

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
75th Anniversary
Oral History Project

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SFMOMA 75th Anniversary

PAULE ANGLIM with ED GILBERT

Gallery Owner, Paule Anglim Gallery

Interview conducted by
Richard Cándida Smith
in 2009

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Interview #1: January 14, 2009

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Cándida Smith: You were born in Quebec City, I understand.

01-00:00:27

Anglim: Yes.

Cándida Smith: Your father was a business person?

01-00:00:55

Anglim: Yes.

Cándida Smith: Did he or your mother have anything to do with the arts?

01-00:01:01

Anglim: In a way, they were doing themselves simple artwork, beautiful drawings, especially my mother. My mother took art classes, as I did.

Cándida Smith: When did you come to San Francisco?

01-00:01:17

Anglim: I don't know the year.

Cándida Smith: The decade?

01-00:01:21

Anglim: Well, it'd be 1950, I guess.

Cándida Smith: Did you come after you got married, or did you get married here?

01-00:01:29

Anglim: No, I came before. I had a masters from the Université Laval and also from Toronto, and I came here to do social work. Eventually, I changed my direction.

Cándida Smith: You had an art and architecture consulting firm?

01-00:01:50

Anglim: It was an art advisory business. A long, long time ago. Most of the artists that I worked with at that time, like Henry Moore, Isamu Noguchi, Alexander Calder, are all dead. But I had Moore.

Cándida Smith: A very international focus.

01-00:02:19

Anglim: Well, the projects were here. They were in America. They were in Chicago, in Houston, in San Francisco, Los Angeles. The big Calder sculpture is in Los Angeles. I did an art advisory project also in Fresno. The whole downtown was made into a mall, and, there, there is a

Calder, there's a Pete Voulkos, a Claire Falkenstein, and quite a few artists.

Cándida Smith: When did you open this gallery?

01-00:02:55

Anglim: Oh, I'm so bad on dates. How long have we been here, Ed?

Gilbert: Well, I think in this space, since '82.

Anglim: Seven years before that, I was in the other.

Gilbert: So mid-seventies, I would say.

Anglim: Mid-seventies.

Cándida Smith: You were over on Montgomery. In the ArtTable interview, you mentioned that you speak to new artists about the framework of the gallery before you take them on. I was wondering if you could give us a sense of what you say. I know it's very individual, but if you give a sense of what you say—

01-00:03:38

Anglim: I would let Ed answer that question.

Cándida Smith: What is the framework? What's the philosophy or the strategy you want to share with them?

01-00:03:45

Anglim: We have such a broad philosophy or broad point of view. We show painters, we show conceptual artists, we do poetry readings, we launch books. It's a very broad activity. But what we tell the artists, what do you think, Ed?

01-00:04:04

Gilbert: It's always approached in a very general way. I think for the most part, artists that we begin to work with already know the gallery, to a great degree, and they know the way other artists have worked with us. It isn't that huge of an orientation. But there're a couple of points that we make with all of them, in that this gallery, I think for quite some time, it's been a gallery working with a lot of artists and therefore, it has that kind of familiar aspect. You have to not demand too much attention from your fellow artists and all that. I think we've almost made a point to seek out a variety of artists and media.

Anglim: Program.

01-00:05:07

Gilbert: Programs. If there's anything you can say, it's that we look for some kind of unique poetry in the artist's work. They're usually dissimilar.

Cándida Smith: Are your strategies for promotion local, national, international? All of those?

01-00:05:32

Anglim: You mean in publication?

Cándida Smith: Publication, reaching out, how you try to place the artist's work.

01-00:05:38

Anglim: It's national and international, both, I would say.

01-00:05:44

Gilbert: Some people that are emerging from the schools here have an international background to begin with. Think of somebody like Rigo [23], who was born in—

01-00:05:55

Anglim: Well, we have four artists right now in the Ludwig Museum, more like seven artists who are in the Ludwig, and three in the Guggenheim. Then Mildred Howard, she's invited to show in Berlin. So there is a rather broad scope of activity, I think.

01-00:06:12

Gilbert: There's been growing interest in what seemed, at one point, like a very regional activity or program. There's a lot of interest in Europe, especially, in California history, post-war California history. So a lot of things that happened in the fifties, sixties, seventies are of interest to young historians and curators. So a lot of shows are popping up on these subjects.

Cándida Smith: When you're working with an artist, what's the balance, in terms of the work you put in to promote them, and how much do you expect them to promote themselves, make the case for themselves? Or is that something you do yourself?

01-00:07:00

Anglim: I don't think many artists work at promoting themselves, do they, Ed?

Gilbert:

No.

