

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

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley

SFMOMA 75th Anniversary

LORI FOGARTY

SFMOMA Staff, 1988-2002
Associate Director of Development, 1988-1995
Director of Curatorial Affairs, 1996-1997
Acting Director, 1997
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[Part of the manuscript has been sealed by Lori Fogarty until January 1, 2020.]

Interviews conducted by
Lisa Rubens
in 2006

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Interview #1: October 2, 2006
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01-00:00:00

Rubens: How did you come to the museum?

01-00:00:09

Fogarty: I started at SFMOMA in 1988. I was a youngster. Actually, the way I started was I came to SFMOMA about four years after college. When I was in school, in college, I had this little grant that was to study art of the Bay Area. I came up one summer and spent practically every day at SFMOMA, and I thought this would be where I'd love to work. In 1988, I got married to a San Francisco native. So we moved up to San Francisco, and I applied for a position in the development department. And that's how I started there.

Rubens: Amazing.

01-00:00:59

Fogarty: I had also worked in L.A., at the Music Center of Los Angeles. I was a fundraiser. I was a development person.

Rubens: Well, then, let's back up a little bit. I think what is so extraordinary about your rise, particularly, is that you only had a B.A. Is that right?

01-00:01:17

Fogarty: Right. Later on, when I, you know, was acting director for a year, my joke about it was it was like Take Your Daughter to Work Day, and, Hey, let's put her in charge. [laughs] I mean, it was serendipity and luck, and being there during a time of great growth. I came out of Occidental as an English major. My first job out of school was at the Music Center, doing development.

Rubens: Your first job?

01-00:01:43

Fogarty: L.A. Music Center. At a time of great growth there. So, you know, [I] really had a great opportunity to learn development.

Rubens: From '84 to '5?

Fogarty: I moved to San Francisco in 1988. It was an unbelievable time to join SFMOMA, because we knew we had the site for the new building. Botta had not been selected. The campaign had not really started, although a few people had made significant, quiet pledges. But it was at the very beginning. So to see the whole transformation of the institution during those twelve years was pretty amazing.

Rubens: If you would say just a couple more things about why you were attractive to the museum. You had had the experience with the L.A. Music Center, doing development.

01-00:02:30

Fogarty: How I was attractive?

Rubens: Yes. Also about the work you did on the Bay Area artists.

01-00:02:37

Fogarty: Yes, well, I was one of these English majors. I'd had, growing up, a lot of exposure to the performing arts, not a lot of exposure to the visual arts, and I had one of these great seminal professors at Occidental, who turned me on to art.

Rubens: Who was that?

01-00:02:50

Fogarty: Connie Perkins. I took art history courses in college, but I didn't even major in art or art history. I came up here to learn about California art. I had an internship at the now defunct *San Francisco Review of Books*. And so I guess probably, what made me attractive was that they were looking for a lot of people in the development department. It was a time of real retrenching. Jack Lane had just recently started. He had hired new senior staff. We had a new development director, who basically restaffed the whole office.

Rubens: Is that who hired you?

01-00:03:43

Fogarty: That was who hired me, Ginny Rubin. I think they were looking to fill several positions. I had had four solid years of development at the Music Center. I started out in corporate fundraising. That was really my focus.

Rubens: Well, could you talk about, then, what you did. Were you asked to do certain things?

01-00:04:02

Fogarty: The key transition was I did corporate fundraising and shared government fundraising with another colleague, who was fantastic. I learned a lot from her. Government fundraising in those days, we used to submit twelve NEA grants a year. Those were the days when there was a lot of, public—Well, there wasn't a lot of public support, but there were a lot of applications [laughs] for public support. I worked a lot with the curators, and I worked really closely with the program staff. And then when this colleague left, I—

Rubens: And who was that?

01-00:04:35

Fogarty:

Jeannette Redensek. Then I was promoted to oversee all of institutional fundraising. So I did foundation, government, and corporate, with a couple people working with me. I guess there would probably be two areas where I think it really made it possible for me to grow into more the curatorial administration. One was it was the opening of the museum, in 1995. I did a lot of fundraising—I was involved with the corporate aspect and the foundation aspect of the capital campaign, but with the opening, we raised a million dollars or so, just for the opening events. I worked a lot with the board, with Elaine McKeon, on that effort. So I think, had a different chance to kind of work in a different capacity. Then, right after we opened in '95, we were invited to apply for a couple of really significant grants. One was the Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, and one was a Pew Grant.

It became clear to me in the fundraising capacity that we needed to have a serious strategic plan. Believe it or not, at that point, the museum had no long-range plan, no strategic plan. It was kind of this moment that everything had been focused on that building and getting that building open, and we kind of dropped off a cliff after that. There was not a real rethinking of, who are [we] now in the community? Who is our audience? How have we changed? It's actually a lesson that I've really learned from that, most institutions, in the midst of capital projects, put everything into that structure and into that opening, and don't look beyond that. So I really instigated doing a strategic plan—mostly for fundraising purposes.

I worked closely with Jack on that process. It was a pretty transformative process, because it was when the board realized, and Jack realized, that we were a different institution than we had been on Van Ness, and that really, things were going to have to change. But again, it gave me a different kind of chance to work with the board and work with the senior staff. And so when my predecessor, Jack's wife, who had been director of curatorial affairs, Inge-Lise Eckmann left, it was actually the curators, a couple of the curators encouraged me to apply for the director of curatorial affairs position. I'm a development person. I go raise money, I don't know how to do this. But I applied. And, I was given that chance. I look back and think, "Boy, did they take a leap of faith for that!" Because, you know, I didn't have the curatorial—Well, I didn't have, you know, the background or expertise on the subject matter. I hadn't managed a lot of people, I hadn't managed big budgets. So it was a risk that Jack and the institution took on me, for sure.

Rubens:

So should we take a break just there, and now go back and talk a little bit more about the long range strategic plan [and] what the

development process was like? Is there a way you can just talk about the numbers in '88, versus in '96?

01-00:07:49

Fogarty: In terms of audience or budget?

Rubens: What kind of development money was coming in?

01-00:07:52

Fogarty: In 1988, at the old SFMOMA, it was about, I think, a \$7 million budget. The contributed income was more or less half of that. You know, the total audience in a good year at SFMOMA, at the old building on Van Ness, was probably between 200,000 and 250,000 visitors. So it was, you know, maybe not small, but a mid-sized institution. In 1995, when we opened that year, I think we had 800,000 visitors. I think the budget was getting up to being \$13 or \$14 million in those first couple of years.

Rubens: And your phrase, “contribute—”

01-00:08:40

Fogarty: Contributed revenue?

Rubens: Yes.

01-00:08:41

Fogarty: Fundraising revenue?

Rubens: What percentage was that?

01-00:08:44

Fogarty: Well, it was probably about half. So we started to raise, then, \$6, 7, 8 million a year.

Rubens: You mentioned three divisions—

01-00:08:54

Fogarty: Corporate, foundation, and government.

Rubens: And government, yes.

01-00:08:56

Fogarty: So it was non-individual, institutional giving.

Rubens: Right. It's a way to break down that half, roughly {inaudible}

01-00:09:01

Fogarty: Oh, you know, I would say probably—no, it wasn't half. I would say it was probably about 40 percent of the budget. I mean, still, individual

giving was still the bulk of the support. So maybe 35 to 40 percent was institutional gifts.

Rubens: Has that been broken down from foundation and government?

01-00:09:21

Fogarty: Yes. But don't ask me to—[laughs]

Rubens: Was government primarily—

01-00:09:27

Fogarty: Grants for the Arts. It was a mixture of state, local, and federal.

Rubens: All right, because the hotel tax will figure pretty much in that.

01-00:09:38

Fogarty: Yes, that was the biggest grant that the museum—I don't know if they still do, but that, at that time, was the single largest source of support.

Rubens: It was?

01-00:09:45

Fogarty: Yes.

Rubens: I can see what a watershed the new building is, of course. In those days, that's the goal, having the building. How are you organizing your day? Who are you meeting with?

01-00:10:03

Fogarty: Well, it was, you know, in the early stages, it was—On the corporate side, we had a corporate support committee of the board. I think that's something that SFMOMA has always done very well. They had a very strong board and strong corporate connections. What changed a lot during the time was that when I first started, it was corporate memberships and corporate grants to programs. The whole area of corporate sponsorship changed dramatically for a lot of institutions during that time. It became more marketing oriented, more sponsorship of exhibitions for marketing recognition. We got much bigger into that field.

Rubens: Let me restate that, because this is what I really know the least about. Are you saying that the corporate becomes bigger and more—

01-00:10:53

Fogarty: It becomes bigger, but also much more of a marketing focus than a philanthropic focus. Government support changed quite a bit during that time. That was when the NEA was under attack. The California Arts Council was shrinking. Grants for the Arts holds steady. But even that, in the late eighties, early nineties period, was a lot of the culture

wars and real questioning, especially in Grants for the Arts, about the allocation of city support toward large institutions, versus small and mid-size and multicultural organizations. That was another really interesting period to be involved with fundraising or with development and philanthropy in San Francisco, because the whole picture was changing. I had a chance to work very closely with—in some ways, with the major institutions in defense of Grants for the Arts; but also, building new coalitions with some of the small and mid-size and multicultural groups to see how we could better work together. There was a real fractionalizing. Kind of the big six, and then everybody else.

