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**Interviewee: Jocelyn Rickards**  
**Interviewer: Roy Fowler**  
**Duration: 04:20:00 [approx.]**

**This transcript has been made from the section of Jocelyn Rickard's interview that was digitised at Newcastle by the Women in Film project. The rest of the interview is being transcribed from cassettes.**

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[Track 1]

*RF: The date is the seventh of March 2001, this is Roy Fowler, and the subject today is Jocelyn Rickards. Jocelyn, to start at the very beginning, if I may, you were born where?*

JR: I was born in Melbourne and when I was about eleven my family moved to Sydney.

*RF: Yes?*

My memories of Sydney are much more acute than my memories of Melbourne, and I went to school there, which I hated, and finally, two days after my thirteenth birthday, having – no, my fourteenth birthday – I sat the entrance examination at the art school where I miraculously passed the exam and got in, and then we got a letter saying, examination passed, she can start, no students are accepted under the age of fourteen, by which, I mean I was thirteen and nearly fourteen, and I made my father and my sister go and talk to the principal. And I said don't leave, don't leave until he'll let me in. Two days after my fourteenth birthday I was able to start, and I stayed there for six years.

*RF: Would it be ungallant to, for the record, to ask when you were born?*

When I what?

*RF: When you were born?*

I was born in 1924.

*RF: Right, okay. Now that kind of early tenacity, did that display your future path? That's a characteristic of you, determination, I would think?*

I guess it is, yes. I'm not absolutely certain, but I guess.

*RF: Well, maybe I should ask you about family background – was there any connection between...*

No, absolutely none. None at all. I mean they were a nice, middle class family. I had two much older sisters, that's it.

*RF: Right. I should ask your birthday actually, again for the record, if I may. You've said the year, but...*

Oh, the twenty-ninth of July, 1924.

*RF: Good, lovely. Okay, so your memories of art school then, how did that progress?*

I mean I was happy, for the first time in my life I was absolutely happy, I adored it. And it was a long day, you'd start at nine, I think you finished at five, and sometimes I'd go to evening classes as well and when it came to specialise after the first two years, I first of all started a design course, which I absolutely hated, and I just stopped going and found a nice empty room and I was working there one day and the professor of painting said, 'What are you doing in here?' and I said, 'Oh, I can't bear that woman'. And he said, 'Leave at the end of the term and join the painting school'. And that's what I did.

*RF: Right. We're talking now, what, of the late thirties I suppose, yes?*

I'm never sure. If I was forty...

*RF: If in twenty-four, you were fourteen – '38, thereabouts.*

Yeah.

*RF: I was curious what the pursuit of art, how that was regarded in Australia, Melbourne at that time?*

It was Sydney and I wasn't interested in how it was considered. It was very good grounding. I mean I was taught very thoroughly by sympathetic men and looking back, I think it was a particularly good grounding, because apart from learning things like anatomy, which you learn and hate and then throw away, and also things like perspective, which you do the same thing with, but they provide a solid structure underneath for you to operate on top of.

*RF: Yes. What was your intention at the time, to be an applied artist or...?*

Just to be a painter. I had no interest in, apart from going to films, which I loved, I had no interest in working in them and it was a total... it was fortuitous.

*RF: Right. Well, there wasn't much of an Australian film industry, I suppose at that time, but how about theatre, was that anything that appealed to you?*

[05:03]

No, but I used occasionally to work with a very close friend of mine, called Loudon Sainthill, who then became very well-known over here, and when I got here, Loudon came six months later and for some time I would work with him in the theatre. The first time he asked me, he said, 'I've taken on too much work, you've got to help me'. And I said, I... I mean he said, 'I want you to design some costumes for me'. It was a period musical [Jubilee Girl], a very naff bit of work that had Marie Lohr in it, Fenella

Fielding, and I can't remember another soul. And he said to me first, 'I'll give you the reference, I'll show you what the sets are, just do some drawings and I'll look at them and see what I think'. So I did the drawings and he said – they were men's costumes – and he said, 'Oh, I didn't realise they'd have such a strong identity. Now you'll have to do the women's too'. So that was how I got into designing.

*RF: That was there or here?*

Here.

*RF: That was here, right, so we've jumped over a span of years. How did your life progress from art school on?*

Well, I was twenty when I finished and I had a studio in a large house, which was filled with painters and sculptors, it had been bought by a very enterprising woman... [pause for drink] who, she took the lease of it, it was a large Victorian house set in a nice garden and the front rooms looked over the harbour. And I painted there and I sold paintings, I had two one-man shows. My lover was a photographer called Alec Murray and he left six months before I did and came over here and then I left, by which time my paintings sold like hot cakes and I could have gone on having exhibitions, selling, painting the occasional mural and I just felt, oh no, you know, I want a larger landscape, this won't keep me happy. I'm twenty-four, I'm full of vitality, I've got to go and try my luck, so I did.

*RF: Right. You're of English stock, presumably, so England was what, a natural progression in those days?*

No, I mean it was for student artists. I mean practically that whole house of painters moved lock, stock and barrel to London or to Italy or to France and... what else? I mean it was an extraordinarily privileged life we had there. We'd have lunch on the lawn under a coral tree and we'd all creep away and work in our own rooms. Alec had the ballroom as a studio, Loudon had one of the front rooms, looking on to the harbour, which was marvellous, and I had a back room looking on to the vegetable garden and the stables, with two windows and a very good light, that was equally marvellous, and one was just left to one's self. My family were extraordinary when I think about it, when I think about it now, they just gave me my head when I said I'm going to art school. I mean I remember, I was travelling from Melbourne to Sydney in the car with my parents, I was sitting in the back, and I thought I'm going to fly a kite, and I said, 'I'm going to leave school at the end of term'. And my mother looked round very slowly and said, 'And then what are you going to do?' and I said, 'I'm going to art school'. And she said, 'Where?' And I said, 'East Sydney Technical College'. And she said, 'Well, try and get in, that's alright, but no going to...' - there was another art school called Julian Smith [Julian Ashton?] - 'no going there for two hours a week, it's got to be fulltime'. And as soon as I'd passed that exam they were perfectly willing that I should go. I think the fact, apart from everything else, of the

difference in school fees, they must have been out of their minds, a year in art school was five pounds, as against 300 at the school I was going to.

[10:33]

*RF: Oh well, that's not a bad trade. Presumably, Jocelyn, your traits had begun, your gifts had begun to show themselves quite early, had they, so it came as no surprise to them, I would guess?*

I guess, they knew what my interests were. I don't know that my gift had shown. Maybe it had, yes, because I remember there was a writer, a man called Brian Penton who used to take me out sailing when I was about twelve or thirteen and when on my twelfth birthday he gave me his own cedarwood box of oil paints and brushes, palette, palette knives, and the smell of the oil paint just did it for me, I think.

*RF: And the group, in the mansion, were they innovators?*

Yes, in a way they were. I mean it's ridiculous now, people are still lecturing about it, I mean travelling from Sydney to Canberra to lecture about... the house was called Merioola and...

*RF: Maybe we should spell that? M-E-R-R-Y... or...?*

No. M-E-R-I-O-double L-A. [Merioola]

*RF: Which is what, an indigenous name?*

I can't remember. M-E-R-I... I-double O-L-A.

