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[BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1]

MEH: [GIVES IDENTIFICATION] Jane, how did you come to be at Black Mountain?

JSM: I had a brother-in-law who read about it in the Atlantic Monthly. It was Louis Adamic. I was in high school in Ogden, Utah and terribly bored and unhappy. My brother-in-law came and said, "Why don't you read about Black Mountain," so I went to the library and got the Atlantic Monthly and that was it. (LAUGHS).

MEH: Where were you living?

JSM: Ogden, Utah, where I was born.

MEH: Oh, right. Were you a Mormon?

JSM: I'm not a Mormon anymore. I was brought up a Mormon.

MEH: I think somebody had told me that. So – did your parents, how did your parents feel about your coming to Black Mountain?

JSM: They pretty much let me do whatever I wanted. I was a spoiled child (LAUGHS). I think they were kind of horrified after the first year I came home and announced I was a Communist. But they let me. They let me go through it.

MEH: Did you visit the college before you enrolled?

JSM: Yes. The summer before my last year in high school. I had a much older brother who lived in Washington, D.C. He'd invited me to come and see him, so

while I was there he said, "Well if you're interested in this place, you'd better go look at it." So he put me on the train and I went down for a weekend and was instantly seduced. (LAUGHS)

MEH: What seduced you? What about the college seduced you?

JSM: Oh, everything. The Blue Ridge Mountains. This was at Lee Hall before they moved to Lake Eden. I don't know what it was. As a matter of fact I don't remember too – I don't remember any particular people. I was only there I think for about twenty-four hours. But it was just the whole ambience of the place. Then I had to go back home and finish my last year in high school, which was very hard.

MEH: Did you have any idea what you wanted to study when you went?

JSM: Well, I thought I was going to be a poet. The first year at Black Mountain I took Bob Wunsch's writing class, which was very exciting. I took some other classes and I played a lot of poker. I wrote, I guess, some poetry, which I'm ashamed of now. Albers wasn't there. He was in Mexico that year, on a sabbatical. He came back the second year, and I went to his classes and then I became an artist. I mean, I took his classes. He would always say, "You don't think of yourself as an artist." Everybody knows that was very important.

MEH: The first year he was away – that was the year you were building the Studies Building?

JSM: Yes. That was a very exciting time.

MEH: What do you remember about (OVERTALK)

JSM: Oh, that was wonderful. After lunch, the truck would be ready outside Lee Hall. You always went to the bulletin board and saw – You had to volunteer at least three afternoons a week, which everybody did. There would be a notice on the bulletin board which crew you would be on – if you would be on the rock gathering crew, or the whatever. Then everybody piled in the back of this great big truck, which went across the valley, and then you worked very hard, all afternoon. It was really very hard physical labor and very invigorating. Then you'd come back. I remember coming back especially. It's beautiful country, and you'd come back and everybody took a shower and got dressed and went to dinner. After dinner there was a half an hour or an hour of dancing. Every night. It was a very good life (LAUGHS).

MEH: Did you have jobs that you were – Did you specialize?

JSM: Some students did. Not I. My friend Nan became a very good rock layer. She built stone walls. I was never particularly good at anything (LAUGHS). There was an awful lot to do with rocks. We had to gather rocks from the river bed and bring them back to the site. I remember Bob Bliss tried to teach me how to saw, and I wasn't very good at that. Well, this was later. This was actually the summer of the Art Institute, but it was still Work Program. I was assigned a cabbage patch, which I think Molly Gregory seeded, because I don't remember doing that. But I remember hoeing it and taking care of it. Then finally the cabbages – this was in the middle – The cabbages were ready to pick at the beginning of that Art Institute, that first one, which was a very exciting time. We picked them – I don't remember picking them, there must have been a number

of us that cut them off – and loaded a whole truckload and took them into the market in Asheville. I think I remember there was a terrible disappointment because we got so little money for it (LAUGHS).

MEH: So these were really being grown to sell, not to eat at the college.

JSM: Yes, at that time. It was obviously something of a failure. I liked hoeing the cabbages and weeding the cabbages.

MEH: Did you have any of this sort of physical labor experience growing up as a kid?

JSM: No! But the physical labor – I mean, I certainly didn't know it at the time – was very important to the rest of the – because – Then you studied at night or played poker. No, I more or less – I didn't do very much of anything until – I really worked very hard in my fifth year. I always worked for Albers' classes. But I took a literature class with Kenneth Kurtz, which was very boring. Oh – Oh, Eric Bentley's classes were marvelous. Those were very exciting.

MEH: What did you take with him?

JSM: Oh, I think it was supposedly called something like "European History," but he made it really – he used a lot of literature, plays and novels and so on, because that's really what he wanted to teach. Who else was an exciting teacher. Gosh, I was so wrapped up with Albers' classes that – But Eric, I remember, hardly waiting to go to Eric's classes.

MEH: Did you take any courses in psychology, like with Straus?

JSM: I took a philosophy class with Irwin Straus and that was sheer torture.

MEH: How was that?

JSM: I remember there were only four of us in the class, and I didn't know what he was talking about. I had to pinch myself to stay awake, because there were only four of us at the table (LAUGHS) and you couldn't possibly go to sleep. Of course, Lucian graduated under Straus.

MEH: Was Lucian part of that class, or had he already –

JSM: No, no, no. I think Ruth McNeill [O'Neill] was in that class. Paco Leon. I can't remember who the others were. Well, this was fifty, fifty-five, sixty years ago?

MEH: Did he give you reading assignments and then you came back and discussed it? How did he (OVERTALK) . .

JSM: Yes, I think that was it. I think, I <u>think</u> he was talking about Aristotle, but I'm not quite sure. What I remember most was the cigar that rolled from one side of his mouth to another (LAUGHS). It wasn't a very pleasant experience (LAUGHS).

MEH: Could you get by at Black Mountain without taking courses in areas that didn't interest you, like science?

JSM: Well, as I'm sure you know, you were given an advisor when you first got there. Everyone had their advisor and supposedly he helped arrange your courses and which ones you wanted to take and which ones he thought you should take. I think people pretty well followed that. I took a psychology class with Jack French, which I don't remember at all. I took a writing class – that was the first year – with Wunsch, which was, of course, exciting because it was somebody listening to what you'd written. Really listening. But I think those first years, what I remember most were the visitors. There were very exciting visitors.

MEH: Okay, who do you remember?

JSM: Well I remember when Henry Miller came with Abraham Rattner. I remember them coming into the Dining Hall at lunchtime, and people said who they were, et cetera. Everyone thought that Rattner was Henry Miller, because Henry Miller looked like a bank president and Rattner looked like a writer (LAUGHS). Then there were – I guess this was only at Lee Hall, maybe not at Eden. A couple of times faculty and students would come from St. Johns in Annapolis for like a weekend or a few days, and there'd be discussions. That was always very interesting. I remember May Sarton. She came and stayed for a few weeks, I think. The poet. [TELEPHONE RINGS]. She would read students' poetry and give you her critique. Who were the other ones? Then there were a whole art and music institutes, which were nothing but visitors. I was there just for the first one, which was – I've used the word "exciting" all the time. That's what it was.

