Ileana's life together sort of flew to pieces. (Later, in 1949, Leo went to Cannes to sell his father in law's house there; Matta had been using that on Leo's invitation. This was also the trip he ~~broke~~ ended the partnership with Rene Drouin).

1947 -

Leo's real artistic life began after Matta's departure. He had met Clem Greenberg, who took him around to the studios of Paul Ruzicka and Willem de Kooning, and Kiesler, the architect and designer of Peggy G's Art of This Century gallery, with whom he could talk about memories of the Austro-Hungarian empire - Kiesler

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

1947 - Agatha Scheyer in California had sent her collection to Nierendorf. A few weeks later Nierendorf died. His directrice, Mrs. Pryteck, was a friend of Leo's. She was worried that with Nierendorf dead, the estate would be tied up and they couldn't sell the Scheyer works. So they wired Kandinsky's widow in Paris, and she wired back, "Give every hing to Castelli." More than 30 oils of Kandinsky and many more watercolors and drawings.

Leo and Ileana had Eames furniture and a long Victorian table that deKooning admired so much they gave it to him - in his studio today. DeKooning gave Leo an oil on paper called "Philips Square" after the 9th Street show - regretfully he later sold it to Ben Heller, after opening his gallery, for $10,000; deKooning annoyed?

1940s Galleries: Kurt Valentin (Klee, Gris, Lehmbruck etc); Julien Levy (Gorky); Peggy Guggenheim; Charles Egan (began 1947 or 1948); Nierendorf. The market was Europe-oriented. Edith Halpert showed earlier Americans such as Ben Shahn and Marsh. Pierre Matisse had Matta, Lam. When Peggy Guggenheim left, her artists were taken over by Betty Parsons and Sam Kootz.

Leo organized six Surrealist exhibitions for Bill Copley and John Ployart's gallery in Los Angeles: Matta, Tanguy, Magritte, etc.

After Matta left, Leo lost interest in Surrealism, moved toward abstract expressionists, New York art. Clem Greenberg took him around.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

was Viennese. Also saw a good deal of Duchamp, who was a great friend of Patricia and of Kiesler. At one point Duchamp got annoyed at Leo and Kiesler, said he didn't want to see either of them again; it was over the complex rivalry for Patricia. "I'm not interested in all these relations, and that's the end of it," he said. Leo didn't renew the acquaintance until he began showing Johns and Rauschenberg.

"With Matta's departure that whole circle fell to pieces, and a fresh group of people entered my life. I already had an inkling that perhaps Matta had the ideas but that Gorky was the better artist. About that time, in 1947, Peggy Guggenheim left for Venice and there was a general falling to pieces. It was the end of an era. The European artists went home, and the Young Turks emerged. Pollock, de Kooning, Baziotes, Kline and the rest. Incidentally Matta always denied the importance of deKooning.

"My great involvement was with deKooning. I admired Pollock enormously but I couldn't really communicate with him. I saw deKooning constantly, at his studio, at the Cedar, at The Club; we even had deKooning and Elaine staying with us two summers running in East Hampton (Leo and Ileana had bought a house on Jericho Lane; it's now owned by Ben Heller). Elaine was tremendous fun, one of the most amusing people in the whole wide world."

Ostensibly, Leo was working for the sweater company. Started there soon after the war, 1946. A Rumanian family with whom Schapiro was involved in a larger textile businss owned the firm, a sort of offshoot called "Tricotex." Leo was seldom there, but he needed the modest salary. Schapiro by that time had pulled in his horns considerably, not having been able to save much of his fortune. In 1951, Leo sold his share of the company for $30,000 and pulled out for good.

Between 1946 and 1949, Drouin had been sending over an occasional canvas, rolled up and delivered by an airline pilot he knew. Several Kandinskys came this way, and Leo sold them to the Baroness Rebay, his only client. Baroness Hiller Rebay was a girl friend of old Solomon Guggenheim, whose collection then was in his huge apartment at the Plaza. "She was a Valkyrie, very convinced of her own ideas. Kandinsky was the god. Also Bauer, a very poor imitator of Kandinsky. She was also a painter, whose work was amply represented in the collection of Solomon Guggenheim.

"I also had a close relationship then with the Nierendorf Gallery. This was a very important gallery at the time - it handled Klee and other Europeans. When Nierendorf died, they had just gotten an enormous number of Kandinskys from Kandinsky's widow. A Mrs. Pryteck, the director of the Nierendorf Gallery, was afraid that the sale of these would be blocked because of Mr. Nierendorf's death, so she got the consent of Kandinsky's widow to consign the paintings to me. There were maybe sixty or seventy items, of which thirty or more were paintings of various sizes. I kept them in the basement at 4 E 77, not insured or anything - that's how it was in those days. So I had two sources of Kandinskys - recent ones from Paris, dating from the late thirties when Kandinsky

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

Important mag. then was View, ed by John E Myers

Best parties were at Bernard Reis' brownstone on 68th St. Reis had good coll., incl. Cornell's "Medici Slot Machine."

Drouin was always in financial straits, wiring Leo to send $400 or he would go under.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

was living there, and earlier ones from the widow through Galka Scheyer. I sold a few. The most expensive ones went to Hiller Rebayfor $4000 -- now it would be worth half a million. Eventually the unsold ones I sent back to the widow.

"I was also buying art - I was terribly involved with Klee (actually I didn't like Kandinsky very much). I bought two marvelous Klees for $4000. Also a Mondrian, whom I admired a lot."

In the summer of 1949 Leo went to France to sell his father-in-law's Cannes house, and also to liquidate his relationship with Drouin. Altho Drouin was nearly bankrupt as usual, he managed to give Leo six major paintings as his share: a Kandinsky; a Pevsner metal sculpture (later sold to Sadie May of Baltimore); a Leger still life; and three or four great Dubuffets including his great Taxicab, now in coll. of Richard Ziesler (Pierre Matisse wanted it, and Leo exchanged it for a very nice Miro). "With that money I bought Pollock - actually, Ileana bought Pollocks, from Sidney Janis. I sold that Mondrian to a doctor in Baltimore; he paid $4000 or $5000 - ~~xxxx~~ he sold it for $175,000 two or three years ago."

(Leo considered buying Blue Poles once - it was then $8,000. But it was 17 feet long, one foot too much for the wall in his gallery. And he didn't really have the money. He also had a serious interest in buying deKooning's great Excavation, but deK.wanted it to go to the Chicago Art Institute.)

He also bought a great Gorky drawing, Summation, soon after Gorky's death. It was in the back room at Julien Levy's, not stretched, for $900 - now it's at MOMA. "One day someone splattered beer on it. I wiped it off, and then after that I kept discovering other spots. Imagine! Today you would have three restorers in right away. I paid for it in installments. And then I sold it to Ben Heller for something like $6000.

Sidney Janis

Leo and Janis did a show together in 1950 on younger Europeans and Americans (see Janis notes). He saw Janis often in those days, used to lunch once a week at Schraffts on 59th Street. Kootz had proposed that Leo take the space he was vacating at E. 57th, in 1949, but Leo demurred and Janis took it instead. "I said I couldn't do it, I didn't have enough confidence." Leo also collaborated with Janis on a show of Fauves (?).

"I must mention the enormous influence on me of the Museum of Modern Art - my really passionate involvement with that institution, which to me seemed miraculous. There was nothing comparable to MOMA anywhere in the world, and there still isn't. The whole place seemed absolutely improbable - its beauty, its excitement. (see also Log, p. 94)

"Janis was also a product of the Modern Museum. The accuracy, the precision, and the selection of his shows was in the same class as that of the Modern. There were other good galleries around -- Matisse, Dudensing, Kurt Valentin - but none of them were really as good. I had the benefit of Alfred Barr's teaching at one remove, through Janis.. People criticize Janis and say he has no original

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

The Club started at the end of 1949, on Eighth Street. Leo started coming early. Pavia really ran it. Friday evenings. Rosenberg, Greenberg, Pollock occasionally, deKooning more often. Alfred Barr, Daisetz Suzuki. John Cage. (See RR notes). Peak came in 1951 with 9th Street Show.

Janis really started the sales of the ab-ex's. Few sales until he got them. Janis having sold the great Europeans, buyers were willing to buy the new painters from him.

Leo once considered opening a sort of European branch of Janis. Went to Europe in 1955 to explore possibilities, and was encouraged, but Janis decided he wanted to keep the biz in the family.

MOMA didn't get excited about deKooning until 1953 "Woman" show.

Episode in 1953: DeKooning and a friend were looking at deK's most recent painting. Castelli came in, admired it, said he'd buy for $3000. They celebrated with a drink. When Castelli left, deK said, "He won't buy it." He didn't, and it was later bought by the Met for $7000. Asked about this, Castelli "raised his eyebrows ironically. 'Timid? Of course. I didn't have the money. I was too enthusiastic for my means.'" (Marvin Elkoff in Holiday, June 1965)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

ideas, but this is not true at all. What he did was of enormous importance. He really taught me that a gallery should be run like a museum, should be a museum. He had that kind of rigor.

"Janis knew the Americans - he knew Pollock and deKooning before I did. Perhaps he was a little more hesitant about them. But it was not because I advised him to take them. But when deKooning got dissatisfied with Egan, I told him to go to Janis. Also Pollock -- Janis was more reluctant there, he felt Pollock would be difficult to manage.

"We had an excellent relationship, we talked about very many things, but I learned infinitely more from him than he did from me."

9th Street Show (May, 1951)

"It was a product of my friendship with artists around The Club. I had something other dealers didn't, maybe because I had no gallery -- I had a personal relationship with deKooning, Pollock, Kline, all those people. I had a strong belief in the importance of what was going on. I had come to the conclusion that Europe post-Picasso was irrelevant compared to what was happening here. There was a sort of religious fervor that we felt about it."

Conrad Marca-Relli found the space, a house on 9th Street close to University Place that was about to be demolished. The idea of using it for a group show arose spontaneously among the artists. "I was the one who appeared to be richest - I bought some white paint, I paid to get the announcements printed -- I spent all in all something like $200 or $300."

It was a great fiesta, with a banner stretched across the street. Barr came down and got very excited, asked Leo to tell him how it came about. Some terrific paintings on view, including a Rauschenberg, whom Leo had discovered a few weeks before at Betty Parsons. Afterwards there was a party at the Cedar. Leo came in with Barr, and there was spontaneous applause from all. (see Vicente demurrer).

John Graham

Entered Leo's life through Ileana's mother, Marianna, "one of the most charming persons I ever came across." She had gone to England before the war to see her daughter, and got stuck there. Mihail went separately to NY, and she had trouble getting over from England. Finally she arrived, about 1944. But her relation with Mihail was no longer good; they lived together but led separate lives. They lived on the fifth floor at 4 E 77; Eve, who had been divorced in Rumania, was on the third, Leo and Ileana the fourth.

Graham appeared there as a friend of Marianne. He was a painter, a friend of Gorky and deKooning. Had come to US after the Russian Revolution, in the 1920s. Was involved with Cubists in Paris but got disaffected, wrote a diatribe against Cubism. Leo didn't find his painting very interesting - Mannerist portraits of women such as Marianna, Eve, Ileana. But then he was working very little, more interested in collecting antiques and objets d'art. After Marianne and Mihail divorced, she lived with Graham and them married him (?),

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

Graham add (from Hilton Kramer, Age of Avant-Garde, pp.300-301)

John Graham, 1881-1961. After taking a law degree he became a cavalry officer in czar's army, and escaped to France after the Bolshevik seizure of power. Real name Dabrowsky. Came to US in 1920s, studied with John Sloan at ASL, became important link between Gorky, deKooning, David Smith and the Paris avant-garde. In 1937, pub. philosophical treatise, "System and Dialectics in Art," recognizing deKs and Smith's stature. Became an "apostate of modernism." Show at Emmerich in May, 1969 (catalog?)

Big money started to come into the art world about 1957-59. Pollock's death in 1956 drew up his own and other prices.

Larry Rivers says in early fifties he thought Leo was a da Vinci scholar; Leo once lent him $25 for supplies.

When Leo told Pollock he was opening a gallery, P. said, "Don't do it, Leo; you're not tough enough." (Greenfield, p. 52)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

mostly in Southampton where they had a house, but they also kept a pied a terre in the basement at 4 E 77. When Marianne died, he stayed on in the basement, then went to Paris. A strange man who thought of himself as a magician, the reincarnation of Cagliostro. "Before they bought their own house in Southampton they used to spend summers with us in East Hampton, along with deKooning and other people. I found him a charming, witty, literate man." Marianne died about 1955. Mihail had moved to 88th and Fifth; he died shortly after the opening of the gallery, in 1958. "He was very happy about the gallery, I think. He felt I was doing something I liked at last, and doing it well. He was always impeccably dressed - his entire life style was impeccable. He went only to the best restaurants, he had the best mistresses, everything. But he expressed a wish to be buried next to his wife. John Graham got very friendly with him after she died; they used to get together and talk about her. Graham came to his funeral, in Bridgehampton."

Starting the Gallery

Leo remained on close terms with Janis after 9th St. Show. At the time Janis was discussing a partnership with Louis Carré in Paris, but nothing came of it. Leo and Janis were in constant touch, but there was no specific connection.

In 1953 deKooning, Kline, and Ludwig Sander took a house together in Bridgehampton. DeKooning was mad at Janis because Janis wouldn't advance him money to bring his mother over from Europe; in a fury, he sold some important paintings to Martha Jackson.

Late in 1954 Leo had a discussion with Janis about joining his gallery, but Janis decided to keep things in the family. In the spring of 1955, Leo went to France, on the Queen Eliz. (Cabin Class) to explore things there. "I had sort of conceived the idea of setting up a gallery. I saw Rene Drouin, who had got some younger artists. I bought a few things -- some Picabia drawings, a few other things." Leo was a bit irritated with Janis, who had sold Leo's pointillist Klee and taken what seemed a very high commission, 20%, and this had given added impetus to the idea of being on his own. But Ileana had bought three important Pollocks from Janis in 1953, and they were still on good terms.

Why didn't Leo open sooner? Lack of money and lack of courage. "I don't really know why I was so fearful about taking the step. Also, it didn't seem to me right to be a merchant, a dealer. It was a silly attitude of mine; I preferred to be a collector, altho this played a diminishing role. Actually I started the gallery as tho' it wasn't one, in my own apartment. Nina had gone away to college (Radcliffe), and that room became the gallery. A closet was the storage space, and people came up by means of a creaky elevator.

"Ileana had gotten some money from her father, which she spent on the Pollocks. We didn't really spend money on the gallery at first.

"When I separated from Ileana she still came to the gallery...

"At first I showed things I'd been surrounded by, Europeans and Americans. Some were borrowed - a Mondrian from Harry Holtzman (Mondrian left him everything when he died, made him rich - ask Janis).

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(Dzubas an offshoot of ab-ex, like Frankenthaler). Friedl Dzubas left gallery because he was jealous, acc. to Leo. Daphnis hung on even tho he wasn't selling. Bluhm left because he felt too much competition from Johns and RR.

Read: Famous article by Clem Greenberg in British Horizon, 1948, proclaiming Pollock the greatest living painter.

Party at Elsa Getz's roof garden, with Jasper and Bob and others. "And there was a feeling of elation about this (New Work) show... a feeling that something important had been accomplished with that show." (Leo in Archives tape).

Tworkov - a painter's painter. Bob and Jap liked him, so Leo took him on.

Bellamy saw Bontecou first - went to her studio to see work by another girl, didn't like it, but found "another artist that Leo might like." Ivan went, liked it; Ileana went and liked it. Leo delayed going, but when he did go he signed her right away.

Marisol - She went to Rome and stayed 2-3 years. Came back, said the gallery had changed so much she didn't know if she belonged any more. Leo didn't like her satiric wood-carvings. She went to Janis.

Al Newbill - really found by Ilse Getz. "I sort of let myself be convinced."

Bill Giles - "a great friend of Bob's and Jasper's." One show.

Bernard Langlais - "definitely was a mistake."

Chamberlain - came from Martha Jackson, ~~xxxxx~~ thanks to Iwam.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

When hanging a show, Leo would just atart and then go on from there, with no overall idea of how it would look. This is what he had done when hanging his first show, at Eugene Thaw's new gallery - Thaw asked him to help hang a Marca-Relli show there. (Thaw started out showing contemporaries but did poorly; later he went on to become the greatest private dealer in drawings of all periods).

Bob Rauschenberg

Leo met him a little before the Ninth Street Show, rather casually, at Betty Parsons'. Bob had a white painting with heavy impasto in the9th Street show. Their rel. developed very gradually (NB Bob's story of Feldman saying he was going to a party at Leo's, telling Bob of course he couldn't go -- too elegant). After Parsons ~~Bikkx~~ Bob went to the Stable, and Leo remembers the piece there with growing grass. "I was interested in any young artist's work, and he seemed very special to me. He was more difficult than the others. And then I was floored by his great red show at the new Egan Gallery on 57th Street (Egan-Poindexter Gallery). It was really a miraculous show to me - that was in 1959. But in spite of my enthusiasm, I did not understand it well enough to go out of my way and buy a piece (as I did with deKooning and Pollock) -- to my great shame.

"When I started the gallery, everything was pretty uncertain. I had that European-American idea. What American artists to show was the big problem. Obviously it should have been Pollock, deKooning, Kline and the others whom I'd been involved with for so many years. They had proposed to me in 1951 that I open a gallery to show them, but I had not been courageous enough, so they went elsewhere. I was just looking around, at any rate. Certainly Bob was one of those I considered, but I was not so sure about whom I would pick.

"The first one I was entirely convinced about -- and again it goes back to my surrealist convictions -- was Jasper. Bob was a curious hybred. There was a certain disorderliness about his things that put me off. His personality at that time did not come through to me. I was very involved then with the Cedar Bar and The Club, and Bob did not appear in those places very much. My real friendship with Bob dates from the Jewish Museum show of 1957, and even more from my own New York show that May.

"My choices were sometimes influenced by people who hung around the gallery, and who needed it. I really did admire Jasper, and with reservations, Bob. I rather liked Marisol. But I wasn't really sure about Brach, Bluhm, or Shueler. Bob and Jasper had no specific influence on me, they never actually advised me or anything. It's really very complex. You get vibrations from them and from many other sources, including yourself. In picking Johns I was not influenced by anyone, but probably in picking Stella I was influenced by the vibrations from Johns's work - not by Johns by by his work. In one case Jasper took me down to Bob Morris's studio. Morris then was making those ~~xxx~~ objects in sculpmetal such as the fist over there, objects with definite surrealist overtones, and I felt they were too close to Jasper's work. Even the material was the same - Jasper was also making those light bulbs and flashlights out of sculpmetal. It's true that very sensitive people who seem to function as barometers do influence my judgement.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bx - 11

Johns & Rauschenberg

~~Even before this, however, Leo had seen the work of Bob Rauschenberg (the Egan red shows was an "epiphany" for him), and that winter he had seen~~ In the winter of 1957 Leo saw his first painting by Jasper Johns, at a group show in the old Jewish Museum, organized by the director, Kaiser, and by Meyer Schapiro. The show was of the younger generation, and included Al Leslie, Joan Mitchell, Rauschenberg and others. Leo knew all their work, but among them was a "an unfamiliar painting. I saw it then as a green painting with collage elements, an all-over green picture. I looked at the name, Jasper Johns, which also made a great impression on me; it seemed like such an improbable name, in connection with that painting. The painting looked so unfamiliar because it was painted in encaustic, a technique that was used in the 18th or maybe the 19th century but never in the 20th -- oh, yes, I just remember now, it had been used in a painting by Victor Brauner. I was terribly impressed. After all, Bob Rauschenberg was more clearly connected to abstract expressionism, but this did not seem to be that at all.

"I went home with that name going around in my mind. Two days later, I went down to Bob's studio on Pearl Street for dinner. And somehow, either Bob's saying he was going to Jasper's for ice cubes, or saying he was going to get Jasper to help him pull out a big canvas, Jasper's name came up. As soon as I found he was living in the same building I couldn't wait to see what he was doing. We went downstairs, and that miracle happened -- my second ephipany! I saw the Flag, which MOMA now owns; the Target With Plaster Casts, which is mine; the Target With Four Faces (MOMA); a Gray Alphabet that Ben Heller bought and later sold to Jean de Menil; the Big White Flag that is now on loan at the Yale Art Museum; and several other White Number paintings. I was simply flabbergasted. It was evidence of the most incredible genius, and it was entirely fresh and new, and it seemed unrelated to anything else.

"I was at the very beginning of my gallery then -- I had no stable. My first show had been a group show of European and American pictures -- my

Barbara Rose on Neo-Dada: emphasis on formal relationships (not anti-art); large scale from ab-ex; impermanence; velocity of RR's images; ironic embrace of banal icons; Cage influence. (See also RR quotes).

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bo-12

idea in those days about how to run a gallery was very fluid, but I wanted basically to have an international type of gallery; this emerged when I did the European-American show with Sidney Janis in 1951, and I kept on with it. The idea aborted because there was nothing in Europe good enough to sustain the effort, but bravely I kept trying. I even had an Yves Klein show, which was totally rejected here -- the blue paintings. At any rate, I asked Jasper right on the spot if he would be willing to join my gallery, and he said, very laconically, yes.

"That May I had a group show called 'New Work,' with paintings by Bluhm, Budd, Dzubas, Johns, Leslie, Louis, Marisol, Ortman, Rauschenberg, and Savelli. The show was a turning point for me. The two key ~~artists~~ choices were Johns and Rauschenberg. They obviously constituted a new trend, a new departure. And there were other new departures there also. Long before color field painting got to be defined, I showed a large painting by Morris Louis, and a painting by Friedl Dzubas."

Anita Ventura designed the poster, and all subsequent ones ~~until~~ for the first year or so; then she introduced Leo to Marc Ratliff, who was working then for Fortune but on the verge of going into designing ~~for~~ independently - Leo encouraged him and was his first client.

"New Work" show had Jasper's Flag (MOMA); Rauschenberg's "Gloria" (Cleveland Museum);

Jasper Johns' first solo show was Jan. 1958. Tom Hess came to the gallery ~~while~~ before it went up, and asked if he could take the Target With Four Faces away with him in a cab.* "I said, of course you can. I had no idea what he wanted it for, but Tom was somebody I looked up to with awe; to question him would have shown a lack of proper respect. He had written with great authority about de Kooming... Anyway, that first Johns show had a fantastic resonance. One incident I remember -- a Dutch dealer named Jan Streep came in, looked around, and said he wanted to buy the entire exhibition. I told him that of course he could not do that, I would never agree to such a thing, and he said, all right, then, if I can't buy it all I won't buy anything." * it appeared on cover of Jan. 1958 Art News

Alfred Barr came, spent several hours, asked many questions and eventually asked to meet the artist. Jasper arrived. Barr said he wanted to buy the Target With Plaster Casts for the museum, but would it be all right if the panel housing the green penis was kept permanently closed? -- random closing for the others. Jasper said he would not be happy about that. Barr said in that case he could not buy it, and would take Target With Four Faces instead. He also got the Green Target and a small White Numbers, and he induced Philip Johnson, who was not enthusiastic then, to buy the Flag. (Barr was uneasy that, in the post-McCarthy climate, there might be problems about the flag painting from patriotic complainers; Johnson hung it in his office, and over the next year or so it was published in many journals, and nobody complained, so Barr went to Johnson and said it was time to give back the Flag. "Your Flag," Johnson said. "Certainly not. It's my Flag." But then, when the new wing was opened dedicated to Barr and d'Harnoncourt, Johnson gave the museum the painting in Alfred's honor). Blanchette Rockefeller bought the White Target/ Dorothy Miller bought a Gray Numbers. Soby bought . Ben Heller bought Gray Alphabets, later sold it to Jean de Menil.