*RF: Right. And that founded a school did it, an Australian school?*

Well, if you call it a school. It was a movement of about four years. We had two group shows, one in Melbourne, one in Sydney. I think we had the Sydney one first. The thing... we were regarded as, actually... I don't know what we were regarded as, but we were an enormous social success and...

*RF: Which means what? You had brilliant openings or...*

We had brilliant openings. Every time anything happened the newspapers would ring and ask our opinion. I've just sent loads of photographs and scrapbooks back to Australia for an exhibition. I mean a scrapbook that was kept by my mother. She pasted it up like a drunken paper hanger and... But looking at it, it has a kind of historical value, and certainly in regard to Merioola. But why this tiny group of people, I mean it's an infinitesimal part of my life and yet the way it's taken hold over there, you'd have thought... There were strong movements of painters, there were Australian impressionists,

a man called Charles Conder. If that had taken hold, I could believe it, not us. We were frivolous, I think we were called The Charm School by some members of the critical press and I never thought we were important.

*RF: You never know.*

No, you don't.

*RF: It's fascinating. I suppose, looking at it from this country's perspective in those days, I think Australia was always inclined to be patronised, was it not?*

Oh yes, enormously. But during the four years between leaving art school and between leaving Australia, eventually there were groups, I mean there were constantly people coming: Eugene Goossens came out with his wife, Rafael Kubelik, Claudio Arrau, then the Rambert Ballet, the de Basil Ballet was caught there during the war for a certain time and... I can't remember many others. But we had a constant flow of people coming and going. They opened our eyes, I suppose, to Australia, which I mean we'd grown up there, we weren't interested in it. And they were fascinated by it and little by little we began to look round. But it had no effect on our work at all. I mean we were all... working, I suppose, we were all rooted in contemporary painting, contemporary European painting.

[15:38]

*RF: Yes. Was there any particular or specific influence on your work?*

No, not really. I mean the other day I had a long and boring letter from somebody questioning me about Loudon Sainthill and questioning me because he was writing his PhD on Loudon, and the questions were sheer gobbledegook, so I sent him, I mean I rapped him over the knuckles and said, but Loudon was a man you couldn't have preconceptions about. He'd never... he hadn't been to school, he hadn't been to art school and he never learned to draw. Now, it didn't affect his rating as a designer and he looked, he wasn't influenced by any of us there, we didn't influence each other. And, I mean that's true of all of us, I suppose.

*RF: Well, he got to the top of the West End theatre...*

Yes indeed, very quickly.

*RF: Well, then we come to the time when you're leaving Australia to come here, which was, you said you were twenty-eight, so that's...*

No, twenty-four.

*RF: So that's, what, '48?*

Yeah.

*RF: Immediately, well, sort of immediately post-war. That time actually, the movement was usually the other way wasn't it, there was a great influx of émigrés into... the arrival of the Poms, I think.*

As I left, no, before I left Harry Watt had been there making *Eureka Stockade* and a man called Julian Spiro...

*RF: Julian is still with us.*

Is he? How is he?

*RF: Well, I saw him, I suppose, about two years ago and memory had largely gone, but otherwise in very good shape. I can give you his phone number if you'd be interested.*

I would love it, I mean maybe he doesn't remember me, but briefly he was my lover.

*RF: Really?*

Very briefly. But he married again, didn't he?

*RF: Well, I didn't know him until I did an interview with him and as I say, that's about two years ago, and a lot of his memory had gone by that time. So we didn't go into a lot of personal detail, I don't think. It may be on the tape, I can't recall, but anyway...*

Anyway, he...

*RF: ...he's in Chelsea.*

He took a room at Merioola and he was a nice, gentle man. His sister, did you know his sister was a novelist called Betty Miller, who was Jonathan Miller's mother?

*RF: No, I didn't know that.*

And she married... he was either a psychiatrist or a neurologist who worked at the Maudsley and then Betty Miller went barking mad, that's all I know about his family.

*RF: Oh, well that's something I'll provide for you. So you arrived here with...*

I arrived here with...

*RF: Great expectations?*

No. No expectations. I arrived here with paints, reference books and a wardrobe of totally unsuitable New Look clothes. And I got, it was a nightmare journey, it took eight weeks to get to Marseille, I was travelling with a friend of mine who...

*RF: I have to check the tape from time to time to make sure we're not running out.*

Who, she was coming over to marry an Old Vic actor, because the Old Vic had been there too.

*RF: What, Larry and Viv?*

Yeah, Larry and Viv. And once, I mean in Bombay, a very nice naval officer got on, an equerry to George V... George... yes, it must have been George V or was it George...

[20:04]

*RF: No, the sixth.*

Sixth then. And what he was doing in Bombay, I don't know, but he said to Mary one day, thinking she was more serious and less flighty than I, 'Would you and Jocelyn consider getting off the ship in Marseille? I know she's bored out of her skull, and so am I. If I don't see my wife soon I'll go mad'. And Mary came to me and said, 'Do you want to get off in Marseille and go overland?' And I said, 'Oh God, yes'. So we got off the boat, which was a one class ship called The Maloja, and we travelled overland and I remember waking in the morning in this third class carriage and looking out and saw the first snow I'd ever seen in my life and we were in the middle of Fontainebleau and I thought this is the most romantic landscape I have ever seen, it's midsummer night's dream in winter. And then they said... we got to Paris and they went off to have coffee and a croissant and I said I'll guard the luggage and then I'll go. And I did. While I was having coffee and a croissant, they moved the train and I went back to the platform, no sign of it. My French was not great in those days and I said to a porter or someone who was there, 'J'ai perdu mon train!' And he said, where was it going to, and I said England, and he took me and showed me the train, and thank God I got back into it and continued. And that evening – could it have taken all day - I guess it could have, we arrived at Victoria. Victoria?

*RF: Would have been Victoria if it was from Paris.*

Yes.

*RF: Gare du Nord. The Golden Arrow was the great train.*

Well, it wasn't, it was no great train. Later I travelled on The Golden Arrow, this was anything that happened to be running on wheels.

*RF: So things haven't changed!*

What?

*RF: Things haven't changed on the railways.*

No, I guess not. Or they've got worse, I think. And Alec was there to meet me. And we had two rooms in Cranley Gardens, which is...

*RF: South Ken.*

South Ken. A front room and a room just behind it, run by a nice Czechoslovakian called... he was called Dimi, I think he was called Dimovich [ph], and the house was again teeming with people. There was a marvellous *Vogue* photographer there called John Deakin and a girl who'd been, she came from a very upper middle class family, mostly riding to hounds, couldn't bear it any longer, ran away and joined the circus and became a bareback rider. And she was Audrey Carruthers's sister – do you remember Audrey Carruthers?

*RF: No.*

She was a designer who worked in Stratford and worked all over. She was a lesbian and had an affair with... I can't remember now, it's gone out of my head. And gradually, I mean it was a complete culture shock for me. I... I just, I was paralysed by it and then...

*RF: You mean life generally here or the domestic situation?*

No, not the domestic situation, I could cope with that, but just life here. I mean...

*RF: They were hideous times, this was the time of austerity.*

I'll say it was. But we were lucky in one thing, Alec was diabetic so he had a special ration book and we were registered - God knows, we lived high, even in those days – we were registered at Harrods and we'd go there and buy lamb neck chops and that would be enough to last a whole week; you could roast part of it, you could cook part in a stew, we [coughs], we were constantly... I think I'm going to get a thing for my throat, Roy.

