

Interviewee: MARY PARKS WASHINGTON
Interviewer: MARY EMMA HARRIS
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[BEGINNING TAPE]

MEH: [GIVES IDENTIFICATION] Mary, how is it you came to be at Black Mountain?

MPW: I was a senior at Spelman College in Atlanta. I was taking art from Hale Woodruff. He discussed with me about a scholarship through the Rosenwald Fund, so I received that scholarship. So, after I finished in June, I went to Black Mountain for that summer.

MEH: This was the summer of 1946.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] '46.

MEH: Did you have any qualms about going to this school?

MPW: No, I didn't. I'd never heard of the school before. But Mr. Woodruff told me that it was a "casual school." You wore blue jeans. I had to buy a pair. I'd never had—In fact, I didn't wear pants. So I thought that was interesting. I think he said on Saturdays you would dress, long dress, or something like that. That's really all I knew, because I'd never been to North Carolina before. I came from a segregated situation in Atlanta, and Spelman was an all-woman's school, so it was quite different. It was a very strict school. We didn't have too many privileges. So, going to a school like Black Mountain was quite different.

MEH: You realized that Black Mountain, though, was a white school, basically.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE].

MEH: But you felt comfortable? How did you travel to Black Mountain, physically, the first time?

MPW: It was by train. But I cannot remember how I left and just where I ended up. That is strictly [LAUGHS] gone. I don't remember.

MEH: But you traveled by yourself?

MPW: Yes, I was by myself. [AFFIRMATIVE]

MEH: Do you remember your first impressions of the college?

MPW: What I liked very much was I had my own studio. We stayed in a loft. I think there were about eight girls in the dormitory. It was very rustic. I liked it. My grandmother lived out in the country, so I appreciated the surroundings. I don't know, for some reason I didn't feel any different. That was really my exposure with non-black, but it didn't seem to bother me. I certainly knew the situation in town. I think I did go one time, by bus. Met some interesting people.

MEH: Let's go back sort of to the living situation there. You lived—you had a room in the dormitory with several girls. Do you remember who some of the others were?

MPW: Well, Ruth Asawa was one. I have continued to be friends of Ruth. Ora Williams was from Clark University. Now that's in Atlanta. I can't remember if I knew she had received a scholarship or not. See, at the time, Atlanta University was over Morehouse, Clark College and Morris Brown. There was

no art department at Clark, so Ora would come over to Spelman. So I knew of her, but I didn't know her that well. But we were in the same room. I can't recall some of the other people. I think there were about four more other people.

MEH: But then you had your own little study in the Studies Building.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]

MEH: Can you describe that?

MPW: You mean the study? It was a long building, and it was built by the students and faculty back—I've seen pictures of the skeleton of that building. It was a long hall. I think the rooms were on the side. I don't believe the hall was in the middle. I can't quite remember. But it was a room about maybe ten by ten, as I can recall. It was long enough you could have a pallet in there if you wanted to. There was a desk and a place you could work. I thought that was very interesting. Usually you might have a room—you have a roommate or you're by yourself, but you didn't have to share a studio. So I liked that.

MEH: With whom did you take classes?

MPW: From Varda. Varda was Greek and a very fascinating person, I thought. He was very colorful, and always very vocal. It seems as though the faculty were shocked by Varda, Black Mountain being sort of a "way-out school"—I use that word—it seems like they couldn't quite understand Varda. That was my impression. Because I liked him. I thought he was interesting. I also took a class from Albers. I took design and color from Albers. So, really two courses.

Then sometimes there was a short term like photography and sculpture. I can't recall the sculptor's name. She was only there a week.

MEH: Yes, Concetta Scaravaglione.

MPW: Yes, Concetta. That's right. [AFFIRMATIVE] Then we did a little dancing. Gwendolyn Lawrence would teach dancing. She was there with her husband, Jacob, and that was my first-time meeting Jacob. In fact, I didn't know too much about him.

MEH: Okay, so let's go back and start through—What was Varda's class like? How did he conduct it?