Anglim:

They go to openings to be present, maybe. They go to museums to be present. But most of the promotion, it's through us by giving exhibitions every two years, by publishing the work and by advertising, and hopefully, having articles written about their work, either in publications or local papers. I don't think the artist themselves—

01-00:07:30

Gilbert:

Some are more social animals than others. Some seem to have developed their own relationships. It's easy to say it's interesting for curators and writers to get to know artists independent of what we can provide. That has happened, sure, for some more than others. It really depends on the personality of the artist. Enrique Chagoya seems to know so many people everywhere. But we make it a point to try to introduce our artists to as many people in the community.

01-00:08:12

Anglim:

Writers. But some artists also seek writers on their own. So that would be one way that the artist would promote himself or herself.

Cándida Smith:

But it's core to your activities to develop a strategy for each artist in what you're going to do with him or her.

01-00:08:32

Gilbert:

We're open to any kind of relationship an artist might have to their following. It doesn't have to just be about buying work. There have been a number of relationships that have come out of the gallery that are not the expected one of a buyer and a seller. The gallery has been here for so long, some of the graduate students that follow artists or send us what once were letters and now are emails, we find out years later they're curating shows on these people. So that kind of activity, we've watched it grow outside the gallery.

Cándida Smith:

Now, the museum's a block and a half away, essentially. How important is SFMOMA to your larger operations?

01-00:09:42

Anglim:

Oh, it is. Over the years, we have developed a special relationship. I had a good time with John Caldwell. He was probably my favorite curator that they've ever had. I like the director very much. I think Neal Benezra is a *marvelous* director. He doesn't visit galleries, but he has other qualities. Sandra Phillips, who is curator of photography, has been supportive and we have a warm relationship. Gary Garrels, who used to be here, now he is back. They're all people that we know and we invite to openings, or to a dinner. Like the last dinner, we had a few curators for Carrie Mae Weems.

01-00:10:36

Gilbert:

We've really enjoyed watching Janet Bishop's career develop over the years from when she was in the old building, an associate curator, to all the shows she's developed. We really enjoyed working with her on the Robert Bechtle exhibit.

01-00:10:52

Anglim:

She did two Bechtle [shows], one in the old building with John Caldwell. Then she organized a large one. She's a terrific curator.

[material deleted]

Cándida Smith: I presume you work with all the museums in the region.

01-00:13:43

Anglim: Try. We try. Don't always succeed. We had a recent relationship with the [M. H.] de Young [Memorial Museum], with Lynn Hershman [Leeson].

Gilbert: On a regular basis, there is some kind of activity with every institution.

01-00:13:56

Anglim: Years ago, I worked with Ninfa Valvo, who showed [Elmer] Bischoff and [David] Park. She died a long time ago.

Cándida Smith: If you look at the museums that you work with, particularly the ones in the region, are there continuities, in terms of the artists that they're most interested in or the kind of work that they're most interested in? Are there artists that you know already, "I'm not going to bother SFMOMA with this person, I'm going to take this to the de Young or to the San Jose [Museum of Art] or across to Oakland [Museum of California]"? Are there particular preferences at each museum?

01-00:14:48

Anglim: Well, they're not preferences, they're a selection. Some artists fit in SFMOMA, some the de Young. So that would be not the preference, but the reality of the relationship of the art work and the museum. Is that what you're asking me?

Cándida Smith: Yes, but I was wondering if you could help define what you think the SFMOMA curators are most interested in. From your perspective, what seems to be the kind of work that excites them the most?

01-00:15:28

Anglim: Well, there's the media, which Rudolf [Frieling] has. It depends. We have a variety of artists. So artists in media would be Rudolf, and in photography— It varies, it depends. On a painter, we'd see Janet Bishop or Madeleine Grynstejn, when she was there.

01-00:15:50

Gilbert: We used to be more active with the regular reviews of SECA [Society for the Encouragement of Contemporary Art]. In a general sense, the really emerging artists, there hasn't been that much rapport with the museum, other than for that, for the younger patronage groups at SFMOMA. But we've watched that develop, where some of these people are just getting out of school. Janet or some of the other curators would be taking them for the small studio. There was that activity of emerging artists besides what Paule was just describing.

Cándida Smith: About ten of your artists have been SECA Award winners. Did winning the SECA Award have a significant impact on their careers?

01-00:16:44

Anglim: I think so, on the local level, yes, I think so. It attracts people to look at the work more specifically. I think it does, don't you think?

01-00:16:54

Gilbert: I think it's a great acknowledgement and encouragement. These are young artists, but they'd already had a little bit of shows; that's the nature of the award. But it's called the work to the attention of the community, more than anything else. It was not something that seemed geared toward collecting that much, oddly enough.

Cándida Smith: But what I'm hearing you say is that perhaps the award doesn't help the artist in terms of a national or international profile?

01-00:17:28

Anglim: I don't think SECA helps nationally.

Gilbert: No, I don't think people know the program enough. There have been publications, and they're distributed to some extent, but it's not—

01-00:17:41

Anglim: I don't know. I don't think it does.