*RF: Okay, I'll stop, a pause.*

[break in recording]

[25:13]

*RF: Yes, times of austerity in South Ken.*

Oh yes. And then we'd get food parcels which were full of tinned hams and butter and so we lived fairly high on the hog and I used to distribute the food parcels to John Deakin who was always hungry. He was alcoholic, unfortunately, and he got the sack from *Vogue* because he went to a party one evening and Cecil Beaton came in and he curtsied to him, and was just *renvoyer*, like that, out. He took some amazing photographs in Chiswick House, in Pelham Crescent, all over London. On Waterloo Station, you name it, he took them. I've got a few left, unfortunately not the whole lot. And then Harry and Loudon arrived. Loudon lived all his life with an Australian journalist, he turned himself into an art critic in Australia – anyone could have turned themselves into an art critic, you didn't necessarily have to know anything about painting, and Harry didn't, he had mildly the gift of the gab. And he...

*RF: Do you remember his last name?*

Harry Tatlock Miller. And he became a director of the Redfern Gallery.

*RF: Sounds like a made up name anyway.*

I don't think it was, actually. I think it was, his name was his own, but practically the only thing that was. And they stayed in Cranley Gardens and then we all took a house just round the corner in Clareville Grove. It was a three-storey house that had been bomb damaged, and we took it furnished for five pounds a week. It had drawing room, dining room, large kitchen, very good kitchen actually, a very small garden, then a huge room on the next floor and then two rooms on the third floor. Harry and Loudon were on the top floor and Alec and I were on the middle floor and then the downstairs was communal, communal in that I cooked and... I don't remember much else about it. I mean Harry very quickly realised he wasn't going to make it as an art critic here. Going to blow my nose now. [blows nose] And before the war he and Loudon had been here and Loudon had had his first exhibition at the Redfern when he was very, very young and they'd made friends with Rex Nan Kivell, who owned and ran the Redfern. He was an extremely astute man who did know about painting just thoroughly, inside and out. And he thought he could use Harry and he did and Loudon just went on to, I think his first job was designing *Midsummer Night's Dream* [*The Tempest*] at Stratford for Michael Benthall. And in this idiotic questionnaire I got the other day from the PhD student in Sydney, he said, how did Loudon break in so quickly to the English theatre establishment. And I thought about it and thought, well there was no secret to it, the whole theatre then was run by a homosexual mafia and he got in because he

knew Bobby Helpmann, he knew Michael Benthall and it immediately provided him with an entrée. And having done this extraordinarily successful *Midsummer Night's Dream* [*The Tempest*] with Richard Burton as Ferdinand, Michael Redgrave as Prospero, Clare Bloom as Miranda, I can't remember the other people in it, but it was a huge success and that created his whole entrée into the establishment.

[30:19]

And then he, after we'd lived there for a year, I guess it was a year, we decided we'd look for two separate flats and Harry and Loudon found one over Constance Spry in South Audley Street, and Alec and I found one in Eaton Square, which was just being requisitioned back from the... it had been lived in by slum families. But the whole of Eaton Square had just been meticulously converted into flats by someone called the Clermont [ph] Estate, I suppose a subsidiary of the Grosvenor Estate. And we took a third floor apartment, which had a very big drawing room, kitchen, bathroom, three bedrooms, constant hot water, central heating, no service charge, nothing and they didn't care if we took it for seven, fourteen, twenty-one years.

*RF: Any idea what you paid for it?*

Seven pounds a week.

*RF: Seven pounds a week?*

Yes. I mean nothing. And...

*RF: And what impresses me is these grand addresses that you all moved into, Eaton Square and Audley Street.*

Yeah. I mean actually when Alec and I had been looking at places and we got more and more depressed and we were walking away from one and we ran into an architect, and Australian architect who'd been working on the conversion of the Eaton Square houses, and he said, we said, oh, Guy – his name was – tell us of any flat that we can live in. And he said, 'Go and see this man at the Clermont [ph] Estates, I know that there's one flat there that they despair of letting, it's only got one bathroom'. And we said, 'Oh, see if we care'. And Alec and I went in midwinter, dressed, Alec dressed in his great-uncle's seal-lined overcoat with a gold watch chain and his signet ring and me suitably dressed, and we went to see this man and said, 'We need to have a very cheap flat but it must have a good address. We've got no money, but we must have a good address'. And he hummed and hah'd and said, 'Well yes, there is this one flat, and go and have a look at it and you can have it repainted to your specifications'. So we did and that was it. And... you have to ask me an occasional question.

*RF: Well, indeed. No, you're doing very well. What I was going to say next was what actually are you doing at this time, because now you've been here some time in London?*

Now I've been, I suppose we're to... 1949... 1950 it must be, the end of '50. I'm painting and I'm... painting. I'm hoping to sell them. I'd sold some paintings when I was in Cranley Gardens. I sold one to Cyril Ritchard, which I can remember it now - how weird, haven't thought of it for years – it was a small painting called, it was a clown either dying or lying, surrounded by three other people, and the other was a painting about that size, whatever that may...

*RF: Well, this is audio tape, remember, so a couple of feet square, would you say, something like that?*

I should think it was twenty-four by thirty-six, of a girl standing with a paper parcel of red flowers, wearing an astonishingly brilliant vermillion to cadmium red long-sleeved shirt, with dark hair. And I saw that, not very long ago, I mean several years ago, I went to see somebody and it was hanging on their wall. And then, Loudon rang me and said, 'They've asked me to do, I mean they've given me a shooting script for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Michael and Bobby want to turn it into a film, and they've asked me to 'Mickey Mouse' it'.

[35:33]

*RF: What does Mickey Mouse mean in this context?*

Mickey Mouse meant, you know, continuity, do comic strip form of the script.

*RF: I see, storyboards as we call them nowadays.*

Indeed, indeed. If I'd thought I'd have remembered. And he said, 'They can be the size of a postcard, but I've been trying to do them for two days and I can only do two, help!' 'I mean I've only done two in two days.' So I went, and a very great friend of mine who I'd been at art school with was here, called Margaret Olley, she was also a friend of Loudon's. She's now the very, very *grande dame* of Australian painting, I mean she's rich beyond the dreams of avarice and she's extraordinary, she's still a friend. And I got in touch with her and we both went to South Audley Street and we sat on either side of a table with a script beside us and we both took a piece of script, and I think it took us a couple of weeks to work through. And then Loudon said to me after Olley had gone, 'You'll have to do Olley's again' and I looked at her drawings and hers were much ballsier than mine, so I had to make the fairies more fairy-like. And they were all bound into two vast books and for years I used to get telephone calls from people saying, these are meant to be by Loudon Sainthill, but they look to me like your drawings. And they were still trying to get it off the ground, but they never did. And after that...

*RF: May I just interpose one question, going back to the pictures you sold – did you paint from life or...*

Sometimes from life.

*RF: So the woman in red was...*

I'd paint from drawings quite often and the clowns, there was a circus in Australia called Wirth's Circus where we used to go and Alec certainly, we'd go and photograph, or he'd photograph at – suddenly reminded me of another painting of a clown I did, I haven't thought of it for fifty years – and we became friends and we'd work in the circus ring with them, so those were, all the clown paintings were from life.

*RF: Any particular reason, the clowns?*

Clowns?

*RF: Mm, why did they appeal to you?*

Painters have always liked clowns. I don't know why, but think about it and they have. And I guess there was something, something romantic. It certainly appealed to Loudon and I certainly was trying to escape from Australia. I wasn't, I'm horrified now, the lack of interest I had in the country and I regret that there's a lot of it I've never set eyes on.