MEH: We'll come back to the '44 Art Institute. The first year you were there Albers was on sabbatical, and you were building the Studies Building. Then he came back. You took his classes?

JSM: [AFFIRMATIVE]

MEH: How would you describe Albers as a teacher? Honestly.

JSM: [LAUGHS] Oh, my. Well, he was a great performer. I had never had an art teacher before. I didn't know what I was getting until years – a number of years later, let's say '70s maybe. We were in Florence and I went to the Academia della Bella Arte to a drawing class, and I was absolutely horrified because here was this huge room. There was a model up there, and there were all the people

sitting around there with their drawings. I couldn't figure out who the teacher was. There wasn't any sign of who he was. But eventually some man with a pipe would come around and draw red pencil on a drawing. This happened maybe once a week. This was so entirely completely different from the way Albers taught. That's one way I can explain it. He usually talked all the time. He would come in – His entrance was always rather theatrical. Oh, God, why should I waste your time with all this – Of course the fact that his English wasn't perfect was a great advantage, because it was very picturesque. He was terribly fair with students. I mean there was never – I never saw a sign of any sort of favoritism. Everyone was on the same level. I only saw him lose him temper once.

MEH: When was that?

JSM: And that was so shocking! (LAUGHS) Well one of the students – it was in a Werklehre class. One of the students, I guess this student had been – he was a big boy, one of the Goldschmidts, I think. Anyway, for some reason – I don't know what it was – Albers felt that he wasn't being serious, and he'd brought something in that was not serious. Albers was furious. I think, as I remember he picked up something and threw it across the room, which absolutely froze the rest of us forever (LAUGHS) because we'd never seen anything like that. But for the most part – Like – Okay, the Werklehre class, which was marvelous, everyone had to bring something each time, and they were all laid on the floor, and then you were supposed to talk about it. To get people to talk about it was quite a trick, and he managed to do that usually. But then when he talked about

it, he'd just say a little bit and then that would bring out the other people. He could find something in things that you just had never seen before. Then the other part of that Werklehre class was the work – I guess the whole class was called Work with Materials – but the other part was construction in wire and in paper. He just made the fact that you could take and score a line on a white sheet of paper and bend it so exquisite! (LAUGHS) At least that's the way I felt. Then the drawing class, that was a great class because that he divided – you must have heard all this before.

MEH: Well, go ahead.

JSM: The first part was sort of construction kind of drawing, so to speak (OVERTALK)

MEH: How would you (OVERTALK)

JSM: And the next part was what he called figure drawing, free drawing. That first part would be like we did the Bodoni alphabet, freehand, over and over and over again. For the rest of my life that has stayed with me. No rulers. No measuring. This was all by eye. I think he as much as said, "This is a training for the eye and the hand." Then taking a teacup and putting six handles on it, and then taking these letters and drawing them folded over.

MEH: How would you put six handles on a teacup?

JSM: Well, let's say you've drawn an R, and then the next step would be, say, "Pretend that you've folded that R over. What would a drawing of that folded R look like?" We did that, I remember we did that with paper too. I guess he started out very simple. You had a sheet of paper and you imagined a corner

coming down, and then another, and so forth and so on. But all this time, and during these two hours, he was talking.

MEH: During the drawing class.

JSM: He very seldom ever touch anybody's work. There were no red pencils! (LAUGHS)

MEH: What sort of – What would be the nature of his talking and his criticism?

JSM: Well let's see if I can remember. (LAUGHS) It was – Very often it was picturesque. I remember this because I was involved in it. I remember Kay What-Was-Her-Name? Faith Murray who was a good student, a good artist. Since we didn't have any money for models, and we certainly couldn't have had nude models because of our situation in North Carolina – at least that's what they said – we'd pose for each other. It was my turn to pose, and Faith Murray did a drawing of me. Albers said, "Oooooh, you make her look like a dissatisfied lady poet!" [LAUGHS] He always had – I mean that's not the most marvelous comment – but he had – One time he came into the – see Black Mountain was very relaxed, shall we say and these were sort of half-built buildings that we were in. There was always messes around, which drove him crazy. I remember one time – I think I told you this or somebody before – he came into the classroom and it hadn't been cleaned up the day before. He said, "Coming into this room is like getting into a bed of someone else that is still warm!" (LAUGHS) I've never forgotten that one.

MEH: Did he teach painting?

JSM: Oh, yes. We had a painting class with a still life, which he would arrange each time, and we painted on yellow manila paper with Prang (PH) tempera color. I mean you can't get any lower than that – which was for economy reasons. When I think back on all these things for economy reasons were very good, they were very good. They were very good. (LAUGHS)

MEH: How was that?

JSM: Because you had such limitations that you had to get through those. You didn't rely on going out and buying something new, something easier to do. I think that was a very central part of his teaching. The sheer poverty of the materials.

MEH: You had never had taken art before?

JSM: Well, I'd done some in high school. A little, but not much.

MEH: Were you really aware of the unusual nature of the art studies you were getting as opposed to a traditional curriculum, or – ?

JSM: Not at all. (LAUGHS) Not until years later.

MEH: Tell me more – [TECHNICAL INTERRUPTION]. Do you remember more about the Werklehre class?

JSM: I remember certain Werklehres.

MEH: For example?

JSM: One that Alex Reed brought in once. It was a tin can that he found on the road. It was rusted and had been dented. Just in the dent of the tin can, he'd put a brown pear. What's the name of those pears – they're brown and they look sort of leathery, and the can itself was pretty much the same color but a slightly different texture. It was just beautiful! (LAUGHS)

MEH: Now what was the purpose of doing something like that?

JSM: To make you look! To make you look! To find something – I mean all of this stuff was found, like in the garbage, on the road up to the Studies Building, in somebody else's hallway. Well, I remember – To do that you had to look. It was very – It worked on a long term basis. I remember one that I made. I had a loaf of bread in my study that had come from a bakery in Asheville. It was a loaf of rye bread. I hadn't touched it, and it had gotten moldy so it was all moldy over the top. I put this – I remember very well – put this on a piece of – I don't know if anybody knows what changeable gingham is. It's a cotton fabric that's woven with one color in the woof and one color in the weft, so it has a shimmer quality. This happened to be a piece of gingham that was green and orange. So it looked something like the mold on the rye bread. Then I had, I took little metallic dots, like sequins, and put it on that. I mean you took these – You put them together, you took it into class, you came out class, you put them in the garbage.