Gilbert: No, I don't think it does, either.

Cándida Smith: Paule, I noticed that you were invited onto the SECA board in 1970.

01-00:17:53

Anglim: Oh, really? That's a long time ago.

Cándida Smith: That is a long time.

01-00:17:57

Anglim: How long ago? Thirty years?

01-00:18:00

Gilbert: Thirty-eight years.

Cándida Smith: Soon to be thirty-nine.

01-00:18:02

Anglim: God, did I have the gallery then?

Cándida Smith: Then you try to resign in 1971.

01-00:18:07

Anglim: Oh, really?

Cándida Smith: They try to talk you out of it. I don't know what the dénouement of that was, but I see in 1980, you're still on the SECA board and attending meetings, at least according to the minutes. My guess is that you got off approximately 1984, off the board. Does that make sense?

01-00:18:35

Anglim: Of SECA? Was I on the board? Hm. Wow. I'm learning something. I don't remember that. I think it was more an honorary thing than an active thing, I don't know. I'm on the board at the [San Francisco] Art Institute; that's the only board I'm on.

Cándida Smith: If I were to ask you how the group worked back then?

01-00:19:08

Anglim: You mean the SECA?

Cándida Smith: Yes, the SECA.

01-00:19:11

Anglim: I know Humphrey was very active in it. I think John Humphrey was one of the first ones to start it. I think it also was a positive activity. I really think it was. But I think it became more active and more present during the last twenty years. That's my feeling. Because they do catalogs now for each show. It's more supportive of the winners of the event.

Cándida Smith: How do you go about participating in the nomination process?

01-00:19:53

Anglim: Nomination for what?

Cándida Smith: For who should be considered for a SECA Award.

01-00:19:58

Anglim: Oh, usually we send slides. Then there's a group, there's a committee that reviews the slides, and then they do studio visits.

01-00:20:09

Gilbert: We've always just sent recommendations. Not necessarily from here, but just from the community. I think we stopped it at that. We wouldn't go to the reviews or participate in that.

01-00:20:22

Anglim: I don't think dealers are invited to go the review, anyhow.

01-00:20:24

Gilbert: No, that just doesn't really make sense.

01-00:20:26

Anglim: No. We can't. At one point, dealers were a part of the review, but they're not any longer.

Gilbert: Yes, that makes sense.

Anglim: For good reason.

01-00:20:35

Gilbert: Yes, that makes sense. Besides the development of artists, we've seen SECA as being *very* helpful to development of art patrons. People that are coming in and don't really know their way around or are timid about going to artists' studios. We've seen people learn a lot in two or three years from being members of SECA.

01-00:21:08

Anglim: Because they do all the studio visits and they have trips.

01-00:21:11

Gilbert: The conversations are very enlightening to people.

Anglim: I think it's a very good event.

Cándida Smith: When one of your artists is selected, not for the award but for the tour, the studio tour, do you give them any advice about what to do or say, what to show?

01-00:21:34

Anglim: We can do that in general. Yes, we can do that. But we're not there during the visit. But we can maybe help them select the work they display.

Cándida Smith: You help select the work?

01-00:21:51

Anglim: Yes, we can. Not always. It varies. It's flexible.

Cándida Smith: Do you have any suggestions to them about what they should talk about or what they shouldn't talk about?

01-00:22:18

Anglim: We might have some broad— Some artists don't need it. Some are teaching at [University of California] Berkeley or Stanford [University], so they don't need any assistance. We have broad conversations. Not to have *too much* work.

Cándida Smith: In '95, Gary Garrels decided that the curators would make the award, instead of the SECA members. How did you feel about that, when that happened?

01-00:22:48

Anglim: Was that solely the curator? Or was it the group?

Gilbert: Before then, it was this long procedure, by which there were meetings and people voted and all that. I don't know about you, Paule, but I personally thought it was a good thing.

Anglim: Yes, I think so.

01-00:23:04

Gilbert: I think the process of getting to the short list was a good one to involve the general group. But it's a lot to ask that that group of people could visualize a show in a museum and see how one artist might be better prepared for that than others. So I think we probably thought it was a good thing that the curators made the final choice.

Anglim: Is Gary still doing it, now that he's back?

01-00:23:29

Gilbert: Well, the curators are.

Anglim: The curators are, yes.

Gilbert: Yes, that's right.

Anglim: I think it's better. Because after all, people that visit studios are collectors or admirers without any experience. I think it's better.

Cándida Smith: Are there any stories you might have about, for you, particularly interesting aspects of SECA exhibitions for your artists? Say, Anne Appleby or John Beech or Rigo [23]?