MPW: It was a class in collage. I guess I was impressed by it because I'm doing collages now. I'd never done one before—before I got in his class. Very colorful. You'd just put things together. It's getting so long ago now, but it was an interesting class. We would find fabric, pieces of colorful paper. In fact, I still have a piece now. I took several notes from his class.

MEH: What about Albers? What do you remember about his class?

MPW: Albers' class was a little stricter, which I found very interesting in that setting. We would sit on the floor. In fact, it was very casual in both of the classes. But I always thought he was very stern, and, well, he really had command of the class. But I told this story before, that we had to do something called *matière*—everything is the same. I went to the kitchen and borrowed an egg. I beat up an egg white. Then I had white paper, salt. Let me see. Did I have soda? Everything was white. So, you'd put your display down, and he would walk with a stick and he'd say "Yes," or just ignore it. So, he passed it. I spent a lot

of time on that project. So, I called him back, and he said "Yes, yes," so I took that to be it was okay—[LAUGHS]

MEH: Did you bring your own art supplies? Were they supplied at the school?

MPW: I think I brought a few. Because I don't remember them furnishing anything, so I must have taken something. As I said before, that part I really don't remember, just how I got there and what I had. [INTERRUPTION IN TAPING] Well, it's so small [REFERRING TO CATALOGUE].

MEH: You mean the—The images, or you mean the reproduction?

MPW: [OVERTALK] Well, the book. I was sorry the book was so small. I've had people who were interested, so I had some more made.

MEH: Some more printed. [INTERRUPTION IN TAPING] Okay. Now, you're hooked up. I'm hooked up. We'll just continue. So do you have other particular memories of the college? Anecdotes? Stories?

MPW: Well, let's see. When I first came—No, no, I was walking somewhere and a woman was in a car, and she asked directions. I can't recall where. So, I gave her directions. I later saw her in the Dining Room. I went and sat down, and she hopped up. Then Ora came. Ora's black, and she sat down at the other table where she had moved. She hopped up again [LAUGHS]. Well, she was a woman from somewhere in the South, and she had come—I think she was a nurse—to take care of someone. But she just couldn't visualize sitting with—because we were called Negroes then. That was one incident. Then there was a young lady, a very beautiful young girl, very personable. She blended very well, but her father I think was mayor or governor of Tennessee.

He had a big position. He found out there was some Negroes there, and so she had to go home. She was only there briefly. Well, I think someone came from town. Evidently they told them in the city that there were some blacks there. Someone said, "Yes, there they are. They're out here." But that was the only thing I heard.

MEH: Did you ever try going into Asheville?

MPW: Went in one time.

MEH: With other students? Or alone.

MPW: Yes. [AFFIRMATIVE] Because—I'm trying to think of the girl. Josephine Levine. I wonder what happened to her. She was from New York. She sat in front, and I told her I had to move to the back. She wanted to move to the back. I said, "No, you'd better stay in the front.

MEH: This is the bus.

MPW: Yeah, the bus, because that was the time when you traveled, Negroes would go to the back. You could get on the front, but you had to go to the back.

MEH: Did you all do that? Did you go to the back and she sat at the front?

MPW: Yeah. I think I only went one time. She was sort of upset about it, but I knew the rules. That was the same thing in Atlanta. That's what the Civil Rights was all about at the time in Birmingham. I think—I don't recall going but one time. In fact, when I went back to Black Mountain, I really got a chance to see the city that I didn't see before. It was only for curiosity, to just to see what a town was about, because everything was out at the college. I can't recall any real incidents on the campus. But something puzzled me about Albers. He had

Ora and I and some faculty members at his home. We were just chatting, but the day before he had had something in his home, and he invited all the students. I don't know why he didn't invite us. [AFFIRMATIVE]

MEH: That is curious.

MPW: Yeah. Yeah. He was sort of a—

MEH: Did he invite all of his students? Or—

MPW: All of the students.

MEH: For the entire summer?

MPW: I don't know how many. There was a gathering at his home. Then he had another gathering with some faculty members—there weren't a lot of them—and just Ora and myself. I don't know if Ora and I discussed that or not. But I just thought that was strange.

