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PAMELA BURTON

ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interviews Conducted
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Santa Monica and Ojai, CA (and environs)
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BIOGRAPHY

CHILDHOOD

Growing Up in California and New Mexico

I was born in Santa Monica, California. My father had just returned from the war and he was a pilot. My mother and my dad had four kids in about six years and we were all very close together. In fact, my sister and I were what they call Irish twins. We had a wonderful childhood in The Pacific Palisades where my father was involved in building houses after the war and getting the vets into housing. It was a big deal. We lived in the Pacific Palisades until I was about six. My father had attended UCLA in engineering and so he went after another job to use his newfound skills, and that was in New Mexico. We lived near Alamogordo, New Mexico, which is where all the testing was being done. We were only there for about a year, but we loved it.

White Sands, NM and Redlands, CA

My sister and I would go to White Sands, New Mexico with our parents and explore, and just be immersed with this incredible environment—all this pure white sand everywhere. It was a fun time for the family during those years. Then after New Mexico, we moved to Redlands, California, where my father had another wonderful engineering job that he loved. We had a house and my father and my two brothers wanted to have a swimming pool more than anything in the world; and so, and we were the only [ones] on the block who had a swimming pool. Everybody would come over to our place to swim and to learn to swim. There was a wonderful tile mermaid on the bottom of the pool—very sexy—and everybody used to love to dive under the water to give her a kiss. That's how I learned how to swim, and [swimming] is still a very big part of my life.

Two Older Brothers and Being a Tomboy

We would always be learning something from [my father]. He liked to build and he liked to explore. [He and my brothers] went hiking and they brought back a snake. They were going to cut it up and eat it. My brothers loved this idea, and we all just thought it was gross. But you know, that's what happens when you're a family and you have two older brothers and they're always kind of fighting with each other. It's a really tight family. My sister, the youngest, was always very shy, and she would always stay with my mother. But my two brothers were always doing something interesting, and so I grew up as a tomboy. I grew up climbing trees. I grew up just doing all the things that boys do. I really enjoyed it.

Building a Bomb Shelter

We did have a big house. Everybody had their own bedroom, plus there was a big game room. It was a pretty interesting childhood because my older brothers were always working on projects. For instance, they wanted to build a bomb shelter and so they started digging this thing. My parents had gone out of town and my oldest brother, Tommy, was put in charge of all of us. He got some friends over and they all got shovels and pickaxes and started digging. [When] our parents got back from their vacation, my dad said, "This is fabulous. Let's make a bomb shelter.' That house still has a bomb shelter in Los Altos. You'd have to really blow that thing up because my dad was in engineering and he knew how to pour concrete. He knew how to build. I remember one time, my brother went down in there and he was playing his trumpet, and he broke one of the windows with the noise. What a story.

Cross Country Family Trip

We did take a wonderful trip across the United States and to stop by Texas and visit my mother's family. This was a road trip for the whole Burton family and it was an unforgettable trip. There was so much to see and so much to do, and different relatives to meet, [while] staying with our grandparents in San Antonio, Texas. Wonderful times. That trip across the country really showed us all what a great place this

[the United States] is: visiting the Liberty Bell, visiting all of the important things in Washington, DC. This was a real eye opener for all of us to be really proud about where we live. Those trips do that for you.

Visiting Texas and Climbing Trees

We spent more time [in Texas] so that my grandmother could take care of us and watch over us while my mother could have some freedom. She would take us to these big parks with beautiful, huge pecan trees, and we would scramble up to the top of those trees. They were big and everybody had their own branch. That would probably hurt quite a bit to fall from those trees, but we were all like monkeys, climbing around. I don't know how our parents put up with four kids in six years. We had a wonderful time on that trip and many other trips that we took later on where we would go skiing, and go up to the mountains. Everybody was skiing and learned how to do it. It was one of my favorite sports.

Mother

I would say my mother was a big influence on me. She was very good with plants. She always had little plants that she nursed and took care of, and I got that from her, even though I didn't want to admit it. I wanted to be more like my brothers. I was more masculine in that sense, but she was the one who saw that I could draw and she decided that I should be the one to get some art lessons. [My mother] was always there for us. My dad was not there that much, but she was the person to go to. She was there all the time for us and she still is, as a matter of fact. She was very artistic and she took painting lessons, and she really loved drawing and painting. She helped me with that so that I could have my own paint set and do my own drawings, and I really enjoyed that.

I did this picture of our dog who was some kind of a retriever, and if you had a stick in your hand, that dog would jump up and bite it right out of your hand. It was a Weimaraner. In order to paint that dog's picture, I had to hold up the stick, and he was just glued to it. I made this drawing and my mother saw it

and said, "Well, you have to take art lessons." She was really encouraging and very loving about how any of us could develop skills or hobbies.

Early Experiences of Landscape

We left [the Palisades] when I was eight. For me, it was about climbing trees and getting up really high to see the terrain. I could scramble up any tree, way up to the top, and just be up there for hours. It was a wonderful way to see the world and to appreciate it. I started climbing trees when I was much younger and my parents didn't like it because they were afraid that [I] would fall out. But no. I still climb trees.

Freedom

When my sister and I would play in the garden [we] would make different kinds of flowers become animated. Snails were really great. We collected snails. You know, all these things that kids do in the garden. I think when we lived in Alamogordo, New Mexico, [White Sands] was our favorite place to go. We went there every time we could. It was just so beautiful and open. It was sort of very liberating. That landscape is big in my memory.

They were doing a lot of rocket testing in White Sands because they would always be able to locate the rockets. It was vast enough. But a part of it was cordoned off for families to enjoy. [It was] absolutely treeless. It's like the desert but it's the most beautiful fluffy white sand you can see anywhere. You could walk up the mounds, walk down the mounds, slide through them. It was a very beautiful place.

As a child, it was freedom, and it was so pure and clean and elemental. I was eight years old. I didn't have those words at that time. It was really a very quiet exploration in beauty and, I think, a real elemental place with just sand and the horizon and the sky.

Parents' Personalities

My mom—she's very artistic and she really works well with people. My dad's a little bit more quiet, a little bit more shy. But my mother is very outgoing, and she really loved to paint. She loved just being a mother. How could anything be any better?

I liked the sense of adventure that my father had. My mother was really a homemaker. How I feel about the whole family relationship now is that I'm so grateful for her. She's 94-years old and I can't see her enough. She's got opinions and everybody in the family goes to visit Ruthie. She's one of the most popular people in all of our family, to this day. My father passed away a few years ago, and my mom's really the queen lady.

EDUCATION

UCLA

I actually started college at UC Davis because I wanted to go into medicine. I wanted to be a doctor. Unfortunately, I did not have the adequate training in high school to be able to go into those courses. So I left UC Davis, and I said, "I'm going to go to UCLA where my dad went to school and graduated from." As a sophomore, I entered UCLA, and completed my college work. I took a year leave of absence and came back and then got my master's degree in architecture from UCLA.

Dr. Stoutemyer

As an undergraduate at UCLA, I studied ornamental horticulture with Dr. Vernon Stoutemyer. He was a lovely man and very strict. And this class was a real eye-opener for me because it taught me the importance of the detail of Latin and spelling words correctly and getting nothing missed. We would walk around the campus with Dr. Stoutemyer, and take a look at some of his favorite trees. Then he would pick some of the leaves and we would all look at them, and we would talk about the uses of the trees, and what their attributes were, and difficulties. Just basically walking and talking. It was just the best thing.

We really loved him too, because he was kind of elderly and kind of bumbling along, but he was just the nicest man; but he was extremely strict. One miss of the dot on an "i", and you missed the whole thing. We would come back to the class after our walks with probably about 20 different samples of leaves, of plant materials, and he would give us the botanic name and the common name. Then at the end of the week, we were given a test. You had to remember how to spell the name, the common name and the scientific name. You really learned how to be specific and to mind the details of the Latin language. The common name is also a way to begin to identify a tree and to learn about it in the field.

As we completed the course, all of us would be able to walk to class, "Oh, there's *cissus rhombifolia*." "Oh, look at that *platenus assimonia*". "Oh my, look at that *podocarpus brissiliard*."

UCLA Graduate Degree in Architecture

So architecture took over for three years, easily, studying with Bill Mitchell and Charles Moore and Eugene Kupper, Yoshio Taniguchi, Charles Jencks, Charlie Gwathmey—all of these incredibly talented architects—and to learn from them about scale, form, materiality, all of these things. I remember the first project that I had with Charlie Gwathmey was to design a beach house because he was designing a beach house for one of his clients. I think it was for Cher. So it gave us all: "This is your job. Design this. Design a house."

It was a real experience to make it as elemental as possible, but to give it a scale and a feel that would be comfortable. Learning about those things, about proportion, materiality, the juxtaposition of the program to the sizes of spaces that are going to be required, that's the architecture. That's the architecture part that we also do in landscape, because you define a space by its enclosure, and the trees that are forming the ceiling, so to speak. We get back, again, to the Bloedel Reserve. The proportions of this space are unusually beautiful in their relationship and the relationship to the sky. There's nothing better.

UCLA Undergraduate Years

[They said], "You're not going to be a doctor. You got Ds in chemistry, so get out of here. Go to Los Angeles. Do it there." I wanted to join a sorority. I didn't last very long. I'm just too free of a spirit to be reined in by all those rules and regulations. I met my first real boyfriend, Ron Rezek, [at UCLA] and boy, what an adventure that was: surfing, building things, and also being in the art department. I had decided maybe I could do physiology and work on drawings in the medical school. Maybe there were some courses about medical illustration that I could take my yearning and my questioning and my wanting to learn about the body and how the body works. It's very interesting. [I] didn't last too long there because I really was consumed with the art department. There was so much going on and taking classes from J. Leroy Davidson, who was the director, especially about Indian landscape and Indian culture—that was a big deal.

UCLA really opened a lot of coursework to me as an undergraduate. I feel like I took advantage of it for everything that I could, studying and learning about the history. UCLA was a great place to grow and to learn, but when I got out, there were no jobs anywhere. Period. I did have a small plant business that Ron Rezek encouraged me to do. He was very encouraging, so I started having a plant nursery business.

North Campus Art Department

The school had just developed the North Campus and the North Campus Art Building. There is a park that was designed by [Isamu] Noguchi. There were pieces of art by many different sculptors like Tony Smith. The link between the humanities and the arts building was a land bridge, but it was so well crafted with the light coming out of a small, thin glass piece. I guess the bridge was probably about 400 or 500 feet long. It was long. Then [you had] all of the beautiful redwood trees and the graduate research library was next to that. To go past this beautiful garden, [students] were always out there doing something crazy. It was fabulous being in the art department there at the north end of the campus.

UCLA: Graduate Research Library

I loved my studies. I worked at the graduate research library (GRL), and that was really my home where I started out by having to put books away, because I had a job. Then I just started reading the books and I was noticed doing that too many times, so they stuck me in the library card window to give library cards out. [The library] is still my favorite place on the campus. I spent a lot of time there studying. I had different carrels that I could go to. I knew every little nook and cranny of that library.

Richard Neutra Drawings

I remember going to the graduate research library to look at the original drawings of [Richard] Neutra. Of course, you have to make an appointment and when you'd get there, you have to put on the white gloves; and then you can only take one document in at a time. There was a lot to learn by looking at other people's drawings. I was just so in love with the work of Neutra, and at that time, I was helping Rolla Wilhite on the Neutra House.

Cherimoya Trees

While I was at UCLA, I had a motorcycle and I really, I had such a sense of freedom, because you can go to so many different places that a car can't go. You can go on little sidewalks. You really have an opportunity to explore in a way that you can't do on foot or that you can't do with an automobile. One of my favorite stories is discovering these trees that were growing at UCLA on the main road from Westwood up into the campus, right smack in front of the police building. There were these trees growing there—three of them. They're the most luscious looking trees with wonderful foliage and I had to find out what these trees were.

As I was walking around in the ivy that grows beneath them, I stepped on one and I swished it, and all this flesh came out, so soft and round. I thought, oh my gosh, what is this? Well, I found out that it was a cherimoya. And from then on, I would always stop by there. I'd have a nice bag and I would fill it up with these cherimoyas and I would go back to Westwood and have a cherimoya vodka hangout—make martinis

out of cherimoyas. Everybody loved it. And I had to keep some of my friends away from the windows where they would like to throw them at people out of the window. I mean, college students can be just so immature.

Working at Ace Gallery

After I finished my undergrad work, I took a year leave of absence. That was a very important growth year for me. My best friend, Donna Vaccarino worked at Ace Gallery, and she asked me to come down there to help her. We had to put together a Sol LeWitt drawing on the wall. We had to get the material to tape a wooden triangle to the wall and to get 6H leads from Sam Flax next door, but first to draw it out to the proper scale. It was probably about 4 x 4. We started taping the wood pieces to the wall and then building a triangle, and going to work. It was fun. It was tedious. But it was beautiful. Sol LeWitt's work is my favorite today. Really, it is. There was a lot of good work.

I remember when Richard Serra had driven across the country on a Harley, and he drove up to the back of the gallery. He had this mat of hair with gum in it. I wanted to just grab him by the collar and start combing his hair. What a character he was. Richard Serra was really very cool, but he did get into a little bit of trouble in that gallery.

Ace Gallery: Philip Glass

I just worked there for the summer and for the year off I was there for the whole time. Keith Sonnier came and Philip Glass was there with Dickie Landry, a good friend. We had a great time, Donna [Vaccarino] and I, taking them out to the mountains and the white sands. Really incredible. And these guys—we didn't know who they were, but they wanted to go swimming. These guys were just so white. They were like newts. And they took all their clothes off, they left their underwear on, and then they found creeks to get into. Then, we decided then to have some lunch and I had put the sandwiches into my pocket. Then Philip [Glass] had us all find a cave. We needed to find a cave, so we found a series of rocks at Devil's Punchbowl

(where this place is). I think there were about eight of us, and he made us all lay down on the rocks and gave us the note that we had to remember. "Aaaaah," like this, and you were "eeeeh, like that. He had us all stick our heads in the hole of this giant boulder and we just sang for a while in there. One of Philip Glass's pieces. He was great. What a wonderful man. We didn't know that he would become so famous. He was a taxi driver for years. But he came out with Keith Soignet to install this piece and then everybody was a group. We all had a great time.

And so in this year off, this year leave of absence, there was a lot of discovery. My boyfriend then was a scientist and Donna [Vaccarino]'s friend was Doug Christmas, who ran the gallery. We would go on outings all over the place. We would drive up to the reservoir and climb over the fence and go swimming at night in that giant reservoir. It's in West Los Angeles. But we would swim and just have the best time. Lots of wonderful days.

Robert Smithson

Working at Ace Gallery was a great opportunity for me, and Doug [Christmas] trusted me to run the gallery when Donna [Vaccarino] wasn't able to be there. What had happened was Robert Smithson was showing, and he was there for the whole weekend. Doug asked me to take care of him and take him to places and show him Los Angeles. My boyfriend at the time was out of town, but he left his car for me to drive. It's some kind of sports car without a top. So, what did I do? I said, "What am I going to do with this guy for the whole weekend? What am I going to show him?" I figured I would show him the things that I liked the most.

So I took him down to this beer joint that had sawdust on the floor and we had the best time talking about what we were reading. I was reading Anais Nin at that time. I was just going through all of the people of that period and I couldn't get enough. He talked a lot about what he liked and we really bonded for that whole weekend, and it was wonderful.

He was very, very shy, very soft-spoken, but the next day I said, "I'm going to take you someplace that you're really going to love." It was my favorite place in the Guiberson Gardens [today this is known as the Hannah Carter Garden] because it was my private Japanese garden. By that time, I had already been to Japan and spent a year there by myself and this made me feel very comfortable and I was really at home. In fact, I used to go up there and climb over the fence, and I'd sleep there. It was fabulous.

So, I made him climb over the fence and we went into the Guiberson Gardens, and I showed him the place. We drove all over. He enjoyed it. I took him to lots of places, all the reservoir trips, and the places in Los Angeles that nobody thinks to look at. It's a very green, really gorgeous city and, at that time, I just felt like this is the best thing in the world, right here, right now—this time off, working at the gallery. I knew its day would end and I would start grad school in architecture at UCLA.

Influence of Artists

For me, it was just a natural progression from being asked to help at Ace Gallery to participate in it with Robert Irwin coming in with a scrim piece that cut off a part of the room. Surprises like that. And to talk to [Robert] Irwin and to understand him and know him as a human being—it's just wonderful. But all of those experiences allowed me to pursue my career, which was to become an architect. Having those experiences of seeing what artists do and how they do it, and the beauty and the simplicity and the elegance—all of those things are important.

UCLA Graduate Years: Visiting Professors

At UCLA, there are series of guest professors who were invited to teach a studio and during that period of time Yoshio Taniguchi was invited, Charlie Gwathmey was invited. Eugene Kupper was a faculty member there that I worked with. And Frank Israel was a very dear friend. And I learned a tremendous amount from all of these professors in the development of the architectural studios.

WORK

Trees for Larry Halprin

I was out of graduate school and there were no jobs anywhere. I had got my own studio and Rolla Wilhite would have me help him on some projects. In fact, trees had to be delivered up to Lawrence Halperin's Plaza—the last plaza that he did. I helped Rolla [Wilhite] because the positioning of the cranes, the location of the melaleucas in the water, all of the different trees and how they were placed in there…and he wanted to do his best to make Larry happy. I can remember Larry coming in and talking to Rolla and saying, "Are you the kind of contractor that gets change orders all the time?" or something that was just equally as onerous and said it in a very degrading way. Rolla just said, "We will take good care of you." Rolla [Wilhite] was one of the biggest tree farms in Southern California.

Motorcycles

I started in Beverly Glen when I was an undergrad at UCLA and I had a little Honda 50, and I would putt-putt to art school and putt-putt back home. It just feels so good to have the wind in your hair. Then I moved on to larger and bigger bikes, and really enjoyed that. When I went to Japan by myself, I had a motorcycle and went all over the place with it. Now I look back and say, oh my God. God watches out for me. [LAUGHTER] I'm just adventurous and enjoy traveling and discovering new places. I always have.

