

Interviewee: ELEANORE BERMAN AND IRENE HAAS-CLARK  
 Participant: UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN  
 Interviewer: MARY EMMA HARRIS  
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 Transcription: Ellen Dissanayake, January 6, 2000; corrected by Mary Emma Harris, July 2000. Comments on photographs and documents added 2018. Not substantive  
 Note: The transcription and corrections were made on inferior machines. On listening with better equipment it has been possible to fill in a number of words, none of which alter the meaning of the text. The original transcription which was released by Berman has been preserved in hard copy. A second improved transcription was saved. In addition, on the original transcription the comments on snapshots were only briefly recorded. In the second transcription the comments have been transcribed. Berman's photographs are housed at the Western Regional Archives of North Carolina in the papers of the Black Mountain College Project. MEH, 11 April 2019.

**[BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1 ]**

[PRELIMINARY REMARKS NOT TRANSCRIBED]

**IH:** Mary, have you discovered a way to find people? I personally would love to find the third party of our –

**EB:** We were three. We went down.

**MEH:** Who was the third?

**EB:** Ruth Levinson was her name. Her picture's there.

**IH:** We didn't know how beautiful she was!

**EB:** The years give softens all the –

**MEH:** It's largely through word of mouth that I'm locating people now. Actually, several people signed the guest book at the exhibition, and I recognize their names as Black Mountain people. But they didn't give their addresses.

**EB:** I'll tell you – Somebody, I think somebody in California – oh, no, she didn't show – who was in Paris in the '50s, and [she didn't include me in art historian?? (INAUDIBLE)}. Do you know who? She did a whole show at the University of California (OVERTALK, UNINTELL)

**IH:** Is she a Black Mountain person?

**EB:** No, but I think several people there brought it to my attention that they were Black Mountain people.

**MEH:** You were at Black Mountain in 1945, in the summer?

**EB:** In the summer.

**MEH:** Black Mountain was not known throughout the country. How did you hear about it, each of you? Eleanore?

**EB:** Well, actually through Irene we found out from our her art teacher. We were dear friends.

**IH:** Didn't you go to the Museum of Modern Art classes with me?

**EB:** I visited your class, but I wasn't enrolled.

**IH:** You weren't? It was me and Ruth?

**EB:** You and Ruth were – at Victor D'Amico.

**IH:** It was – [Ralph ??]– Victor D'Amico (INAUDIBLE). Is the (UNINTELL)

**EB:** Paul Adamo (?) was where I came from (LAUGHS).

**IH:** It was the head of the – he continued to be for years afterwards – the children's Saturday morning classes at the Museum of Modern Art. Why did he think we would – ?

**EB:** He said that that was the best place for us, it would be wonderful.

**IH:** But we were fifteen!

**EB:** Well, we had trouble getting in. That was a very difficult thing to do. It was popular and was hard to get in, and we had – I mean we were very young. We were just before our sixteenth – I was just before my sixteenth birthday. My parents knew friends of the Jalowetzes, who were German immigrants. They said that they could help us get in through the Jalowetzes.

**MEH:** Were your parents German emigrés?

**EB:** No, they had friends who were. My father was a doctor. So, they arranged for him to meet me and to write us a letter which facilitated entry.

**IH:** I have no memory of any of that. Isn't that interesting

**EB:** The three of us wanted to go. We were sort of en masse.

**MEH:** Now the third person was –

**EB:** Ruth. It was a friend of ours.

**IH:** Was her interest painting? Was she a painter?

**EB:** She was an artist of some sort. She took lessons with Nan Ferguson (?). We used to go down to study here with a painter named (Albert Schwartz ?UNINTELL NAME) It was on Saturday.

**MEH:** You heard about the college through D'Amico, who had been there the previous summer, actually.

**EB:** Is that so. That I didn't know.

**MEH:** What did he say about the college? Do you have any recollection?

**IH:** Well, he felt that we were very talented for our age I suppose and that we should have an experience that would sort of solidify our ambitions as artists,

and at that stage in our lives there was very little, I guess. It was the middle – it was a very heavy time in terms of the War. People weren't paying attention to any kind of education, I expect, particularly art education.

**EB:** Yes. To be in residence in the summer, where we could go and live amongst the artists and the Bauhaus people was extraordinary. I guess that summer we had Zadkine and Feininger. Feininger wasn't teaching. He was doing critiques.

**MEH:** Did you have any particular expectations about the college? Did you know anything about the farm or the work program or anything except that it was supposed to be a good art school?

**EB:** We knew about it, because we were expected to understand that. As well as paying tuition, we had to work.

**IH:** We knew we would have to work on a farm.

**EB:** No, we could choose between the kitchen or the farm or painting the living –

**IH:** That's why we knew we would work on the farm, because we knew we weren't going to work in the kitchen. (LAUGHTER)

**EB:** I drove a tractor, I remember, and dug potatoes.

**MEH:** You were both city girls.

**EB:** That was like being on a kibbutz, you know. That was our first commune. (LAUGHTER). It was very radical. That was really extraordinary.

**IH:** We knew we had to have long gowns for the concerts.

**EB:** Oh, yes, I still – I turned mine up not long ago. I found – It was one of –

**UW:** Do you still have it?

**EB:** Well, not now, but I did a few years ago. It was one of those India print skirts.

- IH:** I went down to Kleins on Fourteenth Street, and I bought a huge print of white jersey with a great big flowered print and wore it every weekend, every Saturday night.
- UW:** I found that so extraordinary. Irene had mentioned that to me, and I found that so extraordinary. Here was this –
- EB:** Most Bohemian –
- IH:** It wasn't really.
- UW:** Community of Bohemian, you know, revolutionary radicals and they were dressing for college.
- MEH:** On Saturday nights people always dressed up for concerts.
- EB:** Even though we wore sandals – we wore those cotton things – and during the classes we could go in shorts or swimsuits, very often, to our classes. That was quite all right.
- UW:** I just came from Taliesin West, and the students there still get dressed formally every Saturday night.
- IH:** That's right. It's that kind of situation.
- MEH:** It was sort of a way of keeping some sense of form. Earlier they'd dress for dinner every night. Not in formal – but they'd put on skirts.
- EB:** It would make it special.
- UW:** They did at Taliesin, too.
- EB:** Which I think is wonderful. I like that. It makes it a little special.
- MEH:** So, how did you get there?
- EB:** Oh – that was the (OVERTALK)

- IH:** What a trip that was! It was terribly hard to get anywhere in those days.
- EB:** Southern Railroad. We had to change in Washington, and Irene was sick. She thought she had had the flu, had had a stomach ailment.
- UW:** [UNINTELL: SOUNDS LIKE: You all really sick?]
- EB:** She had been ill and on the train started to get a terrible stomach ache. By the time we hit Washington, it must have been 110 degrees. It was awful.
- IH:** I had 110 degree fever (LAUGHS).
- EB:** She was wanting to throw up, and here I was all of fifteen years old. I was mother. We got to the bathroom and got – took care of you, and then I didn't know how to get her back to the train. She was just absolutely out, so I got a porter with one of those wonderful wooden luggage carriers, and I said, "Please help me." He put her on there and we wheeled her back to the train, and then she was sort of out the rest of the –
- IH:** I was misdiagnosed. I had an extremely inflamed appendix, which subsided as soon as we got to this glorious place in the mountains. And didn't revive until the end of the summer. (UNINTELL) and it burst.
- EB:** She had a terrible emergency.
- MEH:** Were you still at Black Mountain?
- IH:** Yes! Albers saved my life. They couldn't get my family. Well, of course, Elly gave me her blood, half her blood is still in me.
- EB:** We went – She came in the mi – We were five in a room, sleeping in that big house.
- IH:** There was a housemother whose name I think was Alice Something.