MEH: You did this like weekly? The matière?

JSM; Yes. Once a week.

MEH: I hear about the garbage dump. Where was that located?

JSM: Oh –

MEH: Was it the city dump or –

JSM: I don't know. But I was thinking – I remember once I got it out of the kitchen garbage. I got a stalk that bananas had been on. It was about four feet high, and just the stalk was left and all the points, and I put that together with

something. I can't remember. No, I don't know. The garbage dump – I don't remember going through the garbage dump for – I don't think people– Obviously somebody emptied the garbage somewhere.

MEH; What was your job on the Work Program?

JSM: Well, usually mine was just sort of unskilled labor. People like Bob Bliss and Claude Stoller, all the architects – they would become architects – they could do carpentry and masonry and hardwood floor and so on. Most of the time I just threw rocks or helped on the cement mixer.

MEH: But in general, after the Studies Building was built, did you have like a regular weekly assignment? Or did people assign you –

JSM: That was when I grew cabbages. A lot of people worked on the farm.

MEH: Did you work on the farm?

JSM: I remember – Well, there's a picture of me going to the farm, so I must have. There was a – You know, they had a resident farmer. Penley and his family lived there. He must have been just amazed at all these amateurs coming there. But I don't remem- – Well, actually the last year I was there, I did nothing but work in my study, because I was getting ready to graduate, which I was really surprised by. I'm sure I didn't work on the Work Program at all. I don't remember. There were always things to do. Wait a minute! There were always things to do with the various houses around there like the houses that the faculty lived in. They also built the Jalowetz cottage. I'm sure there were lots of repairs that were going on. But I don't remember that last part.

MEH: What do you think was the effect of having the Work Program?

JSM: Well, I think just the sheer physical aspect was probably very good, because you had this contrast of just physical labor and then the academic, if I may use the word – the classes. Also, it certainly went a long way to build what we always called "community spirit." I mean that was probably its greatest advantage. Because if you were working with people like that, and you knew that this was important for the college, and you were building your own building, and there wasn't enough money, ever enough money – that made for community spirit all right.

MEH: But it still didn't resolve – You still had major conflicts such as the Bentley situation (OVERTALK)

JSM: Oh, yes.

MEH: Like the Bentley situation.

JSM: Well I think probably that's always true of Utopias. Well, there was the one big schism when I was there. That was before my last year. Yeah, that was the summer before my last year, and that was devastating.

MEH: Do you think it could have been avoided in any way?

JSM: No.

MEH: No! Why not?

JSM: Because of the force of the various personalities. I've never really thought about that. I'm sure it couldn't have been avoided. Some of the faculty wanted it one way, and some of them very strongly wanted it in another way. You get that kind of strong feeling together, you're going to have problems.

MEH: What were the two ways?

JSM: Well, to put it very crudely, I was on the Albers side, the artist's side. Jalowetz, who was a very remarkable man and a marvelous teacher and the students adored him, was I think probably – I didn't know Jalowetz, but I think he was probably very disturbed by this, and he stayed on neither side, really. Then there was Eric Bentley and Fran de Graaff and Clark Foreman, who were of another mind. Albers and probably Straus who were the other ones – Albers was the most powerful one there – felt very threatened.

MEH: What did the other side want?

JSM: Well, for one thing they wanted to bring in blacks and the other side said it was too soon. Also they were – Albers was apolitical, and he found politics threatening. Of course, I happen to agree with him. How can I say it – I'm sure somebody else can explain it much better than I, like Mr. Duberman.

MEH: How do you think he felt then threatened, threatening politics? In what way did it threaten the school or – (OVERTALK)

JSM: I remember Albers once telling me – This was the last year I was there, and that was during this terr-, this incredible summer, where the Art Institute was going on, the first one. All these visitors and all this excitement about that and then underneath it, the college was fighting like cats and dogs. It was very tense. I remember Albers taking me aside and – How did he – ? He was trying to make sure that I was going to not go with the other side, I guess. But as he described it that – He said a very passionate tale about how at the Bauhaus, when politics came into it – and he was obscure about this, but he meant Moholy-Nagy – that things fell apart.

MEH: Yeah, I think it was Hans Meyer at the Bauhaus, who was Communist. Right.

JSM: And he was – Albers was very very passionate about this. I'm not very articulate about it.

MEH: No I think it's – That's clear. I think that's – I would agree with – I think he had been so traumatized by that situation.

JSM: And he didn't want to have any part of it. [TELEPHONE RINGS - INTERRUPTION]

MEH: What do you remember about the whole debate over integration?

JSM: Well, a very close friend of mine named –

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When I think about all that, it's so – It was very destructive. But then if it hadn't been that, it would have been something else. If it hadn't been the Communists, it would have been something else, I think.

MEH: You think that the issues were just – that the personalities were as important as the issues in the conflict?

JSM: What is it? All Utopias – they don't last. What is it? Why is that? This must apply to Black Mountain. Certainly there were very strong personalities that clashed with each other and that couldn't compromise. Maybe that – I don't know.

MEH: Going back to the whole issue of integration of the college, what do you remember about the nature of those discussions?

JSM: Well, one of the things that really brought that to a head was a very – a good friend of mine, named Jeanne Wacker, and Andy, who were sort of protégées of

Fran de Graaff. One spring vacation, you've probably heard this, they hitchhiked to Highlander Folk School [Fisk University] and they ended up in jail, and Ted Dreier had to go and get them out. I wasn't too aware of what was going on underneath, but I gather that that was one of the things that really started this. I think Albers' position on integration was, let us get some Orientals before we get blacks, which is sort of fudging the issue. But I remember that was, I remember him saying that once probably. But I think actually when it came down to it, they just didn't like each other.

MEH: Neither side.

JSM: Yeah. He didn't like Foreman, didn't like Bentley, Bentley didn't like Albers.

MEH: How possible was it – I mean Jeanne Wacker and Andy were friends of yours –

JSM: Her last name was Anderson, and she was called Andy.

MEH: I'm trying to think. She married Dupee but I can't think of his first name. You had friends, you know, in the Bentley camp, so to speak. You had friends in the Albers camp and were an Albers student. You liked Bentley as a teacher.

JSM: By the end of the summer, Jeanne and I – who was a friend of mine that I had brought from Utah – she found out about Black Mountain. We came the second year – weren't speaking to each other.

MEH: So you really did have to take sides.

JSM: Yeah! We really did. There were meetings, community meetings, that we were trying to keep away from the art institutes, that were very tense and very acrimonious. I remember being very upset. It was hard! But I think you learn something.

MEH: What do you think you learned?

JSM: Oh, that's a good question, isn't it. That things really aren't black and white, and if you insist on that, you're in trouble. Then also – yeah – I don't know further than that. I really don't. As an experience it was something to go through! What the exact results were, I couldn't put my finger on at the moment.