Many others just laughed at the show, including JJSweeney who came out saying, "Now, Leo, really!" Many felt it was a pure put-on.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bu-13

Rauschenberg's first show (March 1958) had no comparable impact. MOMA bought nothing, nor did anybody else - except Leo, who bought Bed. (Later, Panza bought several pieces, Cleveland bought Gloria, etc. -- look up where others went). But it had a big impact on a select few, such as Alan Solomon who was then at the Cornell Museum, and who put on a Rauschenberg show up there soon afterward.

"After these two terrific shows, I pursued my hesitant career, still trying to find comparable European paintings. Again a turning point was my finding Frank(Stella) in the fall of 1959. And Lee Bontecou. Both came out of the blue, with a very powerful image. Now people tend to forget about Lee because she stopped painting, but she was very strong and very important."

Stella

Stella really "dealt a death blow" to the abstract artists in Leo's group - Dzubas, Vicente, etc. Leo thinks it was Robert Rosenblum who first mentioned Stella to him. He had had one painting in a group show at John E. Myers', (Tibor de Nagy), where Rosenblum had seen it (check with Rosenblum.) Leo went to his studio, he thinks alone, not with Ivan - studio on Broadway near 12th Street. It was a very small, narrow room, filled with the great black paintings. Another "epiphany." Frank was very young, 23 or something; had difficulty maneuvering these twelve-foot pictures around in that narrow space. Leo told him immediately he wanted to give him a show.

Dorothy Miller was getting together a group show then, with Johns, Rauschenberg, and other younger artists. Leo took her to see the Stellas. She didn't say anything until they got down on the street/ Then she said she had to have Stella for her show. Leo said that was not possible - he was showing him, and besides it would not be good for so young an artist to be catapulted so quickly to stardom, but Dorothy insisted and of course she won out. People laughed at Stella's paintings even more than at Jasper's - Emily Genauer called him the pin-stripe boy. When Alfred Barr proposed buying the Marriage of Reason and Squalor, which was priced at $1200, he asked Leo if he could get it for less so he would not have to go through getting the board's approval. Leo agreed. The MOMA board was very negative anyway, and Leo thinks Barr offered his resignation over it (ask Dorothy).

The Split - Leo denies there was ever a rift or a disagreement. Larry Rubin had a gallery in Paris (it was taken over when he left by Ileana). He showed Stella there, with Leo's approval. He showed Stella in Paris for two or three years. Then he left and came to NY to establish gallery here. Rubin came to Leo and asked what about Frank? "I said it's a bit awkward, but there's no reason for me to insist that you let him go. Besides, it was a new idea -- why not have two galleries showing an artist's work?" Leo proposed that he have the NY shows, Rubin arrange exhibitions elsewhere. "But it worked out otherwise, that Larry would also have New York shows. Maybe Frank wanted it that way." The solution now is alternate shows.

Stella is Rubin's principal artist. "They have an easier relationship than I have with him. I really don't want to force issues. Maybe I've kept aloof a little too much. The upshot is that Barry is favored because of their closer relationship. It is true that there is a somewhat uneasy situation between me and Frank, but there was never a rift."

Larry Poons - came from Green Gallery, with Judd and Morris. Leo says he left gallery because of his obsession with Olitsky - Poons simply had to be in the gallery where Olitsky was. He s been powerfully influenced by Olitsky, and Leo thinks favorably - his work has grown stronger.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Stipends

The arrangement to pay stipends emerged gradually. Bob and Jasper were the first - "I was rather anxious to have them operative, not to have to worry about paying the rent. It was not a common practice at the time. The usual method was to receive works on consignment, pay the expenses of the show, and give the artist two-thirds of the proceeds of any sale. Even Janis stuck to that principle. The European approach is very different: It usually involves the purchase of works at a very low price (this is how Carre and Maeght could make such a great profit) they would buy at 25-30% of the value, stash the work away for a while, and then sell it at a very high price). Most European galleries are much better funded than their American counterparts. They can afford to wait until prices go up, while letting the smaller or the provincial galleries give shows. This system just was not within my reach at all."

Jasper's first show, which practically sold out, produced not more than $6000 to $7000 in all (check figures with Nancy)

Jasper and Bob started at about $500 a month.

(By the mid-sixties Leo had become much more European in his operation, buying back pictures as often as possible. Some galleries, like Eleanor Ward's, would pay all expenses but keep one painting from each show - Leo sometimes wishes he'd done that. "Now, if I could, I would buy all the paintings of my artists. I do that with Stella - he gets a regular advance that comes out of my purchases." The system differs with each artist (see breakdown, ff).

"I don't want artists to owe me anything. When they get too much in debt to the gallery, I buy something. With Judd and Flavin, I have a great accumulation of their works, except that many of these have to be fabricated. What I actually do is to buy Flavin projects. I like to have them, and I am convinced that someday they will be of very great value. People tell me I am idiotic to put up with Judd, but I feel he is a terribly important artist. And where would he go? He is a very expensive artist. Flavin is hard to sell because his work doesn't really fit in a private apartment -- if you turn on the fluorescent tubes it kills everything else in the room. (more on this later)

Early Clients

Earliest important customer was Alfred Barr - first substantial purchase. Then there was Donald Peters, a stockbroker, and his wife Harriet (now Vicente), and Peters' great friend Henry Epstein, a Supreme Court judge, who came thro Ilse Getz.

The Tremaines came fairly early, their first purchase a Johns Triple Flag. They were in contact with the museum and knew about Johns, and bought from his first show. She had been a distinguished collector before marrying Burton - had Delaunay, Mondrian, Picasso, Miro and others. Started buying Americans from Janis. "Her artistic perception is just tops. Actually she got to Pollock late, and doesn't have as good a Pollock as she should. She got a good deKooning. Then she discovered my gallery, and started buying Johns, Rauschenberg, Stella, and Lichtenstein. She goes from Pollock to Pop very consis-

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Tremaine

Scull-Tremaine/Map Story (from Archives tapes)

Both wanted big Map. Jasper said it had to go to the Museum of Modern Art. Sculls bought it and donated it to MOMA outright. Scull got tax deduction at value of $130,000. But Sculls and Jasper fell out anyway, over their demands on him. And then Jasper painted a picture called "~~Riot~~ Depart" in which a skull appears - this was before they had agreed to lend their paintings to the Jewish Museum show.

Fred ~~Wiseman~~ Weisman of LA bought a later Johns Map for the benefit of Merce Cunningham, for $15,000. Mrs. List came and saw it, and offered Wiseman $25,000 on the spot. He refused. Jasper hates this painting because he feels it was mannfactured to order.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

tently. Like Ludwig, she wanted the complete and perfect c llection. Scull had that approach at one point. But he never got a Pollock because he came too late -- he tried to get one from me, but it was on consignment for $100,000 (whenever a painting by Pollock or deKooning or Kline came along I was glad to handle it, because I considered them mine as well).

Scull - "His first purchase from me was a Johns White Numbers, a large painting that is now Ludwig's. Scull saw a Johns show in Paris, in the summer of 1958. That was a Biennale year. Cardazzo of Milan saw the Green Target, contacted me and asked if he could have a Jasper Johns show. Another one who spotted Johns was a French dealer named Jean Larcade, who also wanted to do a show; he was with the Galerie Rive Droit on the Rue St. Honore. He had a real devil of a girl assistant who called herself 'George' - her real name was Marci, she was very clever, and now she lives in Gstaad. Anyway there was a show in Paris that fall. Scull was in Paris then, saw it, and bought the White Numbers - a later painting that had not been in my show. Then he appeared at the gallery, late in 1958 or early 1959. I first remember him in the gallery when Monogram was there, in March 1959 (Scull would later appropriate the story Leo told him about Jan Street, who wanted to buy the whole Johns show), altho I must have known him before. He said he couldn't have Monogram at home because his two boys would climb all over it, but he wanted to buy it and give it to the Museum of Modern Art. I called Alfred, who said something like 'Well, I really don't know whether I can accept it, I wouldn't know how to handle something like that. Will it disintegrate? Does it have worms? First of all I don't really understand it...' So Monogram stayed with us, then went to that famous show in Sweden, in 1963 or 1964, of '4 Amerikaner' -- it was Jasper, Bob, Al Leslie, and Richard Stankiewicz. It went on to Amsterdam, and I went to see it there. I saw a painting by Bob on the wall that I didn't recognize at all. 'Where did you get that?' I asked. Siemen said, 'I got it from you. Oh, and then there is this goat that I don't know what to do with.' So I had to tell him that the 'painting' belonged on the floor as a base for the goat."

Leo's Flag was in the same show - he bought it for $600. Larcade wanted it, but at a discount. Then the Jakobsens took it home but decided they couldn't afford it. "At that point I decided the painting just does not get sold - but Toiny bought it."

Scull used to invite them out to Great Neck (actually, Kings Point) for dinners and parties. Once they went out with Panza - a memorable day for Leo because it was the day he quit smoking. Scull and his wife were "a bit difficult", together, Leo concedes. They were very competetive with other collectors. The Tremaines wanted to buy Device Circle from Jasper's second show, had been to studio and seen it before the opening. That provoked Scull - he and Ethel had got to the studio first and picked two paintings, False Start and Out the Window, but not Device Circle. Afterward he felt he'd made a terrible mistake, wanted to buy DC, got angry when Leo said he couldn't. The rivalry developed from then on. When Jasper did his first Large Map, he didn't want it to go anywhere exceot MOMA. Both Sculls and Tremaines wanted it; Scull won out by agreeing to buy and give it immediately to the museum. But then

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

when Fred ~~Weisman~~ Weisman got the next Map, and Heller got the next, he was furious. Scull then refused to lend any of his Johns to the Jewish Museum show, and had to be mollified by Jasper (see Johns notes).

Scull bought the Rosenquist F-111, and arranged a sort of press conference to announce it. He quoted the price as $60,000, not Leo. Actually he got it for $45,000. This has been held against Leo, as being deceptive practice.

"My relations with Scull went sour at one point. The reason was that Jasper got rather annoyed at the Sculls for being too possessive. Scull blamed me for that, and we were not on speaking terms for quite a while." But it got healed over.

Scull was always slow in paying. "His eyes were bigger than his stomach." "He wanted to be a complete collector, from abstract expressionism on up. He also wanted me to get involved with Walter de Maria and Mike Heizer, but I really could not afford to finance those earthworks.

Sculls and Tremaines eventually faded out of the picture.

Leon Kraushar was an obsessive buyer of Pop (see Karp notes). He came every Saturday and always bought something & his pockets bulged with banknotes. When he died of a heart attack, Heiner Friedrich flushed out his estate and sold it intact to TK Stroyer, a German collector, who overnight ~~became~~ acquired the leading collection of Pop. His collection is in Darmstadt, Museum.

Influence of Ileana

"As far as I can honestly recall, the choices were mine, always. In the case of Jasper, I don't even know if Ileana was there that day I went to the studio, and as far as Frank is concerned she certainly was not there. She was there when we had all that social life with the artists in East Hampton, and she was there when she was buying Pollocks and de Koonings. But all my activity at that time -- the 9th Street Show, the Cedar Bar, the Club -- she did not participate. She was a great hostess but not a participant. In the case of Bob, her feelings for his work were probably more acute - they came sooner in that particular kind of strength than they came to me. There was some hesitancy on my part. Was she a major factor in swinging me? I don't know.

"Her activity in the gallery - she was very good to have around. Generally speaking we saw eye to eye on what we were doing. David Whitney once said that the person who had the taste, the eye was Ileana. It may be true, after Bob and Jasper. She saw Oldenburg before I did. The happenings, too.

"The European job for my artists (what Sidney Janis did not do for the abstract expressionists) -- this was really Ileana's work. Her first shows in that little gallery on the Quai des Grands Augustins were really

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

seminal. Ileana also played a role in Daniel Cordier's show of Rauschenberg in 1961, which was one of the most important steps in his career.

"I was reproached with imperialism, culminating in the famous 1964 Biennale. My ads in the magazines were said to be imperialistic. Kramer attacked me for cultural imperialism..."

Ivan Karp

"We often didn't see eye to eye about our choices for the gallery. But his presence was very important - his incredible vitality made a tremendous contribution. Actually our split occurred superficially, on the fact that I wanted to get Flavin, and he violently objected. I really did not understand Flavin as well as I should have when I first saw him at the Green Gallery. I didn't see it as art - I saw it more as a great gesture, something in the Dada spirit. My epiphany came one morning at the Kornblee Gallery. I went to see his show, and met Eliza Bliss Parkinson there, and she said, 'Leo, I know he's a great artist but I don't get it.' I suddenly had an inspiration, and I said you should think of Barney Newman... (Note: Flavin also handled by Weber -share)

"No artist ever was decisive in my making a choice for or against an artist. I would make choices that seemed incomprehensible to other artists. In spite of Jasper's and Bob's reactions I would not have given up getting Roy. Now, Stella was influential in my getting artists like Poons and -- Frank felt a little isolated in the gallery then. But I liked Poons. I couldn't be influenced by anyone to do something I didn't want to do.

David Whitney was a great influence, altho his stay with me was very brief. I valued very highly his opinions and advice, and the fantastic rigor of his thought."

"I cannot preach in the desert. You must have some support. And there were very hostile reactions to Lichtenstein, to Stella. Bob Rosenblum, Henry Geldzahler and a few others got the drift right away. These people had an influence, not in making my choices but in making the choices possible. In certain cases the choide was out of the blue -- Jasper, for example, or Stella. Later on as things developed, then you began to have a whole environment, whose reactions you engage and know about."

How choices made? "You have to have a good eye. But also a good ear. Sometimes that's used scathingly, but it's not a bad approach. You don't consult; you hear, feel, guage reactions. In the case of Roy I had the very strong support of Ivan. In the beginning, you're unconscious of what you're doing, you just pick artists. Then, you come to the point where you pick trends. In the beginning it was Jasper and Bob. They seemed to have recognizable elements out of the past, out of Dada, out of abstract expressionism. Then Stella - I felt in an obscure way that he was related to Jasper. Then come the Pop artists - again back to Dada. A whole group that emerges suddenly, all influenced by Jasper's first show -- they all admit it -- they owe nothing to Jasper formally, but the spirit of his work permitted them to do what they did. Then back to simplicities of color and form, the Minimal movement... You spot movements emerging, and try to pick the best practitioners."

Alan Solomon

"He appeared in my life quite early. I don't remember him at the Johns show, but we certainly met at my first Rauschenberg show two months later, in March of 1958. He was just enchanted by it. He was then the

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Criticism of Lee's Biennial role: see Greenfield N.Y.T. article, p. 40.
See also Dzubas quote, p. 55.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Bo-18

curator of the Andrew Dickson White Museum at Cornell, and he picked a painting for the museum to buy -- it was the first museum purchase of a Rauschenberg.

"He was a man of very modest appearance then, in a rather skimpy suit, and he wore a hearing aid. We hit it right off. And he conceived this incredibly audacious plan to organize those great Rauschenberg and Johns shows at the Jewish Museum. The Jewish Museum was being modernized, and its space enlarged thanks largely to Mr and Mrs List. They were looking for a good new director, and they chose Alan, late in 1962. It was a whole new life for him. He got rid of his rather cumbersome wife. He had an operation that let him dispense with the hearing aid. He became very elegant, and grew a rich, Oriental sort of beard, and he started to dress with great originality, and he had many relationships with women, he had the faculty of developing incredibly deep relationships with women. I really learned a lot from him that way, how to value emotional relationships with people. He also taught me that women are not merely sexual objects.

"He was so incredibly sure of himself that nothing could resist him. He had the support of the Lists on that board. When Bob's show opened there was total amazement. Who was Bob Rauschenberg to rate such an enormous show? (Even though Dorothy Miller had included him in her group shows of 1958 and 1961). The show had no particular effect on Bob's sales; his early commercial success was in Europe more than in America. Panza entered the picture about that time, with his grand design.

"And then after those two shows at the Jewish Museum, came the 1964 Biennale. Alan saw two important trends -- Johns and Rauschenberg, and the color field painters such as Louis and Noland. Also the new, younger people emerging: Stella, Chamberlain, Oldenburg, Dine. He did not include Lichtenstein. The concept was entirely his own. And he had a very difficult decision to make in Venice. It took all my goodness of mind not to object to his not putting Rauschenberg and Johns in the pavilion. All this involved tremendous activity. After all it's like electioneering, you hear that Bob may get the prize, you are aware of all the goings-on with the delegates, you are terribly interested in the process. But the only one I could possibly have influenced was Sam Hunter, who was a friend, and there were absolutely no leaks from him. We found there was a real leaning to Bob, but the problem was his not being there on the grounds. So there was great activity to find a solution. Obviously I didn't sit back and say I'll do nothing -- after all, I spoke better Italian than Alan. But I never had any dealings with the jurors, who were already leaning to Bob. I never had any dealings with Sam Hunter. It was an easy victory - practically everyone was in favor of Bob. Falzoni, Alan's interpreter, really knew his way around, and was really our source of information.

"But the conspiracy theory does not die. Today's Times reviews a book about Robespierre by some Canadian professor, in which it speaks of his 'capacity for tactical leadership.' That's exactly what I'm trying to do all the time.

"Alan didn't stay at the Museum much longer. He got involved in a project for creating a museum in Italy, with the aid of a group of Italian magnates. He spent months and months on it, and nothing happened. And then he died soon afterward of a heart condition. He got a teaching job at Irvine but already he was not well. He died in 1970.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bio - 19

Panza di Biume

"He appeared in my life about 1960. A man of vefy modest appearance, interested in Rauschenberg. I asked him how he knew about Rauschenberg, and he said 'I read the magazines' - he had seen photos in art magazines. He'd been in New York before, and had picked out two artists, Kline and Rothko. He'd bought great numbers of their paintings. His principle was never to buy just one example of an artist, but at least five or six. It was feasible then - Kline was selling for about $2000. Before that he'd collected Italian art, but had lost interest in it, he felt there was now progess being made there. Then he went on to some French artists: Fautrier and Tapies. The experience of Tapies led him to Rauschenberg. That he saw Rothko was amazing. The reason he didn't buy deKooning, whom he liked, was that there was not enough available, also maybe that he was already too expensive. Panza didn't have the means to buy $30,000 paintings.

"We went to Rauschenbegr's studio, on lower Broadway, and he picked several very important things (later, when Rauschenberg became expensive, he stopped buying him). He never bought Johns for the same reason -- too scarce and too expensive. But he bought something like seventeen Oldenburg "Store" pieces, and again stopped. What he seems to like is the initial effort, when an artist first emerges - he's not terribly interested in the later development. He likes beginnings.

"He went on to Morris, Flavin, Judd, then Naumann. Not just pieces, but work that would occupy whole rooms. He had a very nice normal apartment in Milan where he could keep a certain number of paintings, but the giant repository is his 17th century palazzo in Varese, a small city in the Italian Lake region - it belongs to him and his brother, who has his part furnished very conventionally with antiques. The dining room is all Rothko. The living room is all Kline. There are vast corridors of Rauschenbergs, rooms and rooms full of Oldenburg. The palace had many annexes - stables and outbuildings of various sorts, and he has transformed these into galleries. Also the servants' quarters. The total area may be greater than MOMA's. He has now started to install rooms full of Flavins, Judds, Morrises, Naumans, and also Carl Andre, Walter de Maria, and the conceptualists Kossuth, Huebler, Weiner, Darboven, and Dibbets. He handles the whole thing himself, with the help of a gardener. There are twenty to thirty rooms involved. And then suddenly he got the idea that it was too much for him - here it would require a staff of twenty. He writes all his own letters by hand, he has no typwriter. He has started buying immense things by Morris and others, and by California light artists like Bob Irwin, by the land artists Heizer and de Maria. Several years ago, he started thinking about distributing the collection to various museums. But space is a big problem. The first to consent to build a special space for part of his collection was the Mönchen-Gladbach museum in Germany, near Cologne. The works will be on loan there for fifteen years, after which the museum has the option to buy them at prevailing prices. This is for the first part of his collection -- Fautrier, Tapies, Rothko, Kline, Rauschenberg (?) But the city doesn't seem to have the funds, so Panza is now threatening to withdraw the offer.

"He has also gotten an old building in Basle for another part; and an airplane hanger in Zurich, and a huge building in Dusseldorf. There has never been anything like it in the world. He can fill six rooms with Judd sculptures - he's bought some enormous Judds. And still he looks like an accountant..."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Johns' Dymaxion Map is 15' x 30'. Sold to Ludwig in 1971 for a reported $200,000, according to Leo "the highest price yet paid fo a.living American artist." (Newsweek)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Bio - 20

Peter Ludwig

A student of gothic art at Heidelberg - took PhD in art history. Met a fellowstudent named Irene Monheim, who was the heiress of a wealthy chocolate manufacturer. Married her. Intended to devote his life to study of art history, but his wife's father died suddenly, the two younger brothers were not in a position to take over the business, so Ludwig did so. He developed into a business genius, and turned it into a multinational corporation - Van Hooten in Germany, Lindt in Switzerland, etc etc.

He went on collecting gothic art. One day, thru more or less accidental circumstances, he discovered contemporary art. Saw American work at Zwirner's, and Heiner Friedrich 's in Cologne, Ileana's in Paris. He got to Ileana, where he found that the real source was Leo in NY. Appeared one day in the gallery (abt 1969), asked to see work by Johns, Rauschenberg, Lichtenstein. At that time Leo had a strict agreement with Ileana that European buyers should buy from her. He came again soon afterward, and asked again. Leo told him he should buy from Ileana. Ludwig said that was just ridiculous, Leo had the pictures he wanted and she didn't. Leo spoke to Ileana and got her agreement, and he proceeded to deal with Ludwig directly.

First thing he bought was Johns' "White Numbers" (which Scull had bought in Paris at Galerie Rive Droit). It was hanging in Leo and Toiny's apartment, where "Fools House" hangs now. Ludwig also said he'd like "Flag" and "Target With Plaster Casts," but Leo told him no. Scull wanted ~~White~~ $50,000 for "White Numbers," Leo and Ludwig went back to the gallery, where by accident Beyeler had just appeared. Ludwig said to Beyeler that he had just seen a very good Johns of a certain period, and what price did he think it should be? Beyeler, who didn't know Johns' work well at all, said $50,000. Ludwig was impressed, and later on agreed to buy it.