MEH: It's hard to know what was going on in his mind—whether he thought this was really honoring you, to have you with the faculty, or—

MPW: Well, looking back—What's the fellow's name who wrote about Black Mountain? See, I've learned more about Black Mountain after I returned.

MEH: Martin Duberman?

MPW: Martin Duberman in his book mentioned that Albers was against blacks coming to Black Mountain. He wasn't by himself.

MEH: I don't think that's because he was prejudiced. I think it's because they were just concerned that [OVERTALK]—?

MPW: Well, it was a concern about the school. I'm not saying prejudice or bias, but he, well, by being—Now he wasn't the director at the time. But anyway, they just mention him as one of the people.

MEH: Yeah, what's curious is to know just why he did that. It's hard to know.

MPW: Yeah. Like I said, I wasn't too concerned about different things. I realized many things, but I had this feeling—I had already finished college. I'd received my A.B., so it was sort of like a vacation, so it wasn't as if things had to be just right. I wasn't going back. It was a little different. But I know one day he came—I always thought he was a little harsh. I didn't expect him to treat me any different, but I kind of felt it was different in another way. Then I thought to myself, "I don't know, maybe I'm—he feels that I'm arrogant," because a little fellow told me once that he thought I was. One of the students would come back and tell me things. I think they thought I was influencing Ora. I wish I could think of his name, but I can't. But anyway, I said, "Well, I think I'll give him what I think he wants," so I was going back to Atlanta. My mother told me that I had a job to teach in elementary school. See, I thought I was going to Chicago University, but I couldn't get in. In the meantime I wasn't doing anything else. So I think she felt that I wasn't going to sit at home, so she sort of—She knew the principal. So, when I got home I had a job. I was telling him that I don't know if I was prepared, and as seeing—this was the first time that he had any interest—and he was very sympathetic. So, I thought, at the time—I said perhaps he had a feeling—I can't quite explain it, but his whole

demeanor changed toward me, which I didn't feel before. Now, [LAUGHS]
he's not here to explain it, but that's the feeling I got.

MEH: Yeah. That's very possible.

MPW: That I had to be maybe a little humble for him. Oh, we had a conversation.

MEH: A lot of people had that feeling.

MPW: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Well, that's the feeling I got.

MEH: I think that may be the case.

MPW: I think that was his way. His make-up, deep down, perhaps he wasn't like that. But I know in class, people seemed to be very frightened. It was tense. That wasn't a tense place. I was wondering, I'd say here it is—now I hadn't moved to California where the happy people were, that thing that happened in the '70s. But this is what I thought the atmosphere of Black Mountain should be. But then reading back, Duberman's book again, I don't think people were as free as they thought they were. This is my opinion. There was a lot of creativity, but freedom and really being at ease, I really don't think that happened.

MEH: I think you're right. I think that it—sometimes you're less free in an institution that has an ideology and a really strong belief in something, even if it's freedom, than you are in one that doesn't. There were a lot—Black Mountain was not a utopia. There were a lot of conflicts and different people. The refugees and you had all different types of students and faculty who often couldn't get along with one another. It was a very flawed community.

MPW: But then you wonder how the situation in San Francisco, with the love children—Now, we don't know the background of that, but it seems like the same people gathered together to do the same things. I think, when I moved to California, I kind of reflected back on Black Mountain, the way it was—it seemed like that would have been the way it should have been. See, I always felt Varda [LAUGHS] was a typical Black Mountaineer that should have been—the talk you hear about, the freedom of Black Mountain. I really didn't see the freedom, as I've heard about. The real freedom that I would think about, of expression, just the general thing. But it was a very interesting school and I enjoyed it. Much different from Spelman. But I still liked Spelman [LAUGHS]. They were just different, but it was an interesting thing to be put in that situation.

MEH: I think that—Go ahead.