MEH: We'll come back to this as a general topic, but on a lighter note. The Summer Institute in 1944.

JSM: The first one.

MEH: What are your memories of that summer?

JSM: Oh, that was so exciting [LAUGHS]. For one thing, I learned how, for the first time I think, to listen to music because the Kolisch Quartet – they were practicing that – what was it? two months or something like that, in the Dining Hall every day for the end concert, which was to honor Schoenberg's birthday, I think it was his birthday. They had all been Schoenberg students or whatever. So this was the Schoenberg music, which I could never have listened to before, was played every day and you heard it. You heard it when you went to the Dining Room, you heard as you went to the Lodge, you heard it as you walked up to the Studies Building. It just sort of floated through the air. By the time of the final concert, it was <u>wonderful</u> to listen to because you had <u>really</u> been listening to it. That was one thing I remember specifically. What else about that? There was Ozenfant, who was something of a theatrical type.

MEH: How was that? Describe him.

JSM: Well, he looked like a tall grasshopper, and he was always on the telephone. He wasn't there very long. Oh, Charlot was very sweet. He was there that first summer, and I remember hanging – Albers had appointed me the curator, which meant that I hung any exhibit that was to go into the Dining Hall. I hung Charlot's exhibit. He came in and he looked. Then he says, "Slats, you're a very nice girl, but you have astigmatism of the eye. Everything is crooked!" [LAUGHS] But he was so gentle about it! Now who else?

MEH: How about – de Creeft was there that summer?

JSM: de Creeft.

MEH: Did you take his class?

JSM: No. But I remember listening to it or going by it or so on. Evidently he was very, everybody was very excited about him. Who else was there? Now I think I can't even remember.

MEH: Did you take Charlot's class?

JSM: I think I did, but it wasn't very interesting after Albers. I think – What was it? See, I don't even remember.

MEH: I think you took composition and drawing.

JSM: I must have taken, but I sure don't remember.

MEH: Did you participate in the murals?

JSM: No. I watched some of them being made, but I didn't – I had nothing to do with that.

MEH: How would you compare the atmosphere of the summer to the regular school year?

JSM: Well, there were so many visitors they sort of – Actually what I remember about that summer is sort of the glamour of these visitors. Agnes de Mille and her – I don't know if she brought people with her. The Cohens and their friends. There were lectures every night, and there were concerts every night. It was just a little more active. I don't think any remarkably different than usual. It was just a little busier. It was exciting to have these strangers there. But Black Mountain, for me, was always exciting. In the dead of winter – [LAUGHS] or whatever. No matter what.

MEH: Were you that aware – obviously everyone was aware that there was a war going on.

JSM: I should think they would have to be.

MEH: How were you affected by the War? How do you think the college was affected?

JSM: Well, I think that was one of the criticisms that the "other side" had for our side was that we were completely stupid about what terrible things were going on in the outside world – that we didn't care about them. In a way that was true, because I didn't know much about it. If I did, it was very subliminal because the last two years – well, I really worked the fourth year I was there and then the fifth year too. I was mostly concerned with myself! I'm sure this was disturbing to Fran de Graaff and Eric. Eric came and stayed with us here. This was, oh, a long time ago, about ten years ago. But that's a diversion. It was just so amazing to open the door and find a completely different Eric Bentley than the one I knew at Black Mountain, but that’s neither here nor there.

MEH: How was (OVERTALK AND LAUGHTER). Was he quite a bit older at that point, or – ?

JSM: Well yeah, he would have been. Like twenty years older.

MEH: I'm just curious. What was it – basically how had he changed?

JSM: Well, it was very simple. Instead of a tweed jacket that was too small for him, he wore a black satin shirt, and a medallion. So that was quite a change. He was here with Kauffman (PH) for a special program that Lucian and someone else had cooked up at Pitzer.

MEH: What do you remember about – You graduated, right?

JSM: Yes.

MEH: And then you got serious about your work. You worked hard then.

JSM: Yes, I worked hard.

MEH: What was the process of graduation like?

JSM: Well, when I think back on it, I am just dumbfounded that I could have had such luxurious experience because I think I probably went – I must have gone to Albers' Color class or maybe the Drawing class, but for the most part I got an extra study so I had another room to mess up and I had meetings with Albers. That was the last year. There were certain things that we planned, like I made a mosaic that he suggested, and I put together notebooks. I worked for my exhibition. That was really it. Then also for the orals and the writtens that would happen. The writtens happened before the examiner came down, which you know. What did I do? I remember working all the time. [LAUGHS] But to be able to – I saw Albers every day. He would come to the – . I remember once some

new – he had managed to get someone to donate money for art books for the library. There were very few books in the library, certainly art books. This new shipment of art books had arrived in the library and, oh, my, that was so appetizing! He found me in the library looking at these books. He actually ordered me to go back to my study and not to look at books! I remember being quite put out at the time. He said "Slats", you have work to do. After your work you can look at these. Not now." Now I know why he did that because there always this, " You are always sitting on your own behind. You are not copying anybody else. You are finding for yourself." I mean in little and big ways, this was a constant undercurrent. I think that's why he did that. I didn't know it at the time. Like he never showed us his paintings.

MEH: I was going to ask you – But let's go back. Who was your graduation examiner?

JSM: A guy named Vaclav Vytlacil from – was he was Brook-, is there a university at Brooklyn or something? Queens, or whatever. Who did I meet re- ? Oh, yeah, somebody that had been his student at the New School. Anyway, he was a very nice man. Very tall and very Russian. See, I was supposed to write – He wrote – He sent questions for me to answer, and I wrote two papers. He got those before he came to Black Mountain. He had never been there before. Then he came down and there was a an oral with the faculty and the examiner and Albers. Then with graduating in art, you had an exhibition. I don't remember much about it. [LAUGHS] I think maybe Vytacil may have been somewhat intimidated by Albers. I'm not sure. I had a champion in Albers because Albers

was the one that suggested that I graduate, and the rest of the faculty wasn't at all enthusiastic about that idea.

MEH: Why? Why not?

JSM: They just didn't think I was worth it, I guess. [LAUGHS] But I did! I'm glad I did.

MEH: You had said before – I was going to ask you and you raised the subject – How aware were you of what Albers was doing as an artist?

JSM: Practically nothing at all. Well, you never saw where he worked. I did the last year I was there, but that was only because I was picking up something. He did bring his paintings to class once in those four years, and it wasn't a success because – at least for him. It must have been something of a decision for him to bring in his paintings. This was before the Homage the to Square times (?). It was geometric figures on a brown and orange sort of background, as I remember. A duo. He brought them in, and we were very surprised, and then he asked us what we thought! Nobody could open their mouths, because nobody could think of anything to say. I think this was very distressing for him. So then he sort of – he needled us and did enough little needling so people started to talk about it, and we talked about it, the shape, the form, and it was all very technical talk. I'll never forget, finally he said "Doesn't anyone see any poetry?" It's funny how you remember those things so vividly. It was a little incident, and he never showed them again.