*RF: There's an awful lot to see.*

What?

*RF: An awful lot to see.*

Yeah. And I never went to Queensland, I briefly visited Adelaide, I didn't know Western Australia at all. My goddam nose, this must be very boring.

*RF: Shall I pause?*

Yes.

[break in recording]

[39:33]

*RF: Yes, we're at the point of the unproduced Dream.*

That's right. Then, from there, I guess my next excursion into the theatre or to things theatrical – I mean I did a bit of work with Loudon but I don't really remember it now, what it was – was the Diaghilev exhibition at Forbes House, just off Belgrave Square. Do you remember that?

*RF: No.*

Well, it was arranged by...

*RF: I was in the States by this time.*

...Richard Buckle, and it overall was designed by Leonard Rosoman, who was subsequently, a hundred years later, I married, a disaster. But he designed the whole of Forbes House but then he gave, I mean they had a collection of extraordinary clothes: Poirets, Vionnets, Chanel – no, maybe not Chanel – which arrived from Paris in, packed in cardboard boxes with acres of tissue paper. And there were two 1911 dresses – are you ready to change?

*RF: I think probably. There's one thing I forgot to do at the beginning of the tape, which is to say the copyright is vested with the BECTU History Project. I have to do that for legal reasons.*

[end of Track 1]

[Track 2]

The first two were Edwardian dresses.

[interference on recording]

[00:42]

They were the first two and then there were three Poiret dresses – unbelievable, in mint condition – and then there were three Vionnets. So I was given them and Leonard and Dicky said, will you devise a way to show them. The exhibition had first started in Edinburgh and it had been a huge success, *The Observer* decided to bring it to London and Leonard had all his Edinburgh art students working like slaves and I was given this room and told that anything I wanted could be done. So I looked at the clothes and divided them into three: the Edwardian dresses; the Poirets; and the Lanvin and Vionnets. And the first two I decided to show in the equivalent of a box at Covent Garden for the 1911 Command Performance. The Vionnets... no, the... yes, the Vionnets I did on a beach in Monte Carlo and the Poirets in an attic room in Paris, and I designed the rooms, painted them. I mean the carpenters constructed them, they were amazing. And I painted the interiors. The box at Covent Garden I hoped was like looking into the heart of a huge bunch of red roses and the women, one was standing and one

– was the other standing or sitting? It doesn't matter much. The ones in the Paris attic were lying on divans or cushions and the ones on the beach were standing. They worked marvellously, I must say, I was very pleased with them and it was the first time I'd ever worked with other people, I mean apart from Loudon. It was the first time I'd asked students, I'd given them things and said, 'Will you paint this', and I painted the outside. The rooms were constructed in such a way that you stood outside them looking in through the box at Covent Garden, had a curved top and it was like looking into a box from outside, and because of the fragility of the clothes we had to glass it in. Nobody was as fussy about the Poirrets, which I would have been infinitely fussier about. They were just sensational. And I had cushions made for them to lie on, and I just bought, for no money at all, a wind-up gramophone with a horn and I painted that – I can't remember the colours I painted it – but I painted it so that it almost became two-dimensional, and they were listening to that and lying there with turbans on. And also I made them up, either with make-up or paint. I had a marvellous Irish sculptor called Cathy McGill [ph], who was in the basement at Forbes House, and I did drawings for her of the figures I wanted and the positions I wanted them to be in, I think the drawings were no more than six inches high, if that. And she produced them absolutely spectacularly. And then I did their hair and their make-up and, I mean it's bringing back to my mind things that I'd forgotten. The Vionnets on the beach, one was black felt, its hat was black felt, a black felt cloche that was, its design was done in eggshells stuck all over, tiny little triangles of white eggshells in a geometric design. And I asked for sand to cover that floor. And everyone was working until God knows, two in the morning the night before it opened. I finished first, having started last, I was delighted. And I went downstairs and said, 'Is there anything I can do', and Leonard said 'Yes, if you wouldn't mind going up there and finishing that', which was on the top of an extension ladder. And I went up and I came down straightaway and said, 'I'm sorry, I suffer from vertigo, I can't do it'. So I went home and went to bed and it opened next morning to a riotous reception, the whole exhibition. I mean, looking back at it now, I don't think it was very good. There were some things that were spectacular and splendid, but it was very, very romantic and...

[06:29]

*RF: Shall we release Clive, because whatever the matter was it seems not to have recurred.*

Clive Donner: Fascinating, I could sit there all day. [laughter] Very good, my darling.

*RF: The notices, I gather, were very good?*

JR: Yes. I mean extraordinary, and it became an exhibition that people had to go to. The house still exists in one of those streets that leads from Hyde Park, not quite Hyde Park Corner, or maybe, down into Belgrave Square. It's a large, free-standing house in a garden and huge. And I mean they arranged, I think they arranged it in a cack-handed way, you entered on the first floor through a rickety flight of steps that had been constructed. Leonard designed a couple of turbaned Diaghilev figures, which I think were cast in papier mâché and lacquered as blackamoors standing outside the entrance. And - I wonder why I use my hands so much when I'm talking into a radio which nobody can see? -

and then you entered a small hall, went on inside and passed a re-creation of Nijinsky's dressing room with his *Spectre de la Rose* costume draped over a chair and pots of make-up. I mean that was marvellously evocative, and a whole long gallery with a section of Bakst, Benois, Goncharova designs, Picasso designs, de Chirico, Ida Rubinstein's drawing of, I've forgotten who. But anyway, quite impressive collection of theatrical Diaghilev mementoes.

*RF: All of which I hope survive. Are they in a French museum?*

I've got no idea. I think they were all probably... most of them were private. Some of them might have been, I should think they won't have let them disappear. And that was the sort of crux of the exhibition. Then we get to 1954 and...

*RF: So may I ask, in a sense this is opening doors for you? I don't mean in terms of personalities, but in terms of...*

Yes. It's opening doors in my head, in that I found I could work with other people, whereas I'd always worked by myself before. Have you got anything down on that list of things as early as this?

*RF: No, the first one is a motion picture in, well, it says The Virgin Queen, which you've crossed out and then The Deep Blue Sea's been written in.*

Yes, but what date? Do you know the date of *The Deep Blue Sea*?

*RF: No, I don't.*

[09:56]

I know what happened next. People, through decorators, would start to use paintings of mind as set dressing. And I know Alec went to see a movie one night – was it *Intermezzo* with Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant?

*RF: Yes.*

Or whoever?

*RF: No, Intermezzo was an Ingrid Bergman film much earlier, 1940 or so. Who else was in it? Bergman and... well anyway. Bergman and who was it?*

I thought it was... I've forgotten who I said now.

*RF: Intermezzo was Leslie Howard, it was a Selznick picture made in Hollywood, yeah.*

No, this was one made here and...

*RF: Bergman and who?*

I've forgotten who I said.

*RF: Well anyway, it will be traceable.*

And Alec went to see it with a friend and said, 'I know that painting very well'. And the man he was with said, 'Alec, it's been hanging on your walls for years'. And I think there were three or four of my paintings in the set and from there I...