Motorcycles + Elyn Zimmerman

I had my own motorcycle at that time and so I could just drive anywhere. You know, they didn't have helmets then, but who cares? That was my transportation and it was so freeing. It was fabulous, and this is when I met Elyn Zimmerman. Elyn was staying with another friend next door to my place on Beverly Glen we decided to do trips together because she was looking for rocks for her sculptures. So I had the opportunity to drive with her to some place in the East.

I was just so impressed with her sensibility about what these rocks were going to do and where they were going. This was when she was working on that most famous piece, Marabar. Oh, it's so beautiful with the rocks cut with the mirror finish going into the water. And then the squareness and the shape of it—that fountain. Elyn was a very big influence in my artistic development, I think. And she still is, for that matter.

Beverly Glen Boys Motorcycle Circuit

I joined the Beverly Glen Boys Motorcycle Circuit and everybody would go up to the top of Beverly Glen—of course there wasn't any housing there— and everybody was doing wheelies. I can do one at 150. Oh, boy, we went dirt biking. It was just so magical.

Japan

There's a continuum of space and time and one informs the other. By actually physically moving your brain and your body to another country, you're affected by that culture's ways and means. And [being in Japan] was the most transformative experience that I think I've had in my life because I was by myself. It was very difficult for me because I couldn't talk to people or speak the language. But I met a girl who had traveled all the way across from Europe to Japan, and so I followed her around for days just so I could hear English spoken and could talk with someone. That was a big deal, to be able to speak the language and understand it through another person. She could speak Japanese, so that was quite interesting. We hung around together.

Climbing Mt. Fuji was the most important thing of all. You have to start climbing up to the stop of the mountain at midnight so that you can see the sunrise from the top. It was surprising to me how many people there were there. There were people carrying bicycles up the top, just so that they could ride their bike around the opening of the vent of the volcano. It was an incredible trip to be there. The woman who had arranged it for us twisted her ankle halfway up and she had to go home and go to the hospital. So

there I was with four Japanese girls. They were little girls. They were young. I ended up having to carry one of them down, but coming down from Mt. Fuji is easy. It's like skiing, but it's ash instead of snow.

When we all got finally down to the bottom, we take these wonderful baths. Then I taught them how to have a pillow fight. [LAUGHTER] They loved it, and we had such a good time. It was one of the best adventures of that [time in] Japan.

Being in Japan and so eager to absorb every little bit of that culture through my pores and into my brain, and the aesthetics, and everything, it was really wonderful. That was a big deal for me. Think about the Japanese culture. Think about the garden that doesn't have anything in it. There's Ryoan-ji, but then there's the Moss garden. And you think about those places, and the Japanese culture is so much different than the United States. I would go to Japan at the drop of a hat. I think that has had a terrific influence on me.

Becoming a Landscape Architect

You can't be a landscape architect unless you've taken your exams, and so that's what my next step was. I moved into Santa Monica. I had a new boyfriend and I worked on getting my license. There were not very many landscape architects in Southern California at that time. I remember going down to Irvine where I could meet with a group and study and compare ideas and learn to study to take my exams. I was living in my own studio next to Bergamot Station at that time.

I think as a person wanting to become a landscape architect, I wanted to meet others, and there were no others around anywhere. So I went all the way down to Orange County to a party that they were having, and I met Courtland Paul. What a gentleman. What an incredible designer and landscape architect. He was just so excited just to be with all these landscape architects and was so encouraging and said, "Study and pass your exams. It's the most important thing." Through his acknowledgement and his

encouragement, I decided to really get it together and get that license. That was the biggest thing on my bill. And believe me, I got it. And it made a big difference. I have a special stamp, it says, "Certified Pig Fat" on it that I put on all my letters. [LAUGHTER] Just because it took so much effort to concentrate and prepare oneself for those kinds of tests and pushing yourself up to the next rung in the ladder.

I chose a path and I think that partly, it was because I really liked being outside. I liked being able to control what the outcome was for the planting, for creating landscapes. I wasn't so interested in the architectural world, even though that's what my degree is in. It's really about making places with living materials. And then it changes. It's not static, like a building is. So it's continuously giving back. I think that's a very big part of why I'm interested in it and I love learning about it; I can't stop.

I really enjoy negotiating and working with architects, and they love seeing what I do because it's unexpected sometimes—because of my ability to edit and really get down to the essence of what makes this place special. It's just like the garden [I made for] the woman who had a terminal illness and her husband. All they had was beach sand. How could I make his wife happy in the last few days of her life? This was a special garden that I developed for them, and it's one of my favorite as well, because it doesn't take any work. All of the conditions match: the salt air, the salty sand, the minimal amount of water, the maximum amount of color and texture. You can do something in a very Japanese way. Right? Isn't that what we learned there about making it look effortless? But it takes a lot of work, a lot of thinking about not putting too much in or too little.

How do you know when it's right? Well, you know it's right when you look at it, and you say, "OK, that's it." And that's a good feeling, especially when one spouse is going to be left behind and that garden can be a wonderful reminder. It makes a memory. It makes a person's life richer, I think.

Katie Spitz

My collaboration with Katie Spitz was a wonderful one. She was a student in the same program, but she had been there four years after me. And her husband, too, was wonderful—Dan. Katie has an incredible facility for drawing and so does her husband. They're incredibly talented people and to be in their presence and have them working on my projects was a real honor.

Katie [Spitz] and I worked together for about six years, and at that point, I realized that if I kept and made Katie a partner, I would become the manager and she would become the designer. I could see it very clearly because she's so facile and so good and fast. I started going to a therapist to figure it out and they recommended that both Katie and I meet with them, and we had a couple of sessions together. Finally, at the very end of the discussion, she said, "Well, do you want to continue to work with Katie?" And I said, "No, I do not." I could feel my arm go completely numb at that time.

It was so difficult for me to say those words to someone that I really loved and I really respected. But I realized it was my future that was at stake, that if I didn't stand up and make myself draw more—and I learned a lot about drawing from Katie—that the relationship would be bifurcated into that ratio, exactly. I knew the only way was to let her go and start her own practice.

She was a big part of my life, and I learned a tremendous amount from her. I'm really grateful for that relationship. I know that it really hurt her. I know that she wasn't expecting me to be saying that at a meeting with the shrink, and I think she just went into a freefall. But she's come out of it beautifully. She's done the most incredible work. She's working with one of the best big contractors here in Los Angeles, and doing great work. And she's enjoying it.

I think that she is doing more painting. She's really very artistic, and she's a great painter as well. She was an incredible landscape architect and an artist. And she wasn't afraid of color. She wasn't afraid of making

some ideas that I would have never come up with, and to have that kind of intellect to work with was so wonderful for me. I so enjoyed her sense of imagination and how she carried out ideas.

Establishing an Office

The office was established in 1975 after I got out of graduate school at UCLA. I started with one or two employees, but eventually it was always up to around six or seven. That seemed like a good number to really get some ideas flowing and be able to generate enough work to make a really thriving business. I've always worked in that way to make sure that everybody is happy, and everybody is getting the work that they like to do. I'll never forget about the big earthquake that we had, and all the books came down off of the bookcases. Nothing was broken. We just put the books back up on the shelf and continued on.

Early Employees

I can remember my first employee. He was an architect and I put him to work. Then there was another woman, she was British, and she was very talented, too. We all worked on projects together, but they came and they went. It wasn't really until Mary Sager McFadden came in that I could really get some wind in our sails. We were hiring more people, and we were involved in competitions, and we were always meeting more and different architects. The firm was really growing in that second phase.

Charles Moore's Birthday party and Getting Engaged

That day, I was in my studio where I lived by myself, and I built my studio myself, too. But I decided that I needed to go to his birthday party, and I didn't know who to go with. But I knew Richard [Hertz] had been, and I thought, well, I'll have him come with me. So I called him up in the morning. I was chewing on my cereal or whatever, "Hi, you want to go to this party with me?"

So anyway, he came with me and I just got soused. I just got really drunk. And Charles Moore had all these little dolls going down the railing. I knocked them all off. All of them. So bad. But then [Richard]

took me home, and I said, "Oh, let's go for a walk." It was a full moon and I could see everything. And he kissed me. Oh my gosh. I couldn't believe it. I was just struck. I just fell head over heels in love with him. Woo! I think a few months later I was pregnant and we were married. That was it. Just like that, slam dunk. That's the best. And now we've been married, what 33 or 43 years. Something like that. A long time.

Richard Hertz

Richard [Hertz], my husband, the love of my life, and I have really worked together on all of these projects. He knows more about landscape architecture than any other person I know. He and I collaborated since the very beginning when we fell in love and got married, and shortly after, had two children. I always consult with Richard about his ideas, about the written part of these projects, the work that I was doing in the landscape architecture world.

Richard was involved with Art Center College of Design at that time. But he only had to go to work every other day. I think he was only in there for three days, or maybe it was just two days, that he could run the department at Art Center College of Design. He loves working with people, and he loved to be in the art world, so that was pretty much how we got through. Plus, my business was growing. But I felt independent in a way because of how we met, and how we got together, that we each could have our own worlds, and then share our world with our children. That started from the very beginning, because I was already pregnant when we got married. [LAUGHTER]

So Richard is a big part of my life, and his writing abilities exceed mine by three miles, because mine is probably one tenth of an inch in terms of being able to articulate through writing what is being experienced in these landscapes and how they work. Richard Hertz has been the most important person in my life and I enjoy working with him. We talk together about a letter that has to be written, and then

he just comes out with the most mellifluous, honey-tongued letter. I mean, he's just really a great writer and I appreciate living with him and raising our children, and our grandchildren together.

The Fishbowl

After 2007, we moved the office to a building that my husband and I purchased. We've really done a great job, I think, of making it our home. Everyone here feels comfortable. There's lots of parking. The trees are growing around here. We have a wonderful spot to have lunch. I think that the employees really enjoy working here and that's not just because of the space, but it's the family-like environment that we have. There are really no secrets. It's like being in a kind of a fishbowl and that fishbowl is a very quiet place.

On the other hand, it's really fun, because some clients have particular characteristics that are worth of talking about, and so there's a little bit of gossiping going on. What's really going on with the projects… and if someone's having a difficulty with some aspect of a construction issue, we all get to learn. That's the whole delight of being in a fishbowl. Everybody knows how everybody's doing, and who's talking to whom on the phone and how people are handling themselves. It's not like being in a silent cubicle. This is a fishbowl. [LAUGHTER] And it's one that everybody participates in gladly. That's the way I like it.

It's really like a family. People respect one another. We learn from each other. Some of us have had more experience than the others, and all of us have a different kind of expertise. Dan Colbeck is an expert in all of the projects that we have been working on lately of big office campuses. Stephanie [Psomas] is, of course, really managing just about everyone, and keeps everybody sane and has the best sense of humor of any of us. Robin [Carmichael] is just back from two weeks in Europe with her kids, and she's really glad to be back at work. You miss this place when you're gone for a couple of weeks. Then you come back, and you say, "Oh, well, this isn't so bad." It's nice for people to have a vacation. We strictly

enforce it. People can't get away not doing it. It's very important, I think, for all of us in an office to break away and have time to oneself. I think that's a good way to see it.

Mary Sager McFadden

Mary Sager McFadden is one of the key principles of this company. She's an incredible delight to work with. Her knowledge of plant materials is incredible. While I was away, we had removed some lawn because we're trying to be more water savvy, and Mary and the office came up with the most incredible recipe for a garden. I've never seen anything quite so beautiful and unusual in my entire life. [LAUGHTER]

We could get rid of all of the grass, we could put in a sequence of penstemons and sedums, but everything in such a low, quiet way that no one would want to pick them, because they're so close to the ground, and so colorful. The base of it was all decomposed granite, but then she found these little maroon succulents that are about as big in diameter as your thumb and you think you are seeing spots, but they're growing. There's probably about five plants in there that I have never seen before. I was so surprised and overjoyed with the aesthetic qualities and the future of this little garden on our north side.

The Office Today

I think it's really about being able to come into my door and talk about anything, any time, any problem. I don't care what it is. If it's "I can't get a babysitter" or you know, any issue that anybody has, I'm happy to hear. If I'm not here, Stephanie [Psomas]'s usually part of that. So we want to make sure that all of our staff is happy. That's why we have these Christmas parties and Stephanie [Psomas] gives the goofiest parties of all. She's a party girl. [LAUGHTER]

The Office Today II

What really makes this office different than other landscape architecture offices? I'd like to think about the friendliness of our office and how all of the principles treat each other respectably. Everybody in the office has their own realm of information and knowledge about plant materials and details. And we all

share these things. You feel so uplifted if you get stuck and can't figure something out. You just go walk to the middle table in the center of the studio, and you say, "Has anybody had this problem before?" And then they'll start a conversation and everybody will learn from the answer. You never feel like you're out on a limb.

I think that Stephanie Psomas is more than half of the institutional knowledge of this company. She is the institutional brain and she really understands surveying. She comes from an engineering family. If there's ever an issue or a question of civil engineering, Stephanie [Psomas] is the go to person. Plus, she's got an incredible vocabulary of plant materials and understands how to bring in the clients.

Because there's a lot of work in contract writing and follow through and accounting, we have a very clear accounting department that is wonderful. You have to have all of those infrastructure pieces in place for the designers to feel free to work. We've managed this company that way for all these years, to make sure that we would be here to answer questions from clients who, maybe five or ten years later, have a question or want to change something.

Mary Sager McFadden has worked here twice: once at the very beginning, and then she took time off to raise her children, and then wanted to come back. I was so thrilled when I heard that Mary was coming back, and she has a very special place in the office with her incredible sense of design, and her skills in writing and handling contracts. She's just amazing. On the other hand, there's Dan Colbeck, who is our go-to person for anything about the infrastructure of the projects. He's currently working right now on a major landscape for a new corporation. It's about 20 acres, just north of Los Angeles, and he's running the whole entire project. It's all going to be [hugely sustainable].

Robin Carmichael is also up here with all of us. She's a person who is really dedicated to all of the educational facilities. She loves doing residential work. Everybody gets residential work because that's

where you really learn, and you can test things with the client's OK. Testing things out is a very important part of being able to develop a really good institutional plant pallet. And we're not willing to just accept the same things. So if you walk on the UCLA campus, all you see are star jasmine and *pittosporum passifolia*. That's it. Basically [they're] wanting to eliminate the choices that chances a failure. But Robin Carmichael and Dan Colbeck, Mary Sager McFadden, Stephanie Psomas and myself all have a very profound and long list of plant materials in our heads and we always are looking for new ones.

That's what really keeps us energized and happy, and feeling like we're growing. It's not like, "OK, let's just get out the old whatever it is and stick it in there." We really challenge ourselves to come up with decisions and plant materials and ways of doing things that are not tested, and have everyone prosper.

DESIGN

Japanese Haiku

I think the haiku is, "No more water in the bucket. No more moon in the water." She was carrying the bucket watching the moon in the water, and then she spilled the water. What a beautiful haiku.

Visiting Walter De Maria's Lightning Field

I went there with Lita Albuquerque and this very famous art historian, Melinda Terbell Wortz. It was the three of us and Lita [Albuquerque] was a very close friend as well, and I've learned a lot from her. We decided to go see the lightning field, and it had just recently been built. Walter De Maria set up these lightning rods that are probably ten feet underground, and they're probably close to 25 feet at the top. They're 20 feet apart and there's probably 20 of them because Walter liked those kinds of clean dimensions. The tip of those poles would hold a plate of glass, whereas the topography would move up and down and change tremendously.

We [went] there for three days shortly after it first opened. There was an abandoned gas station which was where we were to get our directions on how to enter the field. There's nothing but a little room that you check into. A couple of people were in there, and they said, "Oh, you're going to the planet." And I said, yeah. We then drove to "the planet," to the Walter De Maria place, and there was a small log cabin that we went inside and opened up. All of this wonderful Jack Daniels, and the most incredible kind of alcohol and food was set up for us, and there was a refrigerator. There were blankets. All perfectly done in this small little cabin. We spent the next three days living there and walking out, and looking at dawn, and looking at dusk, and looking at the way the topography would change against the rigorous positioning of all of the steel columns. That was a very religious experience, I think, for me, in the heat. It was like New Mexico. I was very happy there. I had my journal. I could write about what I was learning and what I was thinking, reflecting.

Land Art and Landscape Architecture

It teaches you about beauty, simplicity, elegance, curiosity. I mean, what was he thinking? Because you had to drive up to the Continental Divide. You're looking across one part of the country, and you're looking at another part of the country. Why wouldn't you want to go there? You have to go there. I had to go there. I went there. And I'm so glad, because it's just enriched my life knowing that that kind of world exists, and you can see it any time you want. It's the same thing like Roden Crater. That's another place that I would really like to go. I haven't been there yet, but it's on the list to make that trip.

It's absolutely critical that landscape architects know about art and know about places like this that can be experienced. The world of outdoor sculpture has expanded incredibly after its evolution since the '60s. To be present with that kind of thinking and mentality is what's valuable. It makes you see the world in a different way. Having the richness of that experience of what an artist can do [when] they don't have a goal or an intention in mind to do something. That's the difference. But there's no reason why you can't

bring that beauty into your work. Why can't you scoop it all up and bring it in? That's what you need to do as landscape architects, and have fun. Have fun with it. So no, a landscape architect isn't going to just go out and build a Walter De Maria lightning field. But go see it, definitely.

Bloedel Reserve

One of my favorites spaces is the Bloedel Reserve [in Bainbridge Island, WA]. How much more elemental can a piece of art be? And yes, it's landscape architecture. But it's thought through in the sense of the proportions, the height, to the width, to the type of hedging that was used and how [to] use a plumb bob in order to get the hedges as straight and as perfect as they are. What a beautiful place for meditation. Oh my, what simplicity, what beauty. Couldn't be better.