MEH: What about – How aware were you of the Bauhaus as the background to what he was doing?

JSM: Quite a bit I'm sure. Albers talked about it a lot. I remember one thing. When we were doing lettering. He liked letters with serifs, no sans serifs. That's one of the reasons we did Bodoni. He talked about lettering and alphabets and so on. He talked briefly about how – I think he designed an alphabet that was all triangles, I think triangles and – triangles, squares, and circles. He said – let's see what was his adjective, I can't remember. But essentially he said "That was a foolish business. That was all wrong." We did wrong. I remember that. The other about the Bauhaus. Oh I remember him talking about how Paul Klee – this was apropos in the painting class, which was always – that Klee always had two or three paintings at one time that he was working on, and he thought that was a good idea. I mean, he brought his up. Then also part of that was that Klee had died from licking his paintbrush, so we'd better not lick our paintbrush. [LAUGHS] Oh, there're probably others I could dredge up, but those are what I remember now.

MEH: Did you have reproductions of like Klee's work? How were you aware of –

JSM: Oh, actually what Albers – He was very much against art historians, as you may have heard. No artist history, no art history. But almost every painting class he brought in art books. He would sit with them, and I guess probably – I wish I could have remembered – he would have a special point for that day in showing this, a certain painter. But that's how I began to look at art – whether it was Monet or Rubens. He hated Rubens. He made no bones about his likes and dislikes, I can assure you. The Baroque – he had no use for the Baroque, all of which I managed to get rid of in later years. But the way he talked about

paintings, actually I ended up with something better than an art history course. I mean it was certainly not formal and it certainly wasn't chronological, but you got a real feeling for all kinds of art. He talked about Egyptian art. I remember him talking about Egyptian art. You were spellbound. He was particularly fond of Mimbres Indian pots. Well I think they're two thousand years old – with the figures in the side. He would show us pictures of that and talk about the relationships and so on. Oh, we got so much from him. See, I can start, I could go on and on and on.

MEH: How strong – You know, he loved Mexico and the Southwest and spent all of the time he could there (OVERTALK).

JSM: It was because it wasn't Europe. He wanted to leave Europe behind.

MEH: How strong was that influence at the college?

JSM: Oh, I would say practically nil, because you didn't see his stuff when he brought it back. No, I would say that it really – No noticeable influence, as far as I could tell. We knew he'd gone there, and he would talk about the colors and he talked about Mitla and Monte Alban. As a teacher, he was talking all the time, so all these things, whether it was Paul Klee or Monte Alban or the Bauhaus and the lettering and so on, this would all come in. In every class there would be lots of things to listen to. In fact, I don't remember him ever being quiet in class! Which is a great difference from the usual art school.

MEH: Did you ever leave the campus to go into Asheville or Black Mountain?

JSM: Well, John Stix had a car and Jimmy Jamieson had a car, and nobody else. I think it was – sometimes they would be generous and put up on the board: "If

anyone wants to go to Asheville on such an afternoon, I have so many spaces." I think most people went to Asheville on rare occasions, for a few hours. I think once I remember going on a bus. Yeah, we had to go to Shenan- – I can't remember where. No, to go to Asheville was a real treat. We'd go to the bakery. No, for the most part we were completely isolated there.

MEH: What do you think was the effect of this isolation on the college?

JSM: I think it was marvelous. Many people would disagree with me, but the fact that it was a real ivory tower I think added to its strength, considerably.

MEH: Because it was an ivory tower, despite the cataclysmic battles?

JSM: Yeah, maybe – I don't know whether that isolation contributed to those schisms, or not. It probably did. But like, for instance, I see the Pitzer students down here. Almost all of them have cars now. Now Claremont is sort of the boondocks. But here is Greater Los Angeles, and obviously – You go down to Pitzer on a weekend, there's nobody there. In fact you go down there, you don't see students on the campus. Well, now this is really stretching it too far. I think the fact that Black Mountain – I am strongly convinced that Black Mountain was very poor, that it was very isolated, and that I think those two were very important to its excitement and its quality.

MEH: What do you think was the impact or what difference did it make in the college, that you had the refugee teachers there?

JSM: Oh, that was a tremendous impact.

MEH: Be more specific.

JSM: Well, I mean just in the personalities in the people that came. Albers, Jalowetz, Straus, and then there were others later on. But that was sort of the beginning. Then there were ones that didn't stay very long, like Kirill Chenkin, who taught French, who was a Russian. Disappeared, went back – probably went to Russia, I guess, in the middle of the war. It lent an international stimulus. I think without those refugees, at that time, it would have been a different place. I don't think it would have been as exciting.

MEH: Was Hansgirg there when you were there?

JSM: Yes.

MEH: What do you remember about him?

JSM: Oh, he was so big and his wife was so big, and they were very amiable and very nice and they liked the students. They really I don't think knew what was going on at Black Mountain [LAUGHS]. But he was, of course, very rich and so he had a big car. He would have parti- – He'd give quiet parties for people, where we got food that we didn't get in any other place. He loaned, I don't know, half a dozen cameras to the darkroom. It was a nice little bit of luxury that he brought to the – and appreciated all the more.

MEH: What about Jalowetz? Did you take any music courses?

JSM: No, I didn't. But I had a friend who was devoted to him. I had a number of friends that were utterly devoted to him, so I heard a lot about him. I'll never forget the – I'm sure you've heard this before. For the college, it was, I think it was on a Saturday night or maybe it was on a week night, but he gave a series of – can't call them lectures, whatever it was – to show us and teach us Don

Giovanni. I'm sure you've heard about this. Anni Albers made these placards. Jalowetz would sing and play and talk about the music, and then we'd play the records or whatever it was. It was a mixture of all kinds of things. For the scenery, Anni had made – There were colored cardboards about this big that were on an easel that faced the audience, and it showed the action. Don Giovanni was a tall black triangle, a very tall, thin triangle. Leporello was a brown square with a circle on the top. Zerlina was a pink double triangle, like this. Elvira, Donna Elvira, was red. Now what was her shape? I don't remember Elvira's shape. But this was really very nice. Then you changed the placards for the scenes. Jalowetz could get people into music like – He was a marvelous man.

MEH: What do you think his role in the community was? Just a good personality?

JSM: Maybe he was peacemaker in some way. I don't know. I was so absorbed with the other side. He was a marvelous man, he was a great musician, and he fitted into Black Mountain very nicely. He brought a lot to it, Black Mountain.

MEH: Was Max Dehn there when you were there?