Another episode concerned a Lichtenstein painting at the 1968(?) Documenta show in Kastle. Picture of a girl with flowing blond hair that Ludwig, a great romantic, fell in love with. Leo told him it was in Roy's private coll. and not for sale. Later, Ludwig came to NY, and Leo took him to Roy's studio, which was then in a former bank on the corner of Bowery and Spring Street, Ludwig asked Roy if he would sell the painting he had seen at Kastle. Roy said no. Ludwig turned to Leo, asked how much the picture would be worth today. Leo said $20,000. Ludwig turned to Roy and offered him $40,000. Roy was taken aback; didn't want to sell it, but said he'd think it over. Later, Roy still didn't want to sell but he liked the gesture so much that he did so.

Ludwig has an incredibly good collection of Johns - has always bought the biggest and most difficult paintings. The Dymaxion Map - he looked at it for three minutes, said he wanted to buy, how much. Leo told him and he said, All right, I'll buy it. Quickest decision maker Leo has ever seen, at least in the $200,000 range. He bought the very difficult, untitled Johns in the Whitney Annual two years ago, in three panels (body parts, flagstones, and the new cross-hatchings); many people were derisive about the pictu e, but he came and looked a while, and said he'd buy. No haggling at all. Leo gives him 20%, same as he gives to dealers. "I consider he deserves as much discount as any dealer. What he's done for me, for art, for the market is more than any dealer. He is the most important factor in the market for Johns, for Lichtenstein, and for many others."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

His Museum - No more room for his purchases at home. He has whole top floor of the Walraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne, also the entrance hall (where Jasper's Dymaxion Map hangs), a whole room for Rosenquist's "Horse Blinders", another whole room for Rauschenberg's "Soundings."

Another part of his collection is in ax small museum in Aachen where he works. Another part in Basle. And he is lending a lot to the Beaubourg.

Recently he decided to give his entire collection to the city of Cologne, if they would build a museum for it. The city agreed, and an architect will be chosen with Ludwig's approval. Should be ready by 1985. Cologne and Dusseldorf form the art center of Germany.

Note: Influence of Pontus Hulten on Ludwig. His "Four Americans" show in Stockholm, ~~1960 or 1961~~ April 1962: JJ, RR, Al Leslie, Stankiewicz.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Bio - 21

Rauschenberg's Dante Drawings

A rather tall Chinese, whom Ivan describes as an "Oriental gentleman," came into the gallery one day in 19 and said he would be interested in purchasing the Inferno series. Leo, very surprised, told him the price was $30,000, which didn't frighten him at all. He was an architect, he knew Philip Johnson, and had become involved with another firm to build India House (or rebuild it). Leo gathered confidence in him. He said he wanted to donate the series to the Modern.

Leo got in touch with Barr, who'd also heard of him. Barr had told him that the best way was simply to give the Modern a check for that amount and the museum would acquire the series. Leo found later that the Chinese was married to a very rich lady, but they were on the point of separating -- this was his last little trick on her. The wife went along because she didn't want to cut a bad figure after the gift had been announced.

Barr likes the Dante drawings, altho he could never like the #shabby" Rauschenberg combines.

The Chinese carried a hip flask, from which he took swigs of Jack Daniels. He offered it to Leo several times while they talked. Leo says I can probably get his name from Dorothy Miller, altho the gift was anonymous.

Other artists

Scarpitta - "Somehow he never quite got accepted here. He came up with what seemed to me the marvelous idea of recreating historic racing cars. It seemed almost Pop, but more romantic. I was very surprised and distressed that it didn't catch. He would bring those cars up to the gallery and assemble them bit by bit. His next show, he had those fantastic sleds, which was a return to something more primitive. There were no pirchases, but it made a kind of a hit in a way. Now James Harithas is going to give him a show in Houston, and there may be something at the Cordoran. We may get him off the ground.

Higgins - "Another strange case. He made those steel-and-plaster pieces that looked both primitive and modern, like Benin warriors. But he did not develop. He was a little like Bontecou. Higgins disappeared, got a teaching job somewhere, and recently I heard he had gone back to his stone house in Bucks County. Occasionally I can give one of his pieces to a museum and take a tax deduction.

Moscowitz - One of Ivan's discoveries, not Leo's. "I was never very enthusiastic about him, there was that expressionistic element. He got stuck, and abandoned painting altogether. He emerged again not so long ago at the Nancy Hoffman Gallery, but I've never seen his new work."

Rosenquist - "I felt at first he was too close to Surrealism, to Magritte. Bellamy was very interested, so he went there. So did Claes Oldenburg, and Indiana. Again, there was a strong expressionist element in Claes, in The Store, that was not really my idea of Pop.

R. was unhappy at Bellamy's, want to come to Leo. Leo said he couldn't do that to a friend. Later, on a 'plane trip somewhere, R. said he would go to Janis if Leo didn't take him. So Leo and Bellamy and R. got together, and Bellamy said he'd rather see him go to Leo. He did, and made F-111 for his second show there. This was ~~1963 or 1964.~~ May, 1965.
(85'3" long, longer than the actual aircraft)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Johns was very negative about Lichtenstein for several months -- Rauschenberg for a much shorter time.

"Girl With a Ball" was picture that decided Leo to take Lichtenstein. It is now at MOMA. Leo wanted it himself, but Philip Johnson talked him into selling it, for $800 (double the asking price). Johnson gave it to MOMA.

Duchamp liked Lichtenstein right away. Used to come to gallery then.

L. quote: "I take a cliche and try to organize its forms to make it monumental...The difference is often not great, but it is crucial."

Saturday openings - Leo started them because he disliked the social atmpsphere of Tuesday nights, people drinking and talking and not looking.

Closing the Green Gallery - Leo got back from Europe one summer, and Bellamy told him he was closing the gallery. Offered Leo first choice. List included Morris, Judd, Poons, Wesselman, Samaras. Leo wanted Poons. Judd and Morris he knew would be costly. Leo was doing far from well financially, so he hesitated. Jasper said he had to take Morris. Barbara Rose also urged Morris. Stella liked Judd, and urged him on Leo.

Ivan liked Pop's subject matter, Leo its formal qualities. Ivan was a real trader, unlike Leo.

Flavin and Ivan had been friends, but they fell out. Flavin testified in favor of Ivan's wife in divorce proceedings. Ivan left gallery over the taking on of Flavin.

Prices for ab-ex dropped sharply in 1963. Some dealers advising clients to switch to Pop (Time, 6/21/63)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bio - 22

Bob Morris - "I felt that the early sulptmetal pieces were too close to Jasper. Incidentally it was a complete misunderstanding on the part of the Pop artists of Jasper's intention in using the Savarin can in a sculpture of brushes. Morris saw a different sort of element there. But he seemed too close, using the same material; also it seemed very Surrealistic to me, without enough transformation out of Surrealism. He was then taken by Bellamy. And he emerged very rapidly there as a very original artist.

"When Dick closed his gallery, he came to see me, and said I should have first pick of anything. The obvious ones were Morris, whem I'd learned to appreciate, Judd, Poons -- Rosenquist had come to my gallery earlier. Morris had had two shows at Bellamy that year, one Surrealistic and the other quite minimal. Jasper liked the Surrealistic pieces, but I was more impressed by the simple primary structures.

Again and again I did take artists that Dick discovered -- Serra, Nauman."

The Spirit of Pop

"Abstract expressionism was sort of grim -- there was nothing joyful about it. Bob's work was not joyous, nor Jasper's. But there was a real joyful spirit in Pop. Maybe not in Andy, but certainly in Roy and Jim Rosenquist. Kennedy was president, there was a whole different spirit, the whole atmosphere seemed to be more hopeful.

"If Ivan had not been so interested in the campy side of Pop, I probably would not have noticed it. Since Ivan insisted on that element, I emphasized the other side. In any case it's very difficult to separate the formal element from what else is in the picture.

"Roy more than any had the effect of shocking. Even Andy's Coke bottle was more painterly. He created more furor than anybody.

"It all happened one year after Stella and Bontecou. I connected the Pop movement very much with Jasper. It was very refreshing to me. Probably I picked Lichtenstein because he was so outrageous."

"It seemed natural to me that the movement got that sort of attention. I believed in it. Bob Rosenblum was a big factor, also Leo Steinberg and Alan Solomon. Dorothy Miller didn't take to it at all.

Major collectors of Lichtenstein: Tremaines, Richard Brown Baker, Panza (who got disenchanted, sold one or two of his important pieces and now admits it was a mistake). Kraushar.

Lichtenstein became more acceptable to collectors with his brushstroke series. Scull never got very involved with him, bought a few paintings. Ileana did a great job in Europe - he caught on there before here.

"How could I be involved in so many different, even contradictory movements?, people ask me. It's very simple. It was no problem for me to like Mondrian as much as Picasso, or to like both Ingres and Delacroix. I'm not partisan. I think there is absolutely no contradiction in my choices. I am convinced there is a kinship, altho it may seem remote, with all the artists in my gallery."

Flavin -"He had been at Dick Bellamy's. Then I remember him being at Jill Kornblee after Bellamy's. I got interested, but I didn't want

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

At a certain point Leo reached the decision that painting was really dead, "I felt it was not possible for a young artist to be a painter, that he had to do something else."

Nauman - Leo saw his work first in Lucy Lippard's important show of Eccentric Art at the Fishback Gallery. Also Serra, Eva Hesse. Dick Bellamy urged Leo to take Nauman. Nauman, acc. to Leo, comes "straight down from Duchamp through Jasper and he's the latest manifestation of that experience and in a very, very subtle way."

David Whitney and Dick Bellamy introduced Leo to the work of many conceptual artists but the ones he picked were Serra, Sonnier, Nauman -- the only ones who have become really successful.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

to take him away from another gallery. He left, and went to Dwan, where he was again dissatisfied. I'd got to appreciate him by that time, so he came to me. There was no pressure from Judd to take him.

"I always like extremes. Little by little I got to like the extreme rigor of Judd. Barbara and Frank were an influence there. You're subjected to so many influences, some of which you are not even aware of. The important thing is to actually do it. People say there were painters who dripped before Pollock did, but nobody did what he did with those drips. All these influences coming from all directions -- from artists, critics, museum people, collectors -- something gets going. There are these two views - some say I have invented everything and imposed my views on the world, others say I'm just a puppet with no eyes or anything; both are incredibly naive."

Bruce Nauman - "Nauman was more easy for me because of his relation to Jasper, the extreme gestures. A cube of steel with one polished surface which is underneath, so that no one sees it. His first works were fiberglass, ugly and nondescript shapes. Also latex. Then he went into videotape pieces - his Performance Corridor at the Whitney. After that, more and more different pieces, some with sound -- the padded corridor that cut out all sound. Lately he's done pieces in a very large empty room - cubes of stone, paired, one large and one smaller; it's very disorienting.

Richard Serra - "Serra is an almost violent conceptual artist. By nature he is very intense, a difficult person to deal with. He went from those latex scatterings to huge lead sculptures - the heaviest material, put together in such a way it was impossible for them to stand up very long. Dangerous, precarious pieces." But the accident involving the death of a workman in Minneapolis was due to sloppy work by the engineering rigging crew at the Walker Art Center, there was no reason for it. Now his plate pieces are absolutely safe, have been tested to withstand shocks up to 7 on the Richter scale.

After that he got involved with land art, doing huge pieces in the country. Did a 3/4 mile piece at Roger Davidson's in Toronto; he said it would cost $40,000 to $50,000 - actual cost was ~~$200,000~~ $150,000. He did another big piece for Joseph Pulitzer III in St. Louis; for the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterloo, Holland (where Oldenburg's forty foot trowel is); his Amsterdam Tower has three plates 40' high by 10' wide leaning against each other, in Cor-ten steel that is becoming a deep red. Now Hulten wants him to so a piece in front of the Beaubourg. Economically all this is a total loss for Serra and Leo. The Amsterdam piece was budgeted at $40,000, to include material, construction costs, installation, and some fee for Serra and perhaps a commission for me; the costs mounted and mounted, up to $75,000. It was ~~a great achievement~~ of de Wilde's great achievement to get the project thru the City Council at that price, but neither Serra nor I got a cent from it."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

Opening of 420 West Broadway celebrated Sept. 1971. Remodelled at cost of $500,000. Each gallery has 8000 square feet of space.
(NYT, Sept. 27, 1971, p. 40)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bio - 24

Move to Soho

After the experience with the warehouse space at West 108th Street, the 77th Street space seemed confining. Leo wanted to get a place in Soho for storage and some display, but got carried away by it. It became more gallery than storage space. 167 feet in length, from Broadway to Thompson St. Bedenkapp helped resolve the technical problems.

Leo is ambivalent about it -- sentimentally attached to uptown gallery.

"Sometimes I have a desire to stop. But then I would stop entirely and do something different. The gallery is based on the idea of continuous expansion. As long as I run the gallery, expansion is built into the whole concept. Roy argues about that. He says why not sit back and take it easy. I try to explain that it is also to his benefit - I don't want him to be the remnant of a period but part of a live enterprise from which he also profits. I do not allow anybody in the gallery to become smug."

More on Soho - There had been first the warehouse at 103 West 108th Street - it started as a warehouse but the space was so marvelous they started having shows there. But public didn't come. Serra showed there the first time. When they found that the building was to be torn down, Leo turned to Soho. Ivan Paula Cooper and others had established there. Rents were going sky-high in midtown - it was the height of the real-estate boom. Leo's own rent had increased steeply. Downtown rents were less than $2 per square foot then, as against $15 uptown. Emmerich and the Hague Brothers, art movers, went in with Leo to look downtown, and they found a beautiful building that used to be a paper mill, dating from the 1870s. Decided to re-do from top to bottom.

Now Leo is a little sorry he didn't take the ground floor space. He can't show really large works by Serra and others because of limited access.

Current Problems

Very little gets sold to New York collectors any more. Most sales are in "the provinces" or Europe. And most of those are not sold by Leo directly, so his profit is half or less.

"If I break even with Judd I am very happy."

Artists all start out very modestly in their demands. Judd and Flavin just wanted to be in the gallery. "But after you buy a building you do not go back to what you were living on before. People say to me why don't you cut the stpiends? But that would be chaos. They would start selling work out of their studios. I have to keep them fed. One does not get rid of a Flavin or a Judd, that would be the ultimate stupidity.

"I still pay Lee Bontecou $500 a month, altho she hasn't produced anything in years. One feels one cannot abandon somebody. Generally speaking, if I cannot manage an artist financially, I give him infinitely more freedom to shift for himself. I won't even ask for exclusive rights to his work in America.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Chamberlain has been a liability for years. I have given him all along a modest amount of money, and let him shift for himself. He once owed me $30,000 -- a tremendous sum ten years ago , and peanuts today. The whole thing has grown. I now have nine people who work for me...

"It is impossible to have a major artist now without guaranteeing him $60,000 a year. That is the minimum for any artist of stature.

"But galleries by nature are not liquid enterprises. You have to go on buying from your artists, and it may take years before you can sell them and recover that investment. It s really a highly complex operation. A gallery like Betty Parsons compared to mine is a very simple operation. Mine is even more complex than the Marlborough, because of my relationships with the artists.

"I have now acquired an interest in a gallery in Toronto. Sable could not have survived, and it seemed to me a shame to let all that effort go down the drain.

"The gallery network arose pretty early in my career. Jasper and Bob became well known. Collectors like Fred ~~Weisman~~ Weinman and Robert Rowan would come occasionally to New York, but it was not yet the jet age, so they did not come regularly. They would want me to set aside important paintings by Johns or Rauschenberg or Stella, but I can't work that way.

"New York used to have great collectors like the Tremaines and the Sculls, but what they bought was peanuts compared to the new collectors I would require now to keep the gallery going. Once I did a study, and found that about 50% of the works sold here went to Los Angeles, Minneapolis, and a few other cities; about 40% went to Europe, and only 10% to New York.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Bio - 26

Ileana Sonnabend - 2/11/76

First impression of Leo: Very Italian, very attractive. "I was very spoiled, and I found my family life very stifling. When I met Leo I still had a French governess - I was seventeen." They spoke mostly French at home. She was interested in literature and arts.

"Leo was awfully lazy. He was always being reprimanded for not living like a bank employee. I would wait outside his office when we were going to have lunch together, with the car and driver."

Leo's mother was very elegant and beautiful, but cold emotionally. His father achieved "something that Leo is also trying to do -- he has been a model for Leo; he had a high position, he wanted to be fair to everybody, kind to everybody, well liked by everybody, not snobbish, and in a way he achieved that, some kind of ideal behavior. Leo had two models, his father and the Courtier by Castiglione. He wants to be good, kind, just, considerate, have a lot of friends, and be loved. Of course you can't be all that. Leo has friends and enemies for the same reasons. Leo basically has the desire to do the right thing. I say basically. He wants to be fair to everybody, but he ends up being unjust to some."

If things had been a little different here Leo might have ended up a teacher.

New York - "The first opening I went to was at Julien Levy's, an exhibition of Dali whom we knew in Paris.

Ileana enrolled at Columbia, taking the regular curriculum, and majored in psychology. She also read Proust and worked on her English. Suddenly she was doing housework and Leo was taking subways -- things they had never done before.

Ileana's mother was in London during the blitz, with her ~~sister~~ other daughter. The sister had married an Irishman, mother had gone to visit them.

While Leo was away in the army Ileana started to go regularly to galleries. She liked doing it. As a child, she had a sister four years older; the sister, her mother, and the governess when they travelled to Vienna or Paris would all rush to the shops, but Ileana was too young so they would drop her off at the museum. She spent days inside museums. In NY, she also went to The Club but was too shy to say anything.

"I was very enthusiastic about Kline. I had ambivalent feelings about deKooning, but I liked Pollock a lot, and Guston. At that time the artists were very much in need of friendship and understanding.

"I liked the emotional climate of it all. People were very defensive - nothing European was any good at all. I felt very disillusioned with Europe, I never wanted to see it again. The years before the war were very ugly years in the history of Europe, very superficial. Leo was of the same mind, altho people didn't always recognize that. John E. Myers once called Leo 'Coq au Vin,' which hurt us very much. We both felt very strongly about this country. One of the most curious things was what happened to Matta. Matta was very attracted to this country. He kept a cooler head than we did. He was a great influence on many people - not influence as much as a catalyst. He brought people together, he knew how to make them talk, he stirred up ideas. It's too bad he was so self-indulgent."

John Graham - Married her mother about 1949 or 1950. They met thru Hedda Sterne and Saul Steinberg (mother came from England with Saul on

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Bio-27

Ileana - cont

same boat, and Graham became a friend of the family. He was very unhappy, he had no success at all. But a great influence on Gorky and deKooning. After so many rejections, he couldn't find a gallery, he almost stopped painting altogether. He reverted to magic studies, alchemy. "He was really a crazy White Russian. He could be very pleasant, and also very outrageous. He would pretend not to know Grace Hartigan, and say to her, 'Who are you, little blond?' Or to a successful artist he would say, 'How's business?' He was not bitter, just unhappy." Ileana was unhappy over her mother's marriage to him - she felt in a way he was a charlatan, and she was anxious for her mother, but he was always kind to her. They used the apartment where the gallery is now at first; then bought a house in Southampton, and kept the terrible little basement apartment as a pied a terre. "After mother died he continued living there. We did not have very good feelings about him, I'm afraid. He sold the house in Southampton and stayed one or two years in the basement. But Leo certainly did not kick him out."

"My father was very conservative. He had no confidence in the possibilities of art dealing. He was also a bit tyrannical. We on the other hand were very good children. My father sort of lost his nerve when he came here, he had to pay an enormous amount to get out of Europe. He had some money here, and he tried several things and they failed, so he felt absolutely lost and he had a lot of anxiety for us. When we did open the gallery he thought we were absolutely crazy, but by then he was resigned to it. He helped us, but he was sceptical. My father was very fond of Leo, I think. But he didn't really know what Leo was about. Once he asked me, 'Does he treat you well? Does he play the horses or gamble?'

"We just wanted to do a really good job, and to have as much fun as possible. I remember one evening on the beach at East Hampton, deKooning had been having trouble with his gallery, he was very upset, and he attacked Leo for not opening a gallery. I said, 'I think he will open a gallery and I think you won't be one of his artists.' DeKooning wanted to know who would be in it. I thought it would be more interesting to be involved with what was coming up, not with what had already bloomed. Leo was more adventurous than that. Those were prophetic words, based on intuition.

"We had not precise ideas about the gallery. We pretty much agreed on the artists. But I think Leo was more eclectic, while I was more detached. I think I learned a lot from Leo, and a lot from Matta. I'm very instinctual, and I had to learn from Leo. I think he sort of respected my judgement, or at least my response to things. We were a good combination, he being intellectual and I being emotional. Rumanians are supposed to be temperamental, spoiled, rash, and extravagant -- all the things I am. When I let myself go, that's very deep in me. What's deep in Leo is the absorption of different European cultures. I think Leo is as Austrian as he is French or Italian...

"Leo gave in to all my whims. We enjoyed life a lot all the time, even while we were fleeing from France. In Casablanca we still managed to have a very good time. Leo is narcissistic and vain, but he doesn't really care about comforts or security. He says he has had the main thing that these paintings can give him, which is immaterial. But you have to learn to let go of them too -- that's his attitude. If you can have a gallery and not become bitter or stale, I think that's a real achievement.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: III.B.29

Bo-28

Ileana - 3

"His father's death was very painful for Leo. He had been wounded by the bombing in Budapest, and there was no medecine -- everything was needed for the army. His mother died of multiple sclerosis there. Their last years were very sad."

Kiesler -"Both he and Leo were really adolescents. They told Austrian jokes, and remembered songs that nobody else knew or understood. They saw each other a lot. Leo was really Kiesler's confidant, and would help him in lots of ways."

Meeting Rauschenberg

"I had a very strong reaction to Jackson Pollock's work and to Bob's work. The first time I saw Bob himself was at the 9th Street Show. Here was this young man laughing, so handsome, so happy and kind -- quite a contrast to some of the others. I thought the work was absolutely eccentric -- I'm still that way, what I don't understand really I like. Well, when we opened the gallery we were looking for artists. I had liked Bob's work at Egan, and so had Leo. Then we went to Bob's studio with Ilse Getz, one rainy Sunday. There were lots of beautiful paintings, and Bob started showing them up us, and I was in the midst of a great experience, but they were big paintings and Bob said he was going to get Jasper Johns to help bring them out.

"I had been ill with 'flu, and I did not get to the Jewish Museum show that had Jasper's Green Target. Leo came back very late, and he sat on my bed and talked about the show, 'and then there was a green painting, I don't know what it was or who the painter was, but it's the best thing in the show.' When Leo heard that Jasper was coming up he became very excited. Jasper came, very young, very shy, and helped move the paintings, but from that moment Leo didn't look much at Bob's paintings. Bob sensed that he had lost interest, and he stopped showing them. We went downstairs, at Leo's urging, to see Jasper's work. I was surprised -- he had installed a show, it was not so spontaneous as it looked. Lots of marvelous paintings. It was overwhelming. We both became very much wrapped up in Jasper. Ilse Getz was trying to make things easier for Bob. It was a risk that Bob took for Jasper -- it had all been arranged im advance, and it turned out the way Bob had hoped but was afraid of too. I think that was a sign of great love - I was aware of that then -- it was real self-effacement. It was such a hard experience for Bob, and it kept repeating itself.