Power of Organization

We're talking about the period of time of graduate school at UCLA. I took a year leave of absence. I went to the East Coast and stayed in Stonybrook and I got a job there working as the clerk of the works for the construction of a high-rise medical center. I was in heaven. It was so fantastic, even though I spent most of the time in a trailer on the jobsite. I was so excited every time Bertrand Goldberg, who is the architect from Chicago, would come to town. He would come right over to my desk because I knew where all the change orders were, and I knew exactly which one it was, and I knew about the ricks and hinges on the N7 level—things like that. I could be useful because I was organized and could keep track of all the change orders, because working in the field is not always so clear cut. Those trailers can get really messy, and there can be a lot of lost information. There can be delays in the scheduling. So what I did actually turned out to be a really good thing: I learned for myself that organization and being able to retrieve dates, pieces of papers, notes, is really extraordinarily valuable when you're working on a job.

One of my favorite stories is about working in the field on the construction with contractors, [on] this is heavy-duty construction for a medical center, seven levels underground where they had animal testing. I

was living with my boyfriend there in Stonybrook and I wanted to build a bed because I thought I could, and this would be a great thing to do. I could get the lumber. I know how to build it. It would be terrific. And oh, gosh, it would be really great if I could get some core ten steel brackets made for each of the legs that hold the bed up. I was so excited about it, so I went over to the contractor and I had to really reel him in. I said, "Say, I'm working on a project, and I'm wondering if you could help me fabricate some brackets." We needed four brackets and they needed to be so big. "Say, and can you get core ten steel, too?" And he said, "Well, sure. What are you going to do with these?" And I said, "Well, I'm building a bed." And he says, "Oh, I get the pick of the litter!" These are construction men. I was so embarrassed. Pick of the litter.

But those days working on the high-rise medical center with Bertrand Goldberg as the architect were very powerful for me. They really gave me insight and a kind of knowledge that I went back to school with that I could share. This is what I learned working on this high-rise medical center, and these are all the things that had to be taken care of. Construction is complicated but it works better when it's organized. They would always have me come back every summer. *Please come back again. Can you help us with this?* To be wanted because you're useful is something very valuable.

Cesar Pelli at UCLA

Cesar Pelli was one of the jurors at UCLA, and I found that he was really very insightful, and his wife was also an architect. Their firm is Pelli Clark Pelli. Clark was my friend's husband, and it was great to be able to talk about architecture on the same level with Cesar, and to understand how much he's contributed to the world of architecture. He's one of my favorite architects. I think that Charles Jencks is another person who I really learned a lot from, and his wife Maggie Keswick, when she was alive—lovely people who were very interested in a new way of thinking about architecture as a narrative and putting that into the ideas of space-making. I was very interested in that approach. From that period of time, I was ready to get out

and be on my own. Graduation just couldn't come soon enough. That's for sure. But I'm happy that I have my degree. And I'm happy that I have my own practice.

Greenhouses

When I was going to graduate school at UCLA, I had an apartment in Westwood that had an open kind of flat rooftop space and I built a greenhouse there. I built it up and stapled some kind of plastic around the outside of it to bring the moisture in. And I built the shelves. My father was very handy in that way and I think I got that from him. I love building, which is why I actually have my degree in architecture, because of my dad.

This greenhouse that I built in Westwood on top of the roof was my sanctuary, and I had a hose out there to it. I had four or five shelves of potted plants, and I would collect plants. They were sort of friends, in a way, and to go inside of a greenhouse and to smell the moisture in the air that helps the plants grow, it's very soothing. It's a very soothing thing to be in a structure like that. It's special.

Experimentation

This whole place is a giant experiment. Are you kidding? We're always looking at new plant materials. They're always germinating new combinations of different plants and this is a place where I can safely try it out and see how it grows. We know most of the basic things, but I'm interested in all of the new cultivars, and I like having a spot to put them in, and I don't have to worry about pleasing somebody or not. It's really all one big experiment.

That's a valuable point, because a landscape architect could be just specifying the same materials over and over again. You get a certain pallet. I know I've gotten into ruts like that before. But you've got to get out of it quickly and you do that by going to the nurseries, looking at what's growing, finding things that you don't know what they are, buying them, and trying them out on yourself. That way you can really

experiment and explore. It gives you a new breath of life into your plant pallet. There's some people who just have the same pallet, and they use it over and over and over because it's sturdy and bullet proof. But you can get bullet proof if you try it out first yourself, and be really very pleased and smile with your success.

Drawing

What I tell my students, actually, because I love teaching, is you draw things out of your body. You draw them out of your brain. And you put them on the paper. And that's a process that takes a lot of thinking. It takes a lot of endurance and you have to keep at it. You have to keep asking questions. What is this really going to be, and how can I really make it interesting? How can I make it well-proportioned? You have to ask yourself all of those questions as you're sitting down to draw. And the first thing starts with "How big is the piece of paper going to be?" You put Scotch tape down, then you have to really start. You have to really pull this out of your brain and onto the paper and keep trying and keep adjusting and changing. You'll get it right eventually. But you have to be at it, and you have to be patient. Through the years, I've just learned my own way of making drawings that can communicate what I'm thinking.

Style Changes

There are definitely style changes, and they walk through the architecture and landscape architecture community with raging fires, and sometimes they cool down and they blow through like soft winds. But I would consider myself a modernist or postmodern because I'm always editing, taking out, editing, get down to the essence. I think the word postmodern is kind of dated now. Isn't it? I was working with Buzz [Yudell] and John [Ruble] on some projects, and Charles Jencks was big in there, and Maggie [Keswick], of course, his wife, was just amazing.

How Do You Teach Editing?

How do you teach editing? I think presentations to the client will always help. The best thing of all is to really give them a lot of ideas that they can see themselves in and use. It's different than architecture where you'd have certain sized rooms, you'd have certain kind of circulation constraints. But when you're thinking of a landscape, I often see it as a sequence of different types of rooms. And what are the proportions of those rooms? What can then do to support activities that the owner can enjoy, rather than just being lawn right up to the house [where] there's no imagination and nothing hidden to be revealed?

I think that's what's really important about a residential landscape, but we do it a lot with our institutional and commercial work as well: It's to create a series of rooms that you can pass through, and that those rooms are well-proportioned using the walls and the height of the walls and the sky as the ceiling. It's much like architecture in that way.

The Process of Editing

Where do we get our inspiration from? I think it all depends on our awareness and what state of mind we're in. If you're calm of mind and able to push aside the obligations that stand in the way, it's a wonderful thing to be able to read the books, to be able to do the research, and then use those ideas in a way that turns the project from good to really good. That's where you want to be, and that in itself is a process of editing. That editing process is something that I use all the time. Take one thing out. Just take one more thing out and see how it works and the spaces relate and how it can become cleaner and more open. That's what I look or. I'm interested in titrating down to the elemental. And there you'll find peace, and there you find beauty, because the proportions are clear. It doesn't have to have a lot of stuff in it—any kind of a design.

Mentors

When I was first starting grad school at UCLA, we had a visiting faculty member and his name was Yoshio Taniguchi. I had been to Japan by myself and knew the country and was very *gemütlich* ("pleasant," the German word to describe it); I had close affection for that country. When Yoshio Taniguchi was one of our studio professors, I was just so impressed with his abilities. I remember one of his most famous statements. When I'd say, I can't bear this out…I don't know what to do. He says, "When you have a problem, you eliminate it."

And you know, of course, all the girls in the studio had eyes for him. Everybody was in love with him. He was really an amazing studio teacher who really helped me later when I was working on projects in Japan and flying back and forth a lot. I did a lot of projects in Japan and so that really helped me. And you know, and I could bring [our daughter] Julia with me on a trip, and [our son] Nicholas came. Richard came with me. Traveling is the best way to teach yourself how to learn.

Next on that list is Charlie Gwathmey from Gwathmey Siegel Architects. He was a visiting faculty member at UCLA, and he was really tough. He would not let anybody get away with anything. His ability to be angry was a real lesson that scared the beans out of everybody. Believe me. He would not accept anything better than the absolute best.

I remember our first project that he assigned to us was a project that he was currently working on. He was out from the East Coast and he was staying with people from the movie business that he knew. I mean, it was really the crème de la crème, and doing a house for them. So Charlie Gwathmey was a profound influence in my aesthetic, to prune things down to the essential.

This house that I designed for the beach was actually his project, and I was terrified. I was just so hard on myself. I would do these drawings and I'd throw [away] and tear them up. I would build models, and I

would tear them up and throw them out. And I just kept working and working and working, until I finally had something. I had something that I thought could work. And it worked. So yeah. Charlie Gwathmey. I worked with him on a bunch of things.

Then Charles Jencks was also a visiting scholar, and his wife, Maggie Jencks—I just loved her. She was really terrific. I spent a lot of time with Buzz [Yudell] and John [Ruble] and Charles [Jencks], figuring out the story of Charles [Jencks] and Maggie [Keswick]'s house. I took ahold of the narrative. We were going to make it about Paradise Lost. Maggie and I were developing and working with all the words, and going around in the garden. Then Charles Jencks would come out and he'd steal half of our story and just take it away and run in the house with it, making rooms and turning them into all of these things. It was crazy. Charles loved all of it. We all learned a lot from each other at that time. I was really so fortunate to have that experience, to work with the team, with Buzz [Yudell] and John [Ruble] and Charles Jencks.

Of course, the biggest influence in my work was Eugene Kupper who was the studio teacher. He was really very difficult. He, at that time, was working on the house for Harry Nilsson and I was working on the landscape. He would say, "What's the big idea?" So that's the circumambulatory path, the Chaitya hall, and the caves and everything else that I could throw in there along the necklace. What could I do in the landscape that would give it meaning?

Frank Israel was also another big influence. What a wonderful man. What an amazing teacher. He was in the studio all the time with everybody, and would help everybody with whatever problems they were having. I think I had just had my first child and so I was feeling like a house. [LAUGHTER] That's what you feel like. Well, you are a house with this creature growing inside of you. So it was hard. Those were the days where Richard and I really helped each other out, and I only worked a half a day. Period. I wanted to be with our family.

I would say Cesar Pelli is also a person that I really admired, and I learned from his work all throughout the years. He would use me as a landscape architect from the East Coast when he had a project here. I remember working on several projects with Cesar. Fred Clark's wife was in the studio with me so I knew them as well, and we all sort of palled around together. Those were some influences.

Mentors II

Charles Gwathmey was an invited visiting professor, and we all wanted to take his class. All the girls fell in love with him because they just thought he was a dream come true. But he was very tough on everyone because he really expected more than you could ever believe that you could give to him. So, the assignment was to build a beach house. He was out here from New York because he was involved in the music industry, and he was taking advantage of this class to see what he could get. He assigned us the project that he was out here to design. It was so difficult to try to get the sense of elegance, of simplicity, of what it is to design a house that looks effortless. It takes a lot of work to make something look effortless. That, I've learned for sure, and especially on this project with Charlie Gwathmey.

I was just really confused about it. I would get angry and then I would come back and I would tear it all up. And that's terrible. Finally, I had to just give myself a break to get back to the simplicity of the union of the spaces and the scale of the rooms. How big is this, really? And building a model is one thing, but building a real thing is something different. You have to start out with the model, and you have to start out with the drawings, and then you can measure it out on a floor. So that was a really good learning place for me with Cesar Pelli and with Charlie Gwathmey.

Eugene Kupper is another person that I'd like to talk about. He really helped me from the very beginning of the school year, and he's really brilliant. He is a wonderful teacher and just very thoughtful. He was building a house for Harry Nilsson, the singer, the musician, and I was his landscape architect. I learned so much from Eugene Kupper about proportions, about how to make the landscape useful. And that's

where my studies at UCLA with J. Leroy Davidson about Indian art, the Chaitya hall [which is] very famous in Indonesia and in that part of the world… The Chaitya hall is a worship space. It's a cave into the side of a mountain, and you go into that cave and you take these steps repeating them around the stupa, and then back out again.

This ritual of walking around seemed to me to be a very important aspect to measuring and understanding what this piece of work is going to become. You start thinking about the volumes of space being deductive, in other words: Here's a big mountain, and you carved out the Chaitya hall, you carve it out with columns, with lotus capitals. Part of the ritual is walking around that stupa, and at the very end of it, coming back out again. This was all at Ajanta and Ellora in India.

So my experience from learning about Indian art and Indian sculpture and architecture has indelibly marked my brain with something that I use in all of my projects, and that is the ritual of moving around a space. For Eugene Kupper, that's exactly what I did. I didn't know he was my professor. I said, "OK, well, what's the big idea?" That's what you have to have in a project. If you don't have a big idea, you don't have a project.

For me, my studies and my imagination allowed me to make this walking path, a circumambulatory path, and my Chaitya hall was actually where all the heating and HVAC equipment went, into the hill—that was the cave in the hill. There was a pathway. There was a sequence of different rooms that you moved through—outdoor rooms. And then of course, there was the front entry and that was the most difficult of all.

Harry Nilsson was just a delight. He was a complete alcoholic and just pretty much drank himself dead. [LAUGHTER] But Eugene Kupper was my teacher and he was the architect for this house; and Harry was just a huge, big man. I mean, he was enormous. And he would walk around with Eugene, and he would

put his hand on his shoulder, "Now, don't worry about this, Eugene. We'll figure this out together." And of course, he was half drunk all the time. [LAUGHTER] Una, his wife, was popping out babies like crazy and this wonderful house was getting built. I was there to make the landscape sing. In the front, I convinced Eugene [to use] one incredibly beautiful, enormous olive tree [with] gravel underneath it, like the gardens of Kyoto that I had visited. And it will be a rock garden with 3/8 inch crushed aggregate, and then there will be these rocks that I will place that will be flush with the Earth. I think Eugene liked that.

Leonard Koren

I've known Leonard [Koren] since we were undergraduates together. We would get together with friends, and he built a Japanese temple or a meditation room in his mother's backyard. We were like brothers and sisters. We just had such a ball together and still do to this day. But Leonard has been a lifelong friend, and I've always respected his quiet way of getting things done. I'm a little more messy, and I'm much louder, but I would really like to be more like Leonard.

I remember when I first met Leonard. This is a very funny story. He had some kind of a lodge where you go in to take a hot steam bath or something. He had invited [me] and it was really sketchy. I wasn't going to go in there with him. I just simply wasn't. But Leonard was always thinking of different kinds of projects to work on, and he was very influenced by Japanese aesthetic. Very much so.

Ron Rezek: Industrial Designer

Ron Rezek is a real entrepreneur. He's an industrial designer. He knew Bucky [Buckminster] Fuller. He was my boyfriend for a number of years previously, and he really taught me a lot about how to become self-sufficient. He ran this shop at UCLA with another person. (I don't remember his name.) Ron was so good at taking his aptitude for industrial design and getting me involved in it.

For example, he wanted to build a chopper motorcycle. He went to work at it in the shop at UCLA, and he had the big handlebars in the front, and oh my goodness, everybody thought he was really something else—and he was, actually. When I became his girlfriend, I was just as industrious and I would find material and sew my own clothing and do all kinds of costumes. I was into costumes in those days. I remember making a dress out of this material—it was some kind of a velour or something. It must have been curtain material, and I made this beautiful dress. It had a scoop neck and long sleeves and this long trail on it. And of course, I had to get on the back of this chopper and go into Westwood, riding on this bicycle.

We were going along down Beverly Glen and I was so excited to go to this sort of party. All of a sudden, my shoulder started having a pull on it. And I said, "Well, what is this? Oh my God." The dress got caught in the chain—the whole dress. I mean, there I was with my poor little breast exposed. I got off the motorcycle and I was just so mad at him. I yelled and it was, of course, all my fault for [letting] this big, heavy piece of dress get caught in his valuable motorcycle. But anyway, we figured it out. We just figured out how to make it work. But I'll never forget going into Westwood with my shoulder bare because the motorcycle ate the rest of it. [LAUGHTER]

Working in Foreign Countries

[When] you're in a different country, you've got a completely different climate, regardless. And there's a lot to do in foreign work. The first thing that I'll do on any project, especially many that I worked on with [Charles] Moore, [John] Ruble, [Buzz] Yudell, would be to go to the local garden, to the local park, where the plant materials are labeled. Of course, they're labeled in Latin because Latin is the language of botanical gardens. On many of these trips that we went on (one was for the embassy in Taipei, Taiwan), I would go to different nurseries and collect a plant pallet. But it's not just the plant pallet, it's making

and shaping the spaces for a government facility, where you have a whole separate area just for the garrison.

Ryoan-ji

The first trip to Japan, I was still an undergrad. There was a professor who was going to take invited students to go with him on this trip. I was one, and we all flew over to Tokyo, and then from Tokyo down to Kyoto. That was a wonderful trip. I was there with just this one professor and he kind of thought that I was going to be his girlfriend and that did not sit well with me. So I really just took off on my own and I explored every single bit of Kyoto that I could.

I learned so much about the gardens and especially Ryoan-ji. I went there many times. In fact, one time I was going there. Of course, I did a lot of hitchhiking. Girls aren't supposed to do that. But I did. But this beautiful, brand spanking new garbage truck stopped, and I said, "Say, hey! Could I get a ride over to Ryoan-ji?" So I hitchhiked on a garbage truck and they took me all the way over there. It was perfect and I just spent days staying around there. That place was so hypnotizing because of the simplicity, because of the placement of the rocks, the meaning of the rocks, and then the beautiful temple that is adjacent to it. I went there many times, and I learned so much about the elemental qualities of space, there at Ryoan-ji, Kyoto.

I learned a lot of other things, too. I had a good time. I rented a motorcycle—that was better than hitchhiking—and I went all over the place. I could see everything. I could stop and look. For me, I felt like I was Japanese. Honestly, I really did. I became Japanese, because I was just so embedded in it. I was so impressed with the culture and the dignity and scale. Going to another country is really the way to learn about space and that trip to Kyoto was, for sure, the best.

Ryoan-ji II

At Ryoan-ji, you only have one place where you can look at that garden. There's only really one view. All I would do was to keep imagining the parachuters who landed in Japan during World War II, and they were dropped into that garden, and they didn't know where they were. My goodness. What a wakeup call. You know? But to be able to go there and to understand another culture, and the method by which they are able to calm their minds, and to relax their minds through meditation or through looking at some kind of a garden like this—and being there with something for a while. Americans' brains are too busy with a lot of internal chatter. That's not necessary. A lot of these icons of art and of landscape spaces allow for that world to open up to people, the Bloedel Reserve, especially.