**MEH:** Not Rondthaler.

**EB:** Oh, Rondthaler I remember, no. Rondthaler was the –

**IH:** She's not my favorite person. She gave me a laxative, and that's what did it.

**EB:** She called me and I came – My father's a doctor, so I was the next best thing, you know, because she had a fever and I realized something was very wrong. So, I called, I think there was someone to call.

**IH:** You called Albers!

**EB:** Yeah, Albers. Then we got a doctor and rushed her to the hospital. Word came back that they needed a transfusion. Her appendix burst, and they couldn't –

**MEH:** Do you have the same blood type?

**IH:** Yes. We (OVERTALK)

**EB:** The five of us went in on the bus, and I was the only one – Being her dear friend, that was kind of fate, you know. They laid me on the operating table next to her. We had arm-to-arm transfusion.

**MEH:** That's incredible!

**EB:** The man who did the surgery, my father reminded me, was an army surgeon from Burma, from the War.

**IH:** He was off to China to be a missionary. Nobody ever heard from him.

**EB:** He was used to battlefield emergencies, and he saved her life.

**IH:** A beautiful man. Very handsome.

**EB:** And did this transfusion.

**IH:** Boy, did I love him.

- EB:** Didn't they call my parents and they'd get the okay to go ahead, because they couldn't find yours?
- IH:** Why would they call yours?
- EB:** Because they couldn't find yours. I think my father was called.
- IH:** My parents were on holiday, poor things.
- EB:** They were way up somewhere.
- UW:** I'm sure they have spent the rest of their days in guilt for not being available.
- IH:** My father – It took my father almost a week to get down to me.
- MEH:** You have a special memory of the occasion. Your own battlefield.
- IH:** Well, the thing that I regret, and maybe Ellie will recall, is missing the party up there for the end of the War, with all those people. All I know is that people drank, and Feininger was carried out.
- EB:** I don't remember that.
- IH:** No? Why do I remember? Because –
- UW:** Someone told it to you.
- EB:** Someone must have, because she wasn't there. You stayed in the hospital quite awhile after that – several weeks.
- IH:** But I sort of, you know, was glad to hear somebody else was sick!  
(LAUGHTER) You don't remember the party?
- EB:** I don't remember that at all. I went back on the train with Elaine Rodbart. I remember, back to New York. But I don't remember that kind of (UNINTELL).
- IH:** You weren't there for V-J (OVERTALK)?
- EB:** I must have been.



**IH:** Of course, you were.

**EB:** I remember Karl With had a party for his son Christopher who was one year old, and they had diapers strung all the way across the dining hall. His son wasn't there. I think he was in New York with the wife, and Karl was very wild. They went over to Tennessee to bring liquor back. It was a dry state, and they had to go over the mountains to bring back booze, and I was just goggle-eyed at all this goings-on. There was quite a bit of running off into the woods and things. I was not sure what was happening.

**MEH:** You were fifteen years old!

**EB:** Sort of wide-eyed and wanting to be part of it and a little bit afraid of all that, you know.

**IH:** The stream was a big place I used to sit and watch.

**EB:** The stream.

**MEH:** The stream?

**EB:** They could just swim naked down there.

**IH:** Lovemaking in the stream.

**EB:** "Lovemaking in the stream." That sounds like a good title. I got poison ivy down there. I fell flat on my face! (LAUGHTER)

**MEH:** That could be the subtitle: "I got poison ivy!"

**IH:** Three children in this fabulous place!

**EB:** I fell flat on my face, tripped over something, and they had to take me for shots to some local doctor. I was covered. I remember. That was terrible.

**IH:** I remember that.

- EB:** There's a picture of me in my book with calamine lotion. I didn't bring it.
- MEH:** So, who were the faculty that you studied with? You both were in art  
(INAUDIBLE).
- EB:** Didn't you study with Lustig?
- IH:** Yes, Alvin Lustig was there. I promptly fell in love with him. Saw him again. I  
won't tell you –
- EB:** Don't tell Elaine.
- IH:** Robert Motherwell. Mary Callery was there. Ellie will remember if they were all  
teaching (OVERTALK)
- EB:** I studied – I – Actually, I was in Albers' class with the color. (OVERTALK)
- IH:** You know who was there.
- EB:** Yes, but whose classes did you take? I took Albers' class. I took Zadkine's  
sculpture class, and I didn't like Albers' class. I was a painter, and I wanted to  
be free. He was having us do his color things which everyone knows is his  
always popular story. I was resisting terribly. So, when he did come through  
and see me in Zadkine's class, slapping clay, he said, "I'm glad to see you like  
something around here." Very – His nose was out of joint.
- MEH:** Motherwell should have been easy for you to (INAUDIBLE) –
- EB:** I did not study with him. I remember talking to him and seeing him, but I didn't  
have a class with him. I had Albers. I had Zadkine. I took painting. I did my  
paintings in the studios. We were given space to furnish from the attic, this  
great big treasure trove.
- IH:** Have people described the studios to you, because –

**MEH:** In the Studies Building? Go ahead.

**IH:** Well, I just – I don't know whether everyone shared my – To me that was spectacular.

**EB:** It was wonderful.

**IH:** Because it was – It was the simplest idea. It was nothing more than a corridor with cells off, off of this long corridor. You were aware of what the other artists were doing for some reason.

**EB:** You could always peek in, that's why. You always looked at every –

**IH:** Yeah, you walked by and you – gorgeous revelations of some of the things, a lot of them were musicians, and you heard incredible stuff, and you were – I miss that terribly, all my life now I've missed it – it was that kind of community of people working. The rooms themselves, they were just boxes. They were square, with a great big window overlooking this incredible valley. I just adored –

**EB:** People used to have parties in their rooms. (OVERTALK) But they had an attic full of treasure for us to select anything we wanted from, and if we came late, we didn't have the best selection. You know, the old pillows and whatever kind of mats we could put down and buy an easel or a table to work on.  
(OVERTALK)

**MEH:** (UNINTELL) from the Blue Ridge, when they were – former campus, there were enough rooms that each student has his own student, and they shared sleeping rooms. That was a real priority when they went to Lake Eden  
(OVERTALK)

- IH:** Did people live in those studios? I thought it was just –
- EB:** (OVERTALK) I thought that was still (?) – For Black Mountain College it was very modern, with supports (INAUDIBLE)
- IH:** No, the furnishing
- MEH:** No, there was an earlier campus, and each person – and they shared sleeping rooms. But people did sleep in their studios. (OVERTALK)
- IH:** Did people live in their studios?
- EB:** Yes, some did, and I was always a little bit – what was going on down there.
- IH:** Well, we stayed in the lodge.
- EB:** The Lodge, right. Well, we had five in our –
- IH:** With bedbugs.
- EB:** With this countess. Alice was a countess who shared our room, I remember.
- IH:** When Max wanted to teach me how to smoke, he said, "You get cigarettes." So, I opened Alice's bag and took out a pack of cigarettes and brought them down to the porch and Max and I smoked. I got very dizzy, and the next morning Alice said, "Did someone take one of my cigarettes?" I said, "Yes, I apologize." She said, "Well, it was my 'quanna'." I thought that was a brand of cigarette! (LAUGHTER) That was my first cigarette. That's all I remember about Alice.
- EB:** I started smoking there, too, and I remember we all went into town and tried to get whatever we could buy, because cigarettes were very hard – they were rationed, and we had Sir Walter Raleigh and we had Lucky Strikes and we had Camels.