JSM: Yes. Let's see. I think it was my last year there. He was also a very sweet man, as I remember. I didn't have any classes. He taught mathematics, right? I think he was there after I left too. I remember what he looked like, and that he was nice.

MEH: You stayed – Where did you live?

JSM: Well, the girls lived in the Girls Lodge and then the boys in the Boys Lodge, and then we had our separate studies in the Study Building. You'd eat in the Dining Hall. That was a good arrangement.

MEH: What do you remember about meals?

JSM: Oh, they were terrible. [LAUGHS] What I remember most vividly I think were the hotdogs that were usually put out on Sunday. They were the color of a brand new brick, and who knows what was in them. Everybody was always hungry. There was a little – the college store, sort of a little closet before you went in the Dining Room, and you could buy their cigarettes. What else could you buy there? Maybe there were paper and pencils, I'm not sure. Mostly cigarettes and cookies and peanut butter and Mallomars, and pumpernickel bread that somehow or another Albers ordered from Michigan or someplace. It was this dark, heavy – like a shingle. So, we were so hungry we'd buy the pumpernickel bread and put peanut butter on it. Oh, and Nestle's cocoa. That was there. How innocent, how innocent. Come to think of it, imagine that. That was a great treat: Nestle's cocoa and a Mallomar cookie, and we were all grown up pretty much. [LAUGHS]

MEH: Did you make any trips away from the college that you remember, like to New York or –

JSM: Well, at Christmas vacation I would go to New York – I had family. Or Washington. The only time anybody made any trips, and those were important, was when they took plays to Chapel Hill which happened I think once a year.

MEH: Did you do that? Were you part of that group?

JSM: No, I – Why didn't I go? Because I did – One year I worked with – I was Frances Kuntz's assistant on all the Molière plays that we did. I did all the wigs. Who was involved in that? Yeah, I did the wigs and I helped her do the costumes. I think we did – I think they did Molière two years in a row.

MEH: What were the costumes and wigs like?

JSM: Oh, they were marvelous. [LAUGHS] Well, Frances Kuntz, have you heard about her?

MEH: Yes, but I don't really have a (OVERTALK) – I know who she was.

JSM: I wonder whatever happened to her. She was a very talented person. She was to do the costumes and the wigs and I guess the sets for the Molière plays that Wunsch was putting on. There was a shed down below South Lodge that they gave her to work in. They gave her twenty-five dollars to make the costumes for these two Molière plays, and she claims – because it was – This is an example

[END OF SIDE 2. BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, AUDIOCASSETTE 2]

MEH: Go ahead.

JSM: [LAUGHTER]

MEH: Let's go back a little bit about the Molière costumes and the twenty-five dollars in poverty.

JSM: Frances had twenty-five dollars for these two plays, and I don't know – there must have been at least six or seven characters in each play. So, fortunately Frances was a rich girl, so she bought a sprayer, automatic sprayer, and she made all the costumes out of unbleached muslin, which was of course ten cents a yard or something. She had a dress dummy, and she'd put the

costumes on there and then she'd spray it with poster paint, and that way you got marvelous color, really strong good color, and you got a certain nap to it, so it almost looked like velvet. But she used tons of poster paint. So Frances augmented the twenty-five dollars. Then the idea was the wigs had to be made out of something very cheap. I made one wig out of peanuts. I remember Mendez Marks had to wear it. It weighed almost as much as he did. We'd make these buckram skullcaps. Then I strung peanuts, and they came about down to here on him. That was the funniest wig. I don't think it was the most beautiful. The most beautiful one was wood chips that I'd picked up in the woodshop. They were the shavings, so that they were blond curls. I remember Tommy Brooks wore that. Tommy Brooks was handsome, and this made him even more handsome, and it really went [SOUND EFFECT INDICATING FULL WAVY SHAPE], very Baroque. Then a couple of the women's wigs we made out of old mops, and then these were spray-painted. Did we spray paint the peanuts? I don't remember. We didn't spray paint the woodchips. There were mops. Oh, and then there was a peasant wig for Faf Foster. That was shredded wheat. I glued them on. It came about down to here. That was quite nice. [LAUGHS]

MEH: Do you relate this – Was this something that Frances was really telling you to do, or do you relate this to –

JSM: Oh, she let me do – She let me do – Well first of all, she was the older student and she was in charge. It was her job. But she was very generous. She let me do the wigs.

MEH: Would you relate this to the matière experience, or – ?

JSM: Oh, yes. I mean, it all ties in [LAUGHS]. It was great fun to do. We worked – oh my goodness we worked fourteen hours a day. I don't know what happened to the rest of what we were supposed to do. As a matter of fact, I remember working there on a Sunday, December – When was Pearl Harbor? December 9th? Lucian and his current girlfriend – See, Lucian and I weren't connected at Black Mountain. His current girlfriend, Hope Greer, came out of the woods where they had been lying reading poetry - they had a radio I guess – and announced that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. It was a beautiful sunny day. Everybody remembers those kind of days.

MEH: How did the college respond to this?

JSM: I don't know. Of course, what it meant was the men were going, and by the time – The last year I was there, there were thirty-six students, and I think there were four men out of those students. The rest were women. It made a – It was a change at Black Mountain. If there hadn't have been a war, I wonder what would have happened. Something else would have destroyed it, because I think it <u>was</u> destroyed.

MEH: You think by the War?

JSM: By the War and by – I mean, the Black Mountain that is famous is not the Black Mountain that I knew, and it's not the Black Mountain that I'd even want to know. I must say that over these last years with various people interviewing us and so on and then talking to people about it – In the old days nobody had even heard of Black Mountain. When we were going there, no one even knew about

it. Now that's very different. Other people know about it, and they want to ask you about it, and then they always refer: "This was the place where Rauschenberg and Buckminster Fuller and Olson and the others were." This is always – first it irritated me, simply because this was a part I didn't know about, probably. But then, thinking about it, I'd think, you know, they were there a very short time. They wouldn't have been there if the others hadn't made it in the beginning. All the nameless ones are really what made, made it possible for them to come and have a great time, for that short time. I think Ted Dreier was a real hero.

MEH: I was going to ask you about three or four people, and Ted was one. Why do you think he was a real hero?

JSM: First of all, he really stayed anonymous, as the financial backing of the college all those years. I think he was really dedicated to the idea of Black Mountain, and he put his money where his heart was. He was always there. I didn't take any classes with him. I only knew him as another member of the community. But I think he was a very good force and probably held a lot together that wouldn't have been held together. Wunsch, Wunsch was a good teacher. I remember being very excited about his writing class. He was more or less destroyed I think by Bentley, because he was really crushed by that, I think. That was sad to see.

MEH: In what way do you think he was destroyed by Bentley?

JSM: Well Bentley was this brilliant young man, very bumptious and aggressive. In many ways he made fun of Wunsch. In a small place like that, that's lethal.