Rubens: Could you talk a little more about that, about what that coalition building was? Also the degree to which you had to convince your board or your—

01-00:12:17

Fogarty:

When I joined SFMOMA in 1988, I am not sure there was one person of color on the board. Most of the major institutions—symphony, opera, ballet, Exploratorium, ACT, and SFMOMA were considered kind of the big six—they received probably 60 to 70 percent of the funding from Grants for the Arts. They really were bastions of elite, monied San Francisco. There were some real direct attacks on Grants for the Arts, and on the whole city-support system, for not doing enough for the small and multicultural groups. A lot of it came around—and now I'm not going to remember what it was—but there was some sort of festival that was planned, I think in '88 or '89. An arts festival intended to be very multicultural and very diverse. And it bombed. So it caused, then, a lot of scrutiny about where the money went and how this all happened. The interesting thing about that, then, is there were very public accusations about the boards not having any diversity, about the city funding all going to the major institutions.

It actually did cause quite a bit of change in these institutions, to go back and look at how to diversify boards thinking about their relationship with the community in a new way. I'm sure not all six of those organizations were at the same place. But at SFMOMA, it really caused some self-examination. In terms of the coalition building, there was a direct attack on Grants for the Arts to completely dismantle the structure for city funding and to completely reallocate and completely change the way city funding of the arts was done. It was one of these classic San Francisco stories, where there was a committee put together. Every member of the Board of Supervisors and, you know, all the different factions got to nominate somebody. So it turned out to be a committee of fifty-two people. They met over a year, to scrutinize this.

Rubens: Were you on that committee?

01-00:14:47

Fogarty:

We had trustees that were on that. All the major institutions, their staff was really behind and supporting and preparing for this. What was interesting about it was that the big six organizations actually came together in a kind of mini-PAC to defend and to advocate for continued support. So that was pretty interesting, because then you're mad at colleagues from other institutions. On the other hand, what started to evolve in a really more positive way is that smaller and multicultural groups also saw, "Wait a minute, Grants for the Arts is actually a pretty good thing. And it's non-political, and it's very efficient. And we have a great advocate there." The whole reason that Grants for the Arts, or the Hotel Tax Fund actually happened was that the business community and the hotel community got behind it. If the support of the majors goes away, will we still have the support of the hotel community? So there started to be these coalitions with other groups and smaller organizations. That, for me, was much more interesting and much more rewarding than defending the status quo. It was an interesting chapter, in about '92, '93, where San Francisco and SFMOMA was an interesting microcosm of the scrutiny that was happening about the arts and their leadership, and their diversity, or lack thereof, in the country. And certainly, public support of the arts and how that was being scrutinized at the time.

Rubens:

Did you find any resistance from Lane or board members?

01-00:16:32

Fogarty:

Well, you know, not active. Certainly that's not Jack's interest at all. Jack is very much an academic art historian. He's very comfortable with high-level donors.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]]

Rubens:

But wasn't a roadblock.

01-00:17:01

Fogarty:

He wasn't a roadblock, but he was wanting it to go away. We had trustees who were involved, but interestingly, that was when a couple of our key trustees—namely Chuck Collins, who's African-American—joined the board because of this scrutiny about the diversity of the board. He actually ended up being really critical to advocating for the museum and advocating for Grants for the Arts, because he wasn't one of the good old white boys.

Rubens:

Chuck Collins? Do you know where he came from?

01-00:17:37

Fogarty:

He's still on the board. He's now the president of the—or he at least was until recently—the San Francisco Art Institute board. His wife

was on the Yerba Buena board. He's a developer, a real estate developer. I think, actually, he's head of the San Francisco YMCA, or Bay Area YMCA.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

Rubens: Would you attend board meetings?

01-00:19:49

Fogarty: I attended board committee meetings. I was involved with the committees. There was an advocacy committee, and a corporate support committee, and development committees that I was involved with.

Rubens: In terms of the competition—not at the big six level, but in terms of these rising, more mid-level, smaller community-representative groups—could you identify who they might be? Was this the Mexican Museum?

01-00:20:18

Fogarty: Well, the Mexican Museum was at that point—The director was really a kind of muckraker for some of these issues. Really bringing them to the fore and—

Rubens: Do you remember the name right off hand?

01-00:20:30

Fogarty: María Acosta Colón. I'm trying to think of who—

Rubens: Were some of the muralists?

01-00:20:39

Fogarty: There was one guy in particular, Jeff Jones, who was not affiliated with an organization in particular, that I know about. He would write these kind of white papers about institutional racism in the major institutions and city funding. He would manage to get publicity for them. There were a few other organizations, but it wasn't—it was—

Rubens: General climate?

01-00:21:07

Fogarty: Yes, exactly

Rubens: I wanted to ask one more question. City people that you may have worked—

01-00:21:15

Fogarty: Well, Kary Schulman is the director of Grants for the Arts, and has been for twenty-five years, and has weathered all of these political

battles that have happened. She would be a great person to talk to. Yes, she would really be *the* best person to talk to. Another person who would be interesting to talk to, in terms of putting the overall climate of the time in the arts community is John Kreidler. During that period, he was the program officer for the arts for the San Francisco Foundation. So he, in terms of understanding the climate for the arts and some of the political issues, the funding issues, those would be two great resources.

Rubens: Wonderful. To really elaborate a little bit more, we see the board changing. Is there anything else on this vein of when you're—What was the exact title?

01-00:22:30
Fogarty:

Associate Director of Development.

Rubens: Associate Director of Development. You came in to take Ginny's place? Is that right?

01-00:22:36
Fogarty:

Ginny Rubin's. She left in about mid-1996. And the whole development office at SFMOMA has been through so much transition. But the person who came after her was a woman named Bonnie Levinson. She was only there for, I don't know, eighteen months or so.

Rubens: I guess what I'm trying to get at is that under Ginny and you that the strategic plan—

01-00:22:13
Fogarty:

No, the strategic plan, the way that evolved was I encouraged the museum to really undertake this. Jack asked me to kind of take it on as project manager.

Rubens: Is it the museum's open and then the next day you say, "Let's do this"?

01-00:23:29
Fogarty:

Exactly. And, literally, it was in a fundraising capacity, to say, "OK, where are we going from here? What's our vision? What's our role in the community? What's our five year plan? What's our financial plan?"

None of that existed. We tried to write a couple of these grants, where it became pretty clear that there wasn't a clear vision for what the institution was, moving forward. So at that point, then, Elaine [McKeon] was chairman, Jack was still director. We interviewed several firms to do a strategic plan. Then I was the project coordinator, project manager for the planning process. I will tell you this seminal moment that happened with the strategic plan, which was the

consultant that we ended up working with, this guy named David Resnicow, Resnicow Schroeder Associates. They had done the communications plan for the museum when it opened. It was interesting. They were not a classic strategic planning firm, organizational development firm; they're really a kind of P.R. communications firm. But David's a very charismatic kind of high-energy visionary kind of person. And they're in New York. I think, again, there's this kind of SFMOMA—Somehow New York is always bigger and better, and they know what they're doing there, and that's going to rub off on us. So David led the strategic planning process.

We had a retreat for the executive committee of the board, in Meadowood. That is where I trace back a lot of the ideas that then started to happen in the following years, which was, one, around collection development, there was really this recognition that, "Wow, we have this new building, and basically, what people are seeing are the gaps in our collection." There needed to be a serious commitment of the board to collection development. David started talking about how MoMA in New York was doing it, and how the Whitney [Museum of American Art] was doing it. These creative, but hugely monied efforts were happening. So the whole idea of collection development, the whole blockbuster idea, came out of this discussion there. Up until that point, SFMOMA never had, really, a blockbuster exhibition. Even going into the new museum, the schedule for exhibitions, one, almost didn't exist, because again, there is so much thought to the opening of the building that the exhibitions that followed were not well developed.

The other issue that happened was John Caldwell had died suddenly, and Gary Garrels was still fairly new. But Jack's way of thinking and the curators' way of thinking there at that point was not—They were not blockbuster exhibition curators. They were very cutting edge contemporary art curators, in John Caldwell and Gary. Sandy Phillips has a very quirky view of photography. We didn't have an architecture and design curator when we opened the museum. So nobody was thinking about, "How are we going to get the big exhibitions?" It's surprising now, you think about that.

But again, David started talking about how museums get big exhibitions, and how you have to have a lot of money to secure these. Or you have to use the chits of your trustees and the loans that they are giving to other institutions. And starting to talk about exhibitions in a whole different way than the museum ever, ever thought about. Really, the first true blockbuster exhibition at SFMOMA after the museum opened was not until 1998, with the [Alexander] Calder exhibition, which happened after Jack left. Two years after Jack left. Or a year, at least a year after Jack left. So again, there was this whole, "Wow! We

have this building. People are going to expect that we're going to have these exhibitions. In fact, we have to have them to support the costs of this building."

So there were some real kind of seminal ideas that came out of there.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

Rubens: About how long [did] that take?

01-00:28:00

Fogarty: Well, beginning to end, from the very beginning until the document was actually approved was about a year. It went from about spring of '96, so we had been open about a year—or maybe a little even before that, early '96. I think it was approved in early '97, but a lot of this work was happening in those first few months, you know.