**IH:** Mary, have you heard about Alice? Do you know who she is?

**EB:** I don't remember her last name. Alice who?

**IH:** She was from Poland, but she was titled.

**EB:** A Polish countess.

**IH:** We have a picture of her. Ellie has a picture of her.

**MEH:** She must have been a student.

**IH:** Yes.

**UW:** Oh, she was a young person.

**IH:** Yes.

**MEH:** There was an Alice Baumgarner who was there. Alice Daisy Baumgarner.

**IH:** Ellie? Baumgarner – does that sound – ?

**MEH:** That's the only Alice, and I don't know anything about her. I haven't heard anything about her.

**IH:** She'd be interesting.

**EB:** (OFFMIKE REMARKS) Do you have someone named Helena there, because we have a Helena (INAUDIBLE).

**MEH:** Well, let's go ahead and talk, and then (UNINTELL) so you can look through. That will jiggle some more memories when you start looking through those.

**IH:** – what's-his-name with the haircut?

**EB:** Ray. There's a picture of Ray here, too.

**IH:** Do you have any memories about him? Except he was sort of part of the younger crew.

**EB:** He was one of the younger ones. Yeah, there was the older bunch and then the younger ones, and I remember Gropius's daughter Ati. I think she was involved with this Fernando Leon and Chuck (?) –

**IH:** Who's Fernando Leon?

**MEH:** He is an engineer, something in engineering. He's done very well.

**EB:** He was a very elegant fellow. Did he marry Ati Gropius?

**MEH:** No, he married – Ati Gropius married Chuck Forberg.

**EB:** Oh, Chuck is there, then. That's who that was.

**MEH:** He married Eleanor – Ellie –

**EB:** Oh, that's Ellie here then in the picture, whom I didn't remember. I remember she was a lovely girl too (INAUDIBLE).

**MEH:** They're still married.

**IH:** Did they come to the show?

**MEH:** I don't know if they saw it or not. I don't think so, because I think they would have called.

**EB:** Maybe they didn't – Did they know about it?

**MEH:** (INAUDIBLE). I think they would have signed the book (INAUDIBLE).

**IH:** You don't have the people listed for the summer, do you?

**MEH:** I'll show that to you later. I'd like to know more first about sort of the structure of the day. You'd have classes in the morning?

**EB:** Well, we had our breakfast, and a lot of the pictures are of waiting for meals. That is, all the socializing went on outside the dining hall.

**IH:** Every meal for me was peanut butter and raisins on white bread.

**EB:** Oh, really. (INAUDIBLE COMMENTS).

**IH:** I have no memory of anything else.

**EB:** But I remember the socializing on the steps of the dining hall or on the bench in front. Everyone would gather, and there was a great deal of exchange, and we'd get to see people that we wouldn't ordinarily be in touch with. Yeah, there were classes. Then we had, we had our lunch. We had, afterwards there was usually a break. I think people went swimming down at the lake. There used to be wonderful – After dinner we pushed all the chairs back, and they had chamber music, and I remember Eva Heinitz and I remember Josef Marx.

**IH:** There was a great group, was it I think the Budapest?

**EB:** Interestingly enough I ended up –

**IH:** Who came that summer? Was in the Budapest String Quartet?

**EB:** I don't remember that.

**MEH:** (UNINTELL) some of them had been European immigrants, they –

**EB:** No, I don't remember who they were. It was an informal gathering. I remember Carol Brice was there that summer, and they had the studios in the woods where the music studios were separate. It was wonderful to hear them rehearsing. We'd listen. Roland Hayes gave a concert. He was quite elderly. He was there with his family. I love music. I ended – My second husband was a composer. I was involved in music. Strangely enough, I ran into a gentleman at UCLA, where my husband was a professor, who was visiting and I said, "I know this man." He came to our house for dinner. "I know this man!" I looked at him, and I couldn't place him, and he was at Black Mountain. Only after I

looked through my book or through one of the lists, I think it was your book, that I turned up his name and I said, "Oh, my God, that's where I knew him."

**UW:** Oh, you didn't identify him –

**EB:** I could not place him. I said, "I know this face!"

**IH:** Was he young?

**EB:** No, he was older than me. But, you know, when you get up in your years, the age difference seems to equalize. He had been very much an adult when we were children. But it was so interesting.

**UW:** People were there in the summer. You probably already know the answer to this, but I've never known how many people were down there, in your capacity.

**EB:** You mean as students. I don't remember. Maybe seventy-five or a hundred.

**MEH:** Something like that, 75 or 100.

**UW:** Distributed between music and art.

**EB:** And chemistry, and – There was chemistry and math, but the emphasis was on music and art. But there were some significantly important chemists and mathematicians from Europe. Adolph Dehn, I think, and Hansgirg was a scientist. Max Dehn, not Adolph Dehn.

**MEH:** They had – The emphasis in the summer was on the music and art, but they had a regular summer school in the curriculum.

**IH:** When did the dance theater begin? Was it after?

**MEH:** (UNINTELL) it had been very strong before that summer. There was a crisis right before you came, and the theater person had left. It revived – in about



1948. But the summer you were there, there was no theater person (OVERTALK).

**EB:** Was that when Merce Cunningham came down, I think, and they did all that stuff (INAUDIBLE).

**MEH:** Yeah, in the dance – It's always difficult at Black Mountain to keep dancers, because dancers need to be near a city and other dancers. That's true of all the performing arts. But it was a particular summer (UNINTELL), so they didn't have anyone. Otherwise the summer before there was a strong drama program. Do you – ?

**EB:** But I remember those wonderful Jean Charlot murals underneath there where Anni had her looms. We did our sculpture underneath. I loved the sculpture classes. I ended up going to Paris to study after all that, and, of course, Zadkine was then there with his studio. I keep going back and looking at, where he has his, had his place.

**MEH:** What do you remember about Zadkine, just as a teacher?

**EB:** Oh, he was wonderful. He had an enormous energy – that Russian/French energy, and very, very supportive of our efforts. He puffed his pipe. He started us with – Because it was a mixed group of people, he started us with an exercise, to use the clay, of doing geometric volume shapes. We had to do each a ball – a sphere – and a cube and a pyramid. That was our exercise in learning to use the clay and handle it. Then we could do whatever we wanted. I ended up doing a head, and I have one head in my photos of my friend, Ruth. She did a head. I photographed both of them, and I have mine

somewhere at home. I couldn't find it. Then I had Mary Callery's class with the – We were working in plaster. I remember that, and wrapping the burlap around, learning how to make an armature and a structure.

**MEH:** So, you really had two very different experiences in sculpture.

**EB:** Right.

**MEH:** It's interesting that you had mentioned Lustig, because not many people remember him.

**EB:** I remember him.

**MEH:** He was teaching (OVERTALK)

**IH:** Well, I think even in those days I was more drawn to art for reproduction and design and graphics, and I sort of fought it because to me it had no prestige. I wanted to be a great painter, too. But at the time, he was doing work I thought was brilliant.

**EB:** He was. He did all the New Directions covers.

**IH:** I think he's as responsible as anyone else in the field for bringing graphic art to a point where it has prestige and respect and admiration, as this whole separate discipline. He was doing the New Directions covers then.