MPW: Oh, I was just going to say, my family would go up to Varda's ferry boat in Sausalito. Once he had a big party where he had a lamb. The lamb was carried on a big stick by two men. It was a whole procession, and women were requested not to wear black. You had to have a flower in your hair. Varda was a very colorful person. To me, that would be what you heard of Black Mountain, just sort of creative. I know a lot of people there were very creative, but the atmosphere, I really didn't feel, was what people think it was. Black Mountain wasn't so free a spirit. I got to know Jacob Lawrence. We remain in contact. That was a nice experience. I think he came to spend the weekend twice with my family. Then I've been in touch with Ruth, and Varda

before he passed. I'm sure there were others in the area, but I didn't know about.

MPW: If you think of the fact that was just one summer in your life, that is a significant list of people to have had in your life for a long time.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] Well, you know, I was just telling Ora—We say we were the most infamous people, because everybody had something. I think one girl's father was a famous writer. I imagine— I don't know if many were from well-to-do families. I know all of them weren't. But if they weren't, perhaps they came from an interesting background.

MEH: It was a very mixed bag.

MPW: Yeah, various.

MEH: There were people who just came from ordinary backgrounds and there were people from prominent families. Rich and poor together.

MPW: Yeah. That's true.

MEH: Any other particular memories or reflections? I think your reflections are very valid, in terms of—I think one conflict you run into is like—if Varda had been responsible for an institution, he would have been a different person. If he had had the responsibility of running an institution like Black Mountain, he would have been a different person, and he never would have run an institution.

MPW: That's right. I don't think perhaps he could have been as free. When you run something, you're different.

MEH: It changes you.

MPW: That's true.

MEH: The people like Albers and Dreier and all those that felt a responsibility that someone there for two months didn't feel.

MPW: That's very true.

MEH: Did you ever go for a ride in Varda's car?

MPW: I think down the hill, just that one time. But he used to go into town quite often. In fact, I'm sure people turned their heads to look, because as I recall it was painted purple. There were different colors and no top. When Varda came to visit me, on the way to L.A., he spent the night. I went with him to see someone in Saratoga. Varda would trade cars for a painting. This car didn't have brakes. We were going down a hill. It wasn't too steep. But no brakes. [LAUGHS] But that's just the way he was. Yeah. I enjoyed knowing him. I certainly enjoyed knowing Ruth, too.

MEH: What was Ruth like then?

MPW: Very quiet, but she was always busy, always kind of not walking, but sort of running. Like I said, she was into everything. She was doing her art and then always working around the place. Very busy. She was just kind of serious. I also met an interesting person named Leo Amino. Have you ever heard of Leo?

MEH: Amino?

MPW: Yeah.

MEH: He taught sculpture also.

MPW: Oh. Yeah. I received one letter from him. In fact, I took a picture of him and I sent it to him. We were sitting down talking one day and he told about the

internment of Japanese during the Second World War. He was telling me they didn't have their rights during that time. When I moved to California, I found out more about it because many of the Japanese citizens were forced to leave California and put in internment camps. Then I came upon an announcement informing the Japanese that they would have to move in 48 hours. I did a collage of that subject. I think I'm going to donate that painting.

MEH: Did you at all identify with Ruth? Did you ever discuss her internment with you, or the prejudice in the South against what were then Negroes?

MPW: Yes. She was she the first Japanese I ever met. You know, the funniest thing, Ruth won't remember that. She asked me if I was Japanese! [LAUGHS] I thought that was so funny. Later I was in Japan visiting my brother and sister-in-law, to go on the Air Force base I had to get an ID. The Japanese that gave me the pass put down as I.D. Japanese. I kept that ID for a long time here: Japanese. [LAUGHS]

MEH: That's interesting!

MPW: I went on my first trip alone. I always wanted to travel. I had an aunt in McGee, Arkansas, of all places. It seems like the internment was near McGee, Arkansas, because she was familiar with McGee..

MEH: I know from other students that Ruth would—this was right after the War—sometimes to strangers say that she was Chinese.

MPW: She would say she's Chinese?

MEH: Yeah, because prejudice against Japanese was so great. [OVERTALK]

MPW: Oh, I'm sure. She probably did, because that was right after the War.