01-00:25:17

Gilbert: I do remember a very endearing story that Anne Appleby was a little bit coaching Barry McGee, because I don't even know if Barry spoke. That was really at the cusp of Barry trying to reconcile his renegade personality with being a public artist. He got this award, and they were all supposed to speak in the auditorium. I remember Anne just being somebody who—

Anglim: I wasn't there.

01-00:25:54

Gilbert: Anne, who was petrified to speak, did rehearse, but then she was the one having to encourage Barry to talk. Barry did talk, but there was some outburst. Somebody in the back of the audience was saying, you should be arrested, or something.

Anglim: I don't remember. I wasn't there.

01-00:26:15

Gilbert: It was kind of a really odd year, that these people who were not very—

Anglim: So Anne and Barry were—?

Gilbert: Were the same year, I think.

Anglim: The same year.

01-00:26:24

Gilbert: Rigo was a different year. Rigo had that great experience the year that he did it. That was before the hotel, the St. Regis was built. So he had that mural all the way on the side of that building, then adjacent to a parking lot.

Anglim: It disappeared.

Gilbert: You can't see it now, but it afforded him the chance to do images of that and images from the top of SFMOMA. His show was very directed toward the building and the environment, the new environment in the neighborhood.

01-00:27:03

Anglim: Rigo is in a major show right now, a show that's traveling. It's at San Diego, then is coming here. With Ann Hamilton. Rigo's career has progressed fairly well. He had his big show that started in Madeira and Lisbon, went to São Paulo. Not São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro. So his career blossomed. All of them have, I guess. Maybe SECA does help after all. Not only locally, I mean.

Cándida Smith: Or the selection is such that somehow there's a prescience about who's ready to make that breakthrough.

01-00:27:54

Gilbert: I do know that for many artists, it's a pretty traumatic experience because it's a growing experience, where there's a lot of anxiety about the portent of this visit of a lot of people. It's a real growing experience for a lot of young artists.

Anglim: Then when the show gets to the museum, whether it will be reviewed or not. The review of that show is very important for each of the artists.

Cándida Smith: Well, what about art criticism in the Bay Area?

01-00:28:29

Anglim: Oh, gosh! Well, we had two for a while. We had [David] Bonetti—

Gilbert: Well, also we had Tom Albright.

Anglim: Oh, well, that's a while ago. I knew Tom Albright. Recently, there were two. Bonetti left about eight years ago, so that Kenneth Baker is the only one. Except we have local writers in *Art in America* and *Artforum* and all the publications.

Cándida Smith: From your point of view, are the *Art in America* reviews more important than the *Chronicle* reviews?

01-00:29:16

Anglim: It's lasting. It's more lasting. It's a publication. It's a magazine that you keep.

Gilbert: And they're documented and they're seen by more people. Baker writes for—

Anglim: *Art in America*, I think.

Gilbert: *Art in America*. But the magazines, they're short articles, but they're a great opportunity for a local artist.

01-00:29:43

Anglim: Well, because they're seen internationally, especially in *Artforum*. *Artforum* is published more internationally. An article in a publication is quite valuable.

Cándida Smith: Does the gallery do anything to try to get reviews?

01-00:30:02

Anglim: We send news releases to all the writers.

Gilbert: We know writers enough at this point to call them, based on what their area of interest is. We don't do it for the same writer for every show, we try to allow them to develop their interests and following of a specific artist. We do that quite actively.

Cándida Smith: One of the things of particular interest for the museum is some of the stories, the conditions, behind some acquisitions that you were involved with. They've selected a number of pieces that, for them, are the ones that they'd like to see if you have anything to say about the artist or the acquisition, the process of working with the museum.

01-00:31:08

Anglim: Oh, I was so glad when they got this one, the [Robert] Bechtle [*Watsonville Olympia* (1977)]. I think this was just before the show. I remember Harry [Parker] wanted this for his museum [the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco]. This is the [Vincent] Fecteau piece [untitled (papier-maché, acrylic, and balsa wood, 2005, SFMOMA acquisition 2005.263)]. You were involved in that one.

Gilbert: You have an image of a Fecteau piece from 2005. Vince Fecteau came to the gallery when he was just— He'd left an East Coast school, he was an undergraduate, moved here. Not completely sure why, he just wanted to live here. He was a very sophisticated artist, from the beginning, an artist who's very solitary. He's involved with other artists in the community, but his day to day life is pretty nearly monastic. He makes very little work and it's always been in great demand. He has a very nice life, in the sense that he has four or five galleries internationally, and they all give him these small shows. He's been very well collected from the beginning. We were very happy when Madeleine [Grynsztejn] became interested in the work and we were able to take her to his studio. She saw the entire body of work that was going to be shown in a gallery in London, Greengrassi. She was able to select this work before. They had a great conversation, which I think dovetailed into her research for [Richard] Tuttle. She was working on the Tuttle show at the time. But [Fecteau]'s a very unique artist with a very unique point of view.