**MEH:** He did the cover, I don't know if you remember the exhibition, of the Design magazine that was devoted to that summer session. He did the design (OVERTALK) –

**IH:** Well, that was one of the things I admired so much.

**MEH:** What sort of things did he teach in his class?

**IH:** I don't remember.

**EB:** You didn't keep anything?

**IH:** No. But I know I did some things for him. I recall atmospheres and images.

**MEH:** Where did his class meet?

**IH:** In one of the – Were there rooms downstairs, as well as the open sculpture part?

**EB:** Yes, because Albers had his matiere and his color class underneath.

**IH:** It was in a room like that, I think.

**MEH:** Did you take Albers' class?

**IH:** Yes. I was in the room!

**MEH:** Were you as uninterested as Ellie?

**IH:** I don't think I began to understand –

**EB:** I don't know if it was so much disinterest as rebellion. I didn't want that kind of discipline. It always upset me. I thought painting was something I could schmear around. You couldn't just make theories out of it.

**MEH:** The opposite of what Albers was –

**EB:** Right. Strange thing is I ended up doing some squares along the way.  
(LAUGHS) Before she came, I said, "Oh, they're going to think" – because my new work is not quite in the same vein. Except I had no thought of him when these came out! Who knows? Who knows. But I loved the idea of the matiere.  
Funny thing is I had come from a discipline in biology – I was always torn in those years between science and art. My school studies were science, biological sciences, and I intended to go to medicine. But I had always painted

and studied art on the side. This was to be my test of just giving it a full summer of art and immersing it –

**IH:** Fifteen years old and you were doing it?

**EB:** Yeah, because I was on my way to pre-med at Wisconsin that next September. So, I loved Albers' bringing in things of nature: moss and rocks and dirt and things that had wonderful textures. It was this concept of matiere, and that I loved. That was close to my nature study, biology. But I remember going to the library and getting out all the biology textbooks, when I had had enough of all this art and all these personalities. The things that were going were overwhelming in some ways to me, and I would take refuge in biology books.

**IH:** In the library?

**EB:** Yes.

**IH:** I don't think I ever went into the library.

**EB:** It was a nice library.

**IH:** What did I do!

**EB:** I think I kept a diary of those. I may have had a diary. I have my letters to my mother, I think, from those days. I have to find them. I'll see if there's anything pertinent. Maybe I could send them to you.

**MEH:** Oh, that's wonderful. I find that letters home are the best source.

**EB:** Because I remember specifically coming across this one of – You know, "I ran to the library today" kind of thing "and needed to find a place where I felt comfortable again." I was a little bit taken by all that.

**IH:** Can you remember what influence, beside – oh, well Ellie will tell you about the news reports, which were fascinating?

**MEH:** I was going to ask you how the War was (OVERTALK)

**EB:** At the dining room, didn't they give it to us in the dining room?

**IH:** Well, either that, or out on the lawn in front of the dining – That I remember. I remember – dope! – realizing for the first time that there was a very serious thing happening out there in the world and that I should pay attention.

**EB:** Well, we knew in a way because of the immigrants (OVERTALK)

**IH:** Well, that was what I was going to say – That I was in a place where it meant a great deal more than it did in my house in Queens where I'd come from.

**EB:** Their lives had been disrupted so radically to have come. Then the other thing was the question of being in the South and having to pay attention to the color barriers. We were told never to go in on the bus with our black friends who were at college. Which we did, to flaunt, and sat at the back of the bus.

**IH:** Made (UNINTELL) miserable, she was so frightened.

**EB:** Everyone would get up in the bus and yell at us, and call us names, and we were being very brave and (OVERTALK),

**IH:** Then there was an army camp down the road where we used to bicycle a lot.

**MEH:** At age fifteen!

**IH:** But it was also, I realize now, it was a prisoner of war camp. There were prisoners there.

**EB:** That I didn't know.

**UW:** Oh, it wasn't just U.S. Army?

**IH:** Uh-uh (NEGATIVE).

**[END OF RECORDING ON SIDE 1;**

**INTERVIEW CONTINUES PART WAY THROUGH SIDE 2]**

**[IRRELEVANT COMMENTS NOT TRANSCRIBED]**

**IH:** I had the truant officer waiting for me when I got home.

**MEH:** Why?

**IH:** From high school.

**EB:** Oh, you stayed so long because you were in the hospital.

**MEH:** What happened? You had to stay there for a long –

**IH:** I actually died. Only, I came back [NOT AUDIBLE]. That happens. I just loved it because I had this marvelous [INAUDIBLE WORD]. And so I was recuperating for a month.

**MEH:** Did you stay in the hospital or at the college?

**IH:** I stayed in the hospital for over a month.

**MEH:** When you remember – [OVERTALK]

**[BREAK IN TAPING]**

**MEH:** Did you expect to find this mixture of Europeans immigrants and Americans?

**IH:** I had no idea what I was going to. I just knew I would be having instruction and doing the thing I liked to do best.

**MEH:** Did you feel as a fifteen year old that you were intimidated by the community?

**EB:** I did. It was a little bit much for me. I had all these Bohemian inclinations and ended up – like in Paris – I never quite could get both feet into the pond. But,

you know, I dipped my toe in and run back the other way, to be quite frank. I then I went of to Paris when I was twenty and it was the same situation.

**IH:** Was Ruth involved in the community?

**EB:** I don't remember that at all. We ended up having a falling out. Our third friend tended to be quite jealous of our connection. I had been her friend separately, and she had been Irene's friend separately. Being in the middle, when Irene and I would become very close, she would linger ten paces behind on the road when we went walking.

**IH:** I think were drawn together being so young. We weren't really absorbed into the community that much. More as observers at the time.

**MEH:** Do you think that it really made a difference later when you studied so many places and had so many experiences?

**EB:** You mean being at Black Mountain? It was always with me. It always stayed with me as a very significant – I think the personalities and the connections. I've always been a person who admired European artists, intellectuals, whatever. That's been with me forever since I was quite young. Having actually rubbed shoulders with them all and having had that experience was very important for me. Of course, today in these later years it has become important to people who meet me and cannot believe that I'm actually a link in a way. I was interviewed once by a curator who said, "Can I touch you?" He was much younger than I. He said, "You actually know Zadkine. You actually worked with Albers and Feininger." He said, "Don't you know how important that is?" You're a living link in a long chain. That put it into a different frame of

reference, seeing it through someone else's eyes. I had taken it rather for granted.

**MEH:** Did you realize at the time when you were down there that you were studying with extraordinary people?

**EB:** I think in a sense I was. That's why I took all these pictures because I really had a feeling of wanting to document.

**IH:** Did we know beforehand that – did D'Amico tell us or had we read it or – ?

**EB:** I had read. I think I knew some of these names.

**IH:** I was too busy down at Klein's buying a long dress.

**EB:** Then I think having studied with Manfred to whom Ann was married later, which was our way of meeting. Manfred Schwartz was my teacher here since I was eleven or twelve in New York.

**MEH:** Did he know about them?

**EB:** He's a European born man. He was born in Poland and he was friends with Lipschitz and he knew Zadkine from Paris. He went to Paris every summer and had been a student in Paris himself. So, I also had that link through speaking with him. That was very important. In fact, I think even Feininger. I remember going to Feininger for my critiques. I would haul my canvases out. He was too elderly and frail to do a lot of active teaching. So, I considered that a very great honor to come into his presence with my work and the fact that he encouraged me and liked it was very meaningful. He was very warm and very gracious. A beautiful man.