Rubens: And this Meadowood retreat, is that Napa?

01-00:28:27

Fogarty: Yes.

Rubens: How many people were there, about?

01-00:28:31

Fogarty: Oh, well, there were probably about, I don't know, twelve or fourteen trustees, and then the senior staff, so about twenty or so people.

Rubens: Including Lane?

01-00:28:40

Fogarty: Oh, yes. Sure. And so it was approved in February of 1997. And Jack resigned in May of 1997.

Rubens: Oh, oh. This is so important. Twelve to fourteen trustees. Are specific ones invited?

01-00:29:08

Fogarty: It was the executive committee. When you look at who that is, it is all the key people. It was Brooks [Walker] and Elaine [McKeon] and Gerson [Bakar] and—

Rubens: Collins?

01-00:29:19

Fogarty: Chuck was there, at that point. I'm trying to remember if Phyllis Wattis came to that. I'm not sure that Phyllis actually came. But it was the key people. It was the people who then went on to put a lot of the money in.

Rubens: What was the tenor?

01-00:29:50

Fogarty: Well, I think it was two things. I actually remember driving back with David Resnicow afterwards. I think there was this enthusiasm and excitement. We're a world class institution, we need to play at that level; we need to really be changing. I think a real awareness that we couldn't be the same institution that we were.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

Rubens: Inge-Lise [Eckmann] had left before—?

01-00:30:36

Fogarty: She had left. So the transition here is that I was in development, doing this project coordination in strategic planning. She left toward, I want to say the end of,—let's see. It was the end of 1995.

Rubens: Yes. Oh, I see, earlier.

01-00:30:57

Fogarty: She left, and I became director of curatorial affairs. Let me think about this.

Rubens: Well, I have it. I have '96.

01-00:31:05

Fogarty: Or, spring of '96.

Rubens: So as soon as this is launched.

01-00:31:10

Fogarty: Yes. So I was actually—

Rubens: This is launched, not completed.

01-00:31:13

Fogarty: Yes.

Rubens: And you move over.

01-00:31:15

Fogarty: Yes.

Rubens: I don't want to move on to your curatorial position quite yet.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

Rubens: So it's *because* she leaves that you then—

01-00:32:30

Fogarty:

That the position opened up. They did a search. They brought in outside people for interviews. I had to go through a whole interview process for it.

Rubens:

So let's go in two directions here. What made you want to do it?

01-00:32:45

Fogarty:

Well, what I learned in my development experience was what I really loved to do was working with the curators. I loved writing the grants because I worked very closely with them in articulating the vision that they would have for a project. At that point, what was really unusual about our development office at that time was it was very strong. Ginny Rubin was a very strong development director. My colleague who started out with me at exactly the same time on the foundation side was an incredible writer and very knowledgeable about art.

Rubens:

Did you say that name?

01-00:33:21

Fogarty:

Jeannette Redensek. We worked very closely with the curators. Not in a, "OK, here's my project, go fund-raise for it," but working together with them. "What is this project?" Drawing them out about it. That's what I really enjoyed. I loved taking an idea and trying to make it happen with them. So I felt like it was—I'd been there seven years. At that point, I was looking for another job. I had looked at other positions in development at other institutions. But I didn't want to leave SFMOMA; I loved the institution. I didn't want to leave working for an art museum. And yet, I didn't really see a place that I was going to go in development. So when I was encouraged to apply, I thought, "Well, you know, actually, this is doing a lot of the things that I enjoy." I would be working with the curators. I was not a curator. I was an administrator in the curatorial department. So working with them on budgets and schedules and workload and those kinds of things. Now, I had learned from being there for seven years, working so closely with them, I'd learned a lot about art, I'd learned a lot about exhibitions and that kind of thing. But I wasn't in the position of sort of saying, "Why don't we do an exhibition about this artist or that artist." I was trying to figure out a way to make their program happen. It was a new direction for me to take, but still within the institution I loved. And it felt like a great break.

Rubens:

If you would speak to a couple of the exhibits that you facilitated when you were in development. [Sandra] Phillips says that *Crossing the Frontiers* [1996] wouldn't have happened—

01-00:35:17

Fogarty:

Well, it was, definitely, all of Sandy's shows that I worked on. I remember working with her very closely on the Helen Levitt exhibition [1996] and getting funding for that. Working on *Crossing the Frontier* was—That was such a great exhibition. I also think about in the education area, one of my favorite stories is when—Actually Peter Samis and John Weber, when John Weber first came as chief curator of education, they had this whole idea of doing the interactive educational technologies—which was really Peter's brainchild, and John supported that. There was no money to do that. So we went after an Irvine Foundation grant. John and Peter and I flew down to L.A. This was probably 1993. This was pretty early, actually, in technology. We had to go to a computer store in Hollywood and rent a computer [laughs] to take to the Irvine Foundation so that Peter could show a CD of a project that he had worked on, to try to give them some sense of the potential of what interactive technology could do. We raised that first pilot grant that ended up funding his position to move into interactive educational technologies, and funded the startup cost for that. *That's* what I loved doing. The fundraising was a requirement that I had to do to be part of doing these projects. So that was one. I worked a lot on the first exhibitions opening at SFMOMA. Oh, God, what was that show? What was it called? The first exhibition that was a collaboration between all of the departments. Anyway. I worked a lot with Bob Riley on the media exhibitions. He was the founding chief curator of media.

Rubens:

Lane hired Sandy. I've had one preliminary interview with him. He, in a certain sense, took not a risk, but a leap of faith. And then she just rose to it. He gave her ideas, and she—

01-00:37:37

Fogarty:

Jack is—Not speaking on behalf of my own hire—he is a brilliant hirer of people, I think, in general. It's one of the things he does very well. Because he hired Sandy, he hired Bob Riley as the founding curator of media. And Bob was very young at the time, and that was really kind of his first real curatorial position. He hired John Caldwell, of course, brought him from Pittsburgh. Then he hired Gary [Garrels].

Rubens:

He had worked with Caldwell.

01-00:38:10

Fogarty:

He had worked with Caldwell.

[material sealed]

The group of curators that he brought in when he was first hired, he hired every single one of them—Sandy [Phillips], John [Caldwell]. Paolo Polledri was the first curator of architecture and design. Bob

[Riley]. They were really the team that put together what became the SFMOMA program, moving forward from there. Sandy's still there. And then later, he hired John Weber, too, to be the curator of education, who was there, I don't know, ten years or so, who really changed the whole profile of the education department, too.

Rubens: So the fluidity of you meeting with these curators and assistant curators is it literally they saying, "Hey, Sandy, give me an idea"?

01-00:39:05

Fogarty:

It was very collegial. I would go, we would have our list of grant proposals or deadlines. We'd know we were going to go for three NEA special exhibition grants, or we were looking for an opportunity for the Luce Foundation or that kind of thing. We would sit down with them. It was very much a partnership, where we would talk through, "What's the idea? What's the book?" That kind of thing. It was really their ideas, but I think they looked to the development department at that time as their partners in this. Almost like an editor would for an author, probing them on things, challenging them on things, asking them hard questions, and then helping them shape their ideas. Which is what I still love to do.

Rubens: Oh, I can imagine. '92, you just mentioned, that was so interesting about having to rent a computer. When did you start keeping track of things on computer? Do you recall when that came in?

01-00:40:04

Fogarty:

When I started at the Music Center we all shared a computer. I remember the actual meeting at SFMOMA, too, where there was a discussion about needing to have a presence on the worldwide web, and turning to somebody and saying, "What is that?" [laughs] I had no idea. And you think about that. That was not that long ago. Eleven years ago? Then we started collecting websites there, so—

Rubens: I have talk about that. But your role in furthering exhibitions, you've mentioned the highlights—

01-00:40:58

Fogarty:

Yes. But I think, you know, that was a big part of what I then did as director of curatorial affairs.

Rubens: Well, that's right. So we want to move to that.

01-00:41:11

Fogarty:

Yes.

Rubens: But it seems to me—The skinny was that you were asked.

01-00:41:17

Fogarty:

Well, I was definitely encouraged by the curators. “You can do this.” It was actually John Weber and Sandy Phillips who said, “Why don’t you apply for this?” They were very supportive. Then, when it happened, the trustees were very supportive. So I think it was just one of these things where it was the good thing, the good aspect of being an internal candidate, because I had people rooting for me. Then when I got into the job, people wanted to make it work.

Rubens:

And the relationship between the vision of the curatorial director and the long-range plan, those must have matched, in a certain sense.

01-00:41:53

Fogarty:

They did. I would say coming into the position at that time, it was tricky. Jack hired me. I felt great loyalty to him in a lot of ways. He had given me this chance. I thought he was brilliant at many things about being a museum director.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

Rubens:

Were some of the curators already articulating a vision?

01-00:42:44

Fogarty:

Well, I think there was a lot of soul searching and grappling with the vision as it was evolving during that time. Because none of them had been hired to be blockbuster curators. I think that they’re probably still very much institutionally grappling with that. Because that wasn’t what motivated them to do exhibitions. They wanted to do the kind of work that they thought was important for the museum to do. We actually wouldn’t use the word “blockbuster,” for example. We had all these other euphemisms of “magnet exhibitions” and things like that. But it was actually quite controversial when the Calder exhibition [1998] came to the museum because it was suggested by a trustee. The relationship with the National Gallery [of Art] was through a trustee. It ended up being a very high quality exhibition, but there was actually some curatorial questioning and resistance about how it happened, what the decision making process was. Is this the kind of exhibition that we’re now going to do?