Cándida Smith: How did she get to know Fecteau and his work?

01-00:33:31

Anglim: [He] was showing here. We were showing it here.

Gilbert: She saw the work here. But his galleries around the world, they're small but very present. Daniel Buchholz, in Germany; Greengrassi; Feature, in New York, at the time. He's now with Matthew Marks, in New York. So there are many ways that one could see him. But he's kind of a rarefied experience; he doesn't make enough work that a lot of people would see it. He's actually in a show right now at the Art Institute of Chicago, a very small show.

01-00:34:09

Anglim: This was the earliest conceptual work, I think, that we sold.

Cándida Smith: David Ireland [*A Decade Document, Withcomet, Andcomet, Andstool, 1980-1990*].

01-00:34:17

Anglim: I was so pleased. John Caldwell was responsible for this. This (*Broom Collection with Boom, 1978-1988*) was a part of the house of David's.

Cándida Smith: 500 Capp?

01-00:34:31

Anglim: Yes, they just acquired this one, which was a very important one.

Gilbert: But even *A Decade Documented* is a part of David's house, of his very eccentric documenting of his day to day activities. He collected

everything from the rubber bands that were around his daily newspaper, even recording the sound of taking them off. But this [*A Decade Documented*] was part of a wall in his bathroom, where he saved every roll of toilet paper after it was finished. So there's a decade documented that has another another kind of meaning. So many things he's found, yet for this thing, he built this pristine white vanity table [and added] two cans of Comet cleaner.

01-00:35:30

Anglim: This was a special event for the gallery and for the artist because this was acquired in '91. For us to sell a work of conceptual quality was very special.

Gilbert: I'm trying to remember when did Bob Riley do the show? That was in the old building. The big exhibition that had Doug Hall and all that, was that "Passage du Damage"?

Anglim: It's a nice panorama to look at. What are the other ones?

01-00:36:09

Gilbert: Well, this Terry Fox one [*Vortex* (1993)] is real interesting.

Anglim: That was *very* important. David Ross was responsible for that. It's a great piece.

Gilbert: It's basically a ribcage. Terry developed this form of working where he would put text on strips of paper or wood. Part of that was making physical the act of reading, because when we read, most of us think of it as pure thought. It's the idea of going from the page into our head. But for him, by forcing you to move around or turn your body to read and get the meaning of something, it made it more of a physical experience. All these staves have text.

01-00:37:02

Anglim: Also, it really related to his own physicality. He was already quite ill at that time.

Cándida Smith: When did you start representing Terry Fox? Or when did you start collecting Fox?

01-00:37:18

Anglim: How long? About fifteen years ago, I think.

Gilbert: But you knew him even before.

Anglim: Oh, yes, I knew him before, but—

Gilbert: You knew him back when he was in Rose.

- Anglim: I don't know when we had his first show. It will be fifteen, twenty years.
- Gilbert: Paule, over the years, did this wonderful series of shows called "Solid Concept," which were group shows featuring a number of the artists of what is now called Bay Area Conceptualism. Some of the people in these shows weren't necessarily people we represented all the time, but they were in the show.
- 01-00:37:51
Anglim: The one in which Terry had a piece, the physical piece—
- Gilbert: From Berlin?
- Anglim: Yes. Then David Ireland did the walls. So then there was Tom Marioni, Paul Kos.
- Gilbert: Even Tony LaBat.
- Anglim: Sometimes, Tony Labat was in it.
- Gilbert: Howard Fried.
- 01-00:38:13
Anglim: Howard Fried, whenever he could complete a piece. So they were quite nicely joined, I thought.
- Gilbert: We even had Bill Fontana. It's a group of artists who know [each other] and work together. There's a lot of overlap between their work, so they would work together.
- Anglim: They really like each other. There's a real relationship, intellectual, emotional, between those five or six artists.
- Cándida Smith: Is it when Caldwell arrives that the museum begins to take this group of artists seriously?
- 01-00:38:50
Anglim: Oh, yes, he did. Did you know him?
- Cándida Smith: No, never knew him.
- 01-00:38:53
Gilbert: Well, he was remarkable.
- Anglim: He was so open.
- Gilbert: For whatever he did. He went to artist's studios constantly. Anne Appleby, even.

Anglim: Well, literally, it's due to John Caldwell that I met Anne Appleby. He took me to her studio. That's rare. Usually it's the other way around; we try to take the curators to a studio. So that was quite special. Then [Giuseppe] Panza became interested in that initial body of work of Anne Appleby.

Cándida Smith: Another piece that they were interested in is the Joan Brown piece, *Bird*,

Gilbert: Yes, it's wonderful.

Anglim: Wooden, oh. There's another one that's at the Ludwig Museum?

01-00:40:01

Gilbert: There's a similar one—it's a man on a horseback—that's in the Ludwig Museum right now, in this show called—

Anglim: Bay Area art.