MEH: Yeah, some people were being critical. I said, "No. She had learned survival techniques. Do you have other memories or reflections on the college, in particular?"

MPW: Well, I think I mentioned the evening dances. I loved dancing. Sitting on the porch. When I went back for the reunion, it looked a little different. I pictured a big screen porch. That's where we'd sit to have our meals. Often, I think maybe there were four or six people at the table. Then they would get in different conversations and everybody was smoking. [LAUGHS] I never did smoke. But that was one time I wished I smoked. Because everybody else was. Then sometimes when you were not in the conversation, you could always puff the cigarette. I distinctly remember that some people from the village of Black Mountain used to come out to some of the functions. I can't recall exactly what. I thought it was interesting that students were building on the campus. I said when I went back home, I would try and send more nails because they didn't have enough nails. At the time it was hard to find nails anywhere. I thought it was very interesting that people were really into action. I'd never been around that before.

MEH: You mean people doing things.

MPW: I mean actually constructing and building.

MEH: What did your father do?

MPW: He was a shoe rebuilder. I say "rebuilder," because he could make shoes. If you had something wrong with your feet. I used to work in his shop every

Saturday. I started at eleven years old and I worked until I finished college—every Saturday.

MEH: On shoes?

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] Cashier at his shop. On Saturdays.

MEH: Were you an only child?

MPW: No. There were four of us. Four girls. I was the oldest.

MEH: Your parents didn't have any qualms about having you go off to North Carolina to this school?

MPW: No. We never talked about—We were in a certain segregated environment, as if you were looking through cellophane. You couldn't touch outside, but you could punch a finger. I don't ever recall my parents talking about prejudice, really. You might hear stories sometimes. But that wasn't our concern. We were in our own little world, and that was the world. [LAUGHS] Yeah. In fact, I can't recall resenting a policeman. You could read about things, but—I knew the policeman wasn't for us, because he never came around to protect the community. I don't recall having any harsh feelings toward a policeman.

MEH: What did you do when you left the college?

MPW: When I left Black Mountain, I got this job teaching. I taught a year—second grade. Then the next year I went to the high school to teach art. That's what I wanted to do anyway. Then I got engaged. I got married in '47. We stayed in Atlanta, and then went to Massachusetts. My husband was a Tuskegee airman pilot. Later he went into psychiatric social work, so that's what he did. Fort Devins, Massachusetts. So we stayed there two years and then we went

to central New York, at Sampson Air Force base. From there we went to Japan and stayed a year, then came to California. I looked up Ruth. It was sort of interesting because usually people won't give addresses to people. But I went to the museum and asked if they knew Ruth Asawa. That's where I got her address and contacted her. I think she told me how to get in touch with Varda.

MEH: Now all of this time—You had two children?

MPW: Two children. A son and a daughter.

MEH: So, the whole time you were rearing kids, were you able to do your own art work during that time?

MPW: You mean when I arrived in California?

MEH: Yeah.

MPW: I've always done art. Yes. [AFFIRMATIVE] I guess all my life, really. Right now other things [LAUGHS] are interfering. Well, I'm always going on trips and I volunteer lots. But I work better under pressure. When I did my show in Atlanta, well, I really had to buckle down and work.

MEH: How did this autobiographical form of collage come about?

MPW: You mean with me? I guess I got the seed from Varda. Because in my four years at Spelman I never did a collage. I went to the Art Students League in New York and never did a collage. But then another thing. I guess, there was a seed planted at Black Mountain. You know, I said I didn't pull weeds— labor [LAUGHS]. But when I moved to California, I pulled weeds, did cement work, and everything else. So I think I sort of admired and was impressed by what I

saw. I do things that would frighten people, because when you tear up something, you might not be able to get it back. But eventually I would. My daughter used to tease me. I do a lot of things with white glue—you know, Elmer's Glue [LAUGHS] and paper. Patch anything with that, you know.

MEH: Do you think Black Mountain had any real effect on you? The summer there? In terms of your art work, or the direction your life took or anything of that effect?