"We said the work was marvelous and we had to show it -- which we hadn't said to Bob. Also I immediately bought a small painting there, and I had not bought a Rauschenberg. A few days passed. It was decided that Jasper would have a show, but nothing was said to Bob. One day I was alone in the gallery, and Bob came in, very upset. He said he had to know what we intended to do about his work - if we didn't want to show it he would go to another gallery. I was very embarrassed, and conscious of how much he was hurt, He got a date for a show. I remember telling Leo when he got home what a bad time I'd had for Bob. In a way I think I took the decision, yes.

"Bob and Jasper wanted Leo to be their father. In a way he is -- but Leo is too adolescent. I once said to Leo, we are both adolescents, and Leo laughed and said that's what nobody understands about us. We have a wonderful time."

"Leo doesn't care about money or about himself."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Bo-29

Ileana - 4

"Leo doesn't think of himself as a small man, or an old man, or a sick man. He's always wanted to be a Renaissance man."

Why do people write about him in such a negative way? "It makes better copy. Also because Leo does make enemies, it's a difficult position he chose."

Frank Stella - Rosenblum told them about a student at Princeton. Others also mentioned him. Leo and Ileana took the train to Princeton, saw Frank, toothless even then, very young and shy but also very self-assured. Both liked the work. The studio visit came later.

After the group show at end of 1957 season, with Stella and Gasper and the others, a feeling of great excitement was building up. There was a party at Ilse Getz's. Money was scarce then, people were much closer to one another. That spirit is no longer.

European Transplant

The first generation of abstract expressionists had very ambiguous feelings about Europe. They didn't really want to show there, but felt their reputations were not complete without it. They were not shown in time in Europe, while they were producing. "I wanted Bob's and Jasper's work to be seen then, in Europe. The first year of my gallery in Paris was really important to art history, I feel. This was 1962. The first show was of Jasper's Flags. The second was Bob Rauschenberg. Then shortly after came Lichtenstein, Warhol, and the others. It was revolutionary. People were shocked but very enthusiastic. The gallery was full every day. We thought we would just be there for a year, show these things and then leave, come back to New York. But it didn't happen. "

The arrangements were made with Leo, with Janis, and with some artists directly. Janis was reluctant to cooperate - he didn't see why he should have to do it for his artists.

Daniel Cordier showed some American artists -- including Rauschenberg. Galerie Rive Droit had shown Jasper and a few others, but it was closed. Cordier showed Bob but didn't sell anything, and now he had closed, too, disgusted with the French situation (it hasn't improved). But Paris was very good geographically. "Only ten per cent of our clientele then and now was French."

Leo decided that European collectors should buy thru Ileana, who was doing very badly for a while. "We stayed on because we thought we could do a lot of good. The Biennale was coming, and we could show Bob... Everything changed after 1964. The Europeans felt menaced - now nobody even reviews our shows."

"Leo's great merit is not to stop. He has kept the freshness and enthusiasm he had in the beginning."

(Ileana had just come from Europe, where she helped organize a show of Bob's in Ferrara - the opening was mobbed. Now preparing a big RR show in Florence).

"My ideal of course would have been to go on working with him in the gallery, and I think it was his too. We are very good friends. I think that we are for each other the we have known for the longest time."

"Leo never forgets anyone."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

B20-30

Toiny Castelli -- 1/30/76 at Pleiades

Met Leo summer of 1959, in Easthampton. She had come over to help with children of the Peters (Harriet Vicente). Leo had already separated from Ileana, was spending the summer in a house in EH with Friedl Dzubas and others. She says he was much more fun then - went to theater and ballet, was gayer in society, etc. Now he reads in the evening and on Sunday, and they hardly ever go out. "I married Leo too late - I missed all the fun."

Leo never talks about his emotions. Keeps it all inside. Didn't even want to hear about Jean-Christophe's emotional problems at school. Very little real relationship with his son. Jean-Christophe is just like Leo -- brilliant, a great reader, a student of Magritte at age 6 -- and would like to be closer to Leo.

Leo very ambitious to be the number one contemporary dealer. He has a very big ego - everything is really for Leo.

If Leo goes to a dinner party where he is not the center of attention or where his gallery is not being discussed he yawns - Toiny has lost all her friends as a result.

Leo has no interest in personal possessions. When she met him he was living in a small room behind the gallery on the fourth floor at 4 E. 77, sleeping on a cot; he owned only two suits. He never buys anything for himself, tho because of his small trim body he always looks elegant in his clothes (but they are not expensive or tailor made). Toiny bought all the paintings in their collection except the first two, Target With Plaster Casts and Bed. He has told her that if they divorce, she can have everything except the Lichtenstein glass table in the living room.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(31)

Nina Sundell (Leo and Ileana's daughter*

At the age of 13, she said, stupidly, that she hated poetry. Leo was very shocked. He gave her Eliot's "LOve Song of J. Alfre Prufrock" to read, and it changed her mind completely. May have seemed like an odd poem to give a 13-year-old, but typical of Leo to respond on this elevated level. She was fascinated.

Nina majored in French literature at college, intended to become a teacher.

She was married in the gallery. Rauschenberg made her wedding hat, out of old lace and safety pins. A great party - she didn't want to leave.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(32)

Ilse Getz Danes 2/13/76

A painter, early member of The Club, knew all the tiny art world of that time. Worked 3½ years for Bertha Schaffer, and changed hers from an interior decorator to a real gallery. Knew Leo as a friend and enthusiast. "Everybody used to say why doesn't Leo do something? In some ways Leo was a very shy man."

She heard Leo, Janis, and Kiesler were organizing the first, opening exhibition at World House (Kiesler's design), and, needing a job, she called Leo to ask if he could help her get one there. Leo said he was going to open a gallery, and wouldn't she like to work with him. So she did.

Leo's original idea, to show European artists, incensed the New York painters. Why should Leo, who knew their work, show Europeans?

They were open noon to six PM at first. In the first year they sold 102 things - mostly paintings from Leo and Ileana's coll. "I think we didn't make $100." Everything went back into the gallery. "Leo is without a doubt the most generous person to artists that I have ever met, and that is the secret of his success; it's why they never leave him."

"I was always making espresso, five times a day or more. I said we've got to think up an idea to put this gallery across. And it suddenly occurred to me, Let's involve ten or twelve collectors, ask them each to choose one living American artist, a painting now owned by anyone, and call it collector's choice. We sent out letters, and they were all tickled pink. It was a beautiful show, and we sold several paintings. And we had a big party. The collectors all became friends as a result. Harriet Peters and her husband were enormously helpful."

Ilse got hold of Kurt Valentin's mailing list. In starting the gallery they stripped the room, painted everything white. For the first couple of months Leo and Ileana slept in the back room but then they took an apartment nearby and turned that room into storage area. Beautiful announcements weredone by the wife of an artist. Leo did everything in the most elegant way. "I've never seen anyone hang shows more carefully, except Arne Ekstrom. If we had only five pictures to hang we would try them in every possible combination, and spend two days on it. He is truly a perfectionist."

Ilse went to the Jewish Museum show with Leo. He saw the Green Target and stopped dead. "This is a fantastic painting." "I didn't know if he was out of his mind or serious, frankly I saw nothing in it."

"We didn't have quite the right stable of artists. I had already bought a Rauschenberg, I always loved his work. And I had finally convinced Leo and Ileana to go down to his studio, on a Friday evening. As we were walking up the stairs, Leo saw the little nameplate saying Jasper Johns. And then he could barely say hello to Bob. 'Do you know Jasper Johns?' he asked. He was blinded by this name. Ileana looked at Bob's work, I think the goat was there,

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

and the Bed, but Leo could not wait to see Jasper. Finally Jasper himself came up, shy shy shy...

"Afterwards Bob came to me in tears, saying 'what about me?' Well, I was determined to get him a show with Leo. And it was a beautiful show, and it didn't sell anything. But a year later it started with Bob too. Later, Leo bought a small Rauschenberg and gave it to me - he wanted to halp Bob and he also wanted to show his gratitude to me."

At Bob's first show, someone wrote in the visitor's book: "This is a very good show but nothing like Jasper Johns'." Bob was very upset. Someone else wrote "Fuck You" in crayon on one of the paintings, and Bob couldn't erase it - had to collage over.

"My job was to make friends for the gallery."

Kootz started with nothing - knew some writers,and asked each to put up $2000, with which he bouhgt Picassos. The antithesis of Leo. "Leo accomplishes more with love than with shrewdness."

Ilse lived then in a carriage house at 159 East 69th Street. Many parties. In those days a party consisted of a case of scotch, lots of Italian bread, several cheeses and salamis, and about 150 people who danced until morning.

Ileana -- it took her about a year to really become part of the gallery. For months she was too shy, used to hide in the back room. She had a beautiful face but it was like a mask - you never knew what she was thinking.

Kiesler and Michel Sonnabend were around the gallery all the time, talking and making suggestions. "But the eye was Leo's, and a little bit me now and then."

"Leo has been to the gallery world what Alfred Barr was to the museum world."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(34)

Connie Trimble - 2/12/76

Trained as a painter at Carnegie Tech, along with Philip Pearlstein, Andy Warhol. Moved to Alabama, then back to NYC. Married, went to Paris, came home and got oublishing job in NY. One day she put an ad in the Times, got a call from Ileana, went to the interview righ then and there (in a party dress), and got job part time. She started work there with a party, Dec. 17 1957 - the collectors' annual. There was a great feeling of elegance and excitement about the 4th floor gallery. Leo was very private and quiet, Ileana even quieter, except that she had tremendous wit and intelligence. Two very bright people presenting something very important - that was the feeling. Very alive.

It was obvious that they were presenting artists, not playing the game of parlaying talent. They were thinking of art as their life. "I'd come home laughing sometimes, it was almost as though they were trying to lose money. I don't think they ever thought they were in business. They had the naivite of people who could lead their lives and make it work.

Ileana's dog Piccina behaved very much as tho it were her house. She'd bark at the door every time somebody came in, roll over & pee on the floor. Sidney Janis came in once and said, "Is that dog still doing that?"

The first thing I did was catalogue everything in the gallery. Ilse was more a selling person." Connie also set up system of photos, insurance, labelling, etc. Began clipping file, with every sort of document that might be relevant. Leo built a stunning little library on his artists, with a staff of one.

"Leo never to this day expresses any ideas as to where he's going with the gallery." In early days they would open on Mondays, hang shows all day Sunday. Connie's part-time quickly became seven days a week.

"Ileana was very strong. I sort of felt she had willed it to happen. The atmosphere was always very European. By temperament, Leo was much more classical & he preferred Leger over Picasso. Ileana's taste was much warmer, and people felt that warmth in the gallery.

"Everybody who came to the gallery had to know about it first - there was no sign outside. We started getting European museum people, dealers, artists very early - there was a sort of international feel to it, as a place where people would stop off to get and exchange information. The word had gone out.

"Life magasine called once, to ask how many sellout shows we'd had that year. Leo didn't even call back - it seemed too stupid. But they called again. Then an article appeared about six months later, on sellout art shows, and it brought in people from the middle west; it gave the idea that art was exciting. But we were just mortified to be asked that question.

"Leo would always take back anything, if a collector wasn't satisfied. He liked young collectors, and went out of his way to help them out. He was never a sharp businessman - but it turned out he had a better business sense than all the rest. His generositities sort of multiplied. Sometimes we'd have $150,000 in bills to pay and nothing in the bank. Then we'd have to call and ask people to pay, which was humiliating. I remember celebrating one year when Bob could move out of his cold studio into one with heat.

"It really was mine and Ivan's idea that the artists should have stipends. Originally we gave the artist his share as soon as we were paid, but they would

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(35)

need advances, and it would be embarrassing for all of us.

"I used to carry Rauschenbergs back and forth from the back room every Saturday, and nobidy would buy them.

"MOMA never really took up Abstract Expressionism; when Barr took up Johns, there was a lot of anger.

People who had lived in the house before Schapira? Laughton? (ask Leo)

Bob's ~~xx~~ first show in Europe(at Daniel Cordier): "Leo and Ileana felt his work should be shown in Europe. Leo waived his entire commission, and he paid all the shipping and insurance charges. It put us in the red for some time. Many other dealers could have had shows in Europe for their artists on that basis -- of losing money -- but none of them did.

Connie liked the feeling that the gallery was a sort of brain trust - not only the most exciting gallery but the most intelligent. Duchamp coming in to see the Lichtensteins, etc. A good gallery should be a clearing house for ideas.

Leo and Ileana are both sports - they like a dare.

Prices: After Jasper had done his Maps, one collector sat on the sofa in the gallery and offered another several thousand more than he had just paid for the painting. When they left, Leo said, "Don't they realize that they have just driven his prices up?" It's the collectors who do that, not the dealer. The collectors set the prices.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(36)

Kay Bearman - 2/10/76 lunch at Met

Came to Leo spring of 1965, stayed to 1969 Worked with Ivan, David Whitney, David White. Was close to a lot of the artists, not so close to Leo.

Leo didn't want to go and see Serra, kept putting it off. He hopes unpleasant things will go away. The staff was often obliged to explain why he didn't show up for appointments.

Once he sold a Twombley to two different people. But it worked out OK, as things usually do for Leo.

Leo's demands on the staff: Once Kay said in esasperation, when scolded for not doing something she hadn't known she was supposed to do, "Leo, I can't know what you're thinking." Leo said, "But I want you to."

Leo not comfortable with the rougher artists -- Poons, Serra, Chambeflain.

Leo was always giving away photos to everyone who asked, and the staff had a hard time replacing them.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(KKK)

(8)

Ivan Karp -

What he's learned from Leo: "Precision management of the gallery, poise, and his being so godd-natured and generous and tolerant. ~~She shared that~~. Also, of course, his generosity of vision. It's all visual perception! There's no conspiracy, no tricks. You show the work and people reach in and find the thing that's good."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(45)

David Whitney - lunch 1/20/76

The key to Leo's success is that he makes people happy. He does everything to make them happy, and that's why his artists stay with him.

There is a $5000 cut-off in art selling -- you don't start to make money as a dealer until an artist sells for more. With Leo there was always one artist paying the bills -- Licntenstein, Jasper, Frank. Leo was always a little behind financially -- $30,000 in those days, probably $350,000 now. In August, he would have to take out a bank loan.

It's all business with Leo. He doesn't really live on a lavish scale at all. Everything he does is business-related, so can be charged to the gallery.

The gallery is "a great nebulous space -- anything looks well there."

Leo really isn't interested in making money, as Janis is.

Leo has a priority system in personal relationships -- bypasses David to shake hands with Jasper, etc.

Maybe Leo likes to give the impression ~~xxx~~ of power and manipulation behind the scenes. He always has to be in on things. Dealers really don't have power, but Leo likes to think he does, maybe, and gives that impression to interviewers.

His deafness - often he pretends to hear, and gives inane answer. Too vain to wear a hearing aid.

Leo is really a rather bland personality. Nobody dislikes him. But he has no real friendship,s either, because he is all business.

(David Whitney came to NY from RISD, where he studied architecture. Arrived in early sixties, worked for Green Gallery during its last year. Before that, Ivan got him a job with Kornblee - "Ivan was the mafia, he got jobs for all sorts of people"). When Green closed, Leo sent a telegram: "I want Poons, Judd, Rosenquist, and Whitney" (check). He got all four eventually. Worked for Leo about a year, as registrar, in 1965. Says Leo used to yell at staff in front of clients. He quit because Leo got furious when he failed to be upset about the glass door being broken).

From David Bourdon piece in Life, May 1 1970:

"Leo has no eye whatsoever...He listened to Jasper Johns, Frank Stella, Barbara Rose, me and others."

"I sort of became Leo's friend, but there's nothing to be a friend with."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(46)

Barbara Wool - 7/28/76 at Mercurio

Worked for Leo from beginning of 1969 to March 1972, succeeding Kay Bearman. No previous background in art world. She is daughter of Avery Fischer. Came to Leo after end of bad marriage. And adored him right away, wanted to do well for him and for first six months never felt she was doing well enough. They had a very intense relationship; she says everyone thought they were having an affair, but they never did - never even came close. Toiny thought they were, though, and the situation wasn't helped by fact that Leo told Toiny they were. She left finally for that reason - the antagonism of Toiny became too insuperable.

She thinks a lot of Leo's problem with being misunderstood comes from his use of language. Some people are put off by it.

"His feelings and his emotional life really exist in the gallery and nowhere else."

Judd was at one time $150,000 in debt to gallery.

The artists were often looking for a father figure, which Leo never could be. He was too deferential to them.

Leo is not really visual - Ivan is. "Leo leads you into something, and lets you find it. He only opens a work up for you. Leo never tries to sell anything, ever."

An astrologer once told him that he would always bob to the surface like a cork, and that's what he does. When there isn't enough money left to pay the artists, something would always happen, a windfall.

Scull -- story about F-111 and the London show? Sent Horse Blinders instead.

Leo always favored Ileana in Europe, until Sperone and Fischer and the others became such a help to the gallery and everything changed.

Leo treats no collector with the same deference he extends to Bob and Jap. He also is more deferential to museum people than to collectors.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(47)

Barbara Heizer - 7/30/76

Succeeded Barbara Wool, worked from 1972-1974. Art history major at Barhard and Hunter. Married to Michael Heizer (divorced and remafried him).

Leo is wonderful to work for. Extremely generous to staff re vacations and salaries. But also very demanding. You don't leave the gallery until Leo leaves, you go to lunch when Leo does, and he doesn't much like personal conversations on 'phone (Barbara Wool remembers Leo's tapping on desk with a key when she did that). All this is hard on private life. Leo must be in on every detail -- he tells you to take responsibility for this and that, but is upset if he's not consulted.

Barbara was very nefvous about coming to work there because of his reputation. She says some collectors from out of town and afraid of Leo because they think he's too elegant and worldly, they don't realize how really nice he is.

"Aftef working for Leo, no other art world job is of much interest."

The tremendous energy Leo puts into the gallery.

Ileana may have been the eye originally. Leo's deference to her Paris gallery may stem from his feeling that he owes her a great debt.

Leo is not victimized by his artists, as Ivan says. Everything he does, he does because he wants to do it. This is his role. He really believes in diplomacy. In the fight with Helman, Leo gave in when he probably didn't have to -- but Helman had opened up St. Louis as a market for new art, and recently the city commissioned Serra to do a $1 million dollar sculpture. So he was proved right.

There was pressure from Sperone, Friedrich etc to take on the conceptualists. No real commitment on Leo's part. He is afraid of being left behind (of growing old?). He's not really interested in video art.

Hasper hardly ever came to the gallery - she saw him there only once, never got to know him at all.

Leo likes the hand-to-mouth existence aspect of the business. He could have made a lot of money, but he does what he wants.

Friedrich is heavily involved with Judd and Flavin.

Arrangement with other galleries: They take works on consignment, at discount that varies according to each artist. If sold, the artist gets his full share, Leo gets his commission less the discount, other gallery pockets the discount.

Most sales in recent years have been outside New York. Barbara never saw anyone come in and buy anything off the wall.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: III.B.29

(48)

Susan Brundage - 1/7/76 at Pleiades

Smith College grad., majoring in American Studies (not art history). Worked at Met one summer, but first real job was with Leo. She came four years ago, has done almost everything including managing downtown gallery and building staff there. Became his secretary uptown a year ago, now Leo describes her as "my right arm and my left brain." She feels Leo now has best staff ever, very young and entirely dedicated. "Downtown we all talk the gallery..."

Big change in the operation over last few years. With the cooling of the art market and the drop in the economy, his business now is mostly -- 70% or more -- with other galleries. Now he's really a sort of wholesaler to a network of galleries he has really developed over the years:

In Los Angeles, the Ace Gallery, the Margo Leaven Gallery, the James Corcoran, and a certain amount with Nicholas Wilder; in San Francisco, John Bergruen; in St. Louis, Ronnie Greenberg; in Chicago, nothing at the moment; in Toronto, Jared Stable (which has just become Castelli-Stable, the only one with their name attached); in Minneapolis, Locksley-Shea; in Houston, Janie C. Lee. With all these they have dealings at least once a month. In Europe: Ileana, Friedrich, Sperone, Konrad Fischer, Beatrice Monti, James Mayor (London).

The galleries show Leo's artists, and get the works at a discount up to 40%. There is a problem of competition among dealers sometimes. And there is a problem for Leo in that it is hard to get payment out of them. Leo is doing well on paper right now but not in reality. He talks now about sales campaigns to develop new markets, shows with still other dealers, no snobbery about whom they deal with. Great need to develop new outlets.

There are very few major individual collectors left - really only Peter Ludwig and Count Panza. Scull has dropped out entirely, Victor Ganz and other are sporadic, no longer buy from every show. Everybody comes to New York now because that's where they think the money is, but it isn't. Today there is not a single major New York collector buying actively.

Leo really loves his staff. He's very generous about vacations, bonuses, etc. He expects a lot from them of course. Susan feels happy that he now takes her into his confidence about the future of the gallery, where it's heading. Says he is very ambitious, but not in the old way of discovering new people. What he talks about is providing a space and atmosphere where artists can show the huge sculpture and the events that they seem to be tending towards. He has taken on very few new artists in recent years, and most of those have been well established -- Jan Dibbets from Holland, Hanna Darboven from Germany.

The video operation he leaves almost entirely to Joyce Nereaux. Leo is not really interested in video, altho he feels it's important for the gallery to do. He keeps very close tabs on everything else.

There is some artist disaffection now. Some feel that Leo spreads himself too thin, doesn't pay them enough attention.

Leo does give a bad impression sometimes -- too guarded unless he likes and trusts you. Secretive.

The gallery never handles works by non-gallery artists, as others do. No dealing in School of Paris paintings, etc.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

"Masterpiece," 1962. Big heads of young man and girl, she saying:

"Why Brad, darling, this painting is a MASTERPIECE. My, soon you'll have all of New York clamoring for your work."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(99)

Susan Brundage - lunch 2/14/76

Judd came in yesterday to complain that the gallery wasn't doing enough to sell his work. Leo was really furious - tight with rage. He said Judd could leave the gallery if he chose - this lasted about two minutes. The fact is that Judd doesn't sell, but he considers himself (with Flavin) one of the two best artists alive. Panza has bought him, but not many others (not Ludwig). And his metal pieces are very expensive to fabricate. Leo used to try to deduct the cost of fabrication from the artist's share (gallery paid the cost) but this didn't work too well; now the cost is included in the purchase price.