Gilbert: Sixties, yeah.

Anglim: It's a marvelous show.

Cándida Smith: It's a nice piece. It reminds me more of [Manuel] Neri or of [Jay] DeFeo than what I think of as typical Joan Brown.

01-00:40:22

Anglim: She did a few. Well, also some with Manuel. Manuel Neri did some, too. This was at the same time. Both Manuel and Joan did work similar to that.

Cándida Smith: Again, 2000. So this was Davis Ross who was interested in it, or the curators?

01-00:40:43

Gilbert: I don't remember how that happened.

Anglim: I think it's David.

Gilbert: Yeah?

Anglim: I think so.

Cándida Smith: Do you have any sense of why this particular Joan Brown caught his eye?

01-00:40:53

Anglim: I remember that they asked us about it, we had it, and then from then on, they presented it to the acquisition committee.

Cándida Smith: How did you acquire this piece?

01-00:41:05

Anglim: Well, it's a part of the—

Gilbert: Estate.

Anglim: handled the estate, so we knew about the work. We don't acquire work.

Gilbert: Sometimes.

Anglim: Sometimes I own a work, Ed owns a work, but usually— Everything in this room is on consignment. This was on consignment. Whether we have it or whether it's in the storage of the artist, we work with it. But we don't own it. We sell it.

Cándida Smith: Did the museum come to you asking, "We'd like to see what you have of Joan Brown?"

01-00:41:49

Anglim: It seems to me they knew about it already. What year is the work itself?

Gilbert: Oh, it's fifties.

Anglim: '57. I think they knew.

Gilbert: At the time, I assumed, without really ever knowing, that there was an interest in completing the sort of profile of certain artists. There may have been some gaps. So those constructions that she did at that time, there aren't a lot of them.

Anglim: No. There's only one left.

01-00:42:20

Gilbert: It would make sense for SF—I'm sure the museum has a number of paintings, so it's really nice to complete that. Joan, of that group, what now is called the Beat group, she had a gallery career from the beginning. At that time, she had a gallery in New York, George Staempfli.

01-00:42:51

Anglim: Both Manuel and Joan had been in Europe, and they came to New York. They went to see Staempfli. He was very interested in them, so he showed them from the beginning of their careers, really. It was very good for them.

Cándida Smith: The Bruce Conner piece [*Burning Bright* (1996)].

Gilbert: It's a drawing. The ink blot right there. There are other ones there, for sure, at SFMOMA.

Anglim: Well, they have a marvelous group of the assemblage. Do you remember how this one came along?

01-00:43:31

Gilbert: Well, I think it was a similar thing.

Anglim: They wanted to complete—

Gilbert: They have assemblage and I think they have engraving collages, but this activity, this kind of ink blot work he made from, I guess, the late seventies until he died, it's very representative. I think they would just have to have—

Anglim: To complete their panorama.

Gilbert: To use an overused term, it's a "no-brainer." It's something that the museum really had to have. We're always hopeful that the museum is recognizing these things that are right underneath everyone's nose.

Cándida Smith: Well, this hopefulness, does that lead to action on your part? Or do you really wait for them to come.

01-00:44:28

Gilbert: Oh, no, we have to call it to their attention.

Anglim: Well, for instance, they are hoping to have a show of David Park. I have a small self-portrait, so I called Janet and I said, "Is your show still possible?" She said, "It is, but it's not defined yet. I know your work and we'll keep it in mind." When we know something is in progress, we can contribute or participate.

Cándida Smith: The Enrique Chagoya is a very interesting piece [*Tales from the Conquest/Codex* (1992)]. I thought to some degree, unusual, because it seems to me that SFMOMA generally has been indifferent to art with a political edge.

01-00:45:16

Anglim: You're right. When did they get this?

Cándida Smith: Yet for somebody like Chagoya, or at least this particular Chagoya, they responded positively to the work.

01-00:45:25

Gilbert: Well, it's good that you put it that way. His work is political and it's a form of commentary; but it has a lot of charm and wit about it and it's not really didactic. He uses that word in the title of some of his pieces,

in an ironic sense, because I guess for him, it seems a little ironic to criticize in an uncompromising way things that he finds uncompromising.

Anglim: Did Enrique have a show or a small show at the museum, and that was in it? How did this purchase come about? I don't remember.

01-00:46:19

Gilbert: I remember there was a review—

Anglim: He had a small show, didn't he, there?

Gilbert: No, it wasn't at SFMOMA, it was at the de Young.

Anglim: I know that, the de Young, with the—

Gilbert: The de Young, but at L.A. County [Museum of Art], patrons from L.A. County were interested in the work before SFMOMA. So they bought it and I suppose we told somebody about that.

01-00:46:40

Anglim: I don't remember who the curator was. It must have been Janet, don't you think?

Gilbert: Very possibly.