*RF: Had they borrowed them? How did that happen? These were reproductions or the originals?*

No, they were the originals. A decorator I know or knew, I think, called John Bannenberg, who'd also been at Merioola and had come over here and made it as a decorator. He first opened a tiny little shop behind Knightsbridge in Montpelier Place, called Marble and Lemon, and then he started... he made his living for a while playing jazz piano at the Rockingham – do you remember the Rockingham?

*RF: That was a gay bar wasn't it...*

Yes.

*RF: Yes, at that time, right.*

And, he wasn't gay, but then he started, I mean he borrowed these, well they hired them from me and then he went on to design yachts and make a fortune. But that was my very first introduction into the film world. I didn't go down, didn't see the set, didn't in fact see the movie, and I'd seen an awful lot of films in Australia and I'd been a great film enthusiast. It wasn't until I started working on it that I became totally disenchanted, I mean mention the word films to me now and I freak out, but I then loved them. The next thing...

*RF: Don't freak out until we've gone down the list!*

[laughter] No, okay. Well, I freak out probably every time we move somewhere. But the next thing was, I was asked if I would meet – I can't remember which came first. Did Anatole Litvak do *The Deep Blue Sea*?

*RF: I think it was, yes.*

If I'd go and see him at The Dorchester. I think that was the first, I can't think why I had to go to The Dorchester to meet him, but I duly went, and we met and said about five words to each other, and that was it. And then I had to go down to Shepperton, and I do remember that I was waiting in that bar – do you remember that bar that was like a grotto?

*RF: Well, again, in the fifties I just wasn't around, I was in the States. So I knew Shepperton later, the Winston Churchill. Anyway, there was a grotto-like bar was there?*

Yes. I mean maybe it was in a conservatory.

*RF: Oh, the old house?*

Yes, indeed. And I had to meet Terence Rattigan. Don't, again, ask me why. And I was standing there, at the bar, and he came in and a voice I knew well said, 'Has your lady artist arrived yet Terry?' And I turned round and it was the Old Vic wardrobe mistress who I'd met in Sydney. And I said, 'I think the lady artist is me, Emma'. And that was the first unfortunate happening. Then I went in...

*RF: Unfortunate?*

[15:00]

Well, she and I were rather like daggers drawn. She was slightly older than I was and resented me. And I was taken on to the set, which had been designed by Zoltan Korda. I suppose Terence Rattigan took me on, it was a marvellously depressing set. I mean all in beige and brown, I mean... and a terrible gas fire.

*RF: It's Bayswater, is it not, of the fifties?*

Yeah. And I looked at it and then I was taken in to meet Zoltan Korda, whom I didn't like.

*RF: Sorry, was it Zolly or it was Zolly's brother?*

Was it Vincent?

*RF: Vincent. Vincent was the designer.*

Vincent was a designer, well it was Vincent. And he said – maybe I'd brought some designs down by this time. I'd done three, what they wanted were designs for screens and a screen painting by Vivien, Leigh. Nobody told me how good a painter she was, but I suppose she must have been quite efficient,

God knows why, because otherwise they wouldn't have got me to do them. And I did one design of three panels: one was orange, one was pink and I suppose one might have been sort of tomatoey colour. And each had in *grisaille* on it, which is to say, in white with only black, totally grey, light grey paintings, I did three figures, I can't remember them now. And one of the other designs was panels of musical instruments with one... one were horn instruments, one was string and I don't know whether the others might have been brasses, against a background that looked like wood, and the third I've totally forgotten. I went in to see Vincent, who looked at them and said, 'Yes, how much will you charge?' I can't remember how much I charged. And he said which did I like best and I said the one with the musical instruments and that was the one he liked, and he said, but for the price I was asking he'd like the other two designs as well. Well, I didn't give a fuck what they did with the designs. And I went, I was ushered into the art department to work and I sat there and there was a very, very nice art director there, I've totally forgotten his name – it'll come back to me – Wilfred Shingleton.

*RF: Oh yes, yes.*

And we talked for a bit and I said, 'I can't work here. I'm paralysed'. And he said, 'Listen, you ought to get out of this place as soon as you can, you weren't built for it'. And I said, 'Well, I'm going to talk to someone and see if I can work at home'. And I arranged to work at home. I got the measurements that Korda wanted, the screen, and I said, 'That's huge, it'll dwarf the set'. And he said, 'I designed the set, I know what will go in it'. So I thought, you may think you know what'll go in it, but you don't. So when I started to do it, I did a broad, I mean it was huge, this screen, I did a broad border all the way round it on each panel, which looked, I mean I did it in perspective, the border, as though it was a three-dimensional border. And then I had them cover the screens, there was a wallpaper – well, I don't think it was a wallpaper – but some kind of wall covering of a wood grain, and I had that put on the screen and then I painted the musical instruments and it went down and was a great success, apparently. But first of all they said, 'It's too big for the set'. Ha ha. And they tried... why they asked me down again, I simply do not know, but I went down and natch, they'd had to cut the border off, except for about an inch, which fucked the design, but no matter, it was a film and I didn't care. And I saw a scene painter doing one of the other screens, and I watched him. I mean instead of being the size of that door, which is – how high do you think that it would be?

[20:43]

*RF: Six feet?*

Six feet? Yes, instead of being six feet by...

*RF: Three?*

No, it's...

*RF: You mean the panel or the door?*

I'm thinking now. Anyway, they were doing it four feet high by whatever they'd decided. And they were doing the one with the three grey and white figures on them, and I looked in horror at the scene painter and I said, 'Do you want me to show you how to do that?' And he looked at me in horror, was about to down his paints and come out on strike.

*RF: Everybody out!*

Yes. And I thought, oh, you know, do what you want. And I went away and never saw the movie. So I don't know what it looked like, and I didn't give a fuck. So that would be... that was my first excursion into films.

*RF: Which you found, what? Off-putting generally?*

I hated it. I mean I didn't hate it, I liked Wilf Shingleton and I thought, no man has ever spoken truer words, I don't want anything to do with that factory, that no good art factory and...

*RF: Vincent was quite talented as a painter I believe.*

Who?

*RF: Vincent Korda.*

I never saw his paintings. Wilfred Shingleton, I liked. I mean I remember him well.

*RF: The other people there, Litvak you had very little contact with after that first meeting?*

No. And I didn't see Vivien at all. I knew her and I'd known her in Australia. Again, we hadn't got on but she'd been very impressed by the Diaghilev exhibition and when they tried to persuade her to use one of the screens done by the scene painter she said no, no, I want the one Jocelyn painted. So she may have been right, she may have been wrong, but anyway.

*RF: Did you meet brother Alex, Alex Korda?*

No, never. I only knew about him through Graham Greene, who also was a lover of mine. And he used to say, to Graham who loved him and worked with him a great deal, he said to him about Merle Oberon, 'Never marry a good woman, Graham'. Apparently she'd been a good woman, she was a very beautiful woman, I thought.

*RF: Yes. I'm not sure she was good.*

Well, she might have been while she was married. It was the next wife who was a bitch who, while he was dying, used to talk on the telephone to her lover - this all told me by Graham Greene – saying he can't live very long, and he'd be listening on the extension.

*RF: He didn't have very good luck with his wives, by and large.*

No, he didn't. And then the second one, I mean the one after Merle Oberon was called...