**MEH:** What do you remember about the evenings?



**EB:** Well, I remember the music – the chamber music.

**MEH:** Erwin Bodky was there that summer.

**EB:** Bodky, yes. And the dances. Then I – we used to sleep out to the wigwams down at the farm and smoked.

**IH:** With the farmer's son.

**EB:** That was the best we could do. [LAUGHTER]

**MEH:** How old was Max? Was he sixteen?

**EB:** Probably just a year or two older. [OVERTALK]

**UW:** There's a guy you should really get into the story. [OVERTALK]

**EB:** He probably had every girl in school.

**IH:** He came to the city once and he had –

**EB:** He did. Yes, he got all dressed up –

**IH:** We were so embarrassed.

**EB:** – and came to [SOUNDS LIKE the asque].

**MEH:** When was this? He came up here [New York]?

**EB:** After we had come back. He came to meet us and take us to a movie or something. [OVERTALK] He looked so out of place, and we were all so uncomfortable. It was no longer down on the farm. I remember. I had forgotten.

**??:** Did he come up just to see you?

**EB:** We were his friends in New York. That was fun.

**IH:** I remember walking all the time, hiking up and down the mountains. And singing. We used to sing and Ellie, of course, remembered every lyric to every

song ever written. [LAUGHTER] I think that's all I learned in the summer of '45 were the lyrics to all these wonderful songs.

**UW:** No, I don't think that's true, Irene. The reason I told Mary about you is that I think ever since I've known you, which is a pretty long time, you have always spoken of that time and of how important it was to you and how you felt that it – “galvanized” isn't the word I want – it turned you in a direction that you mightn't have found otherwise. So, that maybe you can't pinpoint specific things which, you know, is what happens sometimes for something that's really important. But my guess is it's really a very important part of the fabric of who you are as an artist.

**EB:** I think so. [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

**UW:** Oh, I agree with that.

**EB:** The experience was extraordinary. It left an imprint. There's no question about it. I think it was a kind of coming of age, you know. It happened at the time when [OVERTALK] –

**IH:** That's the thing that I don't want to impose on this interview is that it was such a vulnerable age, and we were – I was – a kind of nebulous creature who hadn't any particular idea of how a person could – I mean, I think Ellie was extremely precocious about thinking of the future and herself. I had never taken myself very seriously and to be in a community where people were achieving because of their sense of [SOUNDS LIKE “sacrifice” or “self”] – being serious about themselves was about the most important thing I came to. It was the first time I'd ever seen that.

**EB:** I was very impressed with people like Fernando Leon and Chuck. They knew what they were doing. They were older. They had already had a career goal. The beginnings of their careers was clear. Some of the artists were very involved in what they were doing in a depth that we had not experienced yet, partially because of our age and partially because of our backgrounds, perhaps we [OVERTALK] –

**MEH;** Also, there was a difference in experiencing this association with professional artists in a community and in a school where you just see them for an hour in a class.

**EB:** Very different.

**MEH:** You have a different sense of them as human beings and the choices they are making and their own commitment. Whereas, when you go to school, you seem them for an hour. You get a critique.

**EB:** You don't have that daily response to their characters and see them in a living – I remember who else I studied with, and I think you took that class, too. We did sandals with Bernard – what was his name – Rudofsky.

**MEH:** Bernard Rudofsky – I think his wife was teaching the sandalmaking.

**EB:** Who was Molly Gregory? That was not another –

**MEH:** She was teaching woodworking.

**EB:** Woodworking. I thought she was involved with leather.

**MEH:** She did do some leather belts and things.

**EB:** We did leather, and I remember going to town and buying soles and leather pieces from the shoemakers and having to come back then and cut them out

and put the thongs through them. They hurt my feet terribly. I [OVERTALK] – I walked around with those thongs. I never did wear those out. Then we cut the sleeves off shirts. That was the first time kids were doing that.

**IH:** The jeans.

**EB:** We would make sack dresses. I remember having a chartreuse piece of fabric I must have bought in town without any sleeves and was long. We were in advance of Rudi [Gerhardt ??] – when you think about it.

**MEH:** There's a lovely description in Ms. Feininger – a quote from Feininger in the book [INTELLI] He described the girls in their long skirts they made and going around barefooted with painted toenails. [OVERTALK]

**IH:** That was me. That was the only way we knew in the hospital – That was the only way they knew I was a girl because my toenails were painted.

[LAUGHTER]

**EB:** Or you had long hair.

**IH:** Why did we paint our toenails?

**EB:** Well, everybody does.

**IH:** That was not a Bohemian symbol – painted toenails.

**EB?:** But they were all different colors. She used to wear black nail polish on the days we went to Art Students League together. Black berets, black nail polish and black stockings. [OVERTALK]

**[INTERVIEW INTERRUPTED FOR MEAL. MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION**

**RECORDED DURING MEAL]**

**EB:** I did learn to drive a tractor. I thought that was just terrific. [OVERTALK]

**MEH:** Had you ever been in this sort of situation – rural?

**EB:** Rural, yes, I spent summers in Connecticut as a child. We had a place at [UNINTELLI WORD]. And I loved the country. I loved nature. That was really an important part of [UNINTELLIGI WORD] – So, I loved that because I was drawn to the farm.

**IH:** You know that photograph that you have on the cover of your book.  
[UNINTELLI WORDS]

**EB:** It was so neat.

**IH:** It was so perfect. It told the story of what the atmosphere of that place was like. And even the dresses that the women wear — that strange –

**MEH:** Actually, in that photo Mrs. Gropius is wearing a dress, but somebody else pointed out that all the women are wearing pants.

**IH:** Anni Albers had a dress on.

**MEH:** No. [OVERTALK]

**EB:** They were very playful. Those people. Yes, she [REFERRING TO MRS. GROPIUS OR ANNI ALBERS OR MRS. JALOWETZ] was charming. They had a great sense of life. I think they had risked so much and lost so much they cherished. After all they came from that milieu of German art and Bohemian life – there must have been a great deal of history there of their own lives that they carried with them. Jalowetz was a very famous conductor. I was very impressed with him. I had gotten some of that from these friends of my parents who admired him and knew these people from Europe and had already told me what great people they were. The strange thing is that I bumped into Karl

With again at UCLA when I was a student there after my parents had moved to California. He was teaching art history there. Although I was an English major – I had definitely switched from science at that time – I made my peace with that. There was no art department to speak of at UCLA so I became an English lit major and philosophy minor. I went to Karl With and although he never knew me at Black Mountain – I was one of the young herd that he probably had nothing to do with – I introduced myself –

**IH:** I think we were the young herd.

**EB:** – and he was so excited. We reminisced about that birthday party for his son and I became quite a friend and student of his then. I took a couple of art history courses. It was interesting to use Black Mountain as a resource, you know, for establishing myself with a professor.

**MEH:** Actually, when I talked to him, he wasn't terribly [OVERTALK] –

**EB:** He died a couple of years ago. His wife just had a show out there.

**MEH:** He had a really hostile relationship to Albers – very negative.

**EB:** That was the problem with the college eventually from what I understand – were all these personal feuds.

**IH:** Personal feuds? [OVERTALK]

**EB:** Finances and internal bickering.

**MEH:** The college had no endowment. It was supported year by year by tuition and funds that they raised. Also, it was poorly administered in the fifties. It really wasn't so much the bickering even though that took a lot of energy that could

have been used in other ways. The fifties was not a good time for experimental ventures to thrive. So, it just eventually closed.