Rubens:

Where were you on this?

01-00:43:57

Fogarty:

I guess I would say that I saw that, actually, the museum needed to have balanced exhibition programming, and that we had been probably, at least in those first couple of years, too skewed and still having the mentality of the *Kunsthalle*. It was a very cutting-edge, very niche audience that the museum had been used to programming to in the old

building. And seeing that we're going to need to have a couple of these big exhibitions that are more broadly appealing.

Rubens: What was that word again? What word did you use? *Kunsthalle*?

01-00:44:35

Fogarty: *Kunsthalle*. Which is, in Europe, they're actually museums that don't have collections. They just do special exhibitions. Usually, they're very niche exhibitions. They're not trying to draw large crowds. So there was a real ambivalence about that. I certainly didn't think we should be sacrificing quality or scholarship for these exhibitions. But it was a whole new territory. I mean, SFMOMA didn't know *how* to go get a [Henri] Matisse exhibition or a [Pablo] Picasso. Or even know what was going to be a draw.

Rubens: Didn't the de Young have what one might call blockbusters?

01-00:45:16

Fogarty: Absolutely. This is the interesting thing. It was at that period of time that the de Young started not to be able to do blockbuster exhibitions because their building wasn't seismically sound. Now, they didn't do so much blockbuster programming in twentieth century art.

Rubens: No. The Egyptians or—

01-00:45:36

Fogarty: Exactly. That was what the de Young did. It was a combination of a couple things. One is, people saw that, you know, we needed to be drawing 700,000 people a year, to be able to be doing the other exhibitions that the curators really wanted to do. The other thing was people realized, "Wait a minute, there are new expectations. This is a big museum, in the heart of downtown San Francisco, in the tourist district. People expect something different." It's kind of funny to look back now, because it's so engrained, I think, in museums, that they have to have these kind of exhibitions. But it was new territory for SFMOMA at that time.

Rubens: And the way you were talking about that New York reference point. MoMA [NY] had them. Others had them.

01-00:46:31

Fogarty: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. It was a little bit of the same recognition on the collections side, too, and on the acquisitions side. Jack had started the accessions committee. This was one of the things he really launched. Because up until that point, there were no regular accession funds. So he started this committee that individual members gave \$25,000 a year. So it was \$500,000 a year in acquisitions. And that started to build up a little bit. Sandy started a photography accessions committee. But in

this market, \$500,000 was buying very contemporary art, a lot of unknown artists. That was when there started to be this recognition that, “Wait a minute, if we’re going to be a real museum and a destination and have an outstanding collection, we’re talking about a whole different scale of numbers.” Phyllis [Wattis] started to think about acquisitions on that scale, and other kinds of collection deals were starting to happen. I remember Phyllis Wattis made a gift, or made the commitment to try to purchase a Wayne Thiebaud at auction. It was right as Jack was leaving. Literally in his last month. We didn’t get it at auction, but she went almost up to a million dollars. Nothing like that had ever happened while Jack was there. Nothing like that. The museum had never gone after a painting at auction like that. We’d never spent close to that amount of money. I would say probably the most expensive [work] that had been purchased when Jack was there was probably—He’ll know this exactly. It’s a Bruce Nauman work, but it was probably about, I don’t know, \$300,000 to \$400,000, maybe.

Rubens: But that big of a gap. That’s what I’m interested in.

01-00:48:35

Fogarty:

And then, you know, of course, a year later, she was, you know, spending \$20 million on—cumulatively. Probably the single most expensive [work] that she bought, a couple years later, was probably \$5 or \$6 million. It completely changed, again. That early thinking, then, about, “Wait a minute, this is how we’re going to have to be thinking if we’re truly going to compete with the other major contemporary art museums.”

Rubens: Is it Jack, or you, or who’s responsible for really pulling Phyllis along?

01-00:49:18

Fogarty:

I would give most of the credit to Gary Garrels. Jack was close to her, and she was, of course, very supportive during the campaign. She made a \$5 or \$6 million gift to the capital campaign when the building was built. But I would say it was kind of three of us, really. Elaine McKeon. The story with Phyllis is that in the fall of ’97—so Jack is gone—she thought she was going to die. She went into the hospital, and she really thought she was going to die. When she recovered and came out, she was bound and determined she was going to change a lot of institutions. In the course of about two weeks, she gave away somewhere on the magnitude of \$60 or \$70 million. SFMOMA got \$20 million.

The personal, emotional side of that relationship, Elaine actually really tended. She was at [Phyllis’s] bedside when she was in the hospital. Gary was who she truly trusted, in terms of the decision making about the artwork. You know, “What should we really buy? What are the

gaps in the collection?" I was a facilitator, in some ways, of this. I think she looked at me as almost like a granddaughter. Gary and I used to go over to her house. At this point, now, Jack's gone. So we're in between directors. Because of her physical state, we used to go over and sit in her apartment. You've probably heard this from others—her phrase was, "I want four star work for the museum." She wanted to buy for the museum acquisitions that were going to be like the guidebooks that would have the star: "You must see when you're in San Francisco." We would sit with her and pour over lists. She first wanted to see, "What are the key gaps in the collection? What don't we have?" And of course, it's this kind of combination of what don't we have, and then being opportunistic about what you can actually get.

Rubens: Yes, what's available.

01-00:51:34

Fogarty: But she was very rigorous about that process. It was Gary and I talking through this with her. Then it was that year that she really transformed the collection with those acquisitions. I mean, it started with the Eva Hesse, that was the first, which was a whole great story about buying that at auction, with her on the phone to Christy's or Sotheby's, I can't remember who it was. You know, sitting there it was Elaine, Brooks, Gary, me, and Phyllis, with a speaker phone, with the representative at Sotheby's. It was the highest price ever paid for an Eva Hesse work. It went up to \$2 million. By far, the most the museum had ever paid for anything. And there was Phyllis, sitting there, telling us how high to go. Gary on the phone to the—It was incredible. It was incredible. I mean, it was one of these things, you know. Again, I was like, "What am I doing here?" [laughs]

Rubens: And are you now acting director when that happened?

01-00:52:31

Fogarty: I'm acting director at that point. So anyway, it was an incredible time.

Rubens: So Eva Hesse was the first, and—

01-00:52:39

Fogarty: Eva Hesse was the first. The Mark Rothko was the second, which she actually did not buy out of her acquisition funds. We had deaccessioned a [Claude] Monet.

Rubens: That caused a big to-do.

01-00:52:50

Fogarty: Yes. And we used those funds. But then the next was—Oh, gosh, what did we buy next? I think a [René] Magritte, maybe. Maybe the Magritte was later. There were a few things in that winter. And then

the next big thing was all of the—A lot. That June. And by that point, David Ross had joined. But by that June, it was a [Piet] Mondrian, it was all of the [Robert] Rauschenbergs. It was a whole cluster of incredible acquisitions. [Peter] Voulkos,—

Rubens: [Marcel] Duchamp?

01-00:53:26

Fogarty: Duchamp, exactly.

Rubens: Voulkos? I don't know that name.

01-00:53:31

Fogarty: He's a California artist, ceramicist.

Rubens: Oh, Voulkos, from Berkeley?

01-00:53:36

Fogarty: Yes. Yes. Gary was actually very attentive to trying to make sure that we were thinking about California artists, even in the midst of these huge acquisitions.

[Begin Audio File 2 10-02-2006.mp3]

02-00:00:00

Rubens: It was not a focus?

02-00:00:04

Fogarty: In the thinking about collection building, there would be very nominal efforts any time in the acquisition program. There were a few curators, Janet Bishop was attentive to, and is attentive to California artists. Sandy [Phillips] would think about it. She would definitely think about California artists, and she would think about it in the nineteenth century. She was the one that started to go back into the nineteenth century and collect [Carl] Watkins and others.

Rubens: The nineteenth century collection had been sold prior to her?

02-00:00:36

Fogarty: Exactly. But, you know, it was—Certainly, with the board, they were not thinking at all about what we really need to do is make sure we have a strong California collection. Not at all. It was all about national and international acquisitions.

There wasn't a cohesiveness about, "Okay, we're going to—" It was looking at gaps. Where it started was the Hesse, that was very much opportunistic. That purchase was made out of the Ganz Collection sale. The Ganz were New York collectors, they sold their estate. They had great Eva Hesse, Jasper Johns, they had some Picasso in there. So it

was this kind of once in a lifetime auction opportunity. I guess there was one Hesse in the [museum] collection before that. But it was so opportunistic, because she has such a small body of work that, if we were ever going to get something, this was probably the one and only opportunity. The Rothko was very much strategic, “We need a great Rothko.” There was no great color-field Rothko in the collection at all, so when it came up for auction, that was not only opportunistic but long at the top of the list. It was interesting, actually, the way the Rauschenberg then happened.