MPW: I think anywhere you go it affects you. If you use the word "affect", it was positive. It wasn't negative. It was an experience. It was a different experience for me, because it was in a different world.

MEH: As you look back, do you think—feel—that you were, through doing this, sort of part of the Civil Rights Movement toward change?

MPW: At that time I wasn't in civil rights. [LAUGHS]. No, no that never—not to be the first. I later found out there were other black students, but that didn't cross my mind. It was just going somewhere new. I was always adventurous—and just willing to go there. It never bothered me that there would just be two blacks at Black Mountain. You know, you see the difference, but I don't think it ever bothered me. But I look back at Black Mountain—you think about something and you correlate it with something that has happened. At the reunions, they were always interesting. My first reunion was in San Francisco. But I'll tell you an interesting thing. I guess I really learned about. I guess he didn't have everything—Duberman. Well, when I went to San Francisco, now I did think this: I say everybody would remember me, because everybody knew me at

Black Mountain because I stood out as two of the black students. No one remembered me. Not one person. Then I said to myself, "No one should have worried about a black coming to Black Mountain, because it was very insignificant." I didn't make an impression by being black, to be remembered. I thought that was very interesting, because I could recognize some people. They had changed. In fact I went up and spoke to some, but at first they didn't know who I was. They didn't seem to remember, "Oh, that's the black person who was there!" So that's really interesting to think about.

MEH: I think for, you know, for the total school, it was a big decision to have— and actually two years earlier they had made the decision, because they were concerned about a lot of things. It was sort of typical of the sort of things I heard as I was growing up—when integration was being discussed. Well, will there be attacks? Will the school have to close? Will the black students be safe here? Whatever. So for the administration, the school, these were sort of heavy decisions. But for the students, you were just another student. I mean they knew you were black and most people were white, but—I think typically the sort of people you got to know were people you just had something in common with as a human being—like Ruth and Elaine—just as you would at any school. At Spelman there were people you felt more at home with and comfortable with, I'm sure.

MPW: Yeah. That's true. Regardless. You have your own likes and dislike. But I just still thought that, because there was a Chinese girl there, I can't recall her

name, and no one mentions her. Do you recall? Her picture's in your book.

She's in a tree.

MEH: I know who you're talking about, but I don't, I can't remember her name.

MPW: Yeah. A very beautiful person. Well, I don't know. I guess maybe Ruth interacted. She was in contact with a lot of people, and then she was at Black Mountain longer, before the summer. But there was a fellow from Hawaii. Now I don't know if they remembered him or not, but I just thought that was kind of interesting, just because I was different. Not as a person, but obviously brown. [LAUGHS]

MEH: Right.

MPW: I met some interesting people at the reunion. A few were there when I was there. But I guess that's so long ago, and as years go by it fades.

MEH: It's almost sixty years.

MPW: Yeah. But I have kept everything—For some reason I kept a scrapbook.

MEH: Let's—[INSTRUCTIONS NOT TRANSCRIBED. CAMERA FOCUSED ON
IMAGES IN SCRAPBOOK]

MPW: Well, I remember the gate. It
wasn't a gate, but the sign—to
the left.

MEH: No, look at the one that's on
here.

MPW: This is the fence. I think it had
"Black Mountain" on it.

MEH: The gate.

MPW: That's what I saw when I first
arrived there. It's beautiful,
isn't it.

MPW: Oh, I think that's the Dining
Hall. I just thought the scenery
was so beautiful.

MEH: Now are these photographs
that you made?

MPW: Yes. [AFFIRMATIVE] I'm trying to think—I borrowed a camera. I'll think after awhile, the person that loaned me the camera from _____ and some film.

MEH: This?

MEH: Isn't it beautiful. How do you think the surrounding area contributed to the college, the fact it was in the mountains in a rural area? Do you think it made a difference?

MPW: I think so. I think you felt like okay—All around I think there were mountains. It seems to me you were in a valley, protected, in doing your own thing. If it had been on a flat surface, I don't know if it had been the same. I think the mountains added to the atmosphere.