**IH:** And Albers wasn't the man to do it. [OVERTALK]

**[BREAK IN TAPING. IRRELEVANT COMMENTS NOT TRANSCRIBE]**

**MEH:** I think that's a real unresolved questions in terms of Black Mountain because the idea was that the faculty would administer the college. But the faculty, especially those in the arts – you become so intensely involved in your work that you can only really survive if you believe in yourself very strongly and you are able to sacrifice a lot of things for your work. He had – Theodore Dreier – who may or may not have been there that summer – was the real person who held the college together administratively at that point.

**EB:** And Rondthaler.

**MEH:** And Rondthaler. Rondthaler had just come that summer.

**EB:** Rondthaler had a son, I remember, there. He came from Chapel Hill, didn't he?

**MEH:** From Winston-Salem. But he had just come that summer. That was his first summer. So, it was – one problem in the fifties was that you didn't have anyone that was really performing the same function that Dreier performed. The final conflict that was never resolved at the college was the administrative thing. Every time they would bring in a proper administrator then that person would start wanting control over curriculum, over all these things. They wanted a more structured program, a very predictable sort of thing.

**EB:** They didn't have a board of directors which they probably needed.

- MEH:** Well, they had a Board of Fellows made of faculty, and they had a Board of Advisors. But it was never resolved. They could never find a way to have the college conventionally administered and still keep that same sort of atmosphere. [OVERTALK]
- EB:** I think every utopian atmosphere has had this problem from time immemorial because no one wants to have a head or a governing body. And the group could never handle it.
- IH:** How long did the Bauhaus last? What was the length of the history?
- MEH:** Of the Bauhaus?
- EB:** Well, the Nazis broke it up –
- MEH:** 1919 through 1933.
- EB:** Thirteen years.
- IH:** How long was Black Mountain?
- MEH:** '33 to '57. About the same length of time.
- IH:** Do you like the term “baby Bauhaus”?
- MEH:** [UNINTELLI]
- EB:** No, because of the other disciplines.
- MEH:** It was so much more diverse.
- EB:** My questions is has anybody come into any of the other disciplines from there that were significant, the chemistry or the sciences?
- MEH:** Not – actually, there is one person I want to check out who made significant – There was one person I talked to who was working with the space center in



Texas – Dallas or whatever. He was an aeronautics engineer or technician.  
Nobody has really achieved fame that I know of.

**EB:** Because they didn't have much of a laboratory setup there. I couldn't see –  
[UNINTELLI]

**MEH:** I don't really know – I mean there are a couple of doctors and psychiatrists.  
[UNINTELLI]

**[BACKGROUND COMMENTS NOT TRANSCRIBED]**

**EB:** Did Ray Johnson come to the show?

**MEH:** Um-hmm. [AFFIRMATIVE] Do you remember Ray?

**EB:** He's one of the few people I do remember very well – Ray Johnson.

**IH:** He was close to our age. He was a very regular ==

**EB:** Joe College kind of kid with his crewcut – I remember. Which I have a picture  
of.

**IH:** Yes, Joe College. So, we were related.

**EB:** And a raincoat. In any weather he seemed to wear this raincoat.

**MEH:** Typical Ray.

**UW:** Maybe he was [INAUDIBLE] slasher. [LAUGHTER] [OVERTALK]

**MEH:** Maybe he stabbed fifteen year olds.

**[IRRELEVANT REMARKS]**

**MEH:** Where did you study after Black Mountain?

**EB:** Then I went to Wisconsin pre-med and left again and was very distraught with  
the pressures that were on me then when I was young and taking myself too  
seriously. Then I came back to New York and studied again with Manfred

Schwartz and at the New School. I took printmaking with – that was later. I studied with Manfred Schwartz and then I went back to Queens College again in science until I could get through that first year and realized it wasn't for me. Then my family moved to California so I finished at UCLA in English lit and philosophy but I did take art history at [CALBY?? INAUDIBLE WORD] and went on to Paris. I studied with Leger. Well, at least I signed up there. I must say he didn't come in a great deal. He was there once a week to give critiques. It was a place – Manfred had found that by speaking to Lipchitz and saying where at that time should she go and study because it was very crowded with G.I.s – GI Bill people who filled all the studios. So, he had said that Leger's studio was the best one.

**UW:** That must have been [UNINTELLI WORD] –

**EB:** That was again like a Black Mountain experience for me. I was younger than everybody. I had just turned twenty and there I was in Paris.

**IH:** It was not a good time to be a woman artist.

**EB:** And feeling very alone in this crowd of grownup people with great names and, you know, going to my classes. Basically, I think I was a little shy and wanting to step into the big pond. I think Helen Frankenthaler was in Paris in the '50s. I know Clara Falkenstein [PH] was. Since then I've seen shows and articles about people who were there at the same time. I didn't know them. Then I came back to New York. I didn't want to go back to California. I went back again to Manfred for painting classes. Those were almost private classes with him. And I signed up at the New School with Junkers [PH] and I did

lithography with him. And Chaim Gross – I studied sculpture with him. I love European artists. It seemed to be something I was always following. There weren't that many Americans teaching though at that time. I mean, Hofmann had his classes. I worked with Bob Blackburn. Junkers sent me over to Bob Blackburn to do more lithography because the facilities at the New School were not so elaborate, and I wanted to pursue that. John van Vicht [PH] was there. I remember he was a friend of Manfred's. THAT was the only printing workshop in New York at that time. That's when lithography was just starting.

[OVERTALK]

**IH:** Was Manfred [UNITELLI WORD] studio?

**EB:** No, Manfred –

**IH:** Which studio did he have in those days?

**EB:** On Eighth Street.

**IH:** On Eighth Street.

**EB:** [OVERTALK] On Washington Square South was when I was a young girl and Eighth Street. But he rented a studio for a while to give classes, and when I came back from Paris, he had three or four people. That's when [Wantini ?] was in the class.

**MEH:** Wantini?

**EB:** His friend. She was married to a dentist.

**[UNITELLI OVERTALK]**

**MEH:** Did you live mostly in California or New York?

**EB:** Since then? In California. Then I married after that year in New York. When I came back from Paris, I had a year in New York doing all those wonderful things. Then I went back to California to visit and met my husband-to-be and married him and settled down to raising a family.

**IH:** A big family.

**EB:** I didn't start exhibiting until the sixties when I really began to take it very seriously. It was always there but I was busy with children and raising – There were three at the beginning from the first marriage.

**IH:** There was always a distraction.

**EB:** To say the least. I used work at night after the kids were in bed mostly. Then I was encouraged to show and to take myself seriously. It was like Irene said. when you decide you really want to do it professionally – whatever that means – so in sixty-two, I think, I had my first show in Los Angeles. Then I've shown all along regularly. I should give you a resume if you're interested.

**MEH:** Irene, you came back to New York and met the truant officer. [LAUGHTER]

**IH:** I went back to Andrew Jackson High School.

**MEH:** Were you a senior?

**IH:** No, I wasn't even a senior. I think Ellie must have skipped or something.

**EB:** I skipped a year.

**IH:** She won't mind if I tell you that she's a year older than I am. So, that made a difference. I went to Pratt for two years and wanted to go into advertising, I think, because of Lustig – Alvin Lustig. To me he was still a very great artist. I was told by Weiss, the instructor, **[COMMENTS ABOUT MEAL NOT**

**TRANSCRIBED]** that I should be an illustrator and I fought it for years. I did some commercial advertising for awhile, trying to be Alvin Lustig. You know. I did record album covers after I got out of Pratt. I left Pratt and went to the Art Students League and stayed there for two years. Then I got jobs doing decorative art – wallpaper, procelain. Made lots of money. Why is it so difficult to remember?