The other key artist that Gary really focused on as an early modernist, or earlier modernist gap was Mondrian. In the end, Phyllis bought two Mondrian paintings for the museum. They had had no Mondrian paintings before that. The Rauschenberg came about jointly between Gary and David Ross, that we wanted to expand the Rauschenberg collection. David had actually had conversations, I think, with Rauschenberg’s dealer, while he was still at the Whitney, that Rauschenberg was going to sell some of the early work in his collection. Phyllis loves Rauschenberg’s work, so she was very open to that. And then the chance to get them in a large group.

The funny thing about the Duchamp was, when Gary was talking to her, in her apartment, talking about this acquisition and the difference it would make, he talked about the seminal role of Rauschenberg and where he fit into art history. It was Phyllis who actually said—and I’ll never forget this—she said, “Well, if we have all this Rauschenberg, don’t we need a great Duchamp?” I remember Gary and I thinking, “Wow, she’s good.” [laughs] So he went in search of a great Duchamp that would give that found-object earlier history to the Rauschenbergs.

Rubens: I wonder, maybe we’ll end with this detour about Phyllis. It was exactly my question. Was she good? I mean, was it—

02-00:04:07

Fogarty:

She was completely open, completely curious, very intelligent. Her strength was not that she had the best eye, because by this point, she could barely see. She would listen, she would hear, she would ask tough questions, she would probe. And then she was very open with the curators. So she was great, in that she continued to be so open and be so curious and so probative. Up until the very end. And make the connections. And continue to learn. I would say that there were some things—I’m trying to think who the—There was a California artist in the last group, in June, that was—He’s a painter. Do you have a list of the June acquisitions?

Rubens: No, I don’t.

02-00:05:06

Fogarty:

No. I'll have to think about it for a minute. There were some things that she actually wasn't crazy about, and yet Gary would be able to make the case to her that we really need this. She would listen to it and agree with it. And then there's some things that she just loved. The sale where we bought the Magritte painting—and she loved Magritte. But you know, we bought this great Magritte. And then she bought, on her own, and made as a promised gift to the museum, a [Andy] Warhol, *Red Liz*. She just loved that. She just thought, "I want that for my house." So she had things that she would buy that she loved, but she was also very open to what the museum's needs were.

Rubens:

Now maybe just to round out this conversation, though there may be a little bit more, it sounds [like] Garrels is pretty remarkable. Where did he go?

02-00:05:59

Fogarty

He's at the Armand Hammer Museum. He went to MoMA, he went to the Museum of Modern Art [NY]. He left SFMOMA to go to MoMA. Now, he's at the Armand Hammer Museum. He's definitely worth talking to. About a lot of things. About Jack, about his relationship to Phyllis and other collectors. I mean, he was really integral to relationships with other collectors like the Fishers [Doris and Don] and the Schwabs [Charles and Helen].

[material deleted]

Rubens:

I think just a little revisiting of the communities in San Francisco, how you're trying to bring in more people. You talked about it in terms of who's on the board—

02-00:07:38

Fogarty:

I think it was a sea change too in just how the museum marketed itself. And you know, this was a big change—

Rubens:

And who's in charge of that? Is that you?

02-00:07:50

Fogarty:

Jay Finney reported to me when I was deputy director, but there was— The interesting thing is, when I started at SFMOMA, it was called public relations. That's it. The position was director of public relations. It was all press. It was all just about getting reviews and other press. There was no real advertising or marketing done. That was another big thrust that came through the strategic plan, marketing. Of course, the guy who did the strategic plan with us was a marketer. And is a marketer. A big change, too, was starting to put real resources into marketing the museum. Everything you see now, from all the banners

in San Francisco to the pink section ads, that was very different for the museum to start to see itself marketing itself in that way.

Rubens: And then, of course, we didn't really talk about your position as curatorial director. We'll talk about what you liked and were happy about, and what you were doing. And then your jobs overlapped, right? You became the acting director.

02-00:08:54

Fogarty: Yes, I was director of curatorial affairs for just about a year, with Jack. It wasn't that long when he left, and I became acting director for about a year. He left in August of '97. David Ross came about June of '98. So it was a few months of being acting director. Then I worked for David for about three years.

Rubens: Yes, and you were called senior deputy director.

02-00:09:24

Fogarty: Yes. [laughs]

Rubens: And then you left in January of '01. Did Garrels leave before you?

02-00:09:28

Fogarty: Yes. Just before me. He left about a year before me.

Rubens: And Betsky?

02-00:09:38

Fogarty: Aaron Betsky left—I'm not sure exactly when Aaron left. A few months after I did. Yes. Just a few months after I did, that spring of 2001.

Rubens: Now, do you want to suggest to me, also, that there's some areas that I'm just going to look at for the next time that we meet?

02-00:10:00

Fogarty: Well, the thing that is—I mean, the transition and the way the institution changed between Jack Lane and David Ross.

Rubens: Right. Yes, and, what's the word? Right-sizing the museum? Correct sizing? Right-sizing? Was that someone's word?

02-00:10:20

Fogarty: Right-sizing the museum. What that must mean is that there was major growth in the staff and kind of infrastructure of the museum during that period. Jack was very frugal and very conservative, and he really kept the museum at about the same size, staff-wise. When the museum opened. Then there was this subsequent, with the strategic plan, looking at what the real resources were. So there was some pretty

significant staff expansion. Part of that was an endowment campaign, funded entirely by the board. \$60 million campaign, entirely funded by the board. And four-sixths of it, two-thirds of it, by three people. I wish I had these people at the Oakland Museum [of California], let me just say. [laughs]

Rubens: I bet you do.

02-00:11:19

Fogarty: Well, I don't. I just wish I had those resources.

It's an interesting thing, as you look at the directors in this institution. My theory about directors is if they're successful, boards look for somebody just like them; and if they perceive that they aren't successful, they look for the polar opposite. And you couldn't have more polar opposites than Jack Lane and David Ross. And Henry Hopkins and Jack Lane. Absolutely. And then David to Neal Benezra. Yes, so—

[material deleted]

02-00:13:17

Fogarty: I've thought a lot about this, coming here, because this museum is so engaged and so focused on its own community. When I think back to SFMOMA—I mean, I had one of these funny experiences recently. I actually went to see the Matthew Barney exhibition. I had an appointment there, and I took BART. So you kind of come out of BART, and you see what Third Street is and that whole area now, so much change and building and everything. I go see Matthew Barney and see what that kind of programming is, and who's there and everything. Then I come out here and I come out of the BART station [Lake Merritt, Oakland], and there are the elderly Chinese people doing tai chi. [laughs] I walk here, and it's filled with school kids. I thought, "Wow, this is a really different kind of place. It's just an interesting thing about what kind of place this institution has held in its community."

Rubens: When you took that job as curatorial director, did you ever think that—?

02-00:14:20

Fogarty: No.

Rubens: But it was such a smart step, in the end, I mean, right?

02-00:14:25

Fogarty: Such a *lucky* step. Yes.

Rubens: A lucky step, maybe. You had obviously shown your chops. But you might not have been a director of a museum. They want people with money experience and development.

02-00:14:42

Fogarty: It's been a lucky whole route, because when I left SFMOMA, I had qualifications that looked very good to a museum like the Bay Area Discovery Museum. And then it feels like it's come full circle here.

Rubens: Because now it embraces both of those.

02-00:15:02

Fogarty: Exactly. Because it's a collecting institution, and exhibitions, and curatorial work and all of that. And yet it's very education focused and community focused, like a children's museum.

Interview #2: October 9, 2006
 [Begin Audio File 3 10-09-2006.mp3]

03-00:00:00

Fogarty: I've definitely talked about this in a lot of the diversity work that I've done, which is just from parents who were firm believers. It wasn't called diversity work or multiculturalism then, it was called civil rights. And discrimination and prejudice. My parents were very keenly attuned to not having us be part of just an all-white community in Denver. Actually, my great story about this was that when I was in second grade. I grew up in Denver. They voluntarily bused me across town to an all-black school. It was 1968. It was an interesting year to do that. [laughs]

Rubens: Very. Yes.

03-00:00:43

Fogarty: At the time I was growing up, it was enforced busing in Denver, but it was very much something that my parents were behind, in terms of being part of the community and having us have exposure to different people. So it did come early. Absolutely.

Rubens: And where did that come from in them?

03-00:01:01

Fogarty: God knows. They were both from Iowa and grew up on farms. But a very liberal-minded tradition, good FDR supporters, Unitarians.

Rubens: That's one of the questions I was going to ask, was it a religion, was it politics, was it an ideology?

03-00:01:17

Fogarty: It was a religion and a politics, it was very much an ideology that we were raised with. It came very naturally, in that way.

Rubens: And it was not, then an unhappy or difficult experience for you?

03-00:01:31

Fogarty: Oh, no. Not at all. I mean, it was very much—Even in my college experience, it was very much—I went to Occidental, in L.A., and it was just part of thinking about being part of a community.

Rubens: Was Occidental as involved in the community then, or have—

03-00:01:49

Fogarty: No. It actually predated that. It's since become very focused on diversity. When I went there, it wasn't. Not nearly as much as it should be. Actually, I was surprised going there, that it was as upper-middle-class white kids as it was, without a lot of diversity. That happened in

the aftermath. But from a curriculum standpoint it was, I think, at that point.

[material deleted]

03-00:02:29

Rubens:

You mentioned that you worked with the advocacy committee of the [SFMOMA] board. What did that mean? I have to get clear on the board structure.