Moss Garden: Kokedera and Saihoji Temple

The Moss Garden is much more ephemeral. The Ryoan-ji is more of an emblem of the culture. Imagine the World War II parachuters landing in that garden. That must have been an experience. But the Moss Garden is much more open ended and there's a lot of aspects to it that many people miss, which is the hike to the top, and when you're walking down, you see the whole patterning of the pine trees and how they're growing. It looks like a very carefully painted Japanese kimono. So beautiful, that ability to see those things and to capture them in [the] imagination and have them forever.

Staying Present

I think for any designer, for any person who is involved in the arts, one always wants to record those ideas so that they can be incorporated into future work. And because most people's brains are a sieve [LAUGHTER] for collecting information, I find that carrying a notebook, writing in a journal, are very useful. Carrying the notebook, because you can write things down. And a journal, which is a little more formalized, can be more of a rage book. It can also be a beautiful diary. That's all just a matter of helping oneself to really stay present, which is right here and now at this moment.

Meditation

I started meditating when we moved from Malibu to Mandeville. There was a group of people who were meditating in Mandeville Canyon and I wanted to see what that was like, so I just started going. Why not? Ed Wortz was the leader of that group and his wife, [Melinda Wortz], was a famous writer about the arts, and I was able to go and visit the Lightning Field with her and Lita Albuquerque. That was terrific, to be able to experience that major art piece. 1993 was the year that I really started meditating because of Ed Wortz, and he would lead the meditation group right across the street.

Meditation II

When you learn how to meditate, I think each person does it in their own way. All it means is that you give yourself over to your mind. And you sit still. Things will come in and go out of your brain. Every morning I sit and meditate for 20 minutes. I have a quiet place where I can sit and it's actually at the front door, right next to the sewing machine. It doesn't matter where you do it. But it sure helps. I mean, it sure gives you a sense of grounding. It gives you a sense of messages that are zapping around in your brain. And it just gives you a chance to breathe and to have respect for yourself. I don't know how to describe it.

The meditation that I learned from Ed Wortz just helped me a tremendous amount. You do it first thing in the morning when you wake up. Having a lot of interest in Zen meditation, Richard and I went to Tal Sahara, which is a Zen center, for our honeymoon while I was two months pregnant. Tal Sahara is a wonderful place to learn how to meditate.

Building The First Studio

I was looking for something to do. I had a bicycle and I used to ride my bike to the beach all the time. I had some good friends, Craig Hodgetts and Robert Mangurian, and I knew that they had a studio down at the beach. So I went, and I visited them. Bob Mangurian was so wonderful. He was so helpful, and Craig

[Hodgits] was interested and helpful also. I had a boyfriend at that time and we decided to build out our own studio, do all the plumbing, have a big space that we could do things in. But that relationship just didn't go and didn't work out, and I moved out and built my own studio on Michigan Avenue, where I was for many, many years. [That] was a place that I could really call home, because I built everything myself to be just the way that I wanted it, and I didn't have to ask anybody else. I could have a shelf just like this here. I could punch a hole in the wall if I wanted. Mr. Carlson was a wonderful landlord, and he was really great, and really good to me. He manufactured doors.

I remember on the first day that the rent was due, I was sleeping right there in the front room and at eight o'clock in the morning, there was this big pounding on the door. I woke up. I probably [had] a terrible hangover. I walked over to the door, and he put his hand out. He said, "Rent, please." And I said, "Oh, I'll be right there." And I wrote the check and gave it to him. Our friendship was very good.

I used a big, huge bar—it's a heavy tool for digging holes— because I was making the area between the sidewalk and the road on Michigan Avenue into a garden. I wanted to plant all these bulbs, and so I had this really wonderful tool that I still own today. It's just for making holes in the earth and loosening it up. Well, little was I to know that this tool was headed for a water connection. This was before the meter. So this was a big deal, and it was a geyser that was probably 30 feet tall. Oh, what did I do?! I had to call Mr. Carlson and he came over like a shining knight in armor on his horse, and he had exactly the perfect kind of clamp to put right over it. Then he looks at me and says, "You're not going to do this again, are you?" [LAUGHTER]

He was really my good friend, and he really looked out for me, and he could see everything and anything that I was doing. He would always sing opera at the top of his lungs when he was running his wood through the table saw. I had a wonderful time there. There [were] always opportunities for people to come by. I would roll back the front door and we would have a big long table on the sidewalk on Sunday night, and

have a big dinner party outside. It was so much fun. There was such a freedom and openness for that period in my life. I was really so, so happy to be on my own, and taking care of myself and earning my keep. That's a good feeling.

Designing Campus Landscapes

Campuses are where you're conducting education. And you need to have spaces for people to feel comfortable to sit and stop and talk. You need to have intimate spaces, but you need to have a big idea so that you can find your way. Wayfinding is a very important part, and using these tree-lined horizontal pathways, each with a different flowering tree on it, would be a really good way to signify and give people a feeling of safety of where they are.

On campuses, you can't have any plant materials between; you have to go as high as your thigh, and then you have to go above your head, so that you can have safety, and your vision can sweep through the campus so you have a feeling of security as you're moving through the campus.

Designing Campus Landscapes II

First of all, you have to accept the fact that you've got to have a lot of cars, and you have to make space for them. But wayfinding on the campus is paramount. If you have clear circulation routes and a hierarchy of circulation with a big quad in the middle so that people know where they are, then you have a feeling of safety. That's what's most important: the visibility above your knees, below your knees, and then above your head so that you see clearly where you're going, and who's at hand, and who's there. And good lighting as well. There's a hierarchy of lighting.

I'm just thinking of the work we did at UC Riverside making that very clear for students. It was a mess, but now the whole quad is very lively and the kids just love the student center. We did that whole student

center with a series of concentric circles creating spaces of lawn. Skateboarding is an issue on campus these days, but that's solved in various different ways.

The campuses, I think, are really wonderful projects, because people live their lives there. They go home and sleep, but then they're at the campus. That's really their second home. So you have to make food services available, close by, with good food. You have to have lots of good benches that they can sit on in groups—and the way that they're faced can make a big difference in how communication happens, and if people feel safe. It's wonderful working on campuses, and we've done many of them over the years.

Designing Campus Landscapes III

When you're dealing with existing conditions, you need to take note very carefully of what's there and make an itinerary, make a list of how many of each there are, and what's most prevalent. [You need to] think very carefully about what the nature of each of those trees is. Are they going be high maintenance in terms of dropping of leaves? Do they have any pests? We've worked a lot with arborists on the campuses to try to work to find a pallet of trees that are going to really do the job and live the longest. The life expectancy of the trees is a big part of it. I can think now at UCLA where the London plane trees are lining the walkway from the library up above, down below to the gyms. That campus's circulation is very clear at UCLA, and I'm really glad to have had the opportunity to go there.

A Pamela Burton Landscape

If you were to ask me what makes a Pamela Burton landscape, I would have a pretty simple answer. There's probably three components. The first is: You've got to have a big idea. If you don't have a big idea, you might as well just leave. So people learn how to think big. What makes this different than other gardens? What are the constraints? What are the opportunities? What can I lend to it that would be really special? That big idea is the over-arching idea about what we do. And you have to come up with it. It could be plant materials. It could be something that holds this project together from all the rest.

Going back to the Indian Chaitya hall, going back to the circumambulating and having a path around the perimeter of a project is a key idea that I developed years ago working with Eugene Kupper at Harry Nilsson's house. To have that ability to get outside of your own world, our little internal world, and get outside of it and walk around, and then look back—to really have that ability to be objective about what you're doing, and evaluate your success or failure, or other ways to improve. That circumambulatory ritual is keynote, I think, in our office, for a client to be able to walk around their house and to be able to look at it from a distance. It gives you some objectivity. It gives you ideas. It takes you out of the ruts of whatever it is that you're working on.

Along with that, I'd like to talk about all the native plant materials that we have in Southern California. We live in an ideal climate. You can grow anything here. I am so surprised, but we do have a lot of native plants that are really underappreciated and underused. Plus, they're used to this kind of climate. Why not get things that are effortless to grow? You want to have that ease. You want, "Well, I know this thing is hard as nails and it's not going to go anywhere, and it's going to behave itself." Nothing more. You could not have kids any better than the California native plant materials. We encourage those.

Brain Drawing

When I approach doing a planting plan, mostly, the most important thing is to visit the site, to understand how much area is in hand, and to begin to get an understanding of the assets of the site. How many trees are there? Where are they located? To photo-document a site when you first visit. How is it enclosed? Where are the edges? How does the house sit onto the property? What are the entrances and exits? How's the circulation work? All the practical things that need to be done, because a landscape needs to be serviceable. It's not a painting. It can be, but it, above all else, it has to work. It has to function. It has a job to do. And you'd better make sure that you've got the grading right. That's the first thing that we would ask for in terms of a new project. You have to have a survey, and we send the client the survey.

The conditions of the survey have to be included. We can't work on any project without a survey. Once you have the survey and you know what the grading is, you know where the water is falling and going. You understand where the boundaries are and what the setbacks are. There's so many civil engineering things that need to be understood and accepted.

Then we can sit down once we have that information, and guess what we do? We make a brain drawing. That's what we were known for. You have to have a brain drawing that shows all of those things. What's the property boundaries. What are the setbacks? What are the assets? What are the most difficult aspects to this site? Is there a bad drainage problem? What about lighting? Do you have a lot of streetlights? What kind of ambient light do you have? Garden lighting is just as important as the planting, because people in California sit outside. We enjoy the weather all year long. So there's no reason why lighting shouldn't be included in that portion of the design.

The brain drawing is everything, and it's everything at that time. Usually, there's three or four people working on it. That working together part is really fun because everybody has ideas. "Well what about this? We could do this over here and move that over here." Then there are issues of screening out unwanted views, and opening up new views, because you could make a completely different project just by hiding where the fence is so that you get a borrowed landscape. It looks like part of your property. That's the easiest thing to do to make a place feel much bigger and to please the clients.

But most of all you have to have a very skillfully prepared survey. That's the biggest thing. It has to be very thorough, and we have three or four surveyors that we work with. They're all top notch. The survey is where you start. You have to have that survey and have that information, so that you know what the grading is, you know where the sun is coming from, and then you start getting into the issues of light, how much light falls to the Earth, how much could we open up, or could we screen more? Do you need more or less? There are so many intuitive things about looking at a site for the first time.

I remember the first time that we saw our property up in Ojai. Oh my gosh. The hardest thing I ever did in my whole life was building our own garden. I would get up to the second floor and I would look down, and then I would go there with a shovel and pickaxe and I would start moving dirt around. Then I would get a ladder and stand up on the ladder and look at it. [LAUGHTER] I was my own worst enemy. The grading was all 7% on a diagonal through the whole thing so I really learned a lot by doing my own gardening. You really get a taste of how hard those guys work for us.

The Scale of Landscape

It is about having an educated eye, and its experience. I think that the key here is to not get your panties in a bind. It's to just relax and enjoy it and think about it and sometimes you even dream about it. It's the contrast of the texture matched with the quality of the ground plane and also the framing of views. There's a lot that can be done with landscape that can channel a view in one way or another and also change the experience of the scale of the space.

The height of hedges often times gets way out of hand and nobody's paying attention to just lowering that hedge to here and letting the light come in. That can make a huge difference in anybody's garden. You don't pay attention. The plants grow. See that *podocarpus* hedge right out the door? It doesn't get taller than that because it would cut out the light, and it makes the scale of that room really habitable. So, it's about scale. It's about space. It's about repetition and simplifying the pallet and not having one of everything in it.

Have a palette that's really strong and unusual. Oh, I was so pleased to see those tiny little reddish, plumish-colored sedums. I have never seen that before. I was so surprised and delighted. That's a delight for the eye, that color. So you know, letting everybody have a chance at the creativity. That's what's so much fun, and teaching people not to be afraid: to just go out to the nursery and wander around and look at the names of plants and things.

I always go to F & K. Especially if I'm depressed or something bad has happened, I'll just go over, and I turn into another person, just walking around and looking. "Look at this! This is so amazing. We've got to use this again." There's so many opportunities, such an incredible choice, and an aesthetic pallet that we have here in Southern California because of our climate. I don't want to quit working. You're going to have to get the hook. [LAUGHTER]

Plants that Don't Complain

We love plants that don't complain so we use them all the time. We're greedy for them. We want as many as we can find and use them ubiquitously. I think that plant materials are everything: texture, color, height, smell, scents. It's a living, breathing thing that will adorn any structure in a way that can be very calming, and just be a delight because of its beauty. And the beauty comes not just with the plant materials, but with the proportions of the space. If you don't have your proportions right, it's going to be out of whack. And so how do you know how to make it? Well, what kind of a hedge can you use?

I'm thinking again about the Bloedel Reserve: The proportions of the space, the reflections of the surrounding area in the mirrored surface of the water, the size of the rectangle, the entrance, and the surrounding foliage around that, how it makes it into its own world. That, to me, is the best example of landscape architecture I can ever think of that gives me a sense of calm and well-being. I would love to be in that space. You would go there to think about something carefully, because it's so well designed and built.

Plants that Don't Complain II

You can get a one-gallon plant and you can put it in the ground, and it will grow quickly and show you something. A plant that doesn't complain is one that you can prune off a root this big that's lifting the threshold of the door into your office and you have to cut it again. [LAUGHTER] Because it's yet again

lifting the threshold of the door to the office, and I don't want that door not be able to open. That would not make me very happy. [LAUGHTER]

So I think plants that don't complain are definitely sycamores. They're native here. We'll plant them everywhere that we go, if we can, because they grow, and they don't' complain. They rarely kick the bucket. Plants that don't complain are tough. They're utility plants, but they're also the framework of the garden. They can just define the proportions of the space by the spacing of the planting of the trunks, and then again you have the canopy of the tree. Plants that don't complain get planted a lot from our office because they endure, and they're durable. What more could you ask from a tree or from a plant? They don't complain. [LAUGHTER] Because if they could, you know, meow.

What Makes a Good Client

I would say that the ideal client for me would be someone who's really interested in the garden, interested in what it can do for their dwelling or for their office. Getting to understand the client's wishes turns into making a program list—a list of programmatic items that this space could be used for. Then it's about the senses: What are you smelling? What are you seeing? What are you feeling? What are you hearing? Come to your senses.

The second big thing to do is to really experience what it is and what the potential is. The potential can be to determine the portions of the space ahead of time, and to use plant materials to shrink the space and make it more intimate, or to make the space broader and larger by trimming down perimeter hedges. Hedges can always have edges that you don't like, like if the edge is too high. It's making the space feel proportionately small because it's high. If you bring it down and bring it down, you can make it feel much larger just by trimming a hedge down two feet. They get away from you, you know. You have to be right on top of those hedges because they will change the proportion of your space, and then make it feel claustrophobic. You don't want that.

What Makes a Good Client II

A good client will give you a good program. We always ask our clients: Let's make a list of all the things that you would like to do in this garden. Do you want to barbeque? Do you want to play bocce ball? Do you want to have a backboard? [We are] developing a program for what people can do in these spaces and encourage them to go out into it, not just look at it. You know? Make it so that there's a big, big tree with a swing on it, and then even if you just go out and sit in that swing for a little while, it can be really refreshing to be outside of your regular duties that have you running around all day. You know? Take a step outside of that and be in the garden and just smell the air and be quiet. Rest for a minute. It doesn't have to be that hectic. If you can make that space for yourself, you'll live a lot longer, I think.

Good Clients III

[When the clients know] exactly what they want, boy is that just music to my ears. Suzie and Steve [Gilbert] will always let us come by, bring clients, and show them our work. Now, that's something that you need. We just recently brought Sia by. We're working on Sia's house. That is a story and a half. What a project it's going to be. She's just amazing. Anyway, I could bring her over any minute or time of the day; you have clients that will open their doors for you to show our work. You've got to keep attention and keep those clients happy. I go visit them and see, "Well, how is this working for you?" And I have two of those on my list, right now, today.

Soil "Where the Life of the Garden Begins"

Individual clients are very useful. They're extremely useful. First of all, you have a one-to-one contact. You could ask them what they like. You could develop a program for the garden, and you can already start to see how large and how small spaces could serve this client. You really develop a program. That's the first thing. Then you should really understand the soil conditions.

We have a special tool that you can push down into the soil, probe, and then you pull it up and you can see the quality of the soil. Is it clay-y? Is it sandy? Does it fall apart? You need to know what kind of soil you have, and we have a soil probe we use on every project. Here, you have a lot of clay-y soil that doesn't allow for water to drain, and it just clogs and gets disgusting. So you can remember that. But you just have to know the soil that you're working with. Does it hold together or does it come apart? Is it sandy? What's the quality of the soil? That's where the life of the garden begins.

Soil Probe

We have a soil probe in our office. Rolla Wilhite gave it to me. It is a round, black cylinder, and it has four pieces of pipe that screw into each other, and the bottom one will take out a section of earth. You have two handles on it, and you push it down into the earth, and when you pull it out you can see what kind of soil you have.

That's an important process when you're doing the planting of a lot of trees. You need to know what your soil percolation is like. The landscape contractor is digging all of these holes for his trees and they need to be twice as big as the box that's going to go in there. Then you have to do the water test where you fill the hole up to the brim with water and you watch the time; then you come back in an hour and you see how much it's absorbed. You learn about the clay-y quality of the soil that you're working with, because you have to have good drainage, or you're just going to plant something that's going suffocate.

Office Collaboration

I would say in my case, the whole office is about collaborating. Everybody in there has questions and needs answers and has opinions and wants feedback. There's a lot of communication in a fishbowl environment. It might not be as efficient as it could be in other places, but everybody learns if something happens.

Working with Architects

I have been fortunate enough to work with several architects that we really have a great working relationship with, and [with] repeat projects. First of all, I would say [Charles] Moore, [John] Ruble, [Buzz] Yudell—especially working with John Ruble. He's really an excellent architect in his care and concern about proportions and space making. I've been at work with them on many charettes where everybody is involved and we have glorious results.