Judd's needs are very great. He has bought a Vest Hdg on Spring Street and a house in Texas. Leo helped with both, which was a large factor in the debt getting up to $250,000 (it's remained rel. stable there). Very few sales recently however. Leo is considering buying as much as $100,000 worth of Judd pieces to reduce his debt, although this also means paying fabrication costs. Judd is absolutely unworried about the debt. Leo keeps trying to reduce his monthly stipend, but Mrs. Judd gets on the phone like a banshee, says they can't pay the food bill etc., and Leo relents. It's still $5000 a month.

Leo owns $100,000 worth of Flavins, most of them just on paper still. Flavin at least has some sense of humor - Judd doesn't. Leo made Judd take back his statement that the gallery wasn't doing enough for him. But maybe if Leo did push harder...

Heizer - Leo considering taking him on. Heizer and Susan recently had a long talk in which Heizer expressed the great resentment of younger artists against Leo. The crushing weight of his gallery and his artists, against which everybody new has to be measured. Great need to break free of this influence (as Bob and Jap broke free of ab-ex). And yet, what Heizer wants more than anything else is to have a show at Castelli. They all do.

Some Castelli artists resent Leo's selling thru other dealers. They get their full share, but the dealers often sell below market price, etc. They have less control over the sale.

Most Castelli artists on stipend, some very small. Most get 50%, but Jasper gets two-thirds, and Roy gets 60%(they support the gallery).

Leo doesn't really like to buy their work, as in case of Judd, because this puts him in competition with the artist. Judd's prices have risen little or nothing in ten years,

There is never really a surplus. Cash flow is always a problem. And whenever Leo is flush he spends -- currently on the Sable Gallery in Toronto, or just lends to people like Kornblee or Susan Sontag.

Windfalls continue. Yesterday a young Argentine millionaire came in -- he had turned up several months ago, unannounced, and bought a Rauschenberg and paid with a check on the spot(for his daughter's first birthday). Yesterday he said he needed two pictures for his walls, is considering a Lichtenstein tapestry and Roy's "Masterpiece", at $15,000. Would help a lot right now.

(over)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

People wonder what Ilena's "has" on Leo - giving her pictures at 40% off, or even 80% off.

No idea why Leo took on Frank Owen, or Huebler, whom he really doesn't like. Most of his choices in recent years have been result of pressure from Sperone and others.

Douglas Christmas - Leo really likes him because of what he accomplishes. He still doesn't pay his bills, and other dealers would like to see him go out of busines. But he accomplishes things for artists - a great Serra installation, etc.

Toronto venture seems a mistake. The gallery there never operated in the black. The only real collector has now had his funds cut off by his family (he was coming on like a young Panza, but the family decided he was crazy). Leo has sunk a lot of money in it, may get little back.

Leo is spreading himself too thin. But probably he does not lose sales by not being enough in Soho, as Brad suggested. Most sales now are thru other dealers.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(50)

Brad Gillaugh - 2/13/76 lunch at Charcuterie

Came to Leo from MOMA in 1969, just after Ivan and David White left. Two years uptown, Soho ever since. Runs 420 Bway pretty much on his own -, Leo doesn't get involved in small details. "But Leo does the selling."

Leo operates sort of on principle of 19th century gallery - his personal touch dominates. A competent staff to do his will, but he lets them do it without too much interference.

The fact that he is the gallery, and that he has become so famous, has certain drawbacks as well, particularly for younger artists. Younger collectors tend to be intimidated, feeling the prices must be too high and the atmosphere too rarefied. Leo himself is not personally so involved with the newer artists such as Frank Owen, Douglas Huebler -- and because he has not let anyone since Ivan do the selling, and since nobody wants to buy from anyone but Leo, they may miss some sales. The younger ones might even do better at a place like Ivan's. Some of them are resentful of this - they resent the older artists, not vice versa. And the fact that Leo is not in the downtown gallery more than a couple of times a week, plus Saturday afternoon, does not help - may miss some sales that way.

Re supporting Judd: "Leo obviously considers it worth while."

The selling really goes on uptown, and that's where Leo has to be. Enormous crowds in the gallery on Saturday are just there for the free show - nobody every buys anything.

When Brad came to work there, Leo never told him clearly what he was supposed to do. People have to find out for themselves, make their own jobs, take initiative. Some have not been able to do this.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(31)

Joyce Nereaux - 2/13/76

Now represent 35 video artists . The catalog really got things going. They're holding their own and maybe even earning a little. Outlets are still mainly colleges and museums here, but there are more and more private collectors who buy tapes; in Europe it is mainly private collectors, few museums. Artists are getting more interested in broadcast possibilities, now that cable is coming to Soho. Joyce operates on a budget of roughly $30,000 a year.

Leo - "He likes the idea of it being here, something as avant-garde as video. Personally, he's very happy that I do it." He's very supportive but not really that interested. So far this year there has only been one time-slot for video showing, the current show of Frank Gillette and Peter Campus.

"When Leo is here it's very different. There's just not the kind of excitement when's he's not around. It's like a gallery without a dealer."

Jasper had said he wouldn't show downtown, but he seriously considered it for the current show.

Video stars: Peter Campus, William Wegman, Paik. Then Joan Jonas, Frank Gillette.

Joyce sees video going in another direction now - no longer in its infantile state, it's moving toward installations, environmental situations. Rather than sitting down to watch the set it will be something going on that we watch or not watch. The Advent screen is now up to 4' x 6', and Sony has just come out with a 10' screen. They will get bigger. Video disk is out now, and as soon as the two companies (Phillips and RCA) resolve their differences it will become a tremendous factor. People will be able to buy Gone With the Wind for $5. Joyce doesn't see this as a means of real income for video artists - no point in limited editions of videotape, which goes against the medium. But artists can and do ask a lot for the big screen installations. One of Peter Campus's recent installations cost $12,000.

She sees videotape as an extension of the things around, that we are involved with.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(52)

Sidney Janis - 2/9/76

"Leo came to visit me with Henri-Pierre Roche, an old friend of mine, on one of his infrequent visits to America. He introduced us. I was very impressed with Leo, he was a charming gentleman, and we struck upa friendship. This was about 1941, just after he arrived here. I learned later he was sort of the American agent for Kandinsky - Madame Kandinsky had entrusted to him several Kandinsky paintings, which we used in our Kandinsky show the first year of my gallery.

"I opened the gallery in 1948. The first or second year of the gallery, we decided to bring together some of the younger artists of America with those of Paris. Leo selected the Americans, I went to Paris to select the French. It was a collaborative effort. Leo was just interested, there was no commercial tie. The American part of the show was later invited to Paris by the Galerie de France, where it didn't even raise a whimper - it was just ignored. Pollock, Rothko, Kline and all the others were in it. (Now we have become chauvinist over here, we tend to ignore the young European artists)."

Leo and Sidney used to go around to shows together, on Saturdays -- you could see them all in a day then, since most of the galleries were on 57th St.

"Leo was very much interested in the gallery, he came in very frequently. Now and then there was some remote commercial interest where we would buy a painting together and divide the profit - French masters, Kandinsky mostly. It only happened acouple oftimes. Thefe was no consideration given to his joining the gallery. I was very reticent about sharing the partnership. I wanted my sons to come into the business, and that could only cause complications. Leo would sometimes help with the hanging...

"Leo took me to Guston's studio thefix first time."

"DeKooning came here because he was not making out well with Egan. He was the first of the Abstract Expressionists to come, in 1951. We didn't go after them. Rothko was with Parsons acrossk the hall - he came in 195? "

"I always think Leo always showed a lack of confidence - this was an aspect of his character. That's why the things he's sometimes quoted as saying today surprise me.

"I always thought Leo had a great eye, and that he wanted to be an art entrepreneur spme way."

Stipends - "We've been doing that for years, against future sales. There was a time when Pollock and the rest were not selling, and we were lending them money rather than buying their paintings outright. I don't want to go into competition with an artist by buying his work... Our artists receive a certain amount each month, and after six months their accoints are reviewed. If there's a balance due, he gets a check. If the deficit becomes too great we might let an artist go, and hope eventually to be repaid."

Discounts - "It s a wrong practice. In certain cases we give discounts to important collectors, but never more than 10%. The art world is a very small place, If you sell at one price to X and another to Y, it's bound to get back.

Oct. 1950 show of "Younger Painters in the U.S. and France": Paired Brooks/Wols;

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

Cavallon/Coulon; deKooning/Dubuffet; Ferren/Goebel; Ernst/Singier; Gatch/Pallert; Gorky/Matta; Graves/Manessier; Kline/Soulages; Pollock/Lanskoy; Reinhardt/Nejed; Rothko/deStael; Sterne/da Silva; Tobey/Bazaine; Tomlin/Ubac.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: III.B.29

(55)

Konrad Fischer - 1/13/76

Started his gallery in Dusseldorf in Fall of 1967 - first show Carl André. Has concentrated on minimalists and conceptualists - no Pop artists. Second show Sol LeWitt. Came to US in spring of 1968 and met Leo then. They have no formal contract. He shows a lot of Leo's artists in Germany, but no sharing of commissions. In recent years Leo has shown several artists shown first by Fischer: Hannah Darboven, Jan Dibbets, Alan Charlton.

Leo's reputation in Europe: "Oh, the best. He shows the best artists - three generations of the best. He is very very serious. Leo is the only American dealer they really know in Europe, the one they talk about."

Supersalesman - "That is not true either." He is not commercial, never tries to make Fischer take such and such if he wants another artist. "I have complete freedom whatever I do."

Peter Budwig: "I never could work any business with him. He's bought it all from Leo." A little from Ileana but not much - she is very commercial, totally opposite to Leo in business methods.

"Leo thinks always what is most important for the artist."

"He really opened the market for American artists in Europe. He did something very important there. Paris was always the capital for art. Leo opened the market for American artists, and New York became the capital. Well, I don't mean he did that all himself, but he was one of the chief figures."

"I've learned a lot from Leo. What I admire most is that he thinks first of what is best for the artist."

These days there is a good deal of buying activity in Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, and Germany but few important private collectors. Panza and Ludwig unique. Museums are buying, not individuals.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(56)

Irving Blum -- 2/19/76

"Leo is indecipherable, until you latch onto the idea that he is like de Gaulle; when France was overrun, he maintained that the French were still a great power. Leo has that feeling about the art world. Total dedication and belief in it. His positive feelings carry him through crisis after crisis, and whether it's true or not he makes it work. It's his idea of quality, of continuity, and he represents the best aspect of it.

"Also he's an incredible accomodator, of people and situations. He's always able to let people participate with him in all kinds of co-ventures. It always seems he's giving up an enormous amount, but then you see that he's been enormously clever, and that he's more than compensated when things get difficult. All these satellite galleries are willing to sacrifice for him because he's done so much for them.

"He did it with me, so I know from personal experience, And he achieved two things: 1) a greater distribution of his own material, and 2) he bound me to him in extraordinary ways, from which he benefited.

"He makes all that work in a way that Janis never permitted. Sidney always dominated Sidney's situation. He's a brilliant dealer who made a national market, and later an international market, but you always had to deal with Sidney. Leo had a global view, and he's proved the strength of it. It's probably his major contribution. Janis was never really generous with galleries outside his own.

"His eye isn't flawless. He does have an extraordinary eye -- but the moment was totally responsible for the new situation, and Leo stepped in and picked up all the cards with great skill and brilliance. When Leo opened his gallery, the city was awash with abstract expressionism. It was almost impossible for people to get out from under what had been done by Pollock, Kline, deKooning, Rothko and the others. Leo's instinct that something new might be just around the corner was breathtaking. That's what he instinctively searched for -- he was up to the challenge of breaking new ground."

Blum had been working for Knoll Associates, buying art, in NYC. Moved to LA in 1958 and bought out Kienholz's interest in the Ferus Gallery (co-owner was Hopps). For $500. Moved into a new space but kept the name. Changed policy. Instead of showing 20-30 west coast artists, he cut it to 15, with equivalent number from east coast. "The most intriguing east coast artists were the ones Leo had brought together, and I worked most closely with Leo's gallery." Blum could afford to come to NY once a year; he would consult with Leo, Geldzahler, Bill Seitz, and Dick Bellamy. Geldzahler wanted him to see Andy Warhol, which he did; not enthusiastic over the comic strip pictures. Went back to LA, but a collector wanted him to come east again, paid his fare; at Leo's, he saw slides of Lichtenstein's comic strip pictures. "I looked hard, and they interested me. I told Leo that if he had a show in New York I would show them in California. Then I called Andy, and went down to his studio; he was doing the soup series. He had also seen the Lichtenstein cartoon paintings, and had switched to this." Blum liked the soup cans, and showed them at the Ferus in July 1962. Sold six paintings to people like Rowan and Weisman, but then got to looking at series, became riveted with idea of keeping it together. Called Andy, asked if he'd give special price if he bought the

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

Blum (cont)

lot. Andy said yes. There were 32 pictures, selling at $100 each; Andy said $1,000 for the set, and Blum agreed, called buyers and got them to give up their pictures. He still has the set. Paid over 18 months.

"There was no such term as Pop Art then. Ivan had coined the term 'commonism," which luckily didn't stick.

"The miracle about Leo is that he was able to have the same response as I did, when he's twenty years older. With me it was largely a generational thing. I'm the same age as all these people, Andy and Roy and Frank and Rauschenberg; they taught me how to look and what to look at. Leo was older, it was more difficult for him to have that kind of exchange. He didn't even know the originals on which the comic strips were based! But he's gleaned more information about it than I have, God knows how."

On listening to artists: It's the best way, but also the most treacherous. Both objective and subjective.

Arrangements with Leo: Leo would send an exhibition out on approval. Blum never paid anything, except shipping. He'd sell what he could, and take usually a 30% commission, and return the unsold pictures to Leo. If Leo's usual commission was 50% he'd get 20%. "But Leo never required me to give any guarantees, nor to put up any cash or anything."

The LA art market was a fabrication, on part of handful of people -- Blum, Hopps, Philip Leider and John Coplans with Artforum, one or two others. The California situation was always too thin to sustain it. Strength is that a community of artists live there. But very few collectors, only a handful of galleries, and the County Museum is "virtually anti-art, it really plays a negative role." San Francisco is perking now - Harry Hopkins at the museum, the gift of Still paintings, some new galleries, add up to activity. LA is declining, Wilder is about to close, etc. and SF will undoubtedly decline soon too. "It's endlessly and exhaustively about beginnings out there - ther's not enough substance. New York is clearly the center, the marketplace. Tne list of really extraordinary people who have left California is endless."

"Leo will die with his grahd view. If a guy comes under that he can steal Leo's shoes, and Leo will not only support him, he'll defend him. He'll always find an excuse to be generous." (this re Doug Christmas).

Perdonal - "There are great chunks of the guy that keep eluding me. The closer you get to him, in a weird way, the further you are from knowing him. I think he's indecipherable, but I'm prepared to deal with what I know about him."

Blum-Helman: Looking for a way to operate in NY, "it finally occured to me there might be a possibility for a gallery to make a second market for the people who achieved what they achieved in the sixties. Leo has never been able to buy back major works by his artists because of his short cash situation." Blum does just that, and now whenever possible he gives Leo opportunity to co-venture, buy together. High degree of cooperation between them. There's been an extraordinary change in the last month for Blum. He has just sold Lichtenstein's "Temple of Apollo" for something close to $400,000, and an early Stella

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(58)

Blum -- cont.

for a record $110,000 -- both sales made in the midwest, one to private collector and other to public collection. Most conservative part of the country beginning to focus on that aspect of the American experience. Off the record, "Temple" went to Joe Pulitzer. Blum ~~bought it~~ had sold it originally to Robert Rowan in 1964, for $6,000; he bought it back ten years later for $250,000, and has been stuck with it for two years.

"Things haven't been this hopeful in years. The Market dipped in 1974, corresponding to stock market, and it's been sloggy going since.

Leo and the Judd-Flavin situation: "The Judd-Flavin tunnel is a long, long one. And you've got to remember that in ~~six~~ letting that inventory build up so much, Leo has passed up opportunities to buy back works by Lichtenstein, by Kelly, by others of his artists, on which he could have made a great deal of money. This unique quality of Leo's is also a kind of insanity. If the Judd-Flavin thing does turn out to his advantage, it's going to be down the road a piece.

"Leo hasn't made any money. My own collection of works by Leo's artists is infinitely superior to his."

Note: Story about George E. Ohr, the Biloxi art potter. Check with Tom Armstrong, do Talk piece?

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

59

Janie C. Lee - 1/25/76 lunch

Janie, blond and chic, comes originally from Shreveport, La. Was sent away to boarding school in Wash. DC at about age 11 and never really got back. Sarah Lawrence College. New York, worked in theater for several years, but getting more and more interested in art. When family matters took her to Dallas to live she opened a gallery and ran it there for eight years before realizing she was in the wrong city. Dallas is commerce, Houston is innovation. Moved to Houston two years ago. Represents several of Leo's people, also Mark di Suvero, Helen Frankenthaler, others. Business is improving.

She met Leo in 1967, thru Barbara Rose. Being naturally shy, she had never introduced herself to Leo when in NY, and Barbara R. was amazed to find that, although she represented several of his artists, she had never met him. Next time she was in NY Barbara arranged a lunch at the Carlyle for the three of them. Altho Janie didn't say much, she felt from the beginning a completey trust in Leo, and that has been the basis of their relationship ever since. "It's a trust I could feel with no other dealer." They have no written agreement, and each case is different. If a show costs a lot to fabricate, they may share the costs. Leo very open in saying if something is expensive for him, and they work things out.

Occasional disagreements are usually resolved by a peculiar trait of Leo's. He spreads his hands wide, and says, "Well, what shall we do about it?" Forces you to come up with the solution, which you usually do. Janie has found it so effective that she now uses it with staff and others.

"He puts the artist before the money, always."

"Somebody once said that Leo is the best possible person to end up broke, because if he does all of us will rush to help him out. If I heard that Leo was 84, and didn't have any money, I'd wire him money to come and live in my house."

Contrast Leo with Marlborough - when Janie started out she was nervous about people in the art world being dishonest, and found evidence to bear out her fears. Once she took two pictures from Marlborough on consignment, couldn't sell, returned them to NY. A letter from M. declared the pictures had arrived badly damaged, and she was being assessed , not the $10,000 they had been worth when she got them, but $16,000, the new price. She replied that she was turning the matter over to her lawyer, and heard nothing further.

Peter Ludwig - "If you lose a picture to Peter, at least you know it's gone to someone who really loves it." Ludwig has real passion for his art, is the most interesting collector today. (Banzo, by contrast, seems to be selling his collection - very mysterious).

Leo's salesmanship - He is a salesman, but more in the manner of a diplomat. There is often intense competition for pictures, and somehow he usually manages to juggle things around so everyone ends up satisfied. His real goal is to make everyone happy -- artists, collectors, everyone. "Of course you can't make everyone happy, but Leo comes about as close as you can come."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(60)

Jill Kornblee - 2/4/76

Met Leo in 1959, probably in the Hamptons. She'd become a close friend of Tony, who was baby-sitting for the Peters. Jill and her husband were both beguiled by Leo right away. "And he's deepened enormously for me since then. He opened my eyes to a lot of things, to gallantry and simple social usage, as well as to a kind of imoeccability about things, an honesty ~~that~~ in the way he conducts himself that's almost flawless. Of course there are weaknesses that go along with that, and make him vulnerable in all sorts of ways."

"I didn't know he was the archetypical dancing Italian until I read that book of Barzini's. That figure that came in and out like a Mozartean theme was Leo -- elegant, well-dressed, charming, with at least a varnish of grace on everything he did. Yes, he always means to give pleasure, as Italians always do.

"I sat at his feet when I was opening my gallery. He was marvelous to me - I'd go over and sit around like a groupie, and he would always introduce me to people and say I was starting a very interesting gallery for young artists. I watched how he treated people, and how very well he did it. With artists especially, he gave very soft answers. He always gave an extra minute to finish things.

"Ivan was busy establishing his own charisma. He always looked at slides, saw people, kept up those endless notebooks, but he was another cup of tea from Leo. You couldn't have found a couple who were more diverse."

Says she's actually seen people weeping at Leo's knee for a picture -- a couple from out of town, she in a mink (not a Maximilian mink, an out-of-town mink), saying they must have a Rauschenberg, couldn't he help them, please? And Leo saying he would do what he could, but they must wait until the right one came along, etc., in no hurry to make a sale.

It is very important to place pictures. If those first Johns had not gone to the leaders of the profession, trustees of MOMA and so forth, Jasper's career might have ~~xxxx~~ taken a different course. If paintings go to private collectors in places where no one sees them, the artist is not as well served.

Stioends -- used to be a common European practice. "It worked very badly for me, because there was always that big monthly nut to face." Pace might do it now, also Crispo, maybe Frumkin. "It does mean continuity and a kind of security."

"The language thing with Leo can't be overemphasized." Great help.

Leo has lent Jill money when she needed it; she could not have gone to anyone else. And says he's done it with others.

Twombley -- "Look how long Leo backed him, and look how beautifully Cy's career has finally become."

"The time Leo came in was a time of enormous change, and he moved into it with great assurance."

Princely scale of living of Judd, Flavin.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

(61)

Robert Elkon - 2/14/70

Knkwn Leo since 1958. Started as a private dealer then, handling some younger artists and xkx also some blue chip modern masters. Leo now sends him French masters when he hears of one.

Feels he's a close friend of Leo, "a wise counsel and a good friend. A mxn of European character who adapted himself very well to this country, but who retains his European heritage." (Elkon is Belgian).

"As an art dealer, he is the Metternich of the art world. He is extremely successful as a mdeiator, he can bring together people who are in conflict.

"He has done something no dealer has ever done. He established these outlets like a general mapping out a campaign. He arranged with other dealers xkxcxxxx so his artists would gain visibility all over the world. No other dealer would have gone to the lengths he has to do this."

Janis is a man with a very good eye, who hasn't really launched anybody. "Janis is only Janis - l'etat, c'est moi. When Janis handled de Kooning he didn't even know that de Koonings were selling at Allan Stone at twice the price - that's how little he was aware of things." Moreover it was Beyeler who paved the way for Albers, not Janis. (don't quote).

Elkon once asked Leo what he really got out of the conceptualists, whether he really responded to that or was it just something in the air. Leo smiled. "My own feeling is that it's not only his eye that dictates. He doesn't want to be bypassed. As opposed to Betty Parsons, who shows only what is aesthetically significant to her...

Power? "Leo does like to control. But it's more a question of glory, or recognition."

"Leo is very much like a good chess player who thinks four or five moves ahead -- the ramifications only become clear later."

Toronto - it's a good market, and there is no other forward gallery there.

Leo relax? "I cannot really ever recall Leo just doing nothing. He can't just lie down on the beach, he has to walk. He's taken up tennis again - that's significant in a way, tennis is now in the limelight, Roy and Frank and Paul Waldman play, so Leo takes it up. He wants to stay young.

Leo does not really discuss ideas. "Leo has a certain way of presenting things, so as to give them the significance of the moment.

Discounts - "It's something that all of us do at times of we have any brains."