Then that's the studio, which I thought was nice. It seems to me at the time we used to work under there. It was, you know, it was very high under the studio. I think that's where the sculpture class was I took—for a week. (OVERTALK)

MEH: You think this was a husband—Were they students?
[Karen Karnes (then married and registered as Fromer)]

MPW: Yeah, they were students.
[AFFIRMATIVE]. I think they were from New York.

Now I stayed at one of the—I
don't know which entrance. It
seems to me there were two.

MEH: There were.

MPW: I can't recall which one.

Someone played an organ,
one of the faculty members,
because you could hear organ
music. Downstairs. He was
down on the main floor. We
were upstairs. This person
played an organ.

That's the entrance to the
Studies Building.

That's Jacob Lawrence.

MEH: A nice relaxed pose.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]. That's Albers.

Robert Murphy

MEH: This is a photocopy.

MPW: Oh, yeah.

MEH: Now who is on the right? Is that
Ora?

MPW: That's—No. That's Mary, that's Lillian Lipsett (left foreground), Jacob
me, and that's Jacob's wife, Lawrence, Gwendolyn Lawrence, Mary
Gwen (center, beside Mary), Parks (Washington)
and that's Jacob (beside
Gwen), and to the left— I can't
recall her name but she was
from New York.

Do you recognize the girl in
the back?

MEH: The girl in the back [on the
right] I think is Susan Moore.

MPW: Sue. That's true. Sue Moore.

MEH: Do you know who the guy is? Josephine Levine Sporn, Harold Altman,

MPW: No, I can't recall. The girl to the Susan Moore
left either, I can't recall her
name. [The guy is Harold
Atman.]

That's Leo Amino. That's the
picture I sent him.

MEH: Nice picture. Nice-looking guy.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] Very nice
fellow. [LAUGHS]

MEH: Okay, explain why you cut your
face out. Such a pretty girl.

MPW: I was frowning or something.
That's Henry, I believe.
Jaeger?

MEH: There was a Henry Jaeger.

MPW: Well, this girl was from
New—That's the one I went
on the bus with to Black
Mountain.

Henry Jaeger (?), Josephine Levine
(Sporn), Mary Parks Washington

MEH: You mean on your first trip to
Black Mountain, you went by
bus.

MPW: You know, I said I went into
town? She had to sit in front
and I had to sit in the back of
the bus.

MEH: Oh, right.

MPW: I can't recall her name.

MEH: Those three people?

MPW: I used to know. Well, that's the same girl. I can't think of her name, but it seems like one is Miller, in the back. I vaguely remember.

Josephine Levine (Sporn), John Urbain,
Henry Bergman

MEH: Look at this crew. That's Jacob Lawrence and Gwendolyn on the left.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]. That's Ora to the right.

MEH: Okay. That's Sue Moore with the hair parted sort of to the side.

MPW: Yeah, and the girl at the bottom, we made sandwiches for the—She was from Florida. Dorothy Mayhew.

MEH: What's going on here?

MPW: I don't know what that is.

MEH: Somebody's just reading the
paper, I guess.

MPW: Well, that's the photog—I think
those are people in the
photography class. I don't
recall—What did you say his
name was?

MEH: Nick Muzenic.

MPW: I guess he was part of the
class. I know Peter was part
of the class. Oberlander.

CMEH: That's Nick Muzenic on the left

[OVERTALK]

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE], I remember

Nick.

MEH: I wonder if that's Bill Reed on

the right? I'm not sure.

MPW: Yeah, it looks like him.

MEH: Was he there that summer?

MPW: Yeah, [AFFIRMATIVE]

MEH: I think it's him.

MPW: That's the young lady, I can't

think of her name, from New

York.

MEH: Okay, and this—?

Josephine Levine Sporn

MPW: Oh, that's Varda on the horse.

MEH: Did you help build the horse?

MPW: No. No, I didn't. But there were
fellows—I don't remember any
girls working on it.

It seems to me that's, oh Joseph Fiore
gosh—

MEH: Somebody with a costume on
his head.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]. I know who
that is. I think he had a show
at Black Mountain, and he
married a Black Mountain
person.

Now that's the girl I asked you
about.

MEH: Elaine, Elaine Schmitt (Urbain).

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] and Ruth.

MEH: Here's the same guy. Can see
it better.

MPW: Yeah. Is it Joe Fiore?

MEH: There was a Joe Fiore. He
married a Black Mountain
student.

MPW: Yeah, I think that's Joe.

MEH: That's Varda.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]. I think that's
Mary on that horse.

MEH: So, people did have fun at
Black Mountain.

MPW: Oh, they did.

MEH: Even if it wasn't "free" in the
sense that you think of it.

MPW: Well, I guess maybe I shouldn't
say it wasn't "free," but it
wasn't—I can't quite describe
what mean. Yeah, that was a
lot of fun there.

Down at the studio where I
had sculpture.

MEH: Looks like there's a model
posing there.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]. I think it's the
same girl from New York.

Then that's the fellow I said Concetta Scaravaglione and Isaac
died two years ago? Nataka.

MEH: Ike?

MPW: Ike. That's Ike, talking to the—
Wait a minute. That one.
That's Ike.

MEH: Oh, okay. Talking. That's
Concetta Scaravaglione,
whatever, is that right? The
sculpture teacher?

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE]. I believe she
was Italian.

MEH: [AFFIRMATIVE] There's the
model again. What were you
using, clay?

MPW: Clay. [AFFIRMATIVE] I don't
know what I did with it.

Concetta Scaravaglione and Karen
Karnes (Fromer)

MEH: Class again. William Miller

MPW: I believe that's Miller, but I
can't—

[BREAK IN RECORDING, NEW START]

MPW: I think he went to Paris. Do you
recognize him?

MEH: No.

MPW: He was really into sculpture. I
guess—Nobody seems to
know what happened to him.

MEH: This is—

MPW: Well, that's Leo. I think the
same person, I can't think of
his name.

MEH: I missed this one. That's the
group of people.

MPW: Yeah, that's the same one I
think moved to Paris. I should
have gone over the list and
put that picture. But that was
part of that art class.

Leonard Schwartz (foreground)

MEH: That was you at Black
Mountain.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] We took each
other's portraits in the
photography class.

MEH: I hadn't seen this view before,
on the left.

MPW: Yeah. Someone sent that to
me.

Now this is the girl that loaned
me the camera. [OVERTALK]

MEH: Now who is in the middle?

MPW: That's Gwen, in the middle.
Gwen Lawrence.

MEH: Oh, at the angle I don't
recognize—

Lillian Lipsett, Gwendolyn Lawrence,

MPW: The girl to the left is the one
from New York. I think she
was the model.

Theresa Newhoff

MEH: Oh, apparently people did
swim in the lake.

MPW: I guess they did. I'd forgotten.

Lillian Lipsett (left)

Now somebody's in the tree.

MEH: There's somebody there
picking fruit.

SuFong Li

This was the Chinese girl?

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] Now that was
a beautiful girl.

MEH: Let's look at the one here.

MPW: Oh, that's Gwen and Leo and
Jacob.

MEH: It must be there with the Varda
horse in the background.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] She was a
beautiful girl.

Barbara Stein

UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN

That's Peter.

MEH: Peter Oberlander, a member of
the photography class.

MPW: [AFFIRMATIVE] Now that was
taken from the class, the
photography class. That's the
photography class.

MEH: Okay. So the second guy from
the left is Ted Dreier. The next
guy I should know—

MPW: Do you know on the end who
that is?

Kendall Cox, Ted Dreier, Jr., Robert
Murphy, Peter Oberlander (?), (?),
Nicolas Muzenic, Barbara Stein

MEH: You know I've forgotten so
many—The second person
from the right is Nick Muzenic.
I may have some of these
people identified somewhere
else.

Photo class

[Shots of some photographs are on videotape at end of tape.]

[END OF TRANSCRIPT. END OF INTERVIEW,]