*RF: Well, now, the first one was Maria Corda, he took her name. Then came Queenie Thompson, Merle. Then... I couldn't tell you who number three was.*

I think she became Alexandra Korda, as far as I can remember from Graham, and he just said she was a monster and Korda had a little painting by Boudin which Graham adored, and Korda said to him, 'I will leave it to you, Graham', but Graham never saw it, and always thought, you know, that she'd pinched it with everything else. And that was the first excursion and then I suppose we're getting to be... I suppose if that's '54-ish, or roundabout, we're getting nearly to 1956. Alec had had diabetes all his life and was getting thinner and thinner and thinner and he had a marvellous diabetic specialist called Dr Lawrence, I think, and he went to see him and he sent him to a TB specialist and he found, indeed if diabetics get run down they very much fall prey to tuberculosis. And I mean we were appalled. Alec and I by this time had stopped being lovers for quite a considerable time, but we just did remain each other's closest friend and we still are, he's eighty-four now.

[26:14]

*RF: Oh, he survived?*

Yes. Isn't that extraordinary, for a man with diabetes? I mean absolutely extraordinary.

*RF: You're still roommates are you?*

We're still, I mean we're still great friends.

*RF: No, I say, you were at this time still roommates?*

Oh we still, we shared the flat in Eaton Square. And we... I'd had an affair with Freddie Ayer – does that mean anything to you?

*RF: The...*

Philosopher.

*RF: Philosopher, yes indeed.*

Which went on for three marvellous years and then, I mean a compulsively promiscuous man. He'd have first one other lady, and when it got to seven other ladies there weren't enough days in the week. I moved on, because I couldn't tolerate it any more. We never had a row, we never, I mean we remained friends until the day he died, but our only differences of opinion were, I said to him, 'Freddie, have you ever thought of analysis?' And he said, 'Analysis? I don't need analysis. Anyone would behave like I did, all men want to have affairs with all women'. And nothing I said could persuade him that it was slightly irregular.

*RF: Sowing his seed.*

And, I mean when I think of it now, he'd be stoned in the streets.

*RF: Well, yes. But I suspect he's right in a way, it is a masculine thing to propagate his genes.*

Exactly. And I mean we did love each other in a devoted way, he became devoted too to Clive, but this is years later. But when Alec had to go into hospital, suddenly the telephone rang one day and do you remember Bumble Dawson?

*RF: No.*

Well, she was a not very good designer, but she was an extremely nice, witty, extraordinary looking woman with – these are nothing specs compared to the horn-rimmed specs she wore, which made her look like a frog.

*RF: You're referring to your owl-like spectacles.*

Yes. And she rang me and said, 'Jocelyn...' Oh no, this is... I've jumped ahead.

*RF: May I then, since we've interrupted that, it sounds to me as if you had a scintillating social life.*

Oh I did.

*RF: Right.*

I did.

*RF: And a lot of networking, as we would call it nowadays, by the sound of it?*

I didn't network.

*RF: Well, you know what I mean...*

Yes, I do.

*RF: Everyone knew everyone else.*

[29:21]

Yes, exactly. And there was, I knew Bumble through a homosexual friend of mine called Bunny Roger – did you ever hear about him? He died not long ago at over eighty, a very, very rich man, one of three brothers: Sandy, Bunny and I can't remember what the third was called... Alan. They had a marvellous house in Scotland and a very beautiful house at the back of Knightsbridge in, was it Wilton Street? I think it was. And then subsequently a huge house in Notting Hill. And Bunny was a designer, a couturier. He worked with Hardy Amies for a while, he also worked on his own and he collected paintings and every year he'd give a drag ball on New Year's Eve, which was extraordinary. I mean it was crammed with everyone you knew in London. There was, Vivien Leigh would be there, he just did ask of his friends that they wore token fancy dress and every year there was a scene. One year it was Coronation Ball, one year it was fetishist, one year... I can't remember them all now. Anyway, they were marvellous, and that was where I'd met Bumble, she was a friend of his. But prior to that I'd been working with Loudon on this really terrible musical called *Bloomer Girl* [*Jubilee Girl*], I think, with Fenella Fielding and Marie Lohr and when Loudon said to me, 'You'll have to do the women's costumes as well', stepping in where angels fear to tread, I did them. Where angels fear to tread is a much more suitable phrase. And I would ride over people roughshod. I mean Marie Lohr said to me, 'Oh, I'm very superstitious, I don't like wearing green in the theatre'. And I would say, 'It's not my choice, it's Mr Sainthill's choice', when in fact it was mine. And going in the face of every theatrical superstition, I think I brought bad luck to it, it folded almost without trace. But I'd been working at Nathan's, the costumiers, and when Olivier was setting up *The Prince and the Showgirl* with Roger Furse as designer, Marilyn Monroe as co-star, Bumble rang me and asked me if I'd work as Roger's assistant. My first thing was to say no, and then I talked to Alec, who I think by this time was in hospital, in – what's the hospital in Camberwell?

*RF: I've no idea.*

It's a great big teaching hospital. And I said I've turned it down, and he said, 'I think you should take it, we're going to be running a bit short of money'. So I rang Bumble and said, 'I've changed my mind Bumble, I would like to work with Roger Furse'. And immediately he rang me and said, 'Actually we

met in Australia. I came out on the boat with Larry and Vivien when the Old Vic came out'. And he was such a sweet, charming man, very much on the alcoholic skids by then, great in the early morning. After lunch... and he would shake like an aspen. And anyway, I went and worked with him. He had a very beautiful little Georgian house in one of those Glebes – Glebe Place or Glebe somewhere in Chelsea. You went through the front house, into a courtyard, and there were three studios around this little courtyard, and he had all of them. He lent one to – was he a prop man – he was called Roger something else, I've now forgotten his name. Anyway, I worked there with Roger Furse on designs and lists and then we started to go down to Pinewood and Bumble had an assistant too, called Doris Box, she was John Box's wife, she'd just had a baby and she'd thought, thank God I never have to go to a film studio again. And we became very fast friends, I mean it was Doris Box who saw me actually through the whole nasty nightmare, because she would come and say, 'Have you done your breakdown yet Jocelyn?' and I would say, 'Breakdown, what's a breakdown?' And she'd tell me and I would sit and do it, still when I'd stopped working in films it'd take me longer to do a breakdown than any other piece of rubbish. And she was, I mean one day she came to me and said, Bumble was doing the women's costumes, Roger was doing the sets and the men's costumes, and she came to me one day and said, 'Have you thought of the organ grinder's monkey?' And I said, 'No'. And she said, 'It might be a male monkey'. And I said, 'But it might be female, Doris'. And she said, 'You ought to think about it', and I decided not to bother and the organ grinder's monkey had its own costume, thank God. And then...

[36:08]

*RF: What exactly are you doing in this rather complicated professional relationship on the picture?*

I'm assistant to Roger.

*RF: Yeah, right. So you are actually giving him designs or cutting up his or what?*

No.

*RF: Making them practical?*

Well, he was a very practical designer. When it came to fittings, I'd take the fittings, he didn't have to come, because Nathan's obviously had said my eye was good, I could tell if a costume was going properly, if it was not going properly, and he could absolutely count on me. I mean I remember the first fitting we did with Olivier, who I cordially hated, no, not even very cordially. He was sashaying about in his uniform and he said, 'Rog, I'd like a cape'. So Roger got them to get a stock cape up and then he looked at himself and said, 'I'd like a hat with it, Rog. I'd like a broad-brimmed hat. What do you think, Joss?' turning to me. And I said, 'I wouldn't have a broad-brimmed hat unless you want to look like the Sandeman sherry advertisement', which went down like a lead balloon, but anyway, he didn't have a broad-brimmed hat.