There are really no anecdotes about Leo. He doesn't lend himself to them.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(62)

Joe Helman 2/12/76

Grew up in St. Louis, which has always had collectors. He began as a collector, opened a gallery there 6 years ago. Known Leo since he came to NY in 1963 and bought a Johns from him (which he still has) - the price was $7,000, and he paid $1,000 down and $500 a month; Leo said if he got any money to let him know because "I really need it"; when price was paid up Leo asked if he could keep on paying $500 a month, to apply against future purchases, which he did for a while.

It's no longer true that the gallery is in financial straits. "He's knocking down half a million a year out of the gallery. The guy is making money and he deserves to. He's got an apartment on Fifth Avenue and a house in the south of France and two New York galleries and a staff of twenty people -- and still you get the legend of open-handed Leo in financial difficulty. It's a profitable gallery!

"He has so many good artists, and they dominate the world so much -- any two could make a successful gallery. Bob and Jasper or Frank and Roy or Nauman and Serra -- you could form a gallery around any two of about fifteen. The only real shame is that there's only one Leo. But he keeps a low image of someone prevailing against great odds."

Why does he keep on with new trends? "To sell the others. You take Rauschenberg more seriously because Serra and Nauman are in the gallery. It's aesthetic dynamite.

"I think he's so far above everybody else in the business...He's the best there is. He had the best artists, he built the scene of one artist feeding another - Leo was the catalyst. He did his part more than well."

Stipends - "that's really come home to roost in a remarkable way." Now he has huge surplus with people like Roy which he can use for gallery instead of paying out.

"One of his geniuses is that he never does anything - he lets you do it. He lets you run with your own initiative. This is something he's al ays done for his artists."

St. Louis: I collected Leo's artists, and when I opened a gallery my friends started collecting. There were twenty people buying in the $5000 to $10,000 range, and one or two in the upper range. Gallery still doing well under Ron Greenberg.

"Castelli is an institution. When you say Castelli about an artist you assume something. It's a philosophical position that goes back to Cunningham and Cage, a kind of aesthetic."

Judd - his market would improve if Leo really got into it. "Lots of the minimalists are sort of bitter guys. They're very defensive and hard to be close with. Judd lives in a spartan palace in Texas and a spartan palace on Spring Street. He sees Pomodoro selling for a million a piece at Marlborough, and I think he feels it's Leo's fault if he can't get the same. Flavin feels his sculptures should be as expensive as anyone else's, which is crazy. Judd at least gives you an object, which Flavin doesn't.

(over)

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Leo making the European market is a sort of hype - part of the legend. That was bound to happen anyway, and Leo only anticipated it by a couple of months or years. The work was too good not to be recognized abroad.

"We're all manipulating so that the truth will prevail. We're all on his side. We all want Jasper Johns to prevail. If you don't like Leo's vision, of course, you find that it's all corrupt, as Hilton Kramer does. There really are people who can't see, like Kramer or Tom Wolfe. There's just no way of dealing with Leo unless you can get something back from the work.

"He's never profiteered. He's just lead his life and made as much money as he could without cheating or grabbing or stepping on anybody."

Helman-Blum's business is buying and selling pictures, mainly from and to private collectors. Leo never used to do that buthe does some of it now, taking back paintings on consignment. There are maybe 75,000 contemporary works out in the world, and some of them are always coming back on the market. This is how most dealers operate. Blum has a number of Stellas around, some Neil Jenneys, some Kellys. (Neil Jenney has no dealer, sells direct from his studio).

Add - Everyone is very protective of Leo. He is open and generous, always gives in to others, gives soft answers, etc etc, but he also gets everyone to do just what he wants. He controls everyone with consummate skill, and at the same time makes them feel that he needs their protection.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II. B. 29

(64)

Jasper Johns - 2/4/76

Not sure whether Ileana was there the night he met Leo, but has a feeling that both she and Ilse Getz were present. Nothing was done directly in those days -- Paul Brach told Mortie Feldman, who told Bob Rauschenberg that Leo was interested in his work. The night of the dinner, Jap came upstairs to meet Leo, who said he wanted to see his work, so they went down right away. Leo said, "I think I might like to give you a show."

"He was interested in the work. At the end of that season, in the late spring, Ileana bought a small painting of mine. I remember she and Leo were going away for the summer, and Ilse Getz gave a party for them, and going up the stairs to the party I ran into Ileana who gave me a check."

His first show: "I remember Alfred Barr saying to me that my paintings probably would not last very long, because of the tech nique using encaustic on newsprint, but that they'd probably last longer than we would so it was safe for the museum to buy them."

Second season - a sense of real excitement around the gallery, something happening.

Jasper says he had wanted a gallery, but the only one he thought really appropriate outside Leo s was Betty Parsons - the others all seemed committed to a certain kind of work. He couldn't get Betty to come and see his work, because she had too many artists already.

Ileana - "Everything they did appeared to be a mutual decision, but I don't know if that's true or not. I don't think Leo is just interested in the exercise of his eye. The things he seems to particularly enjoy have to do with himself in relation to other people. I think Leo had an immediate response to my work, and that his interest in it was quite genuine."

Ale Cans incident -- "The part that appealed to me was two beer cans as a piece of sculpture. I was making sculptures of light bulbs and flashlights and things like that at the time, and this gave me a subject in line with what I was trying to do."

Influence - "A couple of times I suggested that there be artists in the gallery that I thought were interesting, but I tried to refrain from that. Leo would always look at them, but not necessarily take them."

Ivan - "I never understood how it was that they worked together."

New image, current show: "I was driving out to the Hamptons some years ago, and on the highway a car came toward me that was painted like that." Similar experience with flagstone image from last series - something he saw once on a wall in Harlem, later went back to try to find but couldn't.

"I have in my head now about two pictures I want to do." He paints very, very slowly. With the big Fuller Map, he worked on it for nearly a year(?), then didn't like it when all assembled in Montreal, so worked on it for months more. The big painting in current show, Scent, took months. Leo puts no pressure in him. "He knows if I have x pictures to make I will make them."

"I don't think he's primarily interested in acquiring wealth. I think he's

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

(65)

very interested in being lively in the business sense, and in being influential. I think he sees himself as someone who's more important than a man who makes his fortune doing something."

"It's he who's had the gallery after all. A number of artists who began with the gallery are still with it. It's not that he's skimmed ~~the cream~~ off the cream. I think that's one of the interesting things about Leo's activity, that he has behaved in such a way to suggest he's able to spot certain kinds of ideas on his own. He's not just making relationships between things as presented."

"The gallery is largely an invention. He can make it whatever he wants to."

Jasper feels the downtown gallery is so vast it would be difficult for him to show there. He works too slowly.

Personal relations? "I've not seen very much of Leo in the last few years, but I don't feel distant from him."

I'm very grateful that I haven't had to have dealings with other dealers."

The Scull incident: Joseph Wiseman (he is now) bought the big ~~(first?)~~ Map before it was finished. The Hellers and the Sculls were full of rivalry. Hellers wanted to exchange a Rothko for the Wiseman's Map, but it was no go -- Judy Heller took Jap to lunch to say she had decided the Map should go to California. Ethel Scull was very angry, though Jap says he never did refuse to make them a Map. When he made one for the Hellers (agreed to at that lunch), the Sculls cut them off their list, and refused to lend anything to Jasper's show at the Jewish Museum. Jap went to see Ethel and talked her into lending. But relations were never the same again.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

(de)

Bob Rauschenberg - 2/1/76

Leo's reputation existed long before he opened a gallery. He was sort of mysterious - nobody really knew what he was after, but everyone was impressed. Maybe he was a collector mainly. But when he opened a gallery Bob and many others immediately wanted to be part of it. "He was clearly going to do the impossible."

9th Street Show - Leo had seen a white painting of Bob's at the Stable, and wanted it for the show. Bob was tremendously pleased, but he still didn't know, in 1957, that Leo wanted him in his gallery. People kept telling him that was so, but he never heard it from Leo.

And there was the earlier occasion, in the fifties, when Mortie Feldman said he was going to a party at Leo Castelli's, and Bob said great, let's go, and Mortie said he couldn't possibly take Bob there, it was much too elegant.

Bob's dinner party in 1957 featured ducks cooked by his mother and flown up from Texas. Leo didn't like duck, it seemed. The whole dinner was a disaster. And in the middle of it, Bob mentioned he was going down to Jasper Johns' for some ice cubes, and Leo insisted on coming too, and spent the rest of the evening looking at Johns' paintings, and asked Johns to be in his gallery (Johns said, "Yes").

Bob doesn't know whether Ileana influenced Leo to take him - he was just about to go with another gallery when it finally happened. "Ileana was always more sensual and imaginative, while Leo was more analytical and art-history aware. The tension between their approaches was what made the gallery."

"I'm always amazed that someone with so little talent could have accomplished so much."

Leo a father? "I often felt more like a father to him - in the sense of lending emotional support when he needed it. I would always have liked to have been closer to him, but Leo was too preoccupied for that kind of friendship."

The "transatlantic transplant" - Leo and Ileana totally responsible for that, and it's been of enormous important to American art. Nobody else was doing that at the time. The MOMA shows were every five years...

Myth -"Leo was successful, also elegant and European, and that was bound to give rise to bad mouthing. In the USA, anybody who's suave and elegant and successful must be a crook."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

(70)

Paul Brach - 3/3/76 at Oh-Ho-So

Jasper s first show was the crucial turning point. After that, "no matter what you did, you had the feeling that it wouldn't hit the right note. But if Leo asked me tomorrow to have a show there, I'd jump at the chance. When I go up there even now, after fifteen years, I still feel it's my gallery. I think Leo is head and shoulders above every other dealer in town."

Leo always needs tne support of the world outside. If Jasper's show hadn't had that sort of response, he might have gone another way entirely.

When Leo opened he couldn't get the people he really wanted - deKooning et al.

Brach liked very much the feeling of being accepted by Leo and Ileana. He stayed in their house in East Hampton, was very proud of being their friend.

But it was always hard to get Leo to discuss anything difficult. He'd say, "we must have a long talk about that some time."

Sidney Janis thought that showing Kline and DeKooning would help him sell his European artists (?), not vice versa. He never thought you could sell American artists in Europe. Janis thought the European artists were way above the Ab-Ex's.

Leo's hesitancy - he needed confirmation of his taste by others.

John Graham - He rode with Admiral Kolchek in Russia, was a Major in the cavalry, was always ten years older than he let on. Also somewhat crazy. A foot fetishist. Whenever he saw a pretty young girl he's ask, "How's the painting going?" Once Brach took him out riding on Long Island. Graham was wearing white shorts, just asked to go along when he saw Brach in riding boots. Graham blew in his horse's nostrils, stroked him all over, gettin to know him - then vaulted into his back in one motion - at age of 60 (probably 70). Enormously impressive man.

Marianne died 1955.

Schapira changed his name in US?

Graham influenced Gorky with his Ingres line.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(71)

Esteban Vicente - 2/12/76

Ileana came to his studio first, while Leo in army; Leo came later. After the war Leo used to buy pictures from Rose Fried and others. When Leo started the gallery Esteban, who had been with Rose Fried, became a member with idea that Fried and Leo would share him. It didn't work out. He had one show with Leo, of drawings, then left after a year. Harriet says the real reason was that Ileana was in love with him. Esteban says it was not because of Rauschenberg and Johns being favored.

Ninth Street Show was originated and organized by artists - Marca-Relli, Vicente, Elaine deKooning, John Ferren and a few others. Leo wanted to intervene but the artists wouldn't let him - he wasn't even on the committee. But nobody had any money and Leo paid the rent on the building.

Harriet was buying pictures from Leo, and she went to the gallery every day. She was close friend of Ilse Goetz. Leo wanted her to go in with him as partner in the gallery; she didn't want to do that, but she helped him publicize his artists. Told him to go to the Carnegie Internatl in Pittsburg so he could meet people - Leo didn't want to at all. MOMA still hadn't looked at Rauschenberg, so Harriet set up a dinner party at Jasper's, with the Jacob Javits and the Barrs, and after dinner she insisted Alfred go and look at Rauschenberg's studio. The dinner was smoked wild duck from Mrs. Rauschenberg.

Esteban: "Leo was a very insecure person who wanted to be loved by everybody. But he was also willing to gamble, to invest money in artists."

Ilse Goetz got Rauschenberg?

Ileana always hated having all those artists in her house.

Michael Sonnabend had been a friend of Esteban's in Paris before the war. He took tourists around in summer, did nothing in winter. When he came to US at start of the war he worked eight months in the censorship office, then quit and entered Columbia where he met Ileana. He took courses with Meyer Schapiro, became an "expert" on Dante, and a habitue of the Castelli household. Very big influence on Ileana. He was involved with Italian Renaissance, used to go to the Met with Ileana. Of the three, itwas Leo who really had curiosity about contemporary art.

John Graham - always talking about the cabala, astrology, magic etc. Sonnabend, Ileana and Leo used to make fun of him.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: II.B.29

(72)

Salvatore Scarpitta - 2/7/76

Italian father, Russianmother. Stayed in Italy after the war, married and had two kids. Piero Dorazio brought Leo to his studio in Rome in 1957. "Something happened, between me and that wonderful man. He was the most civilized person I'd ever talked to. He represented something I had maybe missed in the U.S. -- he kindled a desire in me to return, and it wasn't quenched until I had my first show in January 1959. It cost me my family. I had a wife and two kids, but it was a very colloquial marriage, she didn't want to come to America, she would have missed the corner cafe and all that. Later I was able to bring her over here so we could get divorced and she could find another husband."

"After my show I went back to Italy, but it only lasted 30 days. I wired Leo to help me get back somehow, anyway, and Leo did, he came through.

"Leo is no merchant - he's a man who treats money as a very erudite librarian would treat books."

"Leo's ethic is in America, at a very superlative level. I've never seen him treat anyone with anything less than complete civility."

His courage - getting into a furious argument with a huge Irishman in an elevator at the Chelsea.

"It's true Leo is a gambler, but he's not a croupier. With him it's a vocation and not a speculation."

"We didn't sell one painting for five years."

Ivan: "Leo with his exquisite nobility needed an attachment with what was going on at a sort of grassroots level, and Ivan provided that. Ivan was extremely important in that sense."

Ileana found Bob R. ?

David Smith incident: The painted steel pieces are the weakest park of Smith's oeuvre. The one in question had become badly scratched, and Leo told customer to go ahead and match it. David Smith complained to Scarpitta, who then asked Leo. Leo said, "I did something terribly wrong." But not like Greenberg's actions - he didn't change the surface, simply said to match the original. Greenberg's was a restructuring. "And when an artist dies his work is already archaeology."

"Just as in hunting, Leo tracks, but he's also a still hunter. He observes me from a still point."

Maserati story: In 1973 Scarpitta had a show in Milan. The son of an industrialist liked one painting very much, and his father suggested that he trade his car for it. Scarpitta a car nut. It was a 4.8 liter Maserati "Mexico," the most powerful car they make. "I knew at once that it belonged to Leo." Scarpitta drove it for four days, until his friend said hewas going to tear it apart. Then they set out for Cannes, crossing

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

the Alps twice just to have the feel of the turns again. Delivered it to Leo, "the only time one of his artists have something back that was worthy of him." The customs officials at the border questioned him intently -"mentally I had divorced myself so much from that car that I looked extraneous to it, and they thought it couldn't be mine. Leo looked like he was sitting in his gallery in that car. I went back to Rome tourist class on the plane, and I've never felt so rich in my life."

The Armored Car - (1973-74) Scarpitta and a friend found steel armor plates lying around in a field near Bologna, realized it had been an armored car made for the Italians in WWII. Told Leo what they wanted to do, and said he and friend and Leo would each take a third interest, except that their two-thirds would be in design and Leo would provide the money. He did -- $5000. They worked 18 months on it, and it was shown outside of a museum in Milan. Says he's been offered $50,000. "And never once did Leo put any pressure on me to sell it. 'We'll see' - that's Leo's phrase. He'll go with your concept and back you, but he's not going to try to influence his artists. Without Leo we could never have done it."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(74)

Richard Serra - 4/6/76 at Spring Street Bar

Grew up in Sah Francisco. English major at college. Work with Hugh Kenner at Santa Barnara - Kenner suggested he go to art school (he'd always drawn and painted). In New York, influenced by Johns and Cage (Duchamp at one remove). Bellamy met him in Spain, told him to come around in NY; later, met him again on street in NY, went to his studio, put him in group show with Andre and _____. Then a German dealer showed him, and Leo saw the work over there, took him on. ~~Only~~ Showed at warehouse first, in group. Only one real show with Leo. Didn't get on well with Ivan. "But Leo has been very generous", helped consistently in realizing big projects on which neither makes any money.

"Leo had been very straight with me." When a Serra piece fell and killed a workman in Minneapolis, Leo stood behind him 100%. Neither of them was sued, but they were called to testify. It was fault of the rigger, who proceeded without taking necessary steps as shown in instructions, but Serra felt bad that he hadn't been there to ensure that steps were followed.

Does Leo really like his work? Not too sure. But once he took Leo to see a new piece of his in a Brooklyn warehouse, and when he opaned the door Leo was sp excited he picked Serra up off the ground.

Serra urged Leo to take on Kelly. But he feels that Leo listens, then makes up his own mind.

Whitney show - Bob Morris protest is really for the media. Too many artists into this sort of thing now, as means to keep their names current. Who cares?

Not much innovating going on now in art. Artists mostly repeating older work. Serra himself is doing mainly large environmental works. Leo never tries to push him in other directions. He's never worked in the desert because he likes the sense of his pieces interacting with human landscape.

At presnt he's off to Paris to look at sites proppsed for the new piece that Hulten wants him to do there.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(75)

William Rubin - at MOMA, Jan. 24

In so many articles, Leo is made to look slightly sinister and devious, "when there is no one more open. I know of nobody who is less oriented toward the purely financial aspects of art dealing. Leo is always ready and willing to sacrifice his own interests to those of his artists." Says that when Stella was first to be shown in Europe, Leo waived his own commission so that there would be a better chance of sales.

"I think one can say that in general there has been a tendency on the part of certain people to demean art dealers, because, finally, there is a profit-making element there. Yet the history of modern art would have been very different if it had not been for the work of some enlightened ~~art~~ dealers. I think Leo's played that role. I think he's in the tradition of the men who have been devoted and committed to the artists they handled, to helping their art find its rightful place.

"As a collector and a museum person, I've always found the way he functioned totally admirable. To me he is a model art dealer.

"Leo picked up a leaf from Sidney, and carried it much further. Sidney was the first to treat American painters on the same level as Europeans. Leo went further..." Always felt it was necessary for his artists to establish European reputations. There was a time, ten years ago, when people here were saying Europe was dead, it wasn't worth the trouble. But Leo was less chauvinistic, and he's been proved right.

"Pop art is visibly an American product. As Pollock himself said, the problems of painting really transcend borders... But Pop is peculiarly American, and as such it appeals very much to Germans.

The gray area - dealers taking big ads in Art International, making one suppose they are buying the critics etc. "Leo has none of the cynicism that some of the big wheel dealers show in this regard. I never think of Leo as a big wheel because there's always something personal and intimate in the way he treats his artists. He's always maintained the essential thing of an art object being a feeling object, related to the person who made it and to the person who owns it -- not just a commodity. Marlborough specifically set out to transcend that idea. These are the two styles - one that treats art as though it could be handled like any other product, and the other that it is special."

Conspiracies - "about as much reality as belief in the protocols of the Elders of Zion."

"Leo has an inborn respect for artists. He really believes in the things he believes in, he's not huckstering at all. And he's right more often than not."

Re his special prices - they usually are concessions on his part so as to place the work in an important collection. Not profit motive at all. Most of the things he's accused of are for benefit of his artists.

"I have never heard even indirectly of any kind of nefarious or even questionable activity on Leo's part. That's why I'm always in wonderment over these articles. With ~~all~~ some of the real reprobates on the loose, you wonder who Leo of all people gets treated that way."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

(76)

(actually, Dulcy (pt))

Dorothy Miller - 1/20/76

"I'll never forget my first encounter with Leo. It was right after the war, in 1946 I think. Alfred Barr was in limbo, after being fired. Sweeney was in charge of the department of painting and sculpture. I was in my office at the museum, and I saw this small, brisk figure dash by my door -- it was Leo, bringing to the museum as a gift a brand new, European book about Wols, who was very much in the eye of a small public then."

Many parties at his 4th floor apartment at 4 E. 77/ Alfred and Marga Barr, Bradley Tomlin, a very good list of people. "Leo had bought a wonderful, large Gorky drawing, on wrapping paper, sized with white - he'd bought it from Ben Heller. I was deeply impressed ~~that~~ to see that drawing in that small apartment." (It was "Summation," 78" x 100").

Later, when he opened the gallery, Dorothy and Alfred went to a group show there and saw a small Johns painting, and she imagined Johns as an old, crochety, rather primitive painter.

Johns show 1958: Saturday morning, pouring rain. "I got a call from Alfred, who ~~asked~~ said how soon can you get up to Castelli's gallery? Make it fast. Alfred and I spent an hour in the back room, sometimes with Leo and sometimes just by ourselves, trying to decide what to bring before our acquisitions committee. It was not a question of just one -- we actually bought four. We were so excited we could hardly breathe. We went over them and over them. And at one point Leo asked if we would like to meet the artist. Poor Jasper had been in a tiny little room the whole time, probably overhearing everything we said. He was 27 then, extrenely shy, dressed in a sort of business suit.

"We brought four paintings before the committee -- the Green Target, a small White Numbers, the Target With Four faces, and the Flag. They were deeply impressed and interested. But they boggled at the Flag. So Philip Johnson, who was on the committee then but not yet a trustee, said, 'All right, I'll buy it and give it to the museum later on.' Which he did, years later, in honor of Alfred Barr. Philip often did that; he's been just indispensable.* In 1967, a show that we were planning for the garden wing fell through and we were wondering what to put in its place, and I said let s do a show on the 1960s. We put it together in no time flat. It was w wonderful show. At that time Philip sent us the card catalog of his whole collection, and said, Alfred, choose what you want me to give you. The Flag was among those pictures.

"The other three Johns pictures we bought out of museum funds, but then later Scull said he wanted to give the museum something, and we suggested he pay for one of the Johns', so he gave us $600 for Target With Four Faces,/ which is now listed as acquired thru the Robert Scull Fund. As Alfred used to say, we were always institutionalized beggars."

Soby bought a small White Target, Dorothy herself got a White Numbers. "It's funny, I can remember where all those things were hanging in that show. I can still see them there."