I think collaborating also with Fred Fisher has always been very fruitful. We have the ability to make suggestions about moving buildings in certain places because it could make the scheme better. He's very open minded about that. He's not protective of his own design work. He's open to ideas and that's what I especially like about Fred.

Working with Frank Gehry has been interesting over the years, but one time I was over there talking about the idea of collaborating and working on a project, and he just told me that he bites landscape architects' heads off and spits them out. I just turned on my heels and left. I did have to work with him, though, on John Baldessari's house, because Frank was John's architect. I think that Frank has really given the practice over to his son, and working with his son is a delight.

Aflalo/Gasperini, the architects that we worked with in Brazil, were just the most courteous and the most interesting of all the architects that we've worked with. Because we had the translation issue, they all pretty much spoke English, which was terrific. They liked our ideas and they encouraged them, and they were very happy with that. We've been down for other projects with them.

Working with Steve Ehrlich has always been a pleasure. I've known him for many years, and we've had work with him on wonderful projects. Currently we're working with them on a large park area here in Southern California. There's a number of architects that we've worked with, and new ones that we're

working with now—younger guys who are coming up—and they [said], "Well, gosh, why won't we hire you?" And I said, yeah. That's what I say. So we're open.

David Montalba is also another architect who was once one of my students. He now has a 120-person firm, and he has two offices here and one in Switzerland. He is so talented. We just finished with them the new Erewhon store on Wilshire Boulevard. Take a look at that; You have to take a look at the fig trees on the back side of the building. They're espaliered and growing up beautifully. David just lets us do whatever we want. He's terrific. And he's a very good architect. [LAUGHTER]

Six Views – Landscape Architecture exhibition

Dextra Frankel was the gallery director at Cal State Fullerton. She and I became friends through a piece of artwork that we did with Oliver Andrews, who was the head of the sculpture department at UCLA. He wanted us to accompany him on this boat ride so that he could present his piece, which was really quite amazing, with a giant helium balloon going up in the sky, and it was attached to another equally sized globe that would sink down to the bottom of the ocean. It was like a casting rod. It had to do with air. It had to do with water. And Dextra and I assisted him with this project and then we became friends.

She was so fascinating to me that I asked her, "Why don't we do an exhibition of landscape architecture?" And that gave me the courage to just get on the phone and call up all of these different people and say, "How would you like to be part of the gallery show at Cal State Fullerton? I'm organizing this, and I would love for you to be a part of it." Pretty much everybody that I called wanted to participate and came up with a big idea.

It was a lot of fun, and it really helped to make myself more known. Here I am struggling to try to get something more than just residential projects, and really wanting to have larger scale projects to work on. This was an opportunity for that— working with Dextra Frankel on this show called Six Views.

Six Views II

Everybody that I knew, I would talk to: Lloyd Hamrol, Craig Hodgetts, Rod Wiggington—all kinds of people that I would just call up and see if I could get them to participate in it. And yes, they wanted to, which was really amazing for 1986, for landscape architects to have a show. We started out in La Jolla, and then we had shows all over. I don't know how many different locations this exhibition had, but it certainly was fun for everyone who worked on it.

Six Views III

We did have a big opening and everybody came. It was so much fun. So many landscape architects and many people from Cal State Fullerton came as well. I think there was an article in the paper about it. We kind of felt like we got some notoriety out of it. At least we got somewhere on Pete's [Peter Walker] antenna, and also through George Hargreave's. There we are in Southern California, where it's hard to get noticed. This is the land of television and movies and there is a lot more exciting news than what landscape architects are doing. Nevertheless, it didn't stop me from pursuing other venues of this same type.

I think trying to get landscape architects noticed is a big deal, because people take it for granted. There's so much that goes into developing a landscape and working with a client, knowing about grading and drainage, knowing about materiality and how we can begin to use innovative, unexpected materials…what we can do to call attention to our work that is real, but has a certain kind of quality to it, where things are edited out…where what isn't there is better than what is there. So getting to the essence of what a garden is how we can make them comfortable for people to live in, but yet clearly make a statement about the materiality, the organization. One of the most ubiquitous little tricks that I have is the walk-around, the ritual path that takes you around.

Design Review Boards

When I was at UC Santa Barbara on the design review board, we had projects that were brought to be reviewed by Bob Stern and Robert Venturi. It was incredible because both of those two men were in the same room and they were both talking and speaking with each other about their work and asking each other questions; and I found this interchange so important, because these were people that I had studied and recognized as leaders in the field of architecture, as well as landscape architecture.

I learned a lot from being of service on a review board, and I was on many other design review boards over the years, such as UC San Diego. UCLA doesn't have a design review board, but UC Riverside and then again UC Santa Barbara. That was something where I really learned, being on the other side of the table, and critiquing other people's work. I learned a tremendous amount, and it really I think helped make my practice better.

Private Landscapes

I wanted to write *Private Landscapes* because I was very interested in the work of [Richard] Neutra and specifically the Kaufmann house in Palm Springs. Somehow, we were not included in the project to be finished, and I thought to myself that I need to document this in a way where I can explain to other people what I feel or what I think about the engagement of architecture with landscape. How does that get blended together? And how does that effect the way that architects see landscape?

So basically, we were kicked out of the role of working on that project because another set of architects came in and convinced the client that they were going to be the architect of the building as well as of the landscape. And I said, hmmmm. [LAUGHTER] I would really still like to talk about this. My husband, Richard, really encouraged me, and I went to Kathryn Smith, who was an incredible architectural critic and has written many books about architecture and landscape, and she said that she would be happy to write the introduction. Marie Botnick was also very, very interested in Neutra. In fact, that was how I met her.

She invited me to her house to take a look at their Neutra house that they lived, right on the bluffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean in the Palisades. So Marie [Botnick] was really game for this. She loved the idea of writing a book and working on one. So did I. And we knew nothing about how to do it. So I said, I have my friend Kathryn Smith. Let's go ask her; she writes all about architecture.

We pulled her into our circle, and I'll never forget our first meeting with Kathryn [Smith]. She said to Marie [Botnick] and I, "This, I want to let you know, is a book. In this book, there is a preface…" It took about 15 minutes for her to describe exactly what a book is. It has this. It has this and this, and you're going to have to figure it out and do it. We had meetings probably every week or every two weeks at Kathryn Smith's house, and she would see how we were coming along with the search for projects and the writing about the projects. How did modernism begin in Southern California? And of course, we had to start with [Richard] Neutra and [Rudolph] Schindler.

We did all of the graduate research at UCLA in the archives. We got to pull out all of their original drawings and look at them, and to just see their hand on the paper was really encouraging to me. It was so wonderful to see someone's mind at work on paper, and they're dead. [LAUGHTER] That's what the archives are for. Marie and I really enjoyed ourselves studying and learning about all of these different architects and landscape architects. So, that was how we produced the book.

Julius Shulman

Uncle Julius. We would visit many, many, many times, but we would always bring him orange juice and vodka. [LAUGHTER] That was our key to his memory and his understanding, and he provided us with tremendous amounts of information about all of these architects. Some of them were really very hysterical. I think that [Richard] Neutra even was one of them. He was sending some drawings back to the East Coast and he just stuck the two of them together and they smudged each other. They just didn't

make it. And Julius had to impeccably get this thing figured out and clean it up and put it together so it could be photographed.

I mean, Uncle Julius really saved the neck of many an architect. Many architects had flaws in their photographs, flaws in their structures, flaws everywhere. What he could do was to modify the mistakes with the way that he photographed things so that it is very clear.

That was interesting because everything that I knew about Neutra's work and [Rudolph] Schindler's work was very clean and very clear. There weren't any mistakes, or there weren't any smudges or whatever. But here, you could really, really touch closely what these guys were thinking and how they were working and departing from the flow. They really departed in a sense that this is really the birth of modernism right here, and it happened in Los Angeles.

Collaborating with Richard Hertz

I'm so fortunate to be married to a wonderful husband who has no problem at all with writing books, or with writing at all. The two of us would really work as a team to work on another book. It's really so much work, having to go back in again and write the subtitles, or to make sure every single word and every part of it makes sense. Richard [Hertz]'s a great editor and he's also a great writer. The two of us have really helped each other a lot over the years. I don't know if I've ever helped him write anything. But I can come up with some pretty zany ideas.

The Relationship Between Landscape & Architecture

A lot of landscape architects, they just use fluffery and flufferoo and just throw it out there. I'm certain that it happens with lots of developers who are trying to build something and sell it. But I think there's a fine craft of the relationship of landscape to architecture, and the proportions, the scale and size of the rooms. Think of the Bloedel Reserve. Think of the proportions of water to the scale of the space

surrounding it. Think of the relationship between wilderness and being cultivated. Those two extremes can really make a very interesting design. And it comes from the first big idea that one has when you understand what the opportunities are, what are the constraints, and what is the scale, what size. What am I working with? And then you have to just go to sleep and dream. Writing down my dreams all of my life has been a very helpful, and rich land to cultivate and to choose from.

Experiencing Space (Architecture)

How do you talk about something that you have studied for so long and then all of a sudden you get to go there? It's really about seeing the buildings in three dimensions, very much like Doxiadis at the height of the Hellenic time. There is this raised area and there's the Parthenon on the top. All of those buildings are arranged so that when you come up, you see them in three-quarters. Now, how did the Japanese get the same idea about seeing the buildings not straight on, but seeing them from an angle, where you can see the three-dimensional quality of the building?

With the Romans, you had to go straight through and see the front façade, and it was a different aesthetic of travel. How you move through a space has a lot to say about what the creator of that building or that space has done. They're leading you up there. You're looking at this façade. Or your path of travel is showing you something that has a three-dimensional quality. There's a big difference in the path of how it leads you to where you're supposed to go.

Gardens Are for Living In

Gardens are for living in and for meditating, and if you get tied up and you have your panties in a bind, just go outside and take a big deep breath. Take a walk around the block. I've done that here. I step out of my office, and I walk out and around. Sometimes I'm here late and then there's a light on in my office, and I look from the outside and say, "So that's what goes on in there." [LAUGHTER] You have to separate yourself from yourself. And be kind.

Come to Your Senses

In 1984, along with Robert Mangurian and James Turrell, we were one of the finalists to design a home and a sculpture at the Domain Clos Pegase winery. In the design of the Garden of Seven Mysteries, you distinguish between the backwoods as the trickster or the shadow, the Psyche, while the flat terrain is the rational and logical Hero. Also in *hydrotopia*, a concept created in the American garden at the twelve new landscape designs exhibition in Harvard in the early '80s [where] water serves as the metaphor for a stream of consciousness. Am I inspired by other allegorical landscapes such as the gardens at Bomarzo? I would say, yes. But I didn't know a lot about them.

You have to come to your senses, to be open, to look with your eyes and learn about what you're seeing. I think that's pretty straightforward. I think being in a garden is just exactly that. I mean, sometimes you have to think about what kind of outdoor space it is. If it's a cemetery, you're going to be crying. Right? If it's a volcano, you're going to be [observing]. What kind of space outside are you in? And I believe [you] just come to your senses.

So the senses are very important to me in designing a garden. I have to think about what kinds of plants have I have to have everywhere, and that's lemon verbena, because you can cut it out and put it into ice water, and it's just so fabulous. The sense of smell I think is really more about the weather. It's more about the type of plant materials that are in a garden. You have to get up close to things if you really want to determine a fragrance or to enjoy something.

Lemon verbena, when you take it, it just looks like a rangy weed. But if you know to crush the leaves between your hands and to have a fragrance like that, it's wonderful just knowing about it. As far as touch, poison oak is deadly. [LAUGHTER] Do not touch the poison oak, because you'll be in for a two-week adventure of itching. And of course, everybody likes to touch things.

Take a look at the *Virgularia*. Look at the shine. Look at the size. It's just as big as a person's head—one leaf—and it's rounded and it's very smooth, and it reflects the light. It has an incredible touch—a visual touch, if that's possible. You touch it with your eyes. Right? Interesting. Same thing about *podocarpus* and sycamores. Sycamores are our native tree but they could give people a terrible allergy because of the fine dust and rust that's on the underside of the leaves. People who are allergic to sycamores are sneezing and coughing all day.

And taste, it reminds you of the Garden of Eden, and going in and eating that fruit and paying the consequences. And appreciating them, too. So I think "come to your senses" is what I say. Just really get over it. Stop worrying. Come to your senses. Enjoy yourself. Right? The idea of moving through space and experiencing all of the senses is part of what life is about, and the joy of living with a garden, really. Isn't it? So, look forward to that fragrance, to look forward to the delight of the color of the roses in the rose garden, or the citrus trees when they're in bloom in the spring. You could smell it a mile away, and then you come to your senses. [LAUGHTER]

Bomarzo is just an allegorical landscape because it was a way to get people to walk through it, and enjoy it. I remember our visit there with Richard [Hertz], my husband, and our two children. Afterwards, we went into this restaurant and we ordered a giant mushroom. Everyone got a giant mushroom on their plate. The kids said, "How are we going to eat this?" And I just said, "Just like this." Well, I just picked it up and took a big bite out of it. Richard very politely, sliced it. But it's all about learning and being a daredevil, because how much are you going to learn by staying away and not trying something? What kind of a life are you going to live being sequestered away into an ivory tower? You need to be outside and to experience all of the senses. And that's what that means to me.

The Garden as Wild

I like to try all kinds of things. I go to the POP Park right here with my grandson, and I go on the most daring rides that there are. And I'm not going to say I'm middle aged or anything, but I'm a grandmother. And I just love going on those rides with the kids. I'm a daredevil. And I still am. Because what do you have to lose? Really nothing. And then you've experienced this wonderful world, for as much as it can give us.

I put that to clients, too. You know? What do you really like about being outside in the garden? What kind of a destination can we make for you to go and to want to be lured to something that's mysterious and unexplained? There's a lot of opportunities in designing a garden. I mean, architecture is one thing, because it's so constructed. It has such edges, and it has to be conformed to protect people from the rain and provide them lavatories and bedrooms and kitchens and everything.

But being outside, it's much more wild than that. And I love the idea of the wilderness. I love the idea of going to visit the Lightning Field, to go and experience art in that way. You have to go out to try it. And that's what makes living livable.

Art in the Landscape

Art in the landscape is part of a ritual for people who have the economic situation where they can splurge on expensive pieces of art. And why not? That's a story in itself about a person's taste, a client's taste, and what they would like to do with their garden. I was fortunate enough early on to have a client who grew with me in terms of what kind of art to put in the garden. I learned from him, especially about the work Jenny Holzer. I think of Jenny Holzer and her benches with enigmatic words carved into the bench, which is really great. I mean, art like that gets you outside to go and see things like that. Especially the Richard Long piece at Gil [Friesen]'s garden. He had great taste in art. But art in the garden is, I guess in

a way, some kind of status symbol for people who are involved in the museum and who are involved in bringing art into their lives.

Art in the Landscape II

I learned a lot when I was working with Gil [Friesen]. He did all of the choices himself. I would make suggestions, and of course the stairway that goes down through the garden like Vita Sackville-West was what inspired that walkway. There had to be a termination to it. We had these platforms that originally were going to be for an orchard, because I had an orchard, and I wanted everybody else to have an orchard, especially if they have a lot of property. It's really a lot of fun. So we tried that out for a while but then Gil started to become interested in collecting art and bringing that into the garden.

We would talk about where something should be located, and sometimes I would come over, and there it would be, like the Jenny Holzer bench at the edge of the pool. It's a collaborative effort, I think, and it depends on who the client is and what their interest is. Peter Morton, for example, doesn't have much of a collection of art in landscape. He has it mostly in his paintings and his interior work. But the series of gardens that we've built for him over the years are all just really wonderful and scaled differently. And they're different sizes of outdoor rooms that you can walk through. So every client is different, and every client I think is happy, as far as I'm concerned.

Art in the Landscape III

[John Baldissari] has a very large camel with bright blue eyes that's bigger than this courtyard, and there's a big, giant tree in there as well that we craned in because he doesn't like green tomatoes. He likes to buy what he wants right now. Most clients are like that. He brought in this wonderful piece—one of his favorite pieces of all—and it's the camel. The animal is completely white with blue eyes. There's a big needle and the camel is sitting there staring at the eye of the needle. You know? And so a rich man can get to heaven just like this animal can get through the eye of this needle. That's the metaphor for the art

world from John Baldissari. And I love it. I love it and do everything that I can to make John happy. And it's not very difficult.

Materiality

Coriaria ruscifolia is a very sculptural plant and it can be used to great effect. People don't know what they're looking at, of course. You touch it and it's very stiff and covered with fir. *Coriaria ruscifolia*. We use it all the time. I love it.

I don't use trees as living sculpture. I just don't. That's Tommy Church, and I don't have anything to do with that. I use plant materials to make outdoor rooms that are differently scaled, so that people can enjoy themselves and have a clear way of circulating through the different spaces and the different rooms.

How do I select hardscape materials? I think I'm really realistic and I really think that materials, hardscape materials, first of all, need to be very durable. Hot and cool and reflective qualities don't play a role, really, and I'm pretty basic. I don't like to get stuff fancy. I don't believe in fancy, and I don't believe in that kind of style. I think about simplicity and how much I can edit. How much more can I edit out of this to make this place clearer and easier to inhabit? I'm always taking away things rather than adding them. Why do I want something to shimmer? I'm always looking for how to play, and how to make something simpler. I guess that's because of my Japanese aesthetic about gardens. They can get kind of souped up, too, though, to tell you the truth.

Trees

Human beings have different emotions at different times. When I think of the wedding tree at our house in Ojai, it really makes me so happy to go on that swing and to think about our children and our grandchildren all loving this place. Trees can have very special characteristics, especially when the foliage comes down to the ground and creates a room inside of it. There you have a really extraordinary

experience to be enveloped in a garden, under one big giant oak tree that hasn't been pruned for decades. Yes. That's very special.