*RF: It wasn't an ego that took lightly to being pricked was it?*

No, not at all. And I found him a very pompous, very limited man and he... I mean it was nine months' nightmare, as far as I remember. I mean there was Marilyn who Olivier would humiliate in any way that he could. It was like... it wasn't like *War and Peace*, it was like *War and War*, it was like... and it was like a civil war going on in a small film studio.

*RF: Who started that Jocelyn, was it she with her rather peculiar ways or was it...*

It was Larry. I think, I mean she did have peculiar ways. She travelled with – what was his name – she travelled with Milton Greene.

*RF: Milton Greene, yeah. He was one of the producers, I think, on the picture, wasn't he?*

Yes, that's right. And he, Milton Greene and an assistant... he took photographs all the way through it, and film, which Bumble told me she saw, and she said, in every crowd shot you and I are walking through it like bloodhounds after some extra who's got their costume on back to front. And there was also, oh, Actors' Studio – what was his name?

*RF: On the picture?*

Yes. His wife. His name was...

*RF: We'll have to look it up.*

Well, I've forgotten her name. Well, she sort of badly dyed auburn hair taken back into a large chignon, and she was rather large.

*RF: I was looking for Halliwell.*

It's there somewhere.

*RF: Yeah. Well, we'll check that a little later then, we'll come back to that if you want to. I know that he's got it because we looked at it last time. Anyway.*

I think it's probably low down in that first shelf above the records.

[40:04]

*RF: Let's not delay. Right.*

Anyway... What stage have I got to?

*RF: Well, we're talking of...*

The production. Marilyn. I mean she was weird, she was seriously weird. She'd get dressed, into her costume, designed by Bumble, which I thought Bumble had made a savage mistake with it, it was white with a sort of tunic shape to below the knees and then either cut on the cross below that or pleats, I can't remember, and very simple crystal beading and I think crystal fringing on the sleeves.

*RF: I'm going to have to stop there.*

[end of Track 2]

[Track 3]

*RF: Miss Jocelyn Rickards, tape two.*

*Yes, you were describing the costumes.*

Marilyn's costumes. And I wouldn't have put her in a white costume, she had three identical costumes in case anything was spilled on it and we didn't want hold-ups. It was a scene of a court ball and there was Larry in uniform with his hair parted in the middle then, which nothing is less attractive and it didn't even give him a very good period aspect, you could have done it in several other ways. And there was, in that scene there was Sybil Thorndike, Maxine Audley and Esmond Knight. I can't remember who else. But they were people I got to know. I mean Sybil looked marvellous in violet velvet, and it was a beautiful sort of weird period recreation. Maxine Audley was in shaded lace, very beautiful, rose pink shading to shell pink, immensely elaborate. She looked beautiful, but I heard Bumble say, 'Oh my God, I had no idea that Roger would people the ballroom with men in scarlet jackets'. I'd done it in fact, because I'd chosen all the period costumes, I mean all the ballroom costumes, and there were dark green jackets that I liked, I mean given that in a ballroom the jackets are more important than the trousers. There were marvellous dark blue privy councillors' uniforms, I think, dark blue, gold braided frockcoats and Richard Wattis was in it too, he played Larry's aide-de-camp. But Bumble said, 'All these red jackets, and I thought the centre of the piece would be Maxine in rose and pale pink'. And I thought, why didn't you talk to Roger, why didn't you talk to me, why did you leave it to chance, Bumble? I didn't have to choose red jackets, but there was, you know, it's limited, what you can choose as remarkably swept up, grand uniforms for a ballroom scene. Don't keep your hand over your work, communicate far and wide. But I didn't say anything. And, you know, the film finally limped to an end. Larry once made Marilyn do one take something like, I think, fifty-two times, and it was simply walking out a door, shutting the door and going downstairs, fastening Richard Wattis's raincoat over her as she leaves first thing in the morning, having spent the night with

Larry. The other terrible thing I remember was there's a moment where they're all... she's a showgirl and they're all presented in a line-up to Larry and in the line-up was a Texan and Roger's design was in a white suit with a ten gallon hat. And the actor came in to be fitted and as he took his clothes off his skin came off too and I thought, oh my God, and after we'd taken his measurements, I said to Nathan's, I need a drink, and they took me over to the pub opposite and gave me a double brandy and we talked, and I said, 'If it were my responsibility I would be terrified to have that man in a crowd wardrobe, I don't know if the skin condition's catching, but if it is, just imagine. I think I should ring someone'. And they said, yes, you should. So I rang Tony Bushell, who was also working on the film, I can't remember what as, he was a half-witted creep.

[05:49]

*RF: Yeah, he probably would have been associate producer or something like that.*

I think he was. And there was a man I met on it who subsequently I met on the last film I ever did – I'll think of his name when I come to that film – anyway, they paid me thirty pounds a week, which was a huge amount in those days, for the whole run of the film and when it was over...

*RF: What happened to the extra, by the way? Did they fumigate the costume or...*

I think... he never got done there, I think we fitted him with a toile or something and...

*RF: Such a hair-raising story indicative of what goes on, it's...*

Oh I know. I mean I've never felt so physically sick in my life, sorry for the man, but thinking, Jesus, who cast this man? And then the film, I think limped to its conclusion.

*RF: One question, Jocelyn, Jack Cardiff was the cameraman, one of the great colour cameramen in this country.*

He was great.

*Did he have any input into...*

No, none.

*RF: It does seem to me that it was all so compartmentalised, nobody was talking to anyone else.*

Oh it was, and nobody was talking to anybody else. I couldn't believe that anything on this scale was done with... and the monstrous wardrobe mistress, the first day I went into the wardrobe, said, 'Of course you're very welcome here Jocelyn as Roger's assistant, but I want you to know that you must

not touch any costume, you mustn't touch anything'. And I said, to Doris Box, 'I suppose she means it?' Come the day of the first crowd call, she called me over, and I was wearing a suit and I remember into the jacket of the suit she threaded needles and cottons in every available colour and put a small pair of scissors and a clothes brush into my hand and said, 'This is for you to do running repairs on the stage'. And I didn't say anything, because I knew they'd all come out on strike if I did. But it was what enraged me about the whole of the film industry, I just thought, Jesus Christ, I don't understand what's going on here. Carmen Dillon was working on it too. She was Roger's... I don't know what she would have been working as, but she was in charge of all the construction and she took exception, slight exception to me, because she adored Roger and she'd worked with him for years and they saw me as a usurper, coming in from outside. Roger didn't, I mean Roger was only too grateful that I was there to keep my eye on things. And I remember there was a marvellous soundman called Mitch.

*RF: John Mitchell?*

Yeah. And he said to me one day after lunch, 'Jocelyn, just move over and nudge Bumble, she's snoring on the soundtrack'. And Roger, after lunch, would be so shaking with alcoholic deprivation, I suppose by then, though he'd have something to drink at lunchtime, I mean I don't know how much he drank during the day, but when we were doing a crowd fitting in the early morning, his hands would shake and he'd start sweating. And I used to think, my God, he's going to die. There was a marvellous wardrobe master on that film who I went on using as long as I could ever after, he was great, he was called Johnny Briggs, and... But when the film finished, I thought, that has really finished me, I never want to go on another fucking film set in my life.