**EB:** You did the designs – didn't you work for Eva Zeisel. Did you do designs –

**IH:** Yeah. That was the China painting days. Then I started doing advertising and I was taken note of by a very good agent who got me doing work with a very good publishers, and I've been doing books for thirty-five years. I have some renown as a children's book illustrator.

**EB:** She won the ~~[UNINTELLI WORD]~~ [Caldecott Medal] ~~Continental~~ one year. She was very –

**IH:** [UNINTEL WORD. POSSIBLY CORRECTS AWARD.]

**MEH:** I'll have to come up to see some of your work.

**EB:** She's wonderful. **[IRRELEVANT COMMENTS NOT TRANSCRIBED]**

**IH:** I'm trying to think how soon it was after we had left. I ~~would assume~~ was in my early twenties so it was at least five/six years later --

**EB:** I didn't know [UNINTEL WORD].

**IH:** – and I was working with Eva Zeisel in her studio at 116<sup>th</sup> and River – I didn't know I did either. But the experience of my having been ill and I remember Josef taking care of me –

**EB:** You became a celebrity.

**IH:** – and getting to know the family. He got very involved with my family during the sick – the whole thing. She [Anni Albers] chose me to come to -- to ask whether I thought it would be a good idea if Josef went to Yale.

**EB:** Oh, for goodness sakes.

**MEH:** What did you say?

**IH:** I pretended that I knew. [LAUGHTER] Actually, I did because I had – for whatever reason I don't remember now – I had looked into the university as an art school, and, boy, did it need someone like Albers to make it a prestigious place. It was nothing. It was nowhere compared to Harvard or – Cornell had a wonderful art school in those days. [OVERTALK]

**EB:** [Was it Gropius that designed the building at Harvard or at Yale?]

**??:** So, you advised him to go –

**IH:** I didn't advise. We just had a nice, rosey evening together, and I said I thought it sounded like a wonderful idea.

**[END OF TAPE 1, SIDE 2; BEGINNING OF TAPE 2, SIDE 1]**

**[COMMENTS ON PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS. DIFFICULT TO TRANSCRIBE BECAUSE OF BACKGROUND CONVERSATION. BERMAN AT TIMES MUSING UNINTELLIGIBLY. ]**

**EB:** Lowinsky was a guest at UCLA -- I guess, a lecturer, and he came to dinner and I couldn't remember where I knew him.

**MEH:** That was the musician.

**EB:** Eva Heinetz. Carol Brice. I went out and bought her record right away which I still have. Her *Songs of the Wayfarer*. It's so beautiful.

**MEH:** Is that a contemporary recording?

**EB:** Gabor Rejto. I've known him for years. I didn't know he was there. I just spoke to his wife the other day. He died.

**MEH:** Oh, he did.

**EB:** He died. His son Peter is a fabulous cellist who's concertizing, and his wife Alice accompanies him. He's been teaching at USC all these years. I didn't know he was there. I going to have to speak to her. See I've been very involved in the music for all these 20 years.

**MEH:** That's the music again, just differently printed. [LOOKING AT CONCERT PROGRAMS]

**EB:** Frances Snow Drinker. I remember her. Old, and Einstein. He became a critic.

**MEH:** He was a famous musicologist at the time.

**EB:** I think he reviewed something for my -- Oh, yeah, Fannie Hillsmith. That just came back to me.

**MEH:** Did you study with her?

**EB:** I don't remember. Yeah, he gave lectures -- Motherwell. We attended his lectures. That I remember. We did. There was not a class *per se*. He did critiques. Feininger. Karl With. Is his wife is still alive. Maybe she would have some memories. Maybe you should speak to her

**MEH:** Whose wife?

- EB:** Gerda With. Karl With's wife. She's getting on. She's much younger than him but she's in LA. She's a painter. [UNINTEL] That's right. I remember them. [UNINTEL] Dorothy Ball. Whatever happened to her? She was deaf.
- MEH:** Did you say she was on the Ball Jar Company?
- EB:** I don't – yes, I think so. But I was reminded of this deaf Dorothy that had been with D.H. Lawrence in Taos. There was a Dorothy Brett that was deaf. A blonde woman. Yeah, I remember. Elaine [UNINTEL] if that's the one you know? You mentioned? [UNINTEL – READING LIST SOFTLY] Ruth Levinson, she was my buddy from Forest Hills. We've lost her. I don't know.
- MEH:** Do you know if she has a married name?
- EB:** We don't know. [UNINTEL] I had studied painting with her. We took piano lessons from the same teacher. We took painting lessons from the same teacher. We went to high school together. Oh, that's Halina. I have a picture of her. Did you see?
- MEH:** Which one?
- EB:** Alicia Steiglitz. [POSSIBLY SHE MEANS: Halina Stieglitz]. They look very similar, those two. Do you have an oriental person?
- MEH:** Probably. There's Harold Yanagi.
- EB:** That's him. That's who it was. Harold. Alicia. That's this Alice. The Polish Countess.
- MEH:** Oh, Alicia Stieglitz. As
- EB:** [UNINTEL]
- MEH:** That's just families.



**EB:** Right. And I have the children – the Dehn children.

**MEH:** Dehn children or Beidler children?

**EB:** Beidler. Excuse me. They Hayes family I have there. I don't remember her name.

**MEH:** The Hayes family. There were Helen, I think.

**EB:** I found the boy sitting next to on the step was Harold. [TO HAAS]

**IH:** Harold.

**EB:** That's the only oriental name here.

**MEH:** Yanagi.

**EB:** He's oriental. He's American-born. [UNINTEL]

**MEH:** Is that Yanagi?

**EB:** Yanagi. Irene, Harold Yoshihiro Yanagi. Japanese. As you he was sitting with you.

**MEH:** His first name was Harold. He may have been native-born.

**EB:** A neisei, as they say. [UNINTEL] Alvin. I don't know who Alvin belonged –

**MEH:** He was the grandson of the cook. Alvin Charles Few.

**EB:** He was the grandson of the cook. The little boy with the Beidler kids. I would not have known that, sitting on the grass. A student. [HAAS IN BACKGROUND. UNINTEL.] I don't remember here as a student. Here's Yanagi. You've got applications and correspondence.

**MEH:** Baumgarner through Yanagi.

**EB:** He was an art student is. Here's his application to the Art Institute in the folder.

**MEH:** All of your applications. That's Baumgarner through Yanagi. B through Y.

**EB:** Oh, I see. So, we're in there too.

**MEH:** You're in there too.

**EB:** Our applications for art school. For the Summer Institute.. They kept the records.

**IH:** Who kept those?

**MEH:** The state archives..

**IH:** In North Carolina.

**MEH:** You can write for a transcript.

**EB:** Because that's the kind of school. You had no graduation. You could go for 20 years and then they would certify you through an exam. Through an institution that was accredited. [UNINTEL]

**UN-ID:** That's interesting, because Leslie Symington, when I asked her, she said that she had gone for three years to Black Mountain [UNINTEL].