Using Local Materials

For hardscape materials, it's pretty basic. You want to be ordering something that specifies something that's local. I think that works nicely into the economy expected of landscape architects and architects. You really want to have local sources. So any time that I'm working out of the country, when we were working in Taipei, the first thing that I did was have the driver take me to the local quarry. I wanted to see what kind of material was coming out of the ground, what color it was, the shapes, the availability… That's our job, to do due diligence as a landscape architect, to utilize local materials. You don't want to ship something from around the world that's sparkly and use it in some grounded landscape. You have to be practical, and you have to really respect clients' budgets.

And that's why we're still in practice after 40 years: We do our diligence. We select and use materials that are economical, but that will perform. I think there's a lot of practicality in being a successful landscape architect, to pay attention to your client, to pay attention to the budgets, and to be on top of the billing. I mean, this doesn't just happen because we're just plant lovers, and we just like to dance around in the garden without any clothes on. [LAUGHTER] No, we're very practical, and we have to be responsible to our clients.

We're not artists in that sense. We're not like Maya Lin, whom I've worked with many times, and love working with her. She has a budget and she has a pallet, but I'm coming to that project with practicality. "Well, Maya, what do you think about this? And how about this over here?" You want to support these people because they're the stars. What we can do is produce a space that has a certain quality of the dimensions, horizontal and vertical, and the scale of that space. Does it feel properly? How do people

move through it? No, this is architecture and you want to help your clients appreciate what we've produced for them.

Landscape Architecture is Practical

The conversation is [about] a piece of art that has an incredible depth and facile character to it and yet it's all unified into one place. It's abstract, but it has texture and color like you've never seen before. Will Fowler is really not a very well-known artist. Cy Twombly does give the same thing to me with the randomness of the strokes and swirls, and I've met Cy Twombly. Knowing artists through my husband, who has both feet fully in the art world, I can appreciate the efforts of what it takes to be an artist.

With landscape architects, this is a profession. We perform work that enables people to enjoy their environment. Artists have a different realm, completely. Elyn Zimmerman is a very close friend of mine and I respect tremendously her work, especially her Marabar—her first piece that she did outside of the National Geographic building in Washington, DC. She's an incredible artist, and she's been a very close, dear friend for many years. I have a lot of friends like that who are artists, and I respect them. But I learned from them—their daring quality. The art world is such an open-ended, wonderful world to be in and participate in. Richard [Hertz] and I both participate in it and respect those artists and respect the work that they produce. But I have to draw the line and say that I am in a profession and I learn from artists. What we do is make places for people to live and feel comfortable. And that's a service. But the artist, what bliss. What bliss to go to the museum and to see all of these different ways that people think and project themselves into the world with their work.

That Which is Useful is Beautiful

I think of it as teaching myself how to learn and I'm always learning. I don't feel like I'm at the end of a career. I feel like I've got a whole new career ahead of me. Every project is new and different and takes

a lot of concentration and understanding of what the client's needs and desires are. You're kind of like a shrink, to tell you the truth.

There's two projects: the Light residence and the one up on Toyopa, where of course the pathway comes into shape where the whole front part of this garden, which is actually two lots put together, is filled with this blue mix that I've invented (which is teucrium and lavender). It's in the front yard and there's a pathway through it, and it's lined with all of her favorite types of roses that she loves—big, bossy red roses that are yellow and white. It's just all in there with this blue mix. Then in the back, everything is very clean.

We fixed the pool. We've changed the proportions, and they have a eucalyptus tree that three people can't get their hands around which was probably planted in the 1800s on the bluff. This house is absolutely marvelous. It's absolutely wonderful. The client loves everything that we've done and there's such harmony. Wow. I guess you get to a place, and people respect what you say and what you provide for them, but I am always asking "What would you like? How do you live here, and how will you use the gardens?" We want to make them useful because that which is useful is beautiful.

That Which is Useful is Beautiful II

That which is useful is beautiful. That which is beautiful is not always useful. OK? And so I really have it in the back of my head when I'm working with my clients, because I want things to be useful. This garden on Toyopa, we've got all of those roses, and we've got the blue mix out in front, and we have these beautiful big sycamore trees, but we also have this outdoor room where her husband can have his barbeque and watch an outdoor stream. We have four beautiful *pyrus calleryana* in the courtyard. They can lose their leaves but they give it a nice kind of a canopy, almost like a little room. Then the planting is between all of the paving stones, and it's a place for the family just to go right outside the kitchen. So that's useful, and that's a really beautiful space. It's well-proportioned.

We had to cut hedges down so that the room would appear larger. That was easy to do. It just makes a big difference of knowing how the proportions work to create a space that people feel comfortable in. The other garden, and most recent, is the Light residence. That is really spare minimalism. The house is by Fred Fisher, who I was in architecture school with. There is a sequence of gardens for the client here that are really meaningful, and I think allow them to enjoy the space easily. They have lots of parties. There's a fountain that is basically taking a bowl and setting it so the water level is just a pure circle in the middle. It does have a small jet that can come up and create ripples in the water. But to be able to see that beautiful disk reflecting the sky is part of the simplicity of the beauty of this garden. It's wonderful.

Birds of Paradise

I think it's a place where people can feel relaxed, and they're not forced to. All I can do is think of a plant that I have in my garden, but it's kind of out of place. Things like birds of paradise, they really are squawking for attention. I'm using this one because I want to see what it does. It's a different variety and it doesn't have leaves. It just has these spikes that come out of the ground. So that was interesting to me. But it's so commanding of attention. And I'm just experimenting on myself. That's why I have that garden up in Ojai.

Bird of Paradise II

The bird of paradise has a normal leaf that's about three inches wide, and maybe 18 inches long and *stricta*—I can't describe it to you. It's a cylindrical leaf. It's not flat. It's so weird. And the flowers are really exquisite. I like it, and I'm going to be using it because I can see that it's bullet proof, because bird of paradise is very hard to damage or underwater or over water. They're really just a very study plant and will be nice to experiment with.

Blue Mix

Another example of an experiment here at our Ojai Rancho Dulce is the blue mix. It's a combination of four different shrubs that make an incredible combination and they're all having to do with blue. The *lavendula heterophylla* has a very simple leaf. It's not a fancy leaf like lavenders are. Then there's the *leucophyllum "*Thunder Cloud". This is absolutely bulletproof, drought tolerant. It can be used in the high desert and still perform and has blue flowers. There's also the *teucrium fruticosa*, which I love to mix in there with it. These are all different shades of blue.

Then the salvia, also with the blue [*alium chickering*]. All these things have blue or purplish flowers because that helps recede and make a space feel bigger. If you have something up close, and you've got bright red geraniums, you're not going to have any depth perception. But the blue will connect with the sky, and carry the spatial qualities to infinity. It's quite wonderful.

Swings

When I was a kid and we used to go to Texas to visit my grandparents, we used to entertain ourselves down at this big park in San Antonio. Oh, it was so much fun. They had all these different kinds of tree swings with rope, and everybody could swing on them. Swinging for kids is the best way to make them happy. We have lots of kids so we have lots of swings. That's it.

Time to Contemplate

It reminds you of your temporality. It reminds you of the short time that we all have on this planet. I think that you have to really enjoy it while you're here. Every split second. That's why making space for time to contemplate is so important. In this world that's so busy—and people trying to manage schedules and flights and transportation and getting your food, taking care of your family—to always make that time for yourself. It's a gift. It's a gift, and if you can do it in a beautiful garden, even better. [LAUGHTER]

PROJECTS

Harry Nilsson Residence

When I came back from Japan, I was a changed person. That experience was so profound; I didn't even realize it. My life really changed. I left my boyfriend, Ron Rezek, and moved into the village in Westwood, and I had my own apartment on the second floor of a wonderful Spanish building. It was a complete change, and it was such a revolution to move from being an undergrad, taking a year off, and starting graduate school. There is a big break there, and I think that moving through those experiences, I became much more independent, and much more secure in my own self and my abilities.

There are a lot of difficulties and a lot of things to solve and to take care of, especially being out of school and running my own practice. I just started first thing right out of graduate school. The first project that I worked on was with Eugene Kupper, who had been my thesis chairman and worked on this house for Harry Nilsson, a very famous singer. I was the person to do the landscape for this project.

All of my education really came in handy, especially the course that I took from J. Leroy Davidson about Indian Chaitya halls and all of the caves of Ajanta and Ellora and how important they were to express the nature of this religion. [There were] all of these different aspects I could incorporate in my work. In fact, I had a Chaitya hall behind Harry Nilsson's house. Actually, it was formed of all of the compressors and all of the different utilities that are needed to run a house of that size. It was very large.

The way that I worked at dividing up the spaces around the house to create this ambulatory path, this circumambulatory path, [was] very much like what I learned in J. Leroy Davidson's course on Indian architecture. Why not put it in there? It's a good way to give meaning to a space, to have a pathway, to have a ritual path, to move through a sequence of spaces of different proportion. We built a pergola over the top of two walls, and Eugene [Kupper] was up for this. I was very pleased that he liked what I was doing, and we were really collaborating together on this project.

One of the high moments of this project was when the very famous architectural photographer, Julius Schulman, came up to shoot the house, and Lita Albuquerque came. Of course, the driveway wasn't finished, but we convinced Eugene [Kupper] to do one of Lita [Albuquerque]'s pieces out here. So she developed the proportions of the triangle, and we all helped pour two different colors of blue powdered pigment to fill in the area of this triangle. And her piece was what Julius Schulman took, which was on the cover of architectural magazines. It was a very novel way of getting attention. But it worked. It was great.

We planted this fantastically beautiful, very old olive tree to go into a garden of gravel, and placed the rocks where they should be placed according to what I remembered in Ryoan-ji. The Nilsson house was also big because of the circumambulatory idea. It was all part of a walking meditation. So I think there was a lot of borrowing from traveling and learning from traveling that can easily be incorporated into inspired work. When you have that kind of link, then you're not just what we call "pointing and putting." No more pointing and putting. There has to be an idea. There needs to be an idea before you can get started on a project.

Colorado Center

This is about working on larger scale projects because for so many landscape architects, you just do putterville around the house. I had always worked with other companies, large and small, and this was an incredible opportunity to be involved with the redevelopment of Colorado Center. There were architects that were brought in, and other landscape architects, and I was there. The architect, Steven Ehrlich, was late and all the people from Tishman Speyer, probably 15 men, [were] all sitting around the table, and one of those people was Jerry Speyer's son. They wanted to know what we could do for the landscape of Colorado Center. I told them exactly what I thought.

I said, "This whole place, it's terrible. It really needs to be completely overhauled. It's so inefficient. The kind of planting that's here, it's tired. It was built in two phases, but it has to be completely turned

around." And they said, "Well, what would you do?" I said, "Well, you have to make a place here. You have to have different sizes of outdoor rooms. Make people comfortable and bring in a very interesting but drought-tolerant mix of plants." Then the interview was over and Steve Ehrlich came in for his.

I got a call that night from Rob Speyer. I said, "I can't talk to you. It's my son's graduation." Thunk. I hung up the phone. The next day, he got back with me. His father came to town and his father knew Gil Friesen, and they chit-chatted about who I was, and Gil certainly knew what I could do because he referred me to all of his friends. I built many wonderful gardens from his referral. They just said, "Will you please come and help us?" I said I would be delighted to.

It's five acres. It's in the middle of Santa Monica. It's on structure. There's parking under every tiny bit of it. And [we] went to work at developing a scheme that would bring this place back. Then we were assigned to go down to Brazil and work on a project that had been under construction [until] there was a terrible recession. They stopped in the middle of it. All they had was the parking structure and the plant, and that's what it looked like when I arrived in Brazil.

Aflalo/Gasperini was the architect that we worked with, and they were one of the biggest architects in all of Latin America. I speak Spanish and we all hit it off like crazy. I just rolled up my sleeves and had a ball. I loved working with those people. It just turned out to be a wonderful gift to the city, and a wonderful gift for Jerry Speyer and for his company.

The scheme is really very simple. It's basically based on a grid of trees, like an orchard. But then it has these follies that are working through it. We could have two scales: the orderly grid of the olive trees, and the irregular grid of some big high tree, like a California sycamore, as a point of wayfinding to connect the many buildings.

It was probably five or six buildings. Big buildings, right along the Pinheiros River. This was a big sale for Tishman Speyer. The only problem was why they would want to take garden space up with cars, but they wanted to get those cars on the top of the deck, have them be able to turn around in the middle, and then go out. So we allowed for that kind of vehicular circulation. But when the planting comes in, the very jewel of it is right smack in the middle. What we did was to recess down to the very top of the structure. We made them lower that floor, so that this space would be enclosed with a berm that was just about eyesight as you're walking, so you couldn't see in. Then there were these little side entrances. You had to go in through an opening that would then open up into this beautiful mound so that you could sit on the mound and have a picnic, and you wouldn't have to see the cars that were driving by.

We treated it in a way so that it really was a surprise—that center jewel—for people to come out of the buildings, have to look the buildings, and have a quiet garden space to be in. It's a big success. And Tishman Speyer always calls us to work on projects. We work on projects all over the world with them. We have a good time.

Colorado Center II

Steven Ehrlich was going in for the interview to revamp this 13-acre/four building complex in Santa Monica. And Steven had an idea about making the windows operable so that they could get fresh air into all of the offices. This was a huge financial proposition. When I went into the place to take the interview, I just said that all the landscape needs to be completely renovated.

Colorado Center III

I got the phone call from Jerry Speyer's son, who was running this project and he said that he liked what I said about the landscape, and we would like to hire you. I said, I can't talk to you right now. My son is graduating cum laude from high school, and I'm going right now. Goodbye. Anyway, they got in touch with me the next day. We worked everything out, and it was a marriage made in heaven, because this

was Rob Speyer's first big project to take on for Tishman Speyer, one of the leading developers in the United States.

It was a success from then on. Whatever I wanted to do, I could do, because I couldn't possibly go over the budget that was going to be required by the architect. So it was a good economic situation that was easily resolved.

Colorado Center IV

All thirteen acres, we worked on. That includes all the buildings. The 13-acre site with five major buildings. It's a business park. It was really in poor shape. So I said all of this material on the ground has to change and we need blue stone. We need blue stone to be laid out through all of the circulation areas, and we need to make it more intimate.

Colorado Center V

The heart of the campus needed to be soft. We needed to bring in landscape materials that would break down the heat energy of all of that concrete. So we just worked as hard as we could to get as much grass and as much non-reflective surfaces as possible. We worked with all of the exiting material that was on the campus, we just picked things up and moved them over. We picked up all the palm trees and used those to identify the whole complex around the perimeter.

Scripps College

Being asked by James Manifold to come to Scripps College and help with some ideas about their landscape—well, the college itself is already a real jewel in the campus. To think of Scripps and the varied scales of places and spaces that were available to students, and there's a very clear diagram of circulation, with the establishment of Edward Huntsman Trout's allées. So you would have these allées crisscrossing and forming axes, and making a very clear circulation route for students. They always knew where they were, and they were always feeling safe because you can see where you're going. It's well lit.

What we worked on was a really fun part of that school: to create a link between the arts building and the science building. Mary Sager McFadden and I worked on that and we got such joy from being able to have an institution with the funds and the wherewithal to really do something nice. The walkway for the girls would be from arts to science, and then from science to art. And so we had a series of banners, like musical notes. They were stripes across the path going out on this side on one of the curves, and going out the other side. Each one of them was a woman scientist talking about art, and coming the other way were women artists talking about science. So the art and science walk, in the very center of it had a resting place with two of these very beautiful urns—beautiful turquoise, a really soft kind of Scripps color—with a bench for the girls.

Cal State Northridge

I'd like to talk about our work at Cal State Northridge. It's really a saga because the entire campus was really struck by the 1994 earthquake. Many of the buildings were completely useless. The whole school was a wreck, a big wreck. And they had a president who was really interested in bringing it back and better. There were so many things wrong with that campus that you couldn't have been in a better situation to fix it.

The first thing starts with the students who go there. They get into their car and they drive to school; and they get out and go to a class. Then they go and they get back into the car, and drive around the campus and go to the other class. People were not walking around on the campus. They were getting in their cars and driving. So we wanted to get the kids out of the car and make the campus more efficient. [We wanted] to bring all of those wonderful spaces in the center of the campus into their consciousness, because all that they were interested in was getting in a car. Cal State Nowhere, they call it. [LAUGHTER] That was their nickname.

Well, they had a wonderful woman president, and her VP was really encouraged by our approach to making this campus really work. It wasn't an easy change to get the kids out of the cars and to give the campus a heart. Everything was so spread out, so many buildings were dismantled and broken. We had to reduce the size of the quad, because it was ginormous. It was so big: It was just leaking out all of the edges.

It was really crowned by the campus library and then the different buildings along the outside of the quad. But we knew that that green space had to be more intimate. So we were able, through our master planning work, to redo the whole quad with the use of trees. The trees would bring the scale of the space down and give the campus a heart again, using the library as the locator, as the major building on the face of that quad.

By the time that we finished the campus work, it was really humming again, and people weren't getting into their cars because the parking was redrawn, and the space between classrooms was redefined with new walkways. We had a series of parallel walkways through the rectangular-shaped campus, and each one had been planted over with large flowering trees—favorites of Southern California.

It really is a way of giving people a pathway to their classes, and the parking was completely rearranged so that students didn't have to get in their car and drive around the campus to get to the other side. Everything was close and compact. Then we worked on several other buildings on the campus as well. A wonderful series of projects, and I think one of the best campuses that we've done.

Michael Crichton's Residence

I guess it was in 1996. Good friends of mine, Chuck Kantor and Judy Kantor, they have an architectural practice, and Kantor Associates has been well-known throughout Los Angeles for providing really expert and wonderful architecture. They were also neighbors. They lived down the street from us in Mandeville

Canyon, and I became good friends with Judy Kantor. She was wonderful, very outgoing, and had lots of ideas, and Kantor Architects were very well-known for all of their fantastic work, both residential and commercial.

So Judy Kantor said, "Well, gosh, why don't you come with us, and you can come work on Michael Crichton's house." I said, "Who's that?" I didn't know who he was. I said, sure, I'd love to because I really liked them a lot and we were very close friends. [We] flew frequently to New York. I would say probably at least every other week and met with Michael. We talked about the house on the hill, because it did not have any gardens to cultivate. It was basically just a house plopped on the top of a hill.