[10:27]

And by that time Alec was still in King's College Hospital, they did a very new operation on his lung, which they cut a semi-circular incision from the shoulder right down to the lung, down the back of the lung to below the ribcage, they inserted things like solid ping-pong balls with a hole through them into the collapsed lung and sewed him up, and the lung re-inflated incorporating the ping-pong balls into the substance of the lung, growing through them, and he's got them to this day. It was a very experimental operation they only did for about six months.

*RF: Very graphic description too!*

I mean I was distraught, the day it happened, and I thought oh, you know, I rang the hospital, and Alec coming out of the anaesthetic said to the nurse, 'That'll be Jocelyn' and indeed it was. And they said to me, 'He's okay, we'll monitor the diabetes, it's better that you don't come and see him for two days, because he's wired up to everything, it'll upset you, he's alright'. And I believed them and didn't go for two days. Otherwise, I'd get back from Pinewood, I'd go over to King's College Hospital, see him, take him anything he needed. And this went on, he was, altogether he was in hospital for over a year and they moved him at one stage to Frimley, to a clinic there. Was that before or after the operation? Maybe he'd been there before. They healed the lung at one stage, but then all the lesions opened up

again, as soon as he started to move. He was lying flat for three months, really not able to move, and he was, I mean I had such admiration, not only for Alec but for the National Health system, because these very grand specialists said nobody can afford hospital treatment on the scale to which you're going to have it, and they got a tiny little room for him, I mean it was no bigger than a cubicle, but nevertheless it was private, I mean it wasn't private, there were a whole lot of little cubicles, but he didn't have to look into somebody else's bed. And then he went down to Frimley and got much better there, and then after, I think after thirteen months he was okay, and they said alright.

*RF: Lucky man.*

And then...

*RF: You've taken the vow, by the sound of it, after Showgirl. You've taken the vow after...*

Not to work on films again.

*RF: Indeed. Of total celibacy by the sound of it.*

Yes.

*RF: Alright. But on the list I've got for you next is Look Back in Anger...*

That's right.

*RF: ...would that be the next? Yes. How did that come about?*

Well that came about because I then worked with Loudon again on a musical called *Expresso Bongo*...

*RF: Oh really?*

[14:32]

...written by Wolf Mankowitz, and I did the costume. I mean Loudon rang me and said, 'I'm going to do this musical and it's set in nightclubs and I don't know anything about nightclubs, you'll have to do the costumes'. And I said, 'Loudon, I don't go to nightclubs'. And he said, 'Yes, but you know about clothes, you know about the clothes that people wear'. I mean he knew about clothes too, he just didn't want to do it. But he said, 'I'll give you a copy of the script and they're having a read-through tomorrow. Wolf Mankowitz is there and Oscar Lewenstein. You'll know Oscar Lewenstein' he said, 'because he looks like a terminally ill...' terminally ill... I've forgotten. Freddie Ayer, I mean the same hairline, the same nose, the same eye, except he looked, Oscar looked as if he'd been built out of tallow candle, whiter than white. And I went to the read-through. What really attracted me to it was

Paul Scofield, who's an actor to this day I think is a great, great, superb actor. And I'd seen him in *Ring Round the Moon*, playing those twins, and I thought, oh, he is extraordinary. And then I'd seen him in something else and then he was going to do this musical, so I listened to the read-through and I went up to talk to Oscar Lewenstein and he said, 'Well, how much will you charge for the costumes?' And I said, 'I can't do them for less than £100'. And he said, 'That's more than we can pay'. And I said, 'Well, I can't do them for less'. And Wolf came up at that moment and he was listening, and he said, 'Give the little doll £100, Oscar, we can afford that'. And so the little doll went to work for £100. And I immensely enjoyed that. Billy Chappell was directing it, it was fascinating watching Paul develop his part. It was Millicent Martin's first part, Susan Hampshire's first part. She had one line and she brought the house down every night. And Billy Chappell, who was directing it, did the choreography, and there were some very good dancers in it. And after that film it was pure pleasure, I adored it.

*RF: Does this mean you found your metier as a costume designer, or is it still in a sense an adjunct to your...*

No, I was designing. I designed, this was the second musical I designed for Loudon. I designed the period one, called *Bloomer Girl* [*Jubilee Girl*] and this was... But this one, you know, I enjoyed, it was very infectious and it opened to rave notices, not only for Paul, for the whole show, but also for me. So that was it.

*RF: But what I meant before was in relation to your, in quotes, more serious work, or your serious work?*

Painting?

*RF: Yeah, your painting.*

I still went on painting in between.

*RF: But now you found a career, as it were?*

I did find that I loved working in the theatre and I loved, loved working with other people, I found it very easy. I mean I always found painting a struggle, as to this day I find I enjoy writing more than I ever enjoyed painting. And... I think with painting, while I was a student I did enjoy it and I painted sort of ceaselessly, but the thing was, that having to earn a living, no painter until they have hit the high time is ever going to make enough money unless they do decorative things, unless they... I mean I was occasionally painting murals. I remember I painted a mural for Jocelyn Stevens and I don't remember much... I painted a mural in Rome in the early fifties around four walls of a bedroom of a man called Kenneth Macpherson, who was a very great friend of Graham Greene's, who also had run a gallery

with Peggy Guggenheim, and he wanted a mural that was faintly Etruscan in feeling. And I still regarded those as the most serious things I'd done. But anyway, I was reconciled, if I had to work, it came very easily to me to design. There was a problem and the problem had to be solved, and that was it. And I had a flair for it.

[20:28]

*RF: The impression also comes over of a very independent minded woman, you knew what you were going to do and how you were going to do it, is that fair?*

I suppose so. I don't know.

*RF: It doesn't sound as if you suffered idiots gladly.*

Oh I didn't, I didn't, I didn't ever. And after *Expresso Bongo*, which I'd had made at Berman's and Berman's subsidiary called Elizabeth Curzon, Berman's became interested in me and I, I suppose I went on painting between *Expresso Bongo* and *Look Back in Anger*, but... because I remember Wolf saying to me, they're going to make a film of *Expresso Bongo* – not with Paul in it, I may say, I can't remember who was in it.

*RF: Wasn't it... oh God, Jimmy Woolf's boyfriend? Larry... what's his name?*

Oh, Harvey [Laurence Harvey]. I think you're right. And he said, Bumble Dawson rang me up, she's going to do the costumes, you don't mind doll, do you? And I said, no, I don't mind. I didn't bother to go and see it. And then Loudon... I went to the Court one night, with Loudon I suppose, to see *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl*, or something else that he'd designed. And – how's it going?

*RF: Fine, fine.*

And there was a party on the stage after and I went to the party and there was Tony Richardson and they were limbo dancing, and he was standing like a giraffe clapping in time to the music, I mean he was totally uncoordinated, Tony. Physically the most uncoordinated man I know. Anyway, he beckoned me over to stand beside him, and I went over, there was a gap and I went over and stood beside him. We didn't exchange one word, and then Loudon said, rang me and said... *Look Back in Anger* had started while I was working on *The Prince and the Showgirl*.

*RF: The film or the play?*

The play. And you know the success it was. And I walked out of it, I didn't like Kenneth Haigh. What else didn't I like? I've just been writing about John Osborne for *The Oldie*. Didn't like Kenneth Haigh. I found it claustrophobic and, anyway, I can't even remember what I said the other day. But

then, when Loudon said Tony Richardson's asked me to design a composite set for *Look Back in Anger*, I'll ask you to