Cándida Smith: Did you work at all with either Paolo Polledri or Aaron Betsky, with the design collection?

01-00:47:33

Anglim: I don't remember. I knew him and I liked him a lot.

Cándida Smith: Betsky?

01-00:47:41

Anglim: He was a good cook. He came to my house, I saw his shows, I went to his house, but that's— I liked him a lot. He was also a good friend of Sandra Phillips. We usually would end up together.

Cándida Smith: And Bob Riley, you also worked with.

Anglim: He's the one who bought the big *Tokyo Rose* piece of Paul Kos, which was reinstalled by Benjamin Weil. I think he was very good.

Gilbert: He's very passionate about Bay Area new media and was a great spokesperson for it.

Anglim: He certainly influenced [Pamela and Richard] Kramlich in their selection of work. He curated their show.

Cándida Smith: Did you have disappointments, in terms of artists that you really thought you should be able to place at SFMOMA but never could get them interested?

Anglim: Sure. I mainly propose something with Janet, I think, maybe with John, when he was here.

Gilbert: It's too easy to visualize sort of the conflict of wanting to make SFMOMA an international viable collection, and therefore pursuing international artists; but then maybe not having enough time to document or embrace the local talent, which is sometimes— The joy of watching a curator from Germany or France discover an artist here is really satisfying, when sometimes people here don't have the time to really do that. So that is always an issue. It's a realistic— People just have a certain amount of time and a certain amount of patronage money to collect within the year.

01-00:50:39

Anglim: One participation we have, every year the gallery—I guess it's partially for income tax purposes—gives artwork to different museums. Like the Paul Kos piece here [*Tower of Babel* (1988-1990)]. Also we gave a beautiful John Zurier. I wish I had the list. That is one of our participations. Every year. What have we given to Berkeley [Art Museum]? Rigo, Paul Kos. Paul Kos twice. And Stanford, once.

Cándida Smith: This is a list of things that came to the museum from the gallery. That's the top one. Then the bottom list are things that came to the museum personally, from either you or your son.

01-00:51:45

Anglim: Terry Allen. God, I gave the Philip Guston. Then I'm trying to think what we gave to Berkeley. I know we gave Paul Kos.

Gilbert: Oh, many things, over the years.

Anglim: I have the list of my gifts, but I don't have it at hand. So.

Cándida Smith: Do you try to spread your gifts around the region's museums?

01-00:52:17

Anglim: Also what's good for the artist. Like Stanford didn't have a work of Paul Kos, so I gave them one. Berkeley got one, too, this year. So that's one participation, I guess. We offer, but they don't always accept, because they don't need it or whatever. They have a Rigo [23]. No, they want a Rigo, but we still don't have it, yeah.

Cándida Smith: How much contact do you personally have with the directors? Do you have a lot of interaction with the directors?

01-00:52:58

Anglim: It depends. Which director? You mean Neal?

Cándida Smith: Neal, or before him, David Ross.

01-00:53:04

Anglim: Oh, David Ross, yes, because I knew him from— He used to be at Berkeley. I've known David all his life. I knew him when he was in Boston. So that's an easy relationship. I have a very nice relationship with Neal.

Cándida Smith: What about Jack Lane?

01-00:53:22

Anglim: I like Jack Lane. There was something special. He came to the gallery once a month to see all the shows. It's so good for the morale when someone comes from the museum to see our shows. As you know, he's retired from Dallas [Museum of Art]. He was here recently for about an hour. Wasn't that a nice visit?

Gilbert: Yes, it was a very nice visit.

Cándida Smith: Henry Hopkins?

01-00:53:50

Anglim: Not so much. I liked him, but he didn't come to the gallery. That's a long time ago. And [Gerald] Nordland, I had an easy relationship with, a nice one. He was here a couple of weeks ago.

Cándida Smith: From your perspective, do the directors have a lot of influence, in terms of what choices the museum—

01-00:54:13

Anglim: I don't know. You mean for acquisition?

Cándida Smith: For acquisition.

01-00:54:18

Anglim: I think the curators see it and they ask the director to review it. Don't you think that it's really the curator that promotes work?

Gilbert: But they've had some interest. It's hard to know, in terms of the relationships of the trustees to the director, what kind of conversations go on.

01-00:54:38

Anglim: I think that, like when Madeleine Grynsztejn wanted Vincent's work, it was her choice. Was Neal the director? Yes, Neal was there. I assume that very often, it's the curator's presentation.

Cándida Smith: Again, this is from your perspective or your perception, to what degree do you think the trustees or the prominent collectors in the region have shaped some of the choices that the museum makes?

01-00:55:15

Anglim: It's hard to say, since I don't attend those meetings. I don't know.

Cándida Smith: Well, you must know many of the trustees personally.