Sculls - had a hideous house in Great Neck then, all angles and no straight lines. They were terribly hospitable, giving immense dinner parties for artists and museum people. You would stand around drinking until 11 PM before dinner, then had problem of getting home. When they moved to the city their friendliness evaporated. Very bad feeling developed between Sculls and Jasper. They felt they owned him. It came about over

* G. David Thompson, Pittsburg steel magnate, often did the same - had great eye

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(78)

Bontecou

like, and he said, 'She's a little shrimp.' She lived on East 6th Street, over near Avenue A or Avenue B, and her loft was icy cold. She was a little shrimp, and she was shivering like a whippet, and there were those great big things of hers, so amazing and new. I picked out five to bring before our committee. And when we left I told Leo ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ that if he wanted to keep her he had better go right out and buy her some warm clothes and an electric heater." At the committee meeting, Philip Johnson bought one and walked out with it. Dorothy bought another, the museum bought a third.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III. B. 29

(79)

Walter Hopps - 1/25/76

Known Leo since 1958 - came to one of first shows at the gallery. In 1959, Hopps bought out the last partner of the Ferus Gallery in LA, with Kienholz. The Ferus became a cooperative, and Irving Blum was hired to run it. "I never sold paintings - I organized galleries and bought paintings." Started working with Leo, specifically to bring the people he was interested in out to show on the west coast. "I didn't take a centralized view of the art world then, and I still don't. I wanted to further the exchange between the people out there and the people here."

First show in fall 1960 was of Jasper Johns sculptures and late collages of Kurt Schwitters. "It was really a page out of Castelli's ~~book~~ shows with Janis. But the Johns objects ended up by looking non-aesthetic; ~~while the~~ ~~Schwitters~~ it was the opposute wi th the Schwitters."

"Castelli is always so open with younger colleagues. He didn't make you feel like you were just starting out -- there was no condescension. Also it was obvious that he was really interested in furthering the ~~artist~~ needs of the artists."

A whole wave of new collectors began ~~buying~~ in the early sixties to buy the new art, in California at least. There was a certain amount of resentment on the part of local artists, who saw the market being pre-emted by those from New York. But it didn't last, Hopps says.

Leo took great advantage of everything that was going on - perfect timing.

The myth of Leo the Svengali: "My own feeling is that the people he's working with become, for Leo, almost an extended family. This becomes rationalized in some people's minds as commercial promotion. Leo also likes to be responsible, to be in charge of what's going on - he's like a proud father."

"One thing very special about Leo - he has faith in the advice of his own artists." Duchamp, Ernst and Kiesler shaped the direction of Peggy Guggenheim's gallery, Barney Newman did it for Betty Parsons. This was not the case with Janis or Kootz. But Leo's great regard for Bob R. really shaped his direction. Bob really led to Jasper, who led to Judd and Morris, etc..

Ivan - something of a father-son relationship. Interesting that Ivan wouldn't use his own name when he opened a gallery. O.K. Harris- Works of Art -- the emphasis is on goods, not style. Art being handled like machine parts.

Leo's enthusiasm for Lichtenstein became most strong when Roy was entering into his most formal phase.

Dealing with Leo on the big Rauschenberg show: "He's neither volunteered nor suggested. He's there to facilitate Bob's interest in any way he can."

A change in art galleries after the war: It was no longer what they held but who they represented. Janis moved in and took deKooning and Kline away from Egan, Pollock from Parsons, Motherwell from Kootz. Leo got his business sense from Janis. Later, Kelly and Oldenburg left Janis for Leo, but he didn't woo them. The rise of Marlborough was apotheosis of the new business sense - M. would raid anybody. Not Leo s way.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(80)

Victor Ganz - lunch 1/26/76

Victor visited the gallery in late fifties and early sixties but didn't really like the work, Remembers Michael S. buzzing in his ear about it, talking a blue streak. His theory now is that Ileana was always the real brains, and that she was influenced from the start by Michael. Leo is bright and clever but Ileana has more depth and insight and intelligence. And can spot trends before anyone else -- Art Deco, photography etc.

His epiphany came at the Rauschenberg show at the Jewish Museum in 1963. It suddenly hit him, looking at Odalisk, with all its references to Bob's childhood, the forties, etc. He spent 45 minutes looking(later, he was able to buy Odalisk from Ileana). The following Tuesday he went into Leo's and asked what was available of Rauschenberg's. Bought Winter Pool, for $. Has been buying ever since - about twenty major works from Leo.

"Leo has been completely honest and decent with me always." Once or twice there's been a moment of carelessness, such as occurred over a drawing by Johns that Victor wanted, and Leo said he was keeping for himself; eventually it turned up in Leo's office, Victor asked about it, and Leo said the owner wanted to sell it back. Victor acquired it then, for twice the original price. Never any unpleasantness, though.

Victor feels that Leo's eyes really aren't that good - it's his ears. They were looking together at a Johns drawing called Studio II; and Victor said it reminded him of a late Beethoven Quartet; shortly thereafter he heard Leo describe it to another client as a late Beethoven Quartet. Last week, Victor told Leo he thought Johns' Weeping Women" was a real breakthrough picture, and he expects to hear that come back too.

Talking with Leo in the gallery, his eyes constantly go around the room, noting every arrival. Like a bee among flowers.

Bad experience with Janis. Victor bought a Gleizes, got it home and found it had been badly damaged and restored. Carried it back, explained to Harriet J. who was very upset; Sidney came in, listened to half the explanation, then walked out of the room while Victor was in mid-sentence. V. feels he knew about it all along, didn't want to hear. Has never dealt with him since.

Victor has loaned Leo money when times were tough - $20,000 one time. It's always paid back or arranged thru purchse. He s also bought from Bob -- Rebus, which Bob wanted to be at MOMA, and when it didn't go there decided to keep himself; but when he wanted to buy the place on Captiva he needed money and sold it to Victor.

Jasper's new show - Victor heard thru the grapevine that he was working on new paintings. Asked to see them, went down to the bank and saw four of the deven. His chaise was between two, and he came back at least ten times trying to decide. Now, having seen Weeping Women, he would like to trade his for that plus more dough if Newhouse doesn't buy. Would Leo have called him if he hadn't asked to see the new work? He s not sure, but probably. "Leo is still a mysterious person to me, after all these years."

There were times in the mid-sixties when you felt that if you didn't get to Leo's every day you were going to miss out on something. It was vitally important to be in the know there - you couldn't just wait for openings. But Leo is great at deciding who should get which picture, the diplomatic act.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

Leo's own collection is his only real wealth. How many of them were originally those he couldn't sell, like Target With Plaster Casts? (ask)

Leo's eye - Victor feels he probably never saw that in the big Johns painting bought by Ludwig, flashes of the complementary colors are inserted between the primary color panels, making up that sort of circularity so often found in Johns work. Victor has never heard Leo talk about painting in this sense - usually it's art world gossip. They never discuss aesthetics.

Victor talking to the director of the Sonnabend last week, Ileana called; he said she was calling about Leo, and had already called the hospital three times that morning.

Twombley - never sold a painting first four shows?

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(81)

Robert Scull -- 1/30/76

Meeting Leo - "I was kind of intimidated by that private atmosphere." Had seen Jasper's paintings in the Jewish Museum show in 1955, just before he started buying art. When Leo opened his gallery, Scull went to the first (group) show, and two weeks later he bought a Rauschenberg, "Thaw." "Leo responded a little bit to what you might call my -- not brashness, exactly. But I was never put off by Leo's European manner; I was rather attracted by that. We started a sort of strange friendship right away. Through all those years, and all I bought from him, I always felt Leo was the only true aristocrat I ever met. Leo and Dick Bellamy. They are true aristocrats of the spirit.

"I know he went into many a late spring and summer not knowing how he was going to pay his artists, I was fully aware of the fact that he was having trouble sometimes financially. It was always a great pleasure to deal with him, not only in terms of what something was worth but in terms of what he needed."

"I've seen Leo use a real aggressive attitude. He felt that the paintings should get out into the world. He never really cared about the price. He gave pictures away very cheaply sometimes. And he had a tremendous policy of making each picture he sold seem like an enormous bargain."

Leo as salesman? "He could be very cool. By the time Leo got through, you were buying. He made you feel that you wanted it and should have it. You believed in Leo. But Leo was never in it for the money. His primary purpose in getting the art sold was not profit but the expression of an artist's character.

"Other people relied on Leo to tell them which was an 'important' painting. I've heard Leo sit with customers asking him to guide them - he'd give his really honest opinion, not slanted toward the sale.

(Scull started out buying Soulages and Mathieu, English sculptors. In 1958 or 1959 he got strong message about American painting, that the real action was here. He bought his first Johns in Paris, the White Numbers from Galerie Rive Droite.)

"Legend has it that I wanted to buy out Jasper's first show." Did get most of it eventually, but only a few from show. Says he has been "totally committed" to Johns; "When I got a lump of money I'd buy another Johns."

"I didn't have any real trust in the intellectuals of the art world - Clem Greenberg and the others. For me the most attractive thing was getting into the studios, finding out what these guys were doing, having drinks with them. I never had to explain to the artists what other people always asked me to explain. Leo kept me very sharp. We used to have our lunches once a week, or once every two weeks, and he'd ask me what artist I was seeing...

"We had our ups and downs. We had some bad arguments. Sometimes I felt he wasn't playing the game with me, that he was letting important pictures get out to other collectors. Scully, the Tremaines, Philip Johnson, Ben Heller, Krausharr, Vera List, Richard Brown Baker -- we were all vying for the best things. I used to enjoy that phone call from Leo, saying you better get down to this artist's studio and see what he's doing."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Scull - cont.

Scull went into business for himself in 1954, and started buying pictures in 1957-58. Never has had a lot of money - often didn't have enough to pay for his purchases right away.

"Leo has taught me a great deal about why my relationships with artists can't be like my relationships with other people. Leo as far as I'm concerned is quite a hero. When you're passionate about an artist, you fight for him...It's the only thing I'm interested in, is going on with artists."

The Estrangement -

Controversy over the Johns Map. "When Jasper painted his first Map, we wanted one. Jap insisted that the first one go to the Modern Museum. I said, let me buy it and give it to the museum in five years. Jap said no, it had to go right now. So I said OK. I bought it for the museum. Then I heard that Freddie Weisner (?) had come to New York, gone to Jap's studio, seen the outline of another map that wasn't even painted, and bought it for the benefit of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. I was very angry. We wanted that Map. During the summer out in East Hampton, a visitor told us that Ben Heller had just bought another Map from Jasper Johns, and I just blew up. I thought it was a very unfair thing to do. Leo was in Europe, I couldn't even reach him. I had a fight with Jasper, who then started to write very unpleasant letters to us. Leo came back from Europe, and managed to persuade us to loan some of our things to Jasper's show at the Jewish Museum. And we found out that Jasper had started a Double Map for us. We were delighted, of course, but things were never quite the same. I was so into it, with such passion, I couldn't help it. Now I'm much more tolerant; a thing like that couldn't happen now.

"Leo's involvement is as deep or deeper than mine, though. Leo understood how I reacted to art. I come to art more on the basis of not really wanting to know why I like it. I don't want to analyze my reactions.

"Listen, when you discover a Jasper Johns, a Rauschenberg, when you get Ivan Karp to bring up Lichtenstein and Stella -- Leo has given us some real heavyweight discoveries. Monumental. How do you come up year after year with disdoveries like that? His intuition is as good as it ever was, but where do you come up with another Rauschenberg?

"Leo is really a superior man, with superior instincts. He's a man of real class.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(83)

John Powers - 2/2/76

Harry Abrams introduced him to Leo in 1958. Powers had been a tax lawyer, was then legal counsel to Prentice Hall, had bought some contemporary art for their new offices in Englewood NJ - Abrams, who was part of Prentice Hall, said to him why not buy good modern, and started taking him around. "Leo kind of awed me then. But the great thing about Leo is that he was always willing to talk to anyone."

Guided by Abrans, Powers had already bought a Morris Louis, a Frankenthaler, an Alfred Jensen, and one other picture. At Leo's he started to buy Johns, RR, Stella et al.

"Leo is not a pusher. I might have bought a Lichtenstein there, a picture called "Eisenhowerm" if another dealer had had it; if Sam Kootz had been selling the picture and giving me that big sales pitch I might well have bought it, because I liked it a lot. On the other hand, you feel comfortable going into Leo's. You know there's no pressure on you to buy."

Leo's continental assurance. "The first time I went in I felt he was really a supersalesman, but I soon found out that wasn't the case. It's just that words come easily to him."

Example of Leo's putting himself out: A Japanese company came to Powers, asked his help in getting out a book on contemporary art. Powers set things up for them to photograph the works in Henry's show at the Met. When the photographer arrived, they went to Leo's and spent hours in the back room, going over artists and works and getting a balanceed list of about 200 artists; then they sent the list to critics, museum people, collectors and art historians, with the request that they rate the artists on a scale from one to five. Leo took the project on wholeheartedly, spent hours and days on it. Instead of one volume it became a 12-volume publication called "Art Now" (in Japanese). Leo even got hold of collectors and museums in Europe to supply works. "I know few people who in any business who are willing to go that far to help someone out." Not just his own artists.

"When you're with Leo, Leo does more than fifty per cent of the talking."

Skiing -- Leo is advanced-intermediate, not at all cautious. He's a totally different person in Aspen, totally relaxed. "I ski a lot and I have very strong legs, so on the days I skiied with Leo I was prepared to be waiting for him a lot of the time -- but he kept right up with me."

Leo doesn't really sell paintings. "But he builds an excitement, he tells you all the new things that are happening in the gallery and in the art world" -- creates a climate in which purchasing is not difficult.

Powers once lost a large Lichtenstein that he wanted to the Guggenheim; Leo said he would get them another, but he never did. "Sometimes Leo makes promises and doesn't keep them -- he forgets sometimes."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(84)

Barbara Jakobson - lunch 1/21/76

Came to Leo's opening show on opening day in 1957. Her cousin was married to Harriet Peters (now Vicente), and she had been fascinated by the art world for years. Remembers the Castelli's long-haired dachshund, the excitement of seeing the Pollock and other things on the walls. She and Leo hit it off immediately, and have been seeing each other regularly ever since. They lunch once a week, often talk on the phone. Toiny can't stand it. It used to be rumored that she and Leo were having an affair, but never true. "Leo is very possessive," she says. "He won't ever let go of anything. I knew if I let that happen, if I ever became part of his personal scheme, it would be just awful."

She sees Leo as a perennial adolescent. Seems to have a need to let himself by tyrannized by women, but it doesn't really inhibit him. He still gets his way. He is a seducer, but never really commits himself. Even with Barbara he won't talk about his childhood and family -- there is a certain reserve. They talk about many things other than art -- novels, ideas, architecture, etc., and also about his private life. But he has never mentioned to her his Jewish background.

Leo is a continuing cultural support system. Much more than any other dealer. He serves museums, other galleries, artists, the public -- provides unlimited information about his artists and their period. His photo files are better than most museums. He has performed a great service to the entire period.

Far from being a manipulator, Leo lets himself be manipulated by everyone, principally by his artists. But he has chosen the right people to do this, and it was worked out very successfully. He is manipulated always to his own advantage and that of his artists.

There is no cut-off in Leo's enthusiasm. Most people -- dealers as well as collectors -- stop at a certain point in their openess to the new. Leo never has. Right now most dealers talk very glumly about the situation. But Leo is ebullient. He is excited about Joseph Cornell, about the fact that Michael Crichton is writing the preface to the Cornell catalog, etc. His perceptions are always fresh, and he never tires. Where Larry Rubin will do anything to avoid looking at a new artist's work, Leo will go at the slightest urging.

Ileana was a presence in the gallery -- huge and slightly forbidding. Leo still tells her everything -- if Barbara tells him a bit of gossip she knows it will get to Ileana the next day. Says it was Ileana who left him.

Leo will not accept the parental role with his artists.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III. B. 29

(85)

Dr. Berhard Brodsky - 1/26/76 (don't mention he's an analyst)

Knows Leo 18 years, met thru Ludwig Sander, when the gallery was on the 4th floor at 4 E 77. He and Ileana were trying to make a living selling their own pictures. DeKooning was furious because the one of his they were selling had been a gift. Brodsky's office then was on 78th Street, around the corner, and he would drop in several times a week. They'd talk about everything -- art, literature, politics, philosophy; Leo always terribly interested in what was going on in the world beyond art. "He has that almost adolescent quality of ~~being~~ maintaining a passionate interest in life."

Leo's "Venetian formality of manner" sometimes puts people off at first, but once beyond that there's no problem.

Ileana and Leo made the decisions jointly, he feels, but he thinks Leo had a wider spectrum of interest, was more open, "Leo is like a boy, he's as enthusiastic as a kid about art."

Leo not unduly influenced by Bob and Jap. For example, at one point they wanted him to take on Howard Kanowitz. Leo went to his studio andlooked at the work, but decided against it.

Leo very sensitive about his small stature. Wants to be and remain the number one dealer in contemporary art - but this has never vitiated or cancelled out his eye, or led to any insincere use of art. The only time he ever got into real trouble was when he removed the paint from a David Smith sculpture because a client didn't like it -- get story.

His reputation as a manipulator goes back to the charge of fixing the 1964 Biennale. But also, he may lead journalists to this conclusion, unconsciously. "There is something in Leo, he spills out and talks, he wants to please people, and he gets himself into hot water,"

"His motive is Leo Castelli, but it's also because he thinks his artists should be taken care of" (re stipends, etc). He's profligate with money in those terms."

Changes in Leo? "He's basically, absolutely unchanged in spite of his great success." Remembers going with him and Ludwig Sander to a New Years Eve party in Greenwich Village, and seeing a black man trying to push a woman under a car. Leo said, "I can't let this go on," went over and started to remonstrate with them, whereupon both turned on him and pushed him into a snowbank -- they were too drunk to inflict serious harm. Leo feels people should do the right thing.

"He never really leaves the gallery. I understand he even had a phone when he was in the intensive care unit at the hospital."

Going around Italy with Leo, looking at art and architecture. He is really knowledgable, a great expert on Mannerist painting. "Leo loves all the various styles and idiosyncracies of a period. He's very catholic in his tastes."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

(1) (88)

Leo Castelli - 1/3/76 at the gallery

Leo just back from Aspen, tanned and fit in dark blazer with silver buttons, red-and-white striped shirt, dark blue tie, grey flannels and Guccis. After Christmas closing, gallery has opened with photo show of Ralph Gibson upstairs -- the second (Hans Namuth the first). Toiny hasn't enough room downstairs, is urging him to move his operation to Soho entirely. But he hates idea of leaving the gallery...

Speaks of "that almost biblical simplicity when I started the gallery in 1957, when there were half a dozen great abstract expressionists on the scene, and a number of followers who were beginning to peter out, and thhere was a sense of something new just about to happen."

Hans Namuth comes in to wish Leo a happy new gear -- old friends. Leo quotes from Schiller, Hans says it's Goethe, they argue aimiably. Leo's silver hair brushed immaculately back, his rather bushy eyebrows behind hornrim glasses, sitting at his long white table in back room with a large red and green Ellsworth Kelly on opp. wall. He makes or takes calls, notes conversations in his spiral ring notebook log -- dozens, hundreds a day.

"I am discussing all the time with myself whether to move out of this space and give it to Toiny, to move downtown. People ask me what is the difference between my operation here and my operation downrown and I tell them there is no difference, it is the same. But often I am neither here nor there, which is awkward. I am more here than down there. Here we have an administrative center -- when there are shows to be organized, w th other galleries or with museums, that happens here, so the people usually come here. But it is not very practical because the works of art, the photograohs and all the rest are downtown. On the other hand I am sort of attached to this space. I was two years on the fourth floor of the buulding, ~~xhexex~~ which doubled as my apartment, and I have been here since 1959. The house I have actually been in since 1943. Even before I got into the army in 1943 I was operating on the fourth floor, in a very unofficial way.

"We started the gallery in 1938, and opened in Paris in the spring of 1939. The Druot Gallery -- I didn't have my name on it -- on the Place Vendome, where we showed the members of the dying Surrealist movement. Our first show was of paintings, sculptures and especially objects of all kinds done by Sureealists, and largely organized by Leonor Fini and Eugene Berman. Meret Oppenheim ~~xexxixxzixx~~ did a gilded hand mirror with a golden mane of bair around it, so you saw youself with this golden hair. That summer the war broke out. I hung around in Paris until the Germans invaded. Fortunatwly Ileana's brother-in-law had a place in Cannes, so we went there, and from there to the United States early in 1941. But this included a stay of two months in Morocco, which was free of Germans. Odd as it sounds we did a lot of tpurism -- we went to Marrakech and places like that. Finally we got passage on a Spanish ship to Cuba, and from there to New York -- we arrived March, ~~1944~~ 1941. But then I had to go back to Cuba to arrange our papers.

"As an Italian citizen I was an enemy alien, and for a while m movements were slightly restricted. After which, I got drafted, late in 1943. I was sent to Firt Bragg in South Carolina for basic training in field artillery -- because when I did my military service in Italy years before I had been in that branch. The captain there said that I was compleyely

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(2) 79

Leo at Gallery - 1/8/76

"What makes a good art center? First, there must be a museum with a good curator of contemporary art, and a director who is well disposed to what he is doing -- sometimes the two are the same person, as in Forth Worth. Then, you have to have a good, enterprising gallery, run by somebody who knows what's happening in New York. Nothing very noteworthy is being produced in the provinces. Good artists often come from the provinces, but they gravitate to New York. And third, you need at least one good collector."

San Francisco is beginning to be interesting now, mainly because of Henry Hopkins at the Museum -- he had been at Forth Worth before.

James Mayor arrived to see Leo. He is a young Englishman whose father, Fred Mayor, ran a gallery in London from 1925 until his death - handled Klee, Max Ernst, other moderns. James used to work for Parke-Bernet here, and at age 21 organized the first big auction of sixties painting (see my Talk piece). He left at the end of 1972 to go back to London and take over his father's gallery, which is now the exclusive representative in London for Rauschenberg, Rosenquist, Warhol, Lichtenstein and other Castelli artists. London, he says, has only a handful of people who collect contemporary work. "A big client to us is someone who spends $40,000 to $50,000 a year." Mayor has a stock of older works by the Castelli stable, which he acquired by purchase from collectors or other dealers, and he also shows new work that has not been seen in New York. "Leo handles the artists whom I'm most interested in."

Mayor

"I think the collecting tendency these days is toward American painting and away from European. We've had, until 1970, the most exciting twenty-five years in the history of art -- as exciting as the period of the evolution of Cubism. Going around Europe now, as I do, I find that people who would haver have dreamed of buying American paintings ten years ago -- who would have bought Soutine, or Utrillo, but never Pollock -- are now buying Kline and Johns. It's a pretty general movement."

Mayor and Leo discussed their joint booth at the Basel Art Fair this coming summer - they will do a Rosenquist show. (Leo will also have another booth, in connection with Richard Feigen, , to show Joseph Cornell). "Next to Janis is fine."