So I took a look at it. I said I can't do anything until I have a survey, and I can begin to structure some gardens and some spaces. This is one of the earliest drawings of that project. Because the road is way down at the entryway—and you swirl around to come to the front entry of the house—it seemed to me that the relationship of massive void was not there. You needed to have a mass, like this orchard, that would begin to give you an entrance to close everything down so that when you come up to the front, you see the front of house. [It's] really hidden and then revealed.

I'm always interested in those two: the dichotomy of hidden and revealed. Once the front door was revealed and you moved through that passageway to look out over the gardens and all the way down across the hill, you could see where you could go in the garden. That's a really wonderful experience to see a connection of outdoor rooms, each with a different program, and each with a different garden theme. There's a way to move through those different gardens and really enjoy yourself. So that's basically what the plan was.

Michael Crichton's Residence II

This is an early plan that evolved to become a lot simpler so that the area of cultivation was maybe closer to the house, and then you could walk down. This is a toboggan sled run because this is in Upstate New York, and there was a tremendous amount of snow and things would shut down completely.

The project really did become edited and simplified and clarified so it was easy to work on. Our next door neighbor was George Soros, and I think after Michael Crichton and his wife sold his house and moved to California, Soros bought this house because he liked the garden so much.

Crichton Residence III

This was the place where the planted steps were born, in a way, inventing them. How can I make this interesting? Because of the gradient of the earth, the riser-tread relation really increased. I could have these beautiful blue stone planks that were four feet long and six inches by six inches. The tread had to be at least 20, maybe 30 inches. The riser was only six inches max, but the tread became more like 30 inches—maybe even three feet in some places. We could take the huge pieces of blue stone and make a path where you could go up. But there was lots of planting that occurred in those pockets. Those planted steps, as you're walking up it, it looks like a sculpture or a composition using the grade change to give it some interest and to play around with learning about new plant materials.

Dan Taylor was the landscape architect and the owner of the nursery that I worked with every time I came to New York. When you have such incredibly bright people and really interested in ideas—he was a real plantsman—I learned a tremendous amount from him. I have to credit him on this project.

Gil Friesen's Garden

I think it's incredibly inspiring—Serra piece on Gil Friesen's garden. Beautiful, big chunkety corten steel, craned in by these great Dutch iron workers, over the fence. This thing was 30 feet long, and it dives into the hillside, and then it pokes out its nose at the other end, and it's absolutely daring and incredible. My

role in that sculpture garden is giving people a path of how they can walk through it. *This is where you're going to go because I'm making this path for you. I'm making this staircase that takes you directly down to the bottom, so that you can circumambulate around.* And that circumambulatory idea is a ritual that is performed. Why can't this be brought into the garden? You don't have to be an artist or an architect or a landscape architect. You just do it because it's something to do. And why not have a path to take you to look at all of these different things?

Ojai

Richard [Hertz] and I were on our way to Santa Barbara for our fifth wedding anniversary, and Richard was very familiar with Ojai. I had been here once before with some friends, but I didn't know it that well. Instead of going straight up to Santa Barbara, we pulled onto the highway leading us to Ojai. And gosh, we really liked it, and he was talking about his days that he was here, and lots of things came up. And we decided, well, gosh, why don't we talk to a realtor and see if we could afford something like this. So that's what we did.

She took us around to look at places with horses, places with a living room on the second floor over the garage. No thank you. And then finally, she says, "Oh, what about the old stone house at the end of Grand?" And we both looked at each other. We said, we have to go there right now. She says, "Well, I've got a party but we can go and look at it." And we just fell in love and we put an offer on it.

And you think we could afford it? Hell no. No way. So, it was like having a dear friend or having someone that you really loved that you couldn't go and visit because we had it rented out to someone who was involved in offshore drilling. He wasn't around here very much, but we suffered through it for three years, and then we finally had it to ourselves. And we're so grateful for this place, for our marriage, for our children.

Ojai II

Every project has to have a big idea. The big idea is a family garden and there's an edge of cultivation around that. Then the rest is the orchard, but that comes right smack up to the house. The idea was having an entryway from the parking area that is equidistant between the two sycamore trees and then create a series of outdoor rooms that you could walk across a 7% diagonal slope in the grade. It's high on one corner and low on the other corner, but the house is sitting in an orthogonal way in this diagonal slope. That requires a lot of thinking and a lot of work in order to make those terraces level.

So I would get a ladder, and I would get the ladder out in the front, and I would climb to the top of it, and I would look down, and I would say, "Oh my God, this place is a wreck." Then, I'd go back to the drawing board and start sketching. What's the proportion of these rooms? How big are they? And does it work with this? Do I need to take out more trees? I would drop what I was doing and get back up on the ladder and look at what I was digging. I was doing this with a pickaxe and a shovel myself because that's how I had to do it to get that 7% turned into something that was gracious, elegant, easily paced to the foot. Everything about it, I'm just really showing myself how to learn. [LAUGHTER] That's a good way to put it.

Ojai III

The idea that I discovered when I took Indian art history at UCLA includes these Chaitya halls. They've carved into solid rock, like at Ajanta and Ellora. I was always fascinated by what it would be like to go into that dark space, and the Buddha stupa is there at the end, and you circumambulate around it, and then you come out. There is this ritual path that's established. I wanted to have that here in some form so that's what we did, but it's laid out over a series of terraces that are geometric in relationship to the house. That felt very comfortable to me. The rest is adding the flesh, which is all the plant materials. The jacaranda tree was here, and it's just an incredible color of lavender purple blossoms falling on the ground.

It's really wonderful, the contrast between purple and green, which are opposite colors. So beautiful. And I think living in beauty is something that I require in my life in some form or another.

Ojai IV

As you come in through the gate, you see the Matilija poppies and then you see the orange groves in front of you. The driveway takes you down to another axis, where there's a *tagetes* plant. I had to have something at the end of the axis. The car then turns left and then you see the house on center down the driveway, framed by the two sycamore trees. I think Admiral Grant had planted those when he owned the house. And after you park your car, you come through the space between the two sycamore trees, and you can turn right to go to the front door, or you can turn the family way and go to the back door.

How to make that clear to people is a real guess. I think that people find their way here, and whenever people are having a toast to the sunset, you would be on the west porch. If you were coming in the morning where the sun rises, you would come to the left, because you would come to the pergola that has all of the flowering wisteria coming through, and then also the persimmon tree. All of those things make it so convenient, but it's very small and compact. The house is very small. It only holds two people, really—the children, when they were small. But we now have two other guest houses that make it so there's ample space for guests.

Ojai V

We've had many family discussions on the upper terrace. And then there's a lower terrace. There's plenty of place to sit back in a chair and put your feet on a low wall. It's really a celebration area. We want to make sure that the family has a place to go. It holds people together to come to a place that's really beautiful, where you can relax, and where you can study or people can always find quiet places to go and be by themselves, or they can be more engrossed in family discussions and ideas. Breakfast is like that.

Every meal is like that when everybody's here. It's nice to have your family really close. That's important to me. Family's most important.

Ojai Commission- Howard Residence

Here we are at one of my most favorite gardens in Ojai, other than my own, that really demonstrates the clarity of circulation, and it creates a sequence of spaces of different sizes. First of all, there's the entranceway. There are two entrances to this property because it's a working ranch. Avocados and olives, a very typical combination here in Ojai. Both of those crops perform beautifully here. One just has to be aware of what the constraints are for the weather.

Ojai Commission II – Howard Residence

One of the constraints for the use of the plant materials here would be their ability to withstand freezing temperatures, and then again the temperatures here in the summertime can get up to 105. It's really searingly hot. The plant materials here are required to really be durable. They have to be able to survive the heat, and also be beautiful.

What we've picked here for the pallet is really colorful. You can see the plumbago, which is one of the sturdiest plants I can imagine. Right now it's flowering with this beautiful blue color. And of course, we know that blue really recedes, and it really makes a space feel much bigger. The same situation you can see here with these salvias, the deep purple really doesn't jump out at you, and shorten the space, but it makes it recede and appear much larger. That's what you want with a wonderful working ranch property like this.

Ojai Commission III – Howard Residence

This courtyard had to receive guests entering from two different entrances and be large enough for vehicles to circulate around and allow for enough space for this splendid family with lots of automobiles

and lots of kids to happen in this car court. It needed to have some edges to it so that the space just didn't leak out into the groves. We used a series of Ojai masonry walls to give that delineation.

We're here in Ojai Valley and it's a place that doesn't have an outlet. It's a place where you go to spend some time. For that reason, I think this house is really beautifully sited with the surround of the Topatopa Mountains and Chief's Peak, and the big spreading California live oaks. You've also got the agriculture, the growing of these avocados, and then in the southern portion of the property are the olives orchards.

The first challenge was in approaching a house, the ideal situation is to have the entrance to the house elevated so that, as you're walking towards it, you're becoming elevated to enter the house. That was not possible in this particular situation, so we had to make the carport large enough to give us a platform that we could then stroll very easily and graciously with a gentle descent to the front door. You can see the front door because it's painted red and it's very clear. But it's not the ideal thing to reach the front door by stepping down.

We alleviated that with the use of a fountain, a rill, with the planting of more citrus in tiered planters and then with a really large dose of this wonderful *salvia apiana*, one of my favorite blue salvias. Those blues always recede.

Ojai Commission IV – Howard Residence

We've just been at the entry, and now we've made the descent through the court, and now we're into a whole new sequence of spaces that provide five different buildings as a family compound. There's always enough room for people to spread out. We found that this is such a wonderful way for a family to be together, where everybody has their own personal retreat space. Very important.

That kind of programming and understanding of the client is especially appropriate here at this five-acre parcel in Ojai. When we first came to it, I have to say it was a wreck. There were two entrances, and they

didn't connect with each other. One you could enter in from the road, and then go straight to the back, but it didn't connect with the other entrance. So you have two separate entrances, and now we have a courtyard with the two entrances and exits, very useful for families that have a lot of kids, with lots of cars. That's always a concern in trying to meet the program.

We tried to simplify the amount of hardscape used but we needed a certain amount of it to make pathways that were approachable and walkable in inclement weather. In addition to that, it's also an orchard. So the avocados were removed. The olives use a lot less water than the avocados, about a third, in irrigation volume. And so for that reason, this whole compound is not only for the family with a lot of different multigenerational attributes, it's really the amount of open space that people can go to. There's places for gathering and being outside, as well as a sanctuary outside, and other secret gardens all throughout the whole site.

Ojai Commission V – Howard Residence

What we're standing next to here is the pool house. We have another guest house, and another guest house. So there's enough places for the whole family to be here together, this blended family, and everyone have their own personal quiet spot, if they want to. But then again, you also have this wonderful pool room where the swimming is just fantastic and lots of grass around the outside edges.

We don't use turf very often, but especially around a pool, when there's lots of little kids running around, it's ideal. It's well worth the amount of water that it takes up. The positioning of the house was extremely problematic for me because of the orientation of the pool in relationship to the pool house and its strong geometry. The house was turned at an angle, and it really bothered me. It looked like someone threw it down there like a lost card. So I used a series of planted steps that splay out like a fan. They've very tight up by the entrance court, and they fan out as you come closer to the pool area. Because they're planted

steps, they disguise the fact that this is really a fan situation where the treads get smaller as you get further away, and wider as you come in this direction. So that was a challenge.

The main thing, for me, in this kind of a project, especially for a really complex family and complex needs, is to make it feel at ease—to make it feel relaxed.

Ojai Commission VI– Howard Residence

The goal here was to create an environment where everyone had a place to go and to relax. That's when the families really get along the best. Everyone has what they need. They have a personal space that they can retreat to away from the gathering of the tribe. A mixed, blended family, is wonderful, and they really appreciate this place, and they're here enjoying themselves all the time.

Ojai Commission VII – Howard Residence

One of the most difficult planning issues for a compound like this is the buildings are constructed at different periods of time, and they have different orientations. They're all like a bunch of jacks that you've picked up and thrown onto the table. What the swimming pool does, and the geometrical locations of these sliding bars of stone walls—it gives a frame, a clarity, to the pool area. Then we use the planted steps to disguise the fact that the building is not connected to the rest of the geometry of the other buildings. This way, we've masked it with plant materials in a very useful way, where the lawn area around the pool is open for everyone to come to. That's the welcoming idea here.

Ojai Commission VIII – Howard Residence

Ojai has so many wonderful aspects to contribute to building a garden—to have this amount of rock work available from this site. We didn't have to import any rocks at all. Building all of these dry stack walls, in the early days, was done by the Chinese after they finished working on the railroad. They had nowhere to go or to do. So they came to Ojai in quite a great number, and were always here to help to build the walls.

You can see from the detailing, they're dry stack walls. Many of them are over six feet. They're also about three feet deep, because there's one thing in Ojai that's very plentiful, and that is what's called Ojai potatoes. Every time you start to dig a hole, you come across a rock. That's because of the geology and the way that the water has eroded off of the canyon walls and rushed through the valley, tumbling and bringing in all of the wonderful rocks and big boulders.

What it allows for is a very permeable soil, and we're very fortunate that it may be very dry for three-quarters of the year, but at the first rain, the aquifer fills right up very quickly, so that all of the people who have wells here are able to draw and bring water up during the hot summer months. Ojai has got its own ecology, and we really appreciate it.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica

We are at the UCLA Hospital here in Santa Monica. This was a project very dear to my heart, because the gardens are healing gardens. We designed these healing gardens so that people could have a place of respite outside of the hospital. We created enough working, walking, lounging, resting, waiting, wandering places for people to be, and there's a real kind of calm quietness about this courtyard in Downtown Santa Monica along Wilshire Boulevard. We had the opportunity to work with Robert A. M. Stern on this building and on this project, and it really lasted quite a long time because hospitals are a really very complicated types of construction.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica II

We were asked by Robert Stern's office to do the landscape for the hospital and having worked on five or six other large hospitals, we really knew that providing outdoor spaces for patients to get away from the humdrum of the hospital was, in itself, a really healing gesture.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica III

Robert Stern was a very wise architect to choose for this project because he was able to understand exactly how he could take a little bit of campus in UCLA and the red brick, and really make a bit of UCLA right here in Santa Monica on Wilshire Boulevard. The hospital itself is very friendly. It's very open. And there is this beautiful garden that we have. We took the space out of the program (of the garden) in order to create a place for patients to come outside and breathe the air and be in a place that's very quiet and comfortable.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica IV

I think that there is a little bit of UCLA campus here in Santa Monica, and that's exactly what we wanted it to do. We wanted this, for people to say, "Oh my gosh, that looks just like the Norman brick that's used all over the UCLA campus." And that way, we could really identify this place with the UCLA campus. It's a replica of my favorite spaces at UCLA, where I went to school.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica V

To create a variety of sizes of spaces so that you have an idea about a circumambulatory path, which is something that I've always looked for—to give people a way to move through space and to understand where they are. It's reassuring, especially thinking about a hospital, and gives people an opportunity to wander about a garden, to be able to think and walk and circumambulate around the perimeter of the bigger garden. The big green space provides a place for the hospital to have parties, to have different kinds of events, and feel like you're in the UCLA campus right here in Santa Monica.

I think Bob Stern did a fantastic job developing the hospital and the use of the Norman brick. It's really, I think, one of his best hospital buildings. He's done many of them.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica VI

I found it very much a pleasure to be able to turn the handicap ramping system into something that is other than that. It's not just a ramp for handicapped patients or handicapped people. It's really a very easy access to come to the hospital for two entrances. The two entrances are linked together by a ramped walkway that provides additional seating for people coming out of the hospital and wanting to have a safe place to sit in a garden.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica VII

I can see some doctors over there sitting in one of the benches that we made—different types of seating for different people. The doctors would have equal space to go outside and sit opposite each other and have discussions about their patients, as well as provide two different entrances to the hospital that didn't look like handicapped.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica VIII

Accessibility solutions are entirely integrated with the campus as a whole, so that doctors and patients can stroll through the gardens equally, and there's plenty of room. There's plenty of nooks and crannies for people to sit on L-shaped brick benches that make a series of outdoor rooms, connected with the circulation system. You feel like you're on the UCLA campus with all the Norman brick and with the very strong architectural sense.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica IX

Every garden needs a big idea. The big idea here is the open lawn and then the circulation that surrounds it. There's a very clear diagram and then in addition to that, we have this wonderful pergola that defines the space next to the chapel of the hospital. So it's a place for people to have a quiet moment, like this lady right here, who's getting up to leave. And the series of benches with the reflective light off of the

building always makes this very calm. Unfortunately the university decided to take out the water feature, but it's in the early photographs.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica X

What we're seeing here is an allée of trees, very similar to the allée of coral trees on the UCLA campus that connects the medical department with the other areas of campus. It was one of Ralph Cornell's favorite trees, along with the sycamore trees, which are used throughout this outdoor courtyard.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica XI

I was really inspired by the work of Ralph Cornell on the UCLA campus, where I spent my undergraduate and graduate years. And to be called upon to help design the landscape for the new UCLA hospital in Westwood was really an honor for me, a high honor, to be able to bring what I know of the UCLA campus here into Santa Monica. What we've done is to use the same kinds of materials that Ralph Cornell used. We have the *erythrina coralloides*, the coral trees. We have the cypress trees. We have the California sycamores, *platanus racemosa.* These are trees that Ralph Cornell used all over the UCLA campus because they were durable. These materials are built to last, and any campus needs that kind of attention. That's what we were interested in: the longevity and usefulness of this court and garden.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica XII

One of the most useful things about this garden is the hierarchy of spaces. We have a very large open green space that allows the hospital to really breathe. Its connection to the university is obvious with the use of the Norman brick, but also through the use of the kinds of plant materials that were used here. First of all, we are using the coral trees, which was one of the favorites for Edward Huntsman Trout, who worked on the campus. The use of the sycamore trees, the large ficus trees, remind and recall the campus of UCLA.