MEH: How did the community react?

JSM: I think he was – He really sort of denigrated him. I don't remember now, except I'm sure in the back of my head are remarks that I heard Eric make and so on and so forth. He didn't hold his – He came in to stir up trouble, and he did. In some ways that was good. But there were people that were hurt. Who were some of the others? My later years at Black Mountain were so dominated by Albers that the others sort of fade away.

MEH: Did you take any courses with Anni Albers?

JSM: Oh, yes. Yes, I did and I didn't like weaving at all. I used to wait until somebody else had strung up the loom and then I could go in and do a little bit. I remember – I thought what she did was nice. She wasn't a teacher like Albers at all. Much quieter. She was always very supportive of me. There were various occasions when that happened. But I never realized how <u>good</u> she was until I saw a show at UCLA about ten years ago – or maybe it was less. It was a one-man show traveling from the East – I don't know where – of her tapestries and her graphics, I guess you could call them. It was beautifully mounted, and oh, they were <u>so</u> beautiful! My! This is someone that's really done some really magnificent things and practically nobody knows about it. I think that's still true. She was very quiet, and very elegant.

MEH: Are there students you remember particularly? What about Mendez Marks?

JSM: Oh, he was, he was marvelous. [LAUGHS]

MEH: Describe him.

JSM: Oh, he was about this tall and very thin and sort of sallow. He was really – he was probably really ill most of the time. But that didn't manifest itself because he was very lively and very funny. He wrote skits for Saturday night that were very good. I think he wrote lyrics for some music with John Evarts did. I don't remember that. See, he was there – Was he there two years? He was there like he was a new student when I was a new student, and that's the year I remember him. A very talented fellow.

MEH: In what way? In what field?

JSM: In, well – in musical comedy, so to speak. I don't remember any serious, so-called serious stories. What did he do? Then also another person that died young, Francie Goldman, who was a strange little creature about this big. She wrote stories, and she was very talented – and sick. I think she – I don't remember now. I remember hearing about her dying. It was a long time ago. Other students? I remember the students from my first year very well, because I was so agog. Let's see, there was Mendez and Francie and Connie Spencer. I understand she now breeds dogs in New Jersey or something like that. Nan Stoller, who became my very close friend all these years. Still is. I remember de Niro, Robert de Niro's father, who looked very much like him. You've heard this before. De Niro had been sent on a scholarship. He had been a student of Hans Hofmann. He was a New Yorker. I guess de Niro's second year was my first year, so he'd already been there a year, with Albers, and he hated Albers. The difference between Hofmann and Albers was just more than he could cope with. I think it was – it wasn't even at the end of my first year – that would have

been his second – that he just gave up, and I remember he was very melodramatic. I remember buying from him. He was selling everything he had. I remember buying Proust from him. I also remember that he took his paints and threw them out of a second-story window and cursed everything and left. He was a good painter.

MEH: Yeah. That year Albers was gone.

JSM: Albers was gone that year, but there was evidently the residue from his first year was really eating – I don't know really. I didn't know him that well (OVERTALK).

MEH: Something triggered –

JSM: Lucian knew him quite well later in New York, after – before Lucian went in the army and he was working in New York.

MEH: But you graduated and you left the college.

JSM: Yes.

MEH: What did you do then?

JSM: That was a terrible moment. It was April 9th, 1945, and I think it was one of the worst moments of my life. I thought so then. I made a decision before that. I still don't understand why I did it, because Albers – he was always concerned to help his students, and before this was all over, he says, "Now, Slats I know some people in New York." He could have probably gotten me a job teaching, and I said, "I will never teach." I was wrong about that. So then he said "Well, I know some people in New York that I can send you to." I said on the spur of the mo- – "I'm not going to New York. I'm going to Los Angeles." So he says "Well, I

don't know so many people in Los Angeles," but he would do what he – He wrote a letter, letters, to Galka Scheyer, who was here, and to a guy named Antonin Hayter (PH), who was at Cal Tech. I think he was a Hungarian refugee architect, but he was at Cal Tech. And Charles Eames. I gather they were very fulsome letters, because they all saw me and so forth and so on. But if I'd gone to New York it would have been very different.

MEH: How is that?

JSM: Well, I know I would probably have worked for the Rudofskys, like Lise Kulka did. In any event, it would have been different if I had gone. But maybe it wouldn't. Who knows?

MEH: So you came to L.A.

JSM: So I came to L.A. My sister lived here.

MEH: Did any of these people give you a job?

JSM: No. Oh, but should I tell you about Galka Scheyer? This was really marvelous. Do you know who she is? She had –

MEH: Did she have a gallery at that point? What was she doing?

JSM: Oh, she just lived in this house on top of a hill in Hollywood, above everybody else, and it was a house that had been designed for her by Neutra but she didn't like various aspects, so she called in Greg Ehn (PH) to redo her bedroom and a few other things. Anyway, she told me to come so I – and she told me how to get – I went to Schwab's Drugstore on the end of the Strip, then I had to take a taxi to get up to her house. I took my portfolio and off I went. The taxi let me off, and I couldn't even see a house. It was the top of the hill and nothing!

Pretty soon I found some steps and I went down and found the front door. She didn't answer the door, it must have been her companion at the time who's then vanished. Anyway I was led through these hallways and brought out into this huge room that looked all over Los Angeles. Two walls were all glass. There was nothing in this room but a white couch, and on the couch was Galka Scheyer in leopard skin pants, masses of amber beads – huge amber beads – red hair like this, and by the side was a little glass table, which I later realized was a Duchamp. On the two walls were framed the Blue Four. She lay on the couch and I showed her my portfolio. She was *formidable*, and finally I get through and she said, "How long have you studied with Albers?" I said, "Five years." She said, "It will take you fifteen to recover." [LAUGHS] Albers had warned me. He said, "She doesn't like me, but maybe she'll do something for you." Then she kept me there all afternoon and asked me if I wanted to see some more painting. There was a big door in the wall, and opened this walk-in safe and it was all full of the Blue Four, which at time I didn't appreciate enough because I was rather – Then she said "Well, now" – at the end of the afternoon she finally said "Well, I have this young friend in the studio. He's a scenic designer. I thought maybe he could help you, but he was killed in an automobile accident last week." So she said "I will think about it." Well she showed me those and she told me how she taught, she was teaching children. She had children come to the house. She taught them with fire, and water, and this, and that. Then – I never heard from her again, but she must have been ill then

because it was less than two months after that that she died. That was one experience [LAUGHS].

MEH: And so what did you do? Did you get a job doing something?

JSM: [OVERTALK] I've never been good at getting jobs. You really want to hear all this?

MEH: I'd sort of like to know basically what you did after –

JSM: Well, I spent about eight months in a window display company making paper sculpture and being very underpaid. It was a miserable job. I walked out on that, and then I was a waitress for one summer up in Ojai. Then what did I do? Oh, I made leather belts and sandals, that I'd been taught by Rudofsky.