**EB:** [LEAFING THROUGH FOLDER] Here's applications and correspondence. Pertinent stuff.

**IH:** [UNINTEL – SOMETHING ABOUT STEIGLITZ MARRYING AGAINST HER FATHER'S WISHES]

**EB:** I remember that. It just comes back.

**IH:** Her father was so angry that [UNINTEL]. It's not true.

**MEH:** Did she live in New York? [UNINTEL] It was Dorothy Ball who was the Ball Jar people. I could probably find out through them. [UNINTEL] Unlike the Bell Jar people.

**EB:** I don't see that in [UNINTEL] that I have in here.

**MEH:** What was her last name? Rodbart.

**EB:** Rodbart. There she is. [OVERTALK]

**MEH:** Elaine Schmitt. There were a lot of Elaines that summer

**EB:** Rick. I don't know who he is. Susie I don't remember.

**IH:** I just remember [UNINTEL] but I don't remember. Is there a Rick?

**EB:** Richard. I don't see a Richard.

**MEH:** [UNINTEL] Music.

**IH:** He was very strange. He was sort of leftovers from the draft.

**EB:** Stieglitz. Alice with a very young is [UNINTEL] Here's Alice. Elaine Bonaparte. I wonder if she was related to the famous – somebody else. Marie Bonaparte. She worked with Freud. I don't see any Richards. Maybe he worked there. Maybe he was working there.

**MEH:** Could he be a member of the faculty?

**EB:** Rick and Susie. I remember his face. I don't see it here, but I see it in my head as clear as can be. That strange. And these I didn't identify these people. This is Dorothy I think, again. There's Harold again.

**MEH:** He's the person standing.

**EB:** Oh, I think she's in my other photo. [UNINTEL] This is a beautiful girl. Big, tall, long-legged, lovely, lovely girl. Here she is again. I don't remember. I don't have a name. And someone whose name – I have that one picture down there. Such bad pictures. [OVERTALK] She has died. Yeah. She's passed away.

**MEH:** Did she die?

**EB:** Yeah, I think so.

**MEH:** That's interesting because I tried to get back in touch with her. She was living like in Oklahoma.

**EB:** I have a feeling I read somewhere she died because I have this wonderful record of her singing Mahler. Fascinating. [UNINTEL] Was there any information on –?

**MEH:** Was there a child?

**EB:** There was a Richard -- oh, this is Susie. This girl is Susie. I must have [UNINTEL] This was Chuck. What was the last name?

**MEH:** Forberg. He married Matti Gropius. I mean Ati Gropius.

**EB:** How do you spell the last name?

**MEH:** F-O-R –

**IH:** What fascinates me is that Mary has seen these photographs.

**MEH:** Some I have. Some I haven't. [OVERTALK]

**EB:** Oh, this girl was called Widget.

**MEH:** Right.

**EB:** A funny name. Where she – I don't know.

**MEH:** Marilyn Bauer was her name.

**EB:** You knew that. And this one was called [SOUNDS LIKE: Eke] She's here somewhere. It's a funny nickname.

**IH:** But you never see names of [UNINTEL].

**MEH:** Some of these I've seen. Some I haven't.

**EB:** I think that's me. I have a picture of me. [UNINTEL] The farm boy. Strange names. Old Susie..

**MEH:** I think there was a Susanne Wasson-Tucker there could that be she?

**EB:** Probably. [UNINTEL] Where is she? Oh here. Must have been.

**IH:** Vesta Martin was a music student.

**EB:** She was from Howard. She was a graduate of Howard University.

[OVERTALK]

**MEH:** I can probably find out from -- that's what I'm going to do when I start a sort of cleaning up project is to see which people I've located in which people I haven't.

**EB:** Oh, Janeway. Of course, she was there. Yes she was doing all the pottery -- potting. I didn't think she was a legitimate artist. She was very bleached blonde, and I couldn't imagine her with Zadkine because he was so much older.

**IH:** We can't find out who Helen was?

**EB:** I don't know. Is she in here? I forgot to look for a Helen. She was a beautiful girl. Helen Joyce Rosenbluh. I wonder if that was her. What is your "double star"?

**MEH:** It's a student-secretary.

**EB:** Yes, I think that was she, because she was more than a student. I sort of looked up to her. I don't see any other Helen. I love research, going through this kind of thing.

**MEH:** There's one other Helen. I think she was a -- she was just there for the summer.

**EB:** Helena and Alicia. Do you see her name? Oh, I see. That's student – secretary. And a student. Strangest thing is that the other day I was at an exhibition at UCLA, and I bumped into the woman who was a student that I went to Paris with. [UNINTEL] I haven't seen her in all these years. [UNINTEL] is coming back. I'm not sure. I don't remember. They must have had programs. Don't you have some of the programs?

**MEH:** I think there were some classes. But mostly classes – after lunch was left for work on the farm and hiking.

**EB:** And I think we worked in our studios.

**MEH:** Individuals work in your studios.

**EB:** We could make appointments to talk with our teachers and things like that.

**IH:** You were not allowed to walk home alone along the path to the studios. It was dark. A great big wonderful dog that used to walk us back. There's a reason why Ellie's picture [UNINTEL].

**EB:** I remember the papers [UNINTEL] – [TELEPHONE RINGS]

**IH:** I don't know why it was considered dangerous to walk home. Maybe it was snakes.

**MEH:** There had been snakes. I don't know that the dog would help that much. I've never heard that before. [OVERTALK] I guess so. I haven't heard anyone mention that. [OVERTALK] there may have been concerned with – curiosity – people coming to the camp. During the war there were a lot of people – G.I. camps around there, whatever. Veterans' camps. And so, I don't know. It had to be, obviously, there were so few men students. They may have just been

concerned about, you know, Black Mountain people having gotten on campus.

I've never heard that before. Maybe if you were merely 16 you had to –

[LAUGHTER]

**IH:** We would take the bus into Asheville a lot, and one of the treats we had was to go to the radio station and hear the country music which in those days was very exotic. And it was live. And happening right there. It was an introduction to how radio worked.

**MEH:** Did you just do this as a group or as a class?

**IH:** I think again it was maybe two people. We were pretty much – at least as I remember, we were pretty much on our own. Being so young [UNINTEL].

**[END OF TAPE 2, SIDE 1. END OF TRANSCRIPT. END OF INTERVIEW.]**

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[Har and old Yanagi sitting on step next to Irene Haas]

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- EB:** [Dorothy] Ball. [I wonder whatever happened to her. She was deaf.]
- MEH:** [Did you say she was from the Ball Jar family?]
- EB:** Yes, I think so. But I was reminded of this deaf Dorothy, that had been raised on D.H. Lawrence and [UNINTEL WORD] [There was a Dorothy Brett who was deaf who was very similar. A blond woman.] I do remember her.
- EB:** Elaine Gottlieb. Is that the one you remember? Her father was so angry that –
- MEH:** Did she live in New York?
- IH:** It was the Ball Jar people.
- MEH:** It was Dorothy Ball who was the Ball Jar people. I could probably find out through them.
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- EB:** Oh, Janeway. Of course, she was there. She was doing all those pottery – potting. I didn't think she was a legitimate artist. She was very bleached blonde and I couldn't imagine her with Zadkine because he was so much older.
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- IH:** We would take the bus into Asheville quite a lot, and one of the treats we had was to go over to the [UNINTELLI WORD] radio station and hear the country music which in those days was very exciting. And it was live. Happening right there. It was my introduction to how radio worked.
- MEH:** Did you do this as a group or as a class?
- IH:** I think we had THE three of us – maybe [UNINTELLI] Pretty much. At least I remember [UNINTELLI] –



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**[END OF INTERVIEW]**