01-00:55:22

Gilbert: There's a young trustee that I like a lot, Robin Wright. She comes from a family of collectors. Very capable, very knowledgeable.

Cándida Smith: My perception is it's the curators who really take the lead.

01-00:56:10

Anglim: I hope so. I hope they get the support of the trustees.

Cándida Smith: But I do know, for instance, that MOCA in Los Angeles, I know that at one time, the trustees were very much driving acquisition.

01-00:56:24

Anglim: Oh, yes. People like [Eli] Broad and [Kenneth Griffin?], yes.

Cándida Smith: How important is SFMOMA for setting standards for the local art community? Does it set standards?

01-00:56:46

Anglim: I don't know quite what that means, though, setting standards. For a gallery? For—

Cándida Smith: Well, if it's an international museum, if it actually succeeds in being an international museum, does it play a role in telling the local art community, this is what you've got to rebel against? Or, this is the bar you have to strive for? What is the kind of role it plays within the local art community?

01-00:57:17

Anglim: Local or national? Local?

Cándida Smith: Local.

01-00:57:20

Anglim: Oh, I think it's quite present.

Gilbert: I think more and more it's become a voice of international recognition. It's been showing artists that already are of international stature. The last ten years or so, being involved in reassessing certain artists. Luckily, one of them was Bechtle, who is from here and not a household name internationally. That show was able to kind of give

him a second reading and rewrite his story for history, which is a great thing. Not many artists get that chance. The local community, I think, more and more looks to SFMOMA to have these international shows, not to make much commentary on the local scene, other than maybe the SECA. The last few years, they've had these Project exhibitions on the fifth floor. But even those seem to be largely outside work.

Anglim: You mean like Rudolf's show?

01-00:58:40

Gilbert: Well, sometimes they're assigned to associate curators or young curators. Just the one-room things. I would say, for the most part, those are artists from outside the region.

Anglim: SFMOMA doesn't initiate that many shows. Like the [Martin] Puryear show, Luc Tuymans, who's coming here, the [William] Kentridge—all those are invited shows.

01-00:59:06

Gilbert: Or Tuttle was. Then the Luc Tuymans. Olafur Eliasson. They're not people from here.

Anglim: That's what sometimes the museum is criticized [for], that they don't give much support to local artists. But my criticism doesn't inure to that because I think it's an international museum and it brings us visions from other sites. So I'm not critical of that aspect.

Cándida Smith: Do you think it does a reasonably good job, in terms of establishing relationships of the public with artists?

01-00:60:05

Anglim: You mean local artists? Or visiting artists?

Cándida Smith: Whatever artists the curators decide to show at any given time.

01-00:60:14

Anglim: I don't know that. Let me think. In which way can they do it? I don't know. Not in an opening, for sure. So many people. Personal contact is quite diluted. I don't know.

Gilbert: I think definitely, the photography collection, but also just the permanent collection. That, on a regular basis being up, is a great service to the community. Then the new library, the education center, I think is fantastic.

Anglim: Koret is marvelous.

Gilbert: You hear great things about that. Then just what the education department's doing with the community. I think those are really helpful, laudable things for the city, the community.

01-00:61:08

Anglim: Do you think the event that Tom Marioni is doing is—

Gilbert: That's an example. As part of the "Art of Participation" show, Rudolf invited Tom Marioni to do his weekly salon that has happened in his studio for years, to do it at the museum. That is a great opportunity for the public because it's a thing by invitation, normally, in Tom's studio.

Anglim: Wiley was the last one to talk, [James] Melchert talked. There were lots of interest— They didn't talk, they read. Have you been to any of those?

01-00:61:48

Gilbert: It's a little, nice window into this eccentric ongoing activity of many years at Tom Marioni's studio. So that's a *great* opportunity the museum is providing for people.

Cándida Smith: How often do you go to the museum, do you drop by?

01-00:62:07

Anglim: Oh, I go to see all the shows, whether it's at the opening, or sometimes— In the case of the Martin Puryear, I've been there two or three times. Two weeks ago, I went to see just the Participation. I like to go to the de Young and the [California Palace of the] Legion [of Honor], also. I like to go to the Legion on Sunday morning at nine. They open early, which is so nice. It's a nice museum to be in.

Cándida Smith: It's a beautiful setting.

01-00:62:39

Anglim: They have a nice café and it's pleasant.

[End of Interview]

Richard Cándida Smith is professor of history at the University of California, Berkeley, where he has directed the Regional Oral History Office since 2001. He is the author of *Utopia and Dissent: Art, Poetry, and Politics in California*; *Mallarme's Children: Symbolism and the Renewal of Experience*; and *The California Claim to Modern Culture: Painting, Assemblage, and The Political Imagination*. He is the editor of *Art and the Performance of Memory: Sounds and Gestures of Recollection*; and *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Feminist As Thinker: A Reader in Documents and Essays*.