03-00:02:52

Fogarty:

At that point, it was a brand new committee. It was a committee to actually think about the museum's relationship in the community, particularly with elected officials. Up until that point, the museum had had not a lot of contact with anybody—maybe, except the mayor. It didn't have any kind of active program of government relations or contact to elected officials. So coming out of that whole cultural affairs task force, and the threat to Grants for the Arts, the board formed a committee. Chuck Collins was the chair. The committee's intent was to try to think about—not just on a reactive basis, but a proactive basis—having contact to particularly the Board of Supervisors, but to some extent, with state and federal elected officials, as well.

Rubens:

So Chuck—I was going to ask who on the board—

03-00:03:42

Fogarty:

Chuck was the key and it was really a fairly ad hoc committee, I would say. Meeting as needed. I'm not sure, I doubt that it still exists.

Rubens:

I was very interested in that fifty-two people on the committee that met for a year.

03-00:04:06

Fogarty:

The Cultural Affairs Task Force, which I'm not sure I remembered the name when I was talking to; I thought about it later. It was called the Cultural Affairs Task Force of the city.

Rubens:

My question in reviewing was, who of the trustees were on this?

03-00:04:21

Fogarty:

It was Chuck Collins; and I think the other person who was actively involved—and I'm not sure she was, per se, an SFMOMA representative—but Cissy Swig. The way that worked is that every member of the Board of Supervisors had a certain number of people that they could appoint. And then there were also places held for the Arts Commission and Grants for the Arts and other agencies. The whole trick of this became to get one of the supervisors to name people that were going to represent your interests, whichever side you were on. It was a very politicized time. It was pre-Willie Brown, and

Frank Jordan was the mayor. The Board of Supervisors, at that point, had a lot of power, much more so than they did under Willie Brown. It was much more polarized, too. They weren't elected by neighborhood at that point. Terence Hallinan was on the Board of Supervisors. What's his name? It was an interesting cast of characters. Sue {Burton?}, Angela Alioto. It was a different time.

Rubens: People who articulated community interest.

03-00:05:46

Fogarty: Yes. Very much so.

Rubens: I read the strategic plan. I thought it such an elegant piece.

03-00:06:45

Fogarty: Which one did you read?

Rubens: Oh, the '96 one.

03-00:06:47

Fogarty: That David Resnicow put together?

Rubens: Yes. Very simple, very straightforward.

03-00:06:53

Fogarty: Indeed.

Rubens: You know, I was pretty shocked at your statement about, the museum opens and it became very clear—

03-00:07:00

Fogarty: Yes. And that doesn't look anything like what most people would think a strategic plan looks like. Most people think a strategic plan is the set of goals and objectives and all of that. That was basically a vision document.

Rubens: It was a vision document. And it says, "The museum world has changed," everything that you had said. It did say evolving leisure market, erosion of traditional revenue strains and reprioritization of philanthropic and civic interests. You had said all that. Then it says, "The core goal is programming." And then to ensure that various constituencies are served on a regular basis. Then it calls for all sorts of things. You become curatorial then. You launch the strategic, then you become curatorial. Did you see yourselves as initiating, instituting, almost point by point what came out of this.

03-00:08:23

Fogarty: Yes. We realized that there was a real sea change that had to happen, and a lot of things started to flow from that. A reexamination of the

exhibition schedule, in particular. And so the director and, particularly, Gary Garrels, who was the curator of painting and sculpture, thinking much more about the kinds of exhibitions that were going to attract audiences, rather than the hot European artist of the moment. There was a much greater focus and investment in marketing, a new position created in that area—

Rubens: Now, who was that?

03-00:08:59

Fogarty:

Well, when I was hired as director of curatorial affairs, there was another position that was created, called deputy director for external affairs. We had those parallel positions during the transition. Bonnie Levinson was hired in May of [1996] [?]. She and I were together during the period after Jack Lane left, and then for the first few months of when David Ross came. The idea with that was that I would oversee curatorial affairs, exhibition programming, acquisitions, the curators, that piece. She would focus on development and marketing. Then she created a position under her of director of marketing and communications. That person was Jay Finney. That was really the first time the museum, with Jay, had a real legitimate marketing person in the museum. That made a huge change. The resources that were put into marketing and advertising, the thinking about branding, and all of these things that we think about now in museums, but were pretty new—at least to SFMOMA—at that point, started at that period. It was very much thinking about exactly what that plan called for.

What that plan didn't really have, though, accompanying it, was any kind of financial plan. There was no business plan that went with that. So that was the other shoe that fell in the next couple years is, "Okay, we're going to put all this money into blockbuster exhibitions, acquisitions, marketing efforts. How are we going to pay for this?"

Rubens: So that would be good to make a distinction, because it says, "draw upon the board, access what are the revenue streams," and something about—

03-00:10:45

Fogarty:

Right. There was no thought, no actual staffing assessment of what this was going to cost, what the positions were, what positions were going to be added, because as we—I think we talked about this last time.

Rubens: Yes, we did.

03-00:10:55

Fogarty:

Jack was very cautious and conservative in the budgeting. We went into that new museum, and only those absolutely irrefutable positions

that had to be added—I mean, store, guards, those kinds of things—were added. There was no increase in the curatorial staff. There was no increase in the registration staff, installation staff. A lot of those core functions were exactly the same as they had been in the old building. So you know, that was part of the next step that followed. Here we have this great strategic plan, we’re going to take this institution to the next level. How are we going to structure it and pay for it?

Rubens: It’s suggesting they need a war chest of \$3 million, they need a line of credit, they need to sponsor benefits, and to have the trustees—It says, “Ask trustees to make personal loans.” So this is a guide.

03-00:11:49

Fogarty: Right.

Rubens: But this is not a plan about how to get it.

03-00:11:50

Fogarty: Right. And that really followed then.

Rubens: But are you on that side, then? No. Because you move into curatorial.

03-00:12:01

Fogarty: Well, you know, curatorial affairs is one of these positions that’s maybe more common now. Basically, the way this position evolved was that when Jack started at the museum, there was a chief curator position. That was Graham Beale. Then when Graham left, Inge-Lise Eckmann became acting chief curator. She had been the chief conservator. She wasn’t a curator, but she was the administrative oversight for the curators. What everybody realized is, “This is really good. Because curators really want to be curators. They don’t want to oversee exhibition budgets, and other departments, and workload and scheduling and all of those kinds of things.” They actually made that, then, a full position, director of curatorial affairs. That was a position that I assumed. It was a position that worked closely with the curators on scheduling, and supported the acquisition process, but I wasn’t a curator. It made the curators have more equitable circumstances, not to have one of them be the chief curator. Theoretically, anyway. Painting and sculpture still rules the roost. But that was the idea. I think this is why, then, it evolved to a broader deputy director role. I had a background in development and I had done a lot of work with marketing, because I had been on the sponsorship side. So it was a little of everything.

Rubens: You had written grants with the curators.

03-00:13:36

Fogarty:

Right. So most of it, is a big part of what I did in curatorial affairs was to work with all of the curators in the kind of scheduling and balancing of the exhibition program, work on all of the exhibition budgets, scheduling, traveling exhibitions, contracts for exhibitions coming in—the whole acquisition process, which is a machine. We had an acquisitions committee of the board, and a whole process for approving acquisitions. My position supported all those acquisition committees. It was still working closely with development and with marketing. It was a little bit of everything. During the one year I held that position while Jack was there, we were completing the strategic plan, which I was still involved with, so it was a little bit of a Jack of all trades.

Rubens:

So one year—

03-00:14:23

Fogarty:

One year while he was there.

Rubens:

Anything you want to point to, particularly, that you—

03-00:14:27

Fogarty:

Well, I would say—[pause] I loved working with Jack. It was really interesting.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

But working with him, I learned *so much*. He was a very fine museum director. I learned a lot in that year.

Rubens:

Could you point to something? What—

03-00:15:03

Fogarty:

He was a rare, is a rare balance of being very passionate about the art and really having the highest scholarly standards and standards of quality. And yet, you know, he says that his greatest training as a museum director was being a captain in the navy. He still was very committed to running a tight ship, paying attention to internal operations—everything from very, very conscientious on the budget, human resource issues, internal issues as well.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

He just was a person of great—is a person of great, great honesty and integrity.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

I think a lot of people, to this day, realize they didn't know how good they had it under him. So I learned a lot that year. I still think that most of what I know now as a museum director, I learned from Jack.

Rubens: Do you keep in touch with him?

03-00:16:28

Fogarty: Not that regularly, but he was a reference for me for this position. When I thought about leaving SFMOMA to go to the [Bay Area] Discovery Museum, he was one of the people that I talked with. When I thought about coming here, he was one of the people that I talked with. The funny coincidence is that I left SFMOMA to be the director of the Bay Area Discovery Museum. My predecessor went to be the deputy director at the Dallas Museum of Art. It's like we switched jobs. She and I are very good friends, and regular—

Rubens: Who's that?

03-00:16:58

Fogarty: Bonnie Pitman. And regularly keep in touch, so—

Rubens: That's so interesting. And at the same time, being able to very clearly point to certain limitations.

03-00:17:14

Fogarty: Yes.

Rubens: Yes. So one year.

03-00:17:20

Fogarty: One year.

Rubens: And he's gone.

03-00:17:22

Fogarty: He's gone in August or September—I think Labor Day was the transition point—of 1996? Is that right?

Rubens: Yes. I think so.

03-00:17:33

Fogarty: No, no, '97.

Rubens: '97, Yes.

03-00:17:35

Fogarty: '97.

Rubens: Yes.

03-00:17:36

Fogarty: '97, right. And the big story of that year was Phyllis Wattis.

Rubens:

Right.

03-00:17:42

Fogarty: Completely.

Rubens:

We did that story, which is really lovely. I need to ask one thing. The numbers that are going up.

03-00:18:01

Fogarty: Yes. It was astronomical.

Rubens:

[Lane's] not used to working in a world that's that big. Is there anything to be said—I did ask you who's driving how to build the collection? You're talking about filling in the gaps. You talked about opportunities that came along you couldn't miss. But is there anything to say about what was not collected? Because—

03-00:18:31

Fogarty: I think what was driving Phyllis' acquisitions was opportunities that would not have happened in the course of regular museum acquisitions. Because at the same time, the accession committees are going along. You know, there were three accessions committees. Photography, architecture and design, and then the main accessions committee.

The budgets, those curators, particularly in photography—Sandy Phillips was out there not only spending the money that she had from accessions dues, but getting collectors to buy things for the museum, getting collectors to donate works from their own collection. So Phyllis was not buying photography. She was not buying emerging artists or young artists. She was buying blue chip [laughs] painting and sculpture that would've been completely outside what a regular accessions budget would be able to afford. The other thing is, there were all of these other deals that were happening, not so much that year, but in subsequent years. The Logan Collection, the Ellsworth Kelly purchase. So there was other major acquisition activity happening. Phyllis's was of a very particular kind.

Rubens:

I ask this in light of your position as director of curatorial affairs.

03-00:20:02

Fogarty: My role in this, I was not selecting the work. I was not saying, "This is what we should buy," or "This is what we shouldn't." There's an elaborate process in a museum—at least in SFMOMA's case—where there's certain approvals, and committee approvals, and so forth. When we got into some of the more complicated structures of promised gifts and fractional gifts, I was the backup person who was

trying to make sure the process happened correctly, make sure the documentation happened, making the contracts with donors and that kind of thing happen. Strangely enough, even though Phyllis was entirely buying these works out of her own funds, they still had to go through an approval process within the museum. A lot of that kind of behind the scenes work.

Rubens: Because they were promised?

03-00:20:56

Fogarty: Because they were promised. Exactly. Because they were promised gifts to the museum. Or bought for the museum's collection. I would say with her, especially—not so much necessarily the other donors—I had a close personal relationship with her. The curatorial guidance was coming from Gary. But I think having the relationship of trust with the institution at the time, I was part of that, I would say.

Rubens: Was there board opposition? Were there people who said, “We don't like what Phyllis is doing?”

03-00:21:36

Fogarty: No. People were thrilled. People couldn't believe it. I think there were some—The one question that did come up, because this was the one major acquisition that did not directly involve her funds, the purchase of the Rothko. The museum, in the spring before, while Jack was there, had deaccessioned a Monet. Those funds were earmarked fairly specifically. The accessions committee voted that the funds should go for a signature work of a major artist. I think it was post-1945. So they, even at that point, knew that \$7 million was not going to go buy a Picasso or a Matisse. But what Phyllis and other people didn't want it to do was that \$7 million gets piddled away on small acquisitions. Everybody had always known that an early Rothko—or not an early Rothko, a great Rothko—was a major gap in the collection. But there wasn't the—it happened at auction. So there wasn't a chance for thirty-five people to sit around [and] say, “Should we get this? And how much should we pay for it? And—” It happened, and Phyllis really did drive that. She was able to because she was putting up all of these other funds for acquisitions. She could be the one to say, “This is the one we're going for.”

I wouldn't say there was opposition. I would say there was some questioning about how that happened. But I think people couldn't believe what was happening. I think she put it out there, in some ways, as a challenge to the board: “I'm doing this; I can do this; I'm in a position to do this; but everybody should be helping in some way with this effort.”

Rubens: You did mention that painting and sculpture always—

03-00:23:39

Fogarty: Rules the roost. I think that that's true in every modern and contemporary art museum. I'm not sure in other general museums. Maybe at the Met [Metropolitan Museum of Art], it's you know, Egypt or something, but by far, the bulk of acquisition funds and the bulk of exhibition funds. And you know, by definition, that's the market. For painting and sculpture. But it's interesting, because at least prior to the last, ten years or eight years, actually, the strongest part of the museum's collection was photography. It still is one of the strongest parts of the museum. But the interest of the key board members was much more, at that time, in painting and sculpture.

Rubens: And so is it your job as deputy director of curatorial affairs to try and get some kind of balance?

03-00:24:26

Fogarty: Yes. When Gary was hired, after John Caldwell's death, he was actually hired as chief curator, *and* curator of painting and sculpture. That caused a huge amount of tension. Even though there was still a director of curatorial affairs. What's the role of chief curator? What's the role of the deputy? And this was Inge-Lise. This was before my time. By the time I stepped into the position, he was not playing an administrative role at all. But just favored-child status, in terms of Jack's interest and the interest of the trustees, it was a favored status. Probably still is.

Rubens: So the strategic plan, you were saying, didn't have a financial plan. It's asking the museum to come up with a vision. Was there ever a plan written out about what we should be collecting?

03-00:25:29

Fogarty: Oh, what we should be collecting, a real collecting plan?

Rubens: Yes.

03-00:25:33

Fogarty: Yes and no. Each year the curators present to the accessions committee their priorities, and list—either by individual artist, in some cases, in the painting and sculpture department; by category—certainly, in photography, it's both, by category and by individual artist. So they weren't so much, at least at that time, incorporated in the strategic plan. But the curators did have to actually put together a kind of strategy for where they wanted to focus and present that to the accessions committee of the board.

Rubens: Is it Jack who generates that?

03-00:26:11

Fogarty:

Each of the curators—Well, Jack, yes, the director. Yes, yes. I think it's probably still pretty much in practice. It became kind of an institutionalized procedure, that the first accessions committee of the year, the curators would present the priorities. Not necessarily presenting actual objects for acquisition, but a strategy. Here's where we are. Here are our strengths; here are our weaknesses; here are some of our priorities; here's an artist we really should have in the collection, that's not represented; here's where we need to, you know, build a category of the collection.

Rubens:

So one could look at those accession committee meetings, and that's where I would actually see discussion of what works, specifically.

03-00:26:50

Fogarty:

Yes.

Rubens:

One last piece, I think, on the strategic plan. It says, "The museum needs to better integrate its planning and operational process. We need to be a resource to one another, not a hierarchy." But when push comes to shove, it's the director, is that right?

03-00:27:12

Fogarty:

Right.

Rubens:

Well, how about when you come to assume being the interim director?

03-00:27:21

Fogarty:

Becoming the interim director, it was an interesting thing, because Bonnie Levinson and I were both deputy directors at that point. Theoretically, we were sharing that role because we had the same title. She'd only been there three months. I'd been there, at that point—I don't know—eight years. I had a really close relationship with several board members. It was awkward for a while, because we were supposed to be sharing the role; and yet, in terms of, really, the day-to-day functioning of the museum, I was much more in the acting capacity.

Rubens:

Where had Levinson come from?

03-00:28:04

Fogarty:

The New York Public Library.

[The next sentence is sealed by the narrator]

So, we shared it, we were co-acting directors. I would say she was playing a little bit of a lesser role, in that regard, in terms of really supporting the board and that kind of thing. Pretty quickly, there was a search process, of the board—set up even before Jack left, because, he

gave us three months notice. So they were set up. Interestingly, David Resnicow, the same person who wrote the strategic plan, led the search committee.

Rubens: Who's making those decisions?

03-00:28:48

Fogarty:

The board. The executive committee of the board. And essentially, the executive committee of the board—not essentially, they *did*. The executive committee of the board was the search committee. So Elaine McKeon headed the search committee. It was a group of fourteen people. David had never done a search before, but knew the institution and knew the museum community. He led a search that yielded three finalists pretty early, pretty quickly, in comparison to how long most searches take. I think by January or February, the three finalists were determined. I was the only staff member on the search committee. I'm not even sure—Well, I was at all the meetings. I'm not even sure I could be considered a member of the search committee. I was a resource, maybe, to the search committee.

Rubens: You're acting director, though.

03-00:29:49

Fogarty:

Yes. But I was there. I met all three final candidates.

Rubens: No, no. I'm saying, why wouldn't you be there?

03-00:29:57

Fogarty:

Well some institutions include staff in search processes for directors, and some don't at all. I think David's appointment [David Ross] was made in, I want to say March or April of that year, of '98. He was onboard by about June. So it was really about six months or so of really serving as true—By the time he was appointed then, he was starting to engage, even though he wasn't there full-time before June.

[The next two pages are sealed by the narrator]

David is exciting, he's funny, he's charismatic, he is populist, he's edgy. Hope, and enthusiasm. It was also his arrival, very shortly after his arrival was when the Rauschenberg acquisitions were announced. And it was like, Wow. You know? Let the good times roll.

The economy is booming. We opened, that summer, the Keith Haring exhibition, which attracted, you know, great attention and audiences. Look at all the crowds were getting. And this was after a pretty quiet period of not having blockbuster exhibitions and attendance dropping after the first year. And the next exhibition after that—double header, both at the same time—Calder and Diebenkorn, from the Whitney. So

that was record attendance, that fall. Lines out the door and—it was extraordinary. Big marketing effort behind it. So it was a really exciting time, and very booming.

Rubens: What's your job then, at the time?

03-00:38:25

Fogarty: He promoted me to senior deputy director

[The next sentence is sealed by the narrator]

Part of the reason for this is that David—[pause] David had a system at the Whitney that had a single deputy director. He didn't want to deal with any internal operations. He wanted a chief operating officer who was dealing with all of the, day-to-day work. So when I became senior deputy director, all of the other positions, other than external affairs, then started to report to me.

Rubens: And external affairs remained—

03-00:39:09

Fogarty: Development and marketing remained with Bonnie. Let me think here. She was like a pretty much—Trying to think what year it was. I think it was January, '99. It was pretty quickly after David came.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

So she left, but before she left, I had taken on the reporting relationships for everything but development and marketing. So finance, facilities—those are the main areas. Pretty much those two areas. Then when she left—She had hired under her, a director of development. Then I had that position, and the director of marketing position. So basically, at the height of my insanity, I had, like, seventeen direct reports.

It was a structure that, in some ways, made sense for who he was as director, because he wanted to be out there making deals, having the relationships with the top board members, traveling around the world getting great exhibitions for the museum. He wanted somebody internally—and this is exactly the situation he had at the Whitney—running the day-to-day of the museum.

Rubens: And I assume this came with an increase in pay and—

03-00:41:36

Fogarty: It did. The hard part about it was—There was the personal part about it, which is that I had a young child.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

Because he was on overdrive. He wanted to do everything. He wanted to—no idea was a bad one. He wanted to pursue everything. It really, really stretched the institution, in terms of staff, resources, focus, attention.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

03-00:44:17

Fogarty: Gary left—Let’s see. He left, I guess—Well, he announced his departure in late 1999, and left in early 2000. The one project we were working on that, you know, was exciting and, you know, that I took a lot of pride in, we did the big exhibition of the Anderson Collection, which was three floors of the museum. Gary and I were the main liaisons to the Andersons. He left before that show, in the spring before. The show was in the fall of 2000. He left in the spring. He came back to install the exhibition and stayed involved. I stayed through that exhibition because I had actually very much committed to Hunk Anderson that I would see that exhibition through. But then left right after that.

Rubens: You knew you wanted to go.

03-00:45:08

Fogarty: Yes.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

03-00:46:18

Fogarty: I think this is a challenge for probably a lot of modern and contemporary art museums, where they’re dealing with either living artists or galleries representing those artists or estates, where the lines are really blurry in terms of who’s benefiting, and what the gain is, and what the motivation is for doing an exhibition. And it just became—

Rubens: And who’s setting the standards.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

03-00:47:42

Fogarty: Yes, and what started then ending up happening, We had the strategic plan. We didn’t have a business plan. We put together, then, a very solid business plan, to say, “Look at all these goals. What’s it going to really cost?” That led to an endowment campaign, a \$60 million endowment campaign, that was all board. \$40 million, I think, of the \$60 million were given by three trustees. It was boom times. The museum was able to hire staff, we were doing these tremendous

exhibitions. But, things started to turn a little bit. The stock market started to decline, the Anderson Collection happened, people were leaving. The board actually realized, “Wait a minute. It’s great to have this booming museum and these big crowds and these great exhibitions, but we need to have some level of fiscal responsibility.” I gave my notice in, I guess, November, end of October of 2000, and left in January. Gary was gone. Aaron left shortly thereafter.

Rubens: And when does Ross—?

03-00:49:12

Fogarty: He left in July of that year.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

Rubens: Did you take some time off?

03-00:50:58

Fogarty: I took two weeks, and then I started at the Discovery Museum.

Rubens: What was attractive to you about going to the Discovery Museum?

03-00:51:10

Fogarty: It was two things. The attraction for me was to try to be a director. I’d been a deputy director, and I felt like I had learned a lot about running some of the day-to-day aspects of the museum. But it wasn’t my vision, it wasn’t my direction, it wasn’t my culture to create. It was a small institution that I could say, “Yes, I think I could go do this.” It was a reasonable size, and yet it was in a capital campaign and a capital project, so there was exciting transformation. Part of it was personal. I just felt like SFMOMA had taken a huge toll. And so to go to a family-friendly, children-friendly institution was really appealing. Part of it was just, you know, I was really exhausted from [SFMOMA]. So it was good timing.

Rubens: One thing I never asked you about, that I meant to, was about other competing—I meant to ask about if San José [Museum of Art] represented any competition.

03-00:52:50

Fogarty: No. The one thing about San José that was kind of interesting. No, they were not perceived as competition. But the interesting thing was that the Whitney actually had had a deal with the San José Museum of Art. You may remember, there were a couple of big exhibitions, long-term exhibitions that came, of the Whitney’s collection, to San José. Brokered by none other than David Resnicow. It was when the Whitney was actually adding a floor to their building, and did a collection-sharing arrangement with San José to lend great works from

their collection. The deal with San José was that they were supposed to be offered the first right of refusal for any exhibition coming to the Bay Area. That didn't happen. SFMOMA got the Bill Viola exhibition [1999] from the Whitney, got the Keith Haring exhibition [1998], got the Diebenkorn exhibition [1998].

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

03-00:55:37

Fogarty:

Well, you know, the Andersons are a really interesting case because they had had a disaffection with the museum before. I'm not sure if that was really with Jack, or even before his time. There had been an effort made to do an exhibition of their collection—actually, I think it was during Jack's time—but the museum had requested that the Andersons pay for at least part of it. I think they were requested to pay for the catalogue. They said, "Forget it." This is one of those things that happens when you're interim director. We decided to make a proposal to the Andersons. The proposal was to do a first-class exhibition of their collection, pretty much no strings attached. They were not making a commitment of their collection to the museum; they were not making any specific promise; and the museum paid for every bit of it. Now, they did some things. They have staff for their collection, and it required an enormous [commitment of] their staff, and their staff they paid for. Much of their collection we photographed for the catalogue, and they paid for that. But the direct outright expenses were the museum's. It was run like clockwork. Hunk Anderson is very business-like, and very structured. Gary and I would meet with him once a month. We would have an agenda, and we would have timelines, and we would have deliverables, and it was run like that. He loved that. He liked Gary and I. We're both kind of Midwesterners, you know? And he liked that. After I left, I'm not sure exactly what happened.

[The next paragraph is sealed by the narrator]

Rubens:

Yes. Well, do you want to point to anything else that we—I think I will go around for a while and do some more, and then come back to you for a wrap up. But is there anything that you want to point to that we may not have—

03-00:58:21

Fogarty:

I would just say that—No, I think [chuckles] you've covered it. You probably got me to say more about these situations than I've ever said before.

[The next several paragraphs are sealed by the narrator]

Rubens:

The Logan Collection is?

03-00:59:58

Fogarty:

The Logan Collection is a collection of hundreds of works of contemporary art. *Very* contemporary. They [Kent and Vicki Logan] collect a lot of the British bad boy artists—Damien Hirst and that group—a lot of very contemporary Asian work. While Gary was there—so this was in 19—This was before David came, so in 1998, they made a year end gift of 50 percent fractional interest in their collection, which was, like, 350 works. They had collected that in about five years time. [chuckles] Then they went on and collected a huge additional group. Again, this is one of those very dicey—or in my opinion, very delicate—relationships. It involved putting somebody on the board; it involved them making a commitment of an endowment gift; it required a commitment of certain exhibitions of their work. So that was done in the first round. While I was there, there was a whole negotiation, not concluded before I left, of what we called Logan Two, which was a second big group of work. It's an interesting thing that's happening right now because these were all precipitated by the tax law that was in place at the time, which is, you know, a fractional-gift situation that has been repealed by Congress. So all these museums—not just SFMOMA, but MoMA in New York, and lots of particularly modern and contemporary art museums—benefited greatly from this ability for donors to take tax deductions when they make a gift, and every time they give an additional fraction, the value of that at the time they make the gift. So not based on the original value, but the value of the work at the time. So as works appreciate, it's a great tax deal for them. So all of these things were involving fractional gifts and promised gifts to the museum.

Rubens:

This tax law is going to be—

03-00:62:01

Fogarty:

It's been repealed, and now all the museums, especially, you know, the major art museums, are trying to get it repealed. I think it's been passed as tax law.

Rubens:

Will that bear at all on whether the gifts will actually come? Whether the paintings will actually come?

03-00:62:16

Fogarty:

It could. It could be *dire*, really, for some of these gifts.

[End of Interview]

Lisa Rubens is an historian with the Regional Oral History Office. She directs projects on California Culture and the Arts, Architecture and Land Use development, University History and the History of Social Movements.

Dr. Rubens earned her Ph.D in History, as well as a Masters in City Planning, at UC Berkeley. She has published monographs on women in California and on international exhibitions and is currently completing a book on San Francisco's 1939 Worlds Fair.

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