I think that what I really like about this space is some of the things that I've used on many of our other institutional and college projects. We created a sequence of spaces of different scales that have comfortable seating. People don't like being in the middle of a lawn where everybody can look down on them and see them. But people feel comfortable in a garden where they have edges, where they can lean. They have smaller spaces with benches where they can have conversations. The big idea for this garden is this courtyard, open and looking just like the UCLA campus.

UCLA Hospital – Santa Monica XIII

The pergola is a very strong architectural component of this courtyard. Because of the scale of the building, the columns are very large. We could not use wood for the pergola because of the fire possibility, so we had to create an arcade, or a pergola out of steel. It's a lot of steel. And it's big. And it works with the scale of the hospital. But the scale of the hospital here is really broken down into a sequence of smaller spaces, and you'll always see people sitting on these benches, but because the columns are big enough, they allow each one of these benches to become a room, where you can really contemplate.

This is a hospital where serious operations happen. Family come here. They need a place of repose. They need a place to be able to sit and feel comfortable and safe. And because this garden is completely enclosed from the street, it's very useful.

Let's talk a little bit about the circulation diagram for this project. As an architect, we have to understand the scale of ambulation and how people walk through it. They have to have direct lines of exit. Of course, you've got fire and all of those exit requirements. I think more than anything, we wanted to create a garden that people could sit in. The staff could have places to sit on benches that are facing each other. People like to sit on a corner, with one person on one side and another person on the other side, and have a private conversation. At the same time, we had a grade change of five or six feet between the exit from the hospital, or the entrance to the hospital, and the street outside. So we took the opportunity of taking

the handicap ramping system and reshaping it so that we could get a garden in the middle, between the height of the floor of the hospital and the street outside. It became an olive grove and handicapped could access it. This is our handicapped access point and you come through in the middle of the layers, the middle of the grade change, and there you have a very useful space. There's that "that which is useful…"

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence

Here we are in Brentwood at one of the most important projects that I've worked on in my career. I had a wonderful client who was incredible and would follow any piece of advice that I would give him. So we started out with a major overhaul of the full property, which was about three acres. The makeover was a real place of experimentation on my part, in that I could create this very strong axial alignment, not unlike some of the English gardens, where there is a strong axial alignment to take you out of the house and into the garden. Then splaying off of this sort of ritual path gets you right down into the heart of the garden. There's no meandering. This is a straight show, and it's a descent of probably 30 feet in elevation, which is considerable.

Once you're down at the very bottom of the axial alignment with the house, you're at a beautiful water fountain with the sound of bubbling water. Then you turn to your left, and you move around to the orchard. The orchard has had a number of different incantations, becoming a sculpture garden at one point, becoming a vegetable garden at another point. It was flexible programming for these areas. The other side of the axial path is a badminton garden.

One of my favorite images of that place is the outline of the court which was made from a different type of lawn, so that it was brighter and greener and very short, surrounded by a longer Kentucky bluegrass that would make the delineation of that badminton court. The garden was also different kinds of trees that aligned the pathway—gingko trees for the badminton court area. Over on the east side, this was a

much more programmatic garden: We would have it yield all kinds of vegetables and fruits and things for the house.

So it's very fun to have this circumambulatory path, which I think we've probably tried it out in just about every project that we've worked on in different forms. But it's a good way to get people out and about and walking and observing and thinking about the garden and the proportions of the garden. It's a very useful tool, and it really does help people find their way.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence II

The property has a real history, being one of the case study houses of the '50s, and then was purchased by my client, Gil Friesen, in 1983. He was very, very interested in art.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence III

This home was owned by Gil Friesen. He was a big collector of art in Los Angeles. He loved the art world. He loved the artists and he was constantly collecting and settling pieces into his garden to satisfy his sense and notion of the art world.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence IV

Gil was a good friend. He really appreciated the art world. He appreciated architecture and he hired one of his first architects: Robert Mangurian. Robert was also one of my teachers at UCLA. So we were all involved in this project together, experimenting with a client who was so incredibly gracious and thoughtful about art. Art was the biggest component in his life. He served on museum boards. Everybody respected him and loved him. And we're sorry that he's not with us anymore. But here we are at his house, having the opportunity to walk around and see how things have changed, to see how this garden really impacted my knowledge and my understanding of what landscape architecture could really be.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence V

I had been inspired by Vita Sackville-West, and here was the opportunity to make an allée of hedges that would close you in tight and not let you look out until you came to the openings that I allowed. So, we're really controlling the cadence of the movement through the garden by use of framing devices and also creating a path, very much like the Chaitya halls of India.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence VI

It's a graceful, tight stairway descending the hill and bringing you down to the lowest walking path. You have a choice at that walking path: Am I going to go right, or am I going to go left? And they both have wonderful opportunities for someone to stroll and contemplate and think while walking around. And you think about it as a way to open your consciousness to your movement, to your thought process, and to your relationship with nature. It's a very specific type of walking path that has few benches along it. It's mostly for circumambulating. And the client liked this idea. He liked the idea of the changeability of some of the outdoor rooms.

In fact, we started out at the very beginning with the empty room, which was the green lawn, and the furrow, which was the orchard with lots of citrus trees and edible fruits, and a useful garden, as opposed to one that was for viewing. And I liked the idea of having these opposites and combining them to make spaces that are really much more interesting and challenging.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence VII

This garden is really quite a surprise, especially because it drops 30 feet in grade. But let me tell you a little bit about the entrance. Very graceful, very short, very sweet, tight entry court made out of grass and pavers. Keeping that simplicity but still providing the necessary parts to get the groceries into the house…to have a special tree outside of the kitchen window. And that tree changed two or three times during the course of my working on this house, because we always came up with better ideas. And he

allowed all of this experimentation, and really enjoyed it and would invite me over. "Well, why don't we take a look at this for a while? This isn't looking so good. What do you think?" So that gave me the opportunity to create these series of probably eight or nine different sub-gardens, smaller spaces for retreating to and going to as a ritual, in a way.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence VIII

We talked together about it but he has such a good eye that I trusted his eye, and I learned from him. I have to be honest. I really learned a great deal about the placement of art from Gil.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence IX

You don't want the pieces squawking at each other. There is a very calm sense about this garden, even though there are multiple pieces or art. Each one has been sited to have its own territory, its own space and ability for someone to just be in awe of the simplicity. It's not too many pieces. It's very quiet.

Brentwood Residence – Friesen Residence X

We have to thank Michael Paladino for that structure. He was the architect involved in the building of the Getty, and was also a very close friend of Gil's. The three of us would always have these discussions together about what was going on in the garden.

Brentwood Residence XI

This is Michael Paladino. And Michael Paladino, you know, he really thrives on circles. He loves that. But this wasn't a very circular space, because we had an axial link which was at a different angle from the geometry of the hedges. So we used this as a way to experiment with growing vegetables (because his girlfriend at that time wanted a vegetable garden). So we turned the vegetable garden into really a composition of vegetables. These are follies. They're ephemeral. They change. And that's what made it so much fun to work on this garden with Gil.

Brentwood Residence XII

When I first met Gil and was first working on this project the thing that annoyed me the most was the nauseous rolling mounds of lawn that took up the whole entire site. And I wanted to make use of that. I think that having a pathway that can take you to different places in the garden is very useful. So the first thing to do was to make the staircase bring you directly down to the bottom. That axial walkway is really very strong and tight. You're held in on either side by the hedges, and then you have places that you can open your eyes to and see the path circumscribing the property. That allows for two different ways of walking through a garden slowly.

Brentwood Residence XIII

The parties were incredible. Gil was very outgoing and generous to all of his friends, and he wanted to bring all of his friends together in his garden. I think it gave him such pleasure to bring together different artists, many different people and friends from the music industry, which he was a big part of. This was his life and this was his palette. And we were his friends who could provide him with all of the different aspects of the garden we could think of.

OFFICE

Working with Pamela

Stephanie Psomas: I worked [summers] with my family, who have an engineering company. My father started his company many years ago, and my brother's a civil engineer. I started working with them, put in a few years, and thought, I need to do something: I either need to become a surveyor or an engineer or something else. Then I decided to try landscape architecture, which is a great combination of both.

[I] went to a couple of lectures to learn about landscape architecture and met Pamela Burton. [I] went to a lecture with her and Emmet Wemple at UCLA. I said, these are my people. I think this is what I want to

do. Soon after that, I got into the program at UCLA, started going through the program at the extension, and continued working with my family, doing drafting of land surveys.

After a few years, I started interviewing landscape architects and one of those ended up being Pamela Burton and Katie Spitz. I had talked to several landscape architects along the way, and I said, I like these ladies. They are really nice. They've got something going. The same afternoon, they called me back up and they said, "We like you. Can you come and work for us?" That was in 1987 and I haven't left.

They put me onto a wonderful project called Biddy Mason Park, and I loved it. It was so fun. It gave me a lot of fun responsibility. I thought, well, I'll build a little something and after a few months, I'll find another job—kind of make the rounds of these companies. Pamela just kept throwing more mouthwatering projects at me and I could never leave, and I love her so much. It's been a wonderful relationship all this time. [LAUGHTER]

What Makes a Pamela Burton Landscape?

Stephanie Psomas: What makes a Pamela Burton landscape is excitement, meaning, color, passion and a lot of curiosity. It's a lot of testing of all the possibilities, and it's the wonderful search for the big idea, and again, just giving meaning to the whole landscape—to a whole environment.

Robin Carmichael: What makes a Pamela Burton landscape is that we strive very hard to make it look effortless. We take what's there, we look around, we see the context, and we absorb and filter in and filter out and edit. Then we come away with this amazing landscape that is easy to be in and isn't fussy, and doesn't look like we did anything, but every inch has been detailed and designed and thought about.

Mary Sager McFadden: I would say that she draws on her amazing knowledge of art and literature. She's really sort of a genius with her knowledge of so many aspects about life. She draws all that in, and then

she has a very imaginative and creative approach to a space. So a lot of our landscapes you can recognize because they are naturalistic. We use a lot of native materials and things that grow in the wild and tend to weigh. But there's always also a modernistic approach where there's a very strong structure to the landscape and order and hierarchy of space.

The plant materials sort of make it all soft and fun, and there's a lot of texture and graphic expression to the space through the plant materials. She loves plant materials. So all of that knowledge and exuberance comes out in the planting, too. We use a lot of unusual things, tool as well as native materials, so it's really fun to work on a landscape with Pamela. The other thing I would say is that we come up with these very thoughtful, great ideas and plans, and we work on them, and we get out to the site, and the plant materials are delivered, and they're all laid out, and then she changes everything. [LAUGHTER] So it's very much a response to the place, the time, the weather, the light, and it all just comes together with a great sensibility and really, really good taste. The results are always amazing. We end up bringing things back, and ordering new things. [LAUGHTER] But she's free to do that. You know? She's really a master at her craft.

Dan Colbeck: Pamela always talks about creating a design that's timeless and not necessarily the trend of the day—something that will hold up in the long term. It's through that material selection, and then saving the innovation—obviously innovation for the plant materials, the planting design. She's just a pleasure to work with. It always results in a new project, and new ideas being kind of brought out to the forefront.

Pamela's Approach to Planting

Mary Sager McFadden: I think Pamela's approach to planting really involves materials that are current things. I think she makes a constant quest looking in garden centers, at nurseries, really getting familiar

with mouthwatering materials that are going to convey a design. It's a big part of what her designs have always been.

She's really encouraged everyone in the studio to continue to think about designing with color and texture and form, and to really bring into all of that the possibility of being sustainable. I think that the plants that she finds and brings into our projects really become kind of a spur—a new way of looking at things. A lot of our projects have introduced a plant material that has just been starting to be used in the industry. Before you know it, a lot of the time, I've seen that kind of continue on down the line. A lot of other projects take it up as well. I think it makes it really fun. We all sort of think of certain timeframes and we'll go, "Oh, yeah, that's when we started using that good old *seneco mandraliscae*." It's kind of fun.

Pamela + Sustainability

Dan Colbeck: We were working over in the City of Commerce doing a whole civic center area, and specifically for a senior center. Pamela and I went to the senior group and made a presentation to all the senior citizens there in the City of Commerce to tell them about the designs for the area surrounding the new senior center. Going through the design, Pamela said, "You know, we've got a nice little vegetable garden. You go out in the back, and you can do a little vegetable gardening, and a lot of other open spaces." And one of the people in the audience said, "Hey, I'm old. I've done all the vegetable gardening I want to do. I want to find a place where I can go out and have a little romance in the garden. " [LAUGHTER] And Pamela said, "Well, we've got some little trysting spaces here as well. You can do that, too." She's very fast on her feet. [LAUGHTER] And can really come up with some good alternatives for people. So there's that. [LAUGHTER]

Another one I think of as a pure Pamela moment: We would be in the meeting talking with a client or with an agency about some ideas, about what the landscape could look like, or what it could incorporate. And one of the big elements that Pamela felt was the most important was sustainability. This is back in the

'90s when it really wasn't something that people had on the top of their brains to really bring into a project, where she would say, "Yeah, it's really good, and it's important to have some planting along this area and in the back. But let's really try and get rid of some of that lawn. Let's really try to bring in some materials that are a little less water thirsty, and really can make a point in the design and use less water." So I thought that was kind of a pretty positive thing to bring into those designs early on.

Being a Woman in the Field

Stephanie Psomas: When you think about those early years, starting into landscape architecture, most of the people practicing were men. I don't think that that was a defining moment for Pamela (and through her example, for me as well) because what we were presenting to people was a design and a participation in a project where the teamwork was more important than the gender.

We were fortunate to be dealing with men that were all gentlemen and who had respect for the ideas that we could convey and could share with them. I don't recall anyone necessarily being belittling or dismissive of the designs that were being presented; and if they were, it was not something that was dealt with in a victim type of response, but more in a joking, "oh, come on, you don't mean that,"—really cajoling people and encouraging them to bring their game up to par and just get the stuff done.

Pamela Burton & Company Esprit de Corps

Stephanie Psomas: As an ambassador for the company and, in a way, helping Pamela to make a definition of what Pamela Burton and Company is all about, one of the things that I try to emphasize to new people coming in is that we are a family, more than a fishbowl, but we really are a family. We really see each other as important and a team, and one of the biggest elements that we stress to people that they've got to bring to this place is respect for each other—treating each other the way they expect to be treated, and working only in a collaborative and helpful manner.

I think that it's something that pays off because that is at the core of what Pamela has always encouraged with me, with Dan [Colbeck], with Mary [Sager McFadden] and Robin [Carmichael]. And that sort of plays right down the line to every single person in the office. I think it's so important for people to know that they have a say in what happens every day, and that we're all on the same mission. We're all trying to get good work done and have a good time at the same time.

Pamela Burton & Company Esprit de Corps II

Stephanuie Psomas: I feel so proud of the time that I've been able to spend with Pamela and this company. I feel when I look back on the projects and the gardens and the environments that we've created, I just feel so proud to have been a part of it. You know, I think it's really been a great experience, and I know it's going to continue on in that same spirit. We've got a lot of people who have learned from that, and whether they remained here in this company or gone on to other companies, I think they kind of carry a lot of that along with them. I'd like to think so.

Projects You Love

Robin Carmichael: It's where you have blended the designed landscape with the existing landscape. And it's seamless, and it's beautiful.

Mary Sager McFadden: What I love is her house. Her house is just so much Pamela, where she's taken found objects and she's picked this agave from somewhere else, and she just arranges it in a fun way, and she keeps working at it. There's wonderful pathways and the structure of the pool and the path down the big oak. Every time you go there, you're so charmed by it. I've been there for weddings and for parties.

Robin Carmichael: You never want to leave. [LAUGHTER]

Mary Sager McFadden: I've been there just for lunch and I think that really is an expression of who she is and what she does.

Dan Colbeck: I enjoy the Santa Monica Public Library. I really love that courtyard inside. I think it was completed a few years before I started working here. But when I started here, I didn't know the plant materials that well. So seeing the unique species that she put in there and how that small little courtyard was animated, then to find out after the fact, there's a cistern underneath this library that is feeding the irrigation water… The sustainability of the project…and a project that was done before they really had to do that. That's just one of the many.

Legacy

Robin Carmichael: I know we've all learned a lot from Pamela, and we'll carry that forward. She's definitely inspired all of us in many, many ways, and I think we will want to still have the end result: that timeless landscape. We might have different ways of getting there, but we hope that we can still bring in what Pamela has contributed, so that it will still reflect that vision.

Mary Sager McFadden: What will be missing is the personality, [LAUGHTER] which we'll miss. But you know, she's going to be around for quite some time. She always adds a lot of spice to what we're working on. [LAUGHTER] I think we all worked with her long enough to understand the process, and we bring our own skills and expertise to it as well. And knowledge. We feel very confident that we can continue the professional expression that she started. But you know, it's not the same. [LAUGHTER] It's not exactly the same.

Dan Colbeck: It will be a challenge to carry on the legacy because of her personality, her bright personality, what she brings to the room and livening up the room, and always getting a laugh at our client meetings and lightening the mood. We have to remind ourselves that she's always very good at expressing the joy

of this profession and the fun of that. That would be a challenge for us as we take on these new reins, these new responsibilities—to keep that joy. And we'll just, we'll have to channel our inner Pamela. [LAUGHTER]

Final Words for Pamela

Robin Carmichael: Thank you. Thank you for all the lessons, and all the patience, and enduring all of us, and for an amazing time here. It will continue to be so.

Mary Sager McFadden: I feel very lucky to have found this firm. I was an architect first, and sort of stumbled on Pamela. It's just been a perfect fit for me, as a woman-owned firm, and she's given me so much opportunity to grow and to use my knowledge and skills as an architect in the landscape profession. She's been the only landscape architect I've worked with in my whole career. So I feel very grateful.

Dan Colbeck: I'm grateful as well. I've worked for larger offices, big corporate ladder offices, and just to have the experience to work hand-in-hand with an owner who's started this firm from nothing 40 years ago, and really built an internationally acclaimed firm from just a tiny little office here in Santa Monica—and her inclusion of us in every step of the process, from the proposal to the final design, and making sure that we're involved the whole way and learning the whole time. It is wonderful.