They discuss (off the record) a report Mayor's heard that a Washington dealer named Vincent Melzack is offering a group of paintings among which is Johns's "By The Sea," a very great Johns owned by Scull. Anybody can buy it, Leo says, by writing a check - the trouble is nobody can write a check for $250,000 at the moment. Next they discussed the sale of Lichtenstein's 1964 "Temple of Apollo," which Irving Blum had been stuck with for some time. Leo sold the picture for $9,000 ($8,100 with discount) in 1965 to Robert Rowan, then pres. of Pasadena Museum. A year and a half ago, at the very end of the boom in contemporary art, Irving Blum bought it from Rowan for $250,000. Irving gets carried away like this, and just has to have certain things. The wave of euphoria still gripped the market then (June 1974), and he was sure he could sell it for much more. But then the bottom fell out, and he was stuck with it. He has just sold it to Joe Pulitzer in St. Louis, and Leo ~~and Mayor~~ feels he probably got his money out of it -- maybe as much as $300,000. Pulitzer is the son of the publisher, and had been a rather conservative collector; when his wife died, though, he took up with and eventually married Emily Rauh,

just under $400,000.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

a curator at the Cincinnati Museum, and she seems to have led his taste in more adventurous channels. They were married a year ago. Now they are a great influence throughout the middle west - he buys "incredibly good contemporary things,"

St. Louis became an interesting market largely because of Pulitzer and Joe Helman, a young collector who became a dealer and who is now in New York, associated with Blum.

Chicago, oddly, doesn't have a good, up to date gallery. There is a fine museum with good director, there is the Institute of Contemporary Art, etc. But the city never did catch on to the art of the sixties.

The Eastern seabord outside NY is very dead. Nothing in Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia. Washington has had flurries, mainly because of Alice Denny who put on great Pop shows and performance activities in the sixties, but now she is inactive and nothing much goes on. Washington has its own school of artists, of course.

Leo talked more or less continually on the 'phone with a stream of callers. Alan Charlton, whose show opens downtown tomorrow, and who had just arrived in town; Brad downton, on the "hot line" phone direct to that gallery; Janie Lee in Houston (hoping she can get his $20,000 out of a client), Charles Cowles in Seattle (Leo coming out next week, and would like to talk about the situation at Artforum - "let's get all together and have a nice friendly discussion about this.")

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: III.B.29

(91)

Leo at 420 W Broadway - Friday afternoon, Jan. 9

Leo in brown plaid suit and slip-on shoes, talking to Ed de Wilde of the Stedelijk in Amsterdam. Phone calls from Richard Serra, other dealers, a Chicago collector, etc etc. Konrad Fischer visits. Lawrence Weiner (film-maker). Barbara Jakobson, who last week became first American buyer of an Alan Charlton (Barbara in slate blue down parka which she wears in preference to mink this winter; Barbara just back from St. Martins, or Soho South; Barbara the close friend of Leo whom Toiny hates). Dan Budnick shows a dye transfer photo of Jasper with Target With Plaster Casts, taken in late fifties - Leo says maybe they can show a group of them. Endless interruptions -- downtown the staff doesn't screen the calls as well as Susan does. Brad Gillaugh hanging the Charltons - large, gray paintings hung two by two with spaces between; ultra minimal.

Going uptown in a taci, I asked why he had chosen to show Charlton. "I was expecting you to ask that question. Well, it is a little difficult to explain. You see, I felt I had somewhat missed out on the second wave of minimalists, the people who came after the great pioneers Morris, Judd, and Flavin -- and of course Frank Stella, who really influenced everyone. I might have had Dorothea Rockburne and Brice Marden, but somehow I didn't get them; now of course I can't show Marden because Ellsworth Kelly hates him, ~~thinks~~ he feels Marden copied from him, although that is of course nonsense. At any rate, Sperone really discovered Charlton. His first shows were not in London at all but in Turin. Also Panza bought him very enthusiastically. When I saw his work at Sperone's two years ago I liked it very ~~much~~ much. And there was something else about it, which I can only call charisma. Certain artists can be very good but lack this quality of ~~charisma~~ charisma. The supreme examples of charismatic artists are of course Jasper Johns, Bob Rauschenberg, Roy Lichtenstein, and Andy Warhol. Charlton has it, for me at least, partly as a result of the enthusiasm of people like Sperone and Panza. It can't really be explained." (This is Charlton's first American show).

Saturday Jan. 10 - lunch at Bleiades with Walter Hopps, Sandra Starr

Hopps is acting as consultant on the Cornell show in February at Leo's, because of his great knowledge of the work and experience in showing it. (see NYT article on "American Dovecote and Shooting Gallery Corp., with Feigen and Corcoran).

Leo spoke of Alfred Barr's "epiphany" at the first Jasper Johns show - he stayed for hours, asked many questions, and then wanted to meet the artist. Jasper came over. Barr picked the Green Target, a couple of others, and wanted the Target With Plaster Casts - but worried about the green penis. He asked Leo whether it would be possible to keep the door shut on that one - rotate others in random fashion but keep fifth shut. Leo said they would have to ask the artist. Jasper was asked, if he would mind if some of the doors were kept shut -- he said he would be unhappy if the fifth one were. So Barr chose the Target with Four Faces instead. Later, Barr wanted to buy the Flag painting, but was worried about problems of patriotism -- this was still close to the McCarthy era. He got Philip Johnson to buy it instead. Johnson was not enthusiastic, but he hung it in his office and gradually came to love it. After time had passed and the painting had been published in many magazines, and there had been no trouble, Barr went to Johnson and said it was time to take back his painting. "Your painting!" said Johnson. He kept it. But when the new wing at MOMA was dedicated, Johnson gave the Flag in honor of Barr.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: TOMKINS	Series.Folder: III.B.29

Leo spoke of his own three epiphanies: The show of Rauschenberg's red paintings at Egan; his ~~own first view~~ of Jasper's paintings in the studio; his first view of Stella(s black paintings.

Barr tried hard to like Rauschenberg, told Leo he knew he was important but that he couldn't see it. Finally he asked Philip Johnson to buy something for the museum, and they got First Landing Jump - not really a great Rauschenberg. But eventually the museum will get a lot from private collectors.

Hopps' coup in getting Rauschenberg accepted as the Bicentennial artist. First he had to get agreement on idea of a living artist -- because the Bicentennial is looking forward as well as back. Then had to get over the idea of picking the greatest, which was nothing but pitfalls. RR was his choice for many reason,s among them that he was the most engaged with contemporary American life, ~~in~~ beyond art, "and also for his love of American heroes." There was considerable opposition, but Adolyn Breeskin was for RR (even tho her idea of the ideal artist is Helen Frankenthaler). The show will have about 120 works in it, some of which will not go to all the museums on list -- e.g. Charlene.

One problem is that no American museum except the Met can handle the big paintings of the sixties. None of the NY museums really tried to do anything about acquiring the greatest works of the sixties. A few outside NY did try -- Walker Art Center, Basadena when Hopps was there. "But today people come to New York expecting to see great Johnses and Rauschenbergs, and they find they have to go to Cologne or Dusseldorf." MOMA showed Johns' Dymaxion Map in the Directors' Room, and then made no effort to get it. Leo still feels it was tragic to let that painting leave the country. But the only museum with walls big enough for it was the Met, and Henry wasn't interested.

Why did Johns show at Leo's before Bob? Because Bob pushed it, insisted that Jasper, who had been very reluctant to exhibit, jump in and get started. Leo: "Bob is that way. He is the most generous human being I have ever known, the warmest and the most generous."

Johns' first show sold out except for Target With Plaster Casts and White ~~Fi~~ Numbers. Leo gave Jap first choice, and Jap chose White Numbefs. Leo bought the other for $1200 -- and feeling flush with success, paid Jasper the entire $1200 instead of taking his own $600 commission. Now it s worth about $600,000.

Hopps said the ~~appearance~~ Jan., of Johns' Target With Four Faces on the cover of ArtNews in 1958 had repercussions around the world. There was no article to go with it -- unique in magazine history? Tom Hess had come to the gallery and asked to take the painting away with him - without explanation. "Imagine - I said of course you can." He took it off in a taxi, and it appeared shortly afterward on the cover. Just that image, without text, was a signal that abstract expressionism was over and something ~~new~~ new had arrived. Shock waves around the world. Nothing the same afterward. Hopps said it was the most influential event since the death of Jackson Pollock two years before.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Last year Jasper actually went into the red with the gallery. "I told him I was rather strapped, that I would of course go on paying you but perhaps you can help me out by releasing a few paintings, so he released this new group."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	III.B.29

93

Lunch at La Goulue , 1/17/76

Discussed Jasper's opening next weekend. This is his first painting show at Leo's in eight years - since 1968. There was a drawing show in 1970, and several print shows, but no paintings. Long dry period ending, and a lot of critical attention being paid.

Leo has been setting up viewings for critics at the studio on Houston St. Joseph Masheck for Art in America. Tom Hess for New York, David Bourdon for Artforum, Leo Lerman for Vogue. Robert Hughes of Time came, and did a story that's been killed, at least for ~~this~~ next week. John Russell is coming Wednesday.

Leo in the hospital - Mt Sinai - Jan 22

Small pleasant room overlooking the snowy park, 7th floor, wind howling. Yellow walls, insipid still life. Books on his table: Northanger Abbey, The Reason Why, James Joyce's Letters. Leo seems quite subdued. Says he has had these episodes before, rarely more than once a year, but this time a team of doctors decided he must have a pacemaker put in. It shook him a little -- the usual worries, is this the beginning of the end? Will the girls still like me? Can the gallery carry on with me here?

But he has had a steady stream of visitors and phone calls. James Corcoran from LA is there when I arrive. Calls from the office, from Ellsworth Kelly, from Tom Armstrong, etc.

~~Jan 22 - hospital~~ At the end of our talk, a glass of wine - Saint-Veran, from the little refrigerator, in plastic cups.

Jan 23 - hospital

Leo sitting up in chair, in bright red dressing gown, blue and white striped shirt, neat pressed pants. "I've been working all day - I didn't even have time to read any of my books, you see." Richard Serra came by and brought a stone from Peru (Chimu Civilization, 10th to 12th century, from north wall of a palace at Chan Chan in northern Peru) - a black, ovoid stone that looks a little like one of the casts in Jasper's Target With Plaster Casts.

Calls from Bob and Ileana in Paris, from Roy in Southampton, etc etc. Visits from Diane and Paul Waldman, from two Paris auction house people who want Lichtenstein to decorate a BMW (Calder did it last year); from Barbara Heizer.

There has been intense competition for the Johns paintings, which are now all sold. Janie Lee had one picked out but Ludwig wanted that one, and Leo had promised him first choice. SI Newhouse and a Boston collector are vying for the last (of seven). Prices range from $72,000 for a smaller picture to $150,000 for "Scent," the largest, which Ludwig bought.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(12e 94)

At Jasper's Opening

Big crowd thru gallery all day - more than in years. Feeling of an event. Ludwig there - buyer of two paintings ("Scent" and "The Barber's Tree"). Victor Ganz bought "Corpse and Mirror I"; Micki Lee of Boston bought "Weeping Women" (S~~y~~ Newhouse wanted it but his terms weren't good enough); Edwin Janss Jr got the Untitled painting; and Jasper kept "Corpse and Mirror II" and "The Dutch Wives." See reviews etc.

Leo appeared from the hospital about 4:30, dressed as usual in dark flannels, blazer, soft loafers -- looking a little pale but by no means ill. Greeted everyone with usual cordiality. Jean-Christophe came in briefly to hug him, and left looking on verge of tears. After about half an hour Leo sat down in the middle (office) room and held court there. Bob Scull, in bulky sheepskin coat and Greek fisherman's hat, said heartily that's how a dealer should receive his clients, etc. Leo left about 5:45, by limousine, to go back to the hospital - not allowed to go home for dinner. He was grateful to get out at all because doctor had said first that because the weather was so cold he couldn't.

Ludwig, who bt. the big Johns untitled ptg from Whitney in which current image first appeared, by "Scent" early and requested first choice of those remaining unsold when show opened. This was "Barber's Tree," which Leo says is most accomplished of series as painting. Ludwig plans to place both on loan to Beaubourg, "to show the French who is the greatest painter in the world."

At Home, 1/31/76

The Times had a piece on the Chinese zodiac, and Leo is delighted to find that his birth year is Year of the Sheep: "Creative, elegant, shy, but deeply dedicated and warm." I am Ox: "Leader who hates failure; good parent, patient."

Phone call from Roy L. Leo tells him that Bill Rubin called, and is still "dreaming about Entablature." It seems that Rubin is terribly struck by the painting (as was Franz Meyer of the Basle Museum, but didn't have the funds - it's priced at $55,000), and asked Leo if he could find a donor. Leo said he would see what he could do. Irving Blum, a real Roy Johns expert, would like to exchange his Johns Bronze Flashlight for it, "but I certainly would not have sold the Flashlight once I had it in my hands," so that would involve too much money." "Last night, I woke up thinking about how to solve this problem. I thought maybe I should give it myself, but I would have to tell Roy that I couldn't pay him for a long time; also that perhaps he could give it once the law on tax deductible gifts by artists was reinstated." Roy preferred that Leo give it, and said he could postpone payment indefinitely.

"I really would like very much to see it there in all its splendor," Leo told Roy on the phone. Told me afterward that he would also like to place "Horse and Rider" in some great museum, such as Beaubourg. "This is a great series (Entablature), but it was not generally liked and has been somewhat neglected. If seen at a museum it will assume another value in the eyes of people reluctant to recognize its importance. The real motive is my enthusiasm for that series, altho this may be a rather costly public relations job. It would give me great pleasure because also, because of the great debt I owe to the Modern Museum. I really discovered modern art there - I discovered modern European art in America. Nobody in the world except Barr and his Museum had such a well structured view of modern art of this century. The Frendh could put the focus on their own art, especially Cubism -- not really understanding Surrealism which was foreign to them. Or German Expressionism. I saw hardly any Klee or Kandinsky in Paris. I discovered here all this new world I had not seen in Paris at all.

"I wanted to show the Museum my gratitude right at the beginning, just after the war, and I gave them a very beautiful, rare edition of a Dubuffet book that had just been published in Paris, also some Dali drawings -

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II. B. 29

very early drawings, of the forties."

Roy would like to ~~give~~ keep "Horse and Rider" himself, or else see it go to MOMA. A lady offered to give it to the Cleveland Museum but this would not satisfy him.

"Bill Rubin would also very much like to have "Bed.' I'd like him to have it, but I don't know what I'll do. A piece of Bob's of that period might be worth $180,000 today, but this one is literally priceless - 'Bed' is an historic work. Toiny will have to have the final say."

Driving to Soho, 1/31/76

"It's not a business. You just have to go on doing things, even when it makes no sense at all financially. If Rosenquist doesn't want to sell a painting for less than ten thousand dollars, and Panza offers me eight thousand, maybe I will jjust give Jim his ~~extra~~ five and taken only three myself -- to hell with them! (This re price adjusting discussion). What matters is that the paintings get out where they can be seen. And in a few years they will be in Dusseldorf, In Zurich, in Cologne - all those places where Panza is disseminating his collection, and thousands of people will see then, and maybe some will want to come and buy others.

"You cannot stay ~~liquid~~ liquid. You are dealing with things that are often rather difficult to sell, but you must keep on investing in what you believe in. And doing what is necessary, one way or another.#

Re Helman: No lawsuit. "I believe ~~there~~ in finding a way to resolve this kind of difficulty." Leo never gives up on anyone.

In the Gallery, 2/3/76 - going thru books with Nancy Friedberg

Nancy has been with Leo 13 years, longer than anyone. She says Leo has hardly ever delayed payment to an artist more than two or three days. The artists come first, others sometimes wait. "Often I've gone home at night worrying about money, wondering how we're going to pay this months's bills, but something always seems to turn up p- out of the blue sometimes. One year I remember receiving a check a Christmas and kissing it."

Leo: "It's a giant shoestring operation. Sometimes we have as much as $250,000 owed to us. ~~But~~ But often the sales are uncertain. Last February the European market saved us. Panza buys constantly, but pays slowly. One of our great windfalls last year was $500,000 from Panza at one stroke. Another great factor was Jasper's deciding to release a lot of things. These two circumstances -- tho Panza still owes us at least #250,000. And now there is the Cornell operation, which may be slow in getting under way.

Nancy: "Something else about this man -- in the summer he goes off to Europe. I'm left wondering about our dire situation, and this man will arrange to have some kind of foundation benefit for the first show of the fall season -- for which we get no money at all!"

Looking thru the books, noted first sale was Feb. 6, 1957, a painting by Jon Schueler, for $350. Second was to Richard Zeisler, a Theo Van

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(96)

Doesburg gouache, for $1800, that Leo bought in Paris as part of his program of mixing European and American ~~artists~~ masters. March 13, to Donald Peters, a Damian oil for $350 - young Rumanian painter living in Paris, another of Leo's choices of young Europeans. April 24, to Mrs. Henry Epstein, Picabia ink-on-cardboard for $1200 (probably bought in Paris for $500-600). May 15, Richard Brown Baker bought a Claude de Visieux, young French.

First Johns sale on May 15, a collage on canvas "Figure Two" to Donald Peters, for $150 (out of New Work show, May 6-25).

Leo had found a deKooning oil on paper in a Cambridge, Mass, tea shop gallery; he pounced on it for $500, sold it easily for more.

First Rauschenberg sale Jan. 8, 1958 - collage with red, $200, to Mrs. Hortense Kramen.

Johns' first show in Jan. 1958. Mrs. Tremaine bought "Tango" on last day of show, for $700 (encaustic on canvas). Other Johns buyers: see Notebook No. 2, page marked.

Total sales for 1957: $33,744.20 (about half by gallery artists, other half Leo's collection). For comparison, 1974 sales were $2,719,736.33

Total monthly stipends in 1967: $22,000 approximately
Total monthly stipends in 1975: $61,000 "

Leo: "Look at the figures for the artists, what they receive, what they owe, what they make. We do try to buy work of the artists who owe us." (see Notebook No. 2, as marked - stipends, accounts, etc.

Leo usually gives a 10% discount is requested. He gives the artist his full share, thus cheating himself.

A phone call from John Weber elicits a show of anger from Leo. It is about Flavin, who delays and delays on a piece he has been commissioned to do for the museum in Eindhoven Holland (Abbemuseum). Heiner Friedrich is making trouble, as usual, and seems to have convinced Flavin that the proce is too low. Flavin was in Holland recently, near Eindhoven, but didn't install piece. The asking price was $24,000, which was negotiated down to $17,000, making Friedrich and Flavin unhappy. And meanwhile Flavin has this enormous debt to Leo. Leo talks very fast, says it is all arranged and there can be no further discussion -- if Flavin does not go ahead and do the piece he will break his relation to him.

Gallery - 2/10/76

Ron Greenburg stops by, young man now running the St. Louis gallery that Joe Helman started. He is trying to buy for the St. Louis Museum five pieces purchased originally by Milton Fischman, the white hope who was in process of setting up a great collection in St. Louis when the stock market collapse hit him, and he soon after suffered a heart attack and died. He had wanted to give his coll. to the St Louis Museum, which has a very lively contemporary dept as result of curatorship of Emily Rauh, who subsequently married Joseph Pulitzer III and is now actively collecting with bim, having converted him to contemporary American art. Pulitzer commissioned a great Serra piece for his country house, bought Rothko and Nauman, also a Judd piece for his house. The museum's new contemporary curator, Jim Wood, is also good. Fischman had bought five big pieces, thinking he might give one or all to museum. After he died, they remained in his estate. Greenberg is trying to solve the problem. Judd, Serra, big Stella painting, Ron Davis, Robert Morris.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

KG
97

Leo on auctions

"I try to protect the price structure of my gallery. If a painting of Roy's or Bob's or Jasper's comes up at auction, I would be very disturbed if the price were lower than the gallery price. It could be very damaging. The tendency is not to push prices up, but to keep them from going below a certain level. I'm buying paintings of my artists every month. I thought it was my duty to protect those auction prices. But I soon found out that I didn't have the means to do so. I just have to hope for the best.

On New Rauschenbergs

"The Hoarfrost series should sell as high as the combines, but they are so perishable, the material is very fragile. So they will sell for about $25,000, whereas an early painting of similar quality will be worth $150,000. With Johns, the relation between early and current work is much closer. "

"Bob is a real idol in Europe, much more than here."
An immensely steady producer, always new ideas, could have two shows a year. But many series have not sold at all - "Revolvers," erotic series, Cardboards, new combines. Ludwig bought "Soundings" but other art-tech-pieces sold poorly. Hoarfrost series succ. in Europe, moderately so here. New series may be difficult to sell.

Cornell Show

That "incredible Duchampian character."

Gene Moore is installing the show. Painting walls dark brown, installing new lighting.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

Photorealism vs Conceptualism

"Ivan caught on to it right from the beginning, with Malcolm Morley and John Clem Clark and Duane Hansen. I did consider Morley, whom I thought a great pioneer. But I was not interested enough. I felt Pop art had approached this kind of idea in many interesting ways already, and this for me was a dead end -- interesting but unproductive. It seemed to me an offshoot of Pop art, not a move beyond Pop art. I was looking for forward moves in a new direction, and here I was not influenced by Bellamy - he stopped with Nauman and Serra and Sonnier, then dabbled in Tweddle and Neil Jenney. I did not go along with him any more.

"What I found more interesting were the conceptualists -- people who experiemced themselves in a new way just by using words, or in a different way like Weiner, who would just cut out a piece of plaster from the wall, and who later started working with film. Or people who did sequences of photographs, like Dibbets.

"I was interested in something fresh, some new exploration. Not thru Bellamy but thru Sperone, Panza, and others. The visual quality of Darboven's scribbly writings, those numbers based on a kind of scheme; landscape was a pretext for Cezanne, numbers are a pretext for Hanne. She's an incredibly intense human being and those numbers are an expression of it -- as you know her that becomes visible to you.

"Generally speaking, when you come across a new artist, much of your judgement should be based on your feelings about the personality of the artist. If there is no real substance to the personality, there is probably no substance to the work either. It's something you sense in the personality that gives you reassurance. It s not as detectable in someone like Judd as it is in Morris or Stella, of course...

Video

"My interest in it is as an incredibly flexible new medium that can be used by artists of all persuasions, conceptual to photorealist. What comes out depends on the artist who uses it.

Leo on languages: "It helps in one way, but I've always felt it interferes with your really knowing one language. My whole youth in a strange contradictory way was totally involved with French, English, and German writers rather than with Italians."

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	II.B.29

(99)

Reviews

"Gelid young men like James Rosenquist, Andy Warhol (in his copies of Campbell Soup ads) and Roy Lichtenstein have carried ~~xxx~~ to extremes a coarse simplification of shadow and outline that counterfeits the grossness, not of the amateur...but of the condescending illustrator."
Max Kozloff, Nation, on "pop cult" artists.

"A painting by Lichtenstein is at once ingenuous and vicious, repulsive and modish -- the latest sensation." (ibid)

"In his future, one can almost see an interesting harsh refinement." (Max Kozloff on Lichtenstein, Nation, Nov. 1964).

Brian O(Doherty in NYT on "Doubtful But Definite Triumph of the Banal":

"One of the worst artists in America has raised some of the most difficult problems in art... Mr. Lichtenstein briskly went about making a sow's ear out of a sow's ear. Vacancy is a mode of expression that apparently suits him... a deep conviction that Mr. Lichtenstein's work isn't art, or more important, isn't worthy of becoming so? ...an unworthy graft to the body of art."