MEH: Oh, I was going to ask you – What do you remember about the Rudofskys at the college?

JSM: Oh, they were very amiable people. Well, amiable? He was sort of sharp. But he taught us how to make these leather sandals, which had never been done before. Everybody made sandals. I think he had just finished putting together his show that was at the – Are Clothes Modern? That the Modern Museum put on for him. I think he gave, he must have given lectures, because I remember all sorts of opinions, such as "Women should never wear heels!" and "Men had something 420 extra buttons on their clothes," and so forth and so on. Berta Rudofsky became a good friend of Lise Kulka, and she's now in her eighties. I don't know – Have you talked with her?

MEH: No. When I get back to New York that's one of the first people that that I'll call.

JSM: You've talked to Lise haven't you?

MEH: I'm not sure that I have. I need to talk to her again.

JSM: I think you should. She was a good friend of mine at Black Mountain. We're still – She lives in Oyster Bay, but they've come out a couple of times. She's married to an Italian who invented a musical typewriter. I mean a typewriter that types music. Well, anyway, I had these miserable jobs, off and on, and nothing ever – Then I got married. Then very shortly after we were married, we were offered this job, if both of us taught, at a private school in Lenox, Mass., the Windsor Mountain School. I'd always said I would never teach, but I was forced to. Lucian taught French and history, and I taught art, and I found I adore teaching.

MEH: How would you compare Windsor Mountain to Black Mountain?

JSM: Whoa! Well, first of all Windsor Mountain was a prep school. It was my kind. I don't know what it was – what they prepared people for, because it was kind of an insane asylum. It was owned and run by a Dr. and Dr. Bondi, man and wife. They were charming Austrians who'd started this private school in the Berkshires. I'd say ninety percent – this may be true of all these schools – ninety percent were from divorced homes. They were children that were (INAUDIBLE). They ranged in age from – well supposedly it was high school. Junior high and high school. The oldest one could have been eighteen. They took in some Jewish refugees – there were little boys. They were twelve. It was in a beautiful place. It was right next to Tanglewood. It was an old estate that had been owned by Rockefeller's banker, and I was given an art studio out in the woods that had been the former tea house, which was a little marble

building, hexagonal, with a domed ceiling. That was out in the woods, and I was given complete free rein to teach any way I wanted. I loved teaching. But the school was, it was crazy. It was no good. Lucian was very upset about it. Our friends the Stollers, they were living in Cambridge and I guess Claude was still in architecture school at Harvard and Nan had just graduated from Radcliffe. They were living in Cambridge and they wanted to go to Italy. We got together and that's – and we were going to quit Windsor Mountain anyway. We went to Italy for a year on the GI Bill.

MEH: You had come to L.A. Had Lucian come back to L.A. after service? Is that how you –

JSM: Yeah. He came – When the War ended – Yeah, when the War ended he came back. His family was in Beverly Hills. We got together and to our great surprise, finally got married.

MEH: And so you went with the Stollers to Europe.

JSM: We were a year in Europe and then we came back and Lucian was writing his M.A. at UCLA, and so we came back to Los Angeles. It was almost by accident – we were living on the GI Bill, which was $115 a month, so it was beholden that I should earn some money. Fortunately – well, Lise Kulka's mother was an analyst, a children's analyst in Brentwood. She's the one that really started it, that I should take some of her patients as students, and I ended up – Then there was another therapist that sent me, so I ended up, I guess it was over about three years, two or three years, that I had art classes in our one-room apartment with these problem children. I really loved that. I liked that a lot. I'd

have sometimes – There was one I had only alone, and then others – never more than four or five kids at a time. I liked that a lot, to my great surprise.

MEH: And then you became a mother yourself.

JSM: And then I became a mother myself.

MEH: When did you start doing your stained glass work?

JSM: Oh, not for ever so long. I remember I always worked – I always tried to work after the kids were in bed. That was not easy being the mother of two. That was mostly in Oregon, where Lucian was teaching. I guess the kids were in school by that time. Claude Stoller, who had gone into – who was a partner of Lucian's brother who was an architect in San Francisco. They were doing quite well in San Francisco and they had a synagogue that they designed and they needed stained glass. I'd never even considered stained glass. All these other years – I'd done silkscreening, painting, printmaking. I'd done a lot of not bad graphic design for the press at University of Oregon. They didn't have anybody else around so they let me do it. I did all that at night, et cetera. It was never a full-time. Then when they asked me to do these windows, how could I resist? So I went to San Francisco and I visited the studio. No, first I did the designs. It was nothing less than the twelve tribes of Israel, which Chagall had done not too long before that, in Jerusalem. There were six windows on one side of the big doors and six on the other, and they were eleven inches wide and twelve feet tall. Each one of those – eleven inches wide by twelve feet, not twelve feet, it was less – had to have one of the tribes of Israel. Oh dear, I go on and on. Anyway, to make a long story short I made the designs in my studio, in my

studio in Eugene, and I thought, "Well, this is stained glass so I'll do it in colored paper." I had a lot of trouble finding out what to use for those – over the symbols for these twelve tribes. No one helped me with that, including the local rabbi, but I finally found it other places. Anyway, I did the designs and I took them down to the Cummings (PH) Studio, at that time. This was a long time ago. There were only about maybe two or three stained glass studios in the country, and Cummings was the third generation one. The young man, the young son that had just taken over wanted to do something more modern and more experimental, so he was willing to take these collages of mine and transform them into glass. Well, I learned a lot there because a collage doesn't have a black lead line around it. That red is very different when the black line goes around. I was taken – I wasn't allowed to touch anything. I could pick the color of the glass, and then they cut it from my pattern, and then they tried to – all this goes on all day – they tried to anneal it. No, first they leaded one up, and I realized "My God!" It destroyed <u>everything</u>. The black line around every one of the shapes had destroyed all these close color relationships. So they said, "Oh don't worry. We will fuse them, without the lead." They fused them, and it took, this took a couple of weeks and all sorts of experiments, and the things – they either burst in the oven, or when they came out of the oven they looked like old caramel candy. So that was all finding – Finally they did them with epoxy glue and no lines. But that was my first stained glass. But by that time I was really – I really wanted to do stained glass. They told me "Oh, you have to apprentice fifteen years." They did let me take some scraps out of the bin where they

threw away big pieces. They sold me a couple of strips of lead. I went back to Eugene, and it was karma or something because the new head of the architecture department had just arrived, and his wife, Alice Linden, had just come from a school in Paris where they trained people to repair stained glass. So she said "That's ridiculous. I'll show you in an afternoon, and she did." From that time on, that's the only thing I've really – that's what I really do. That was a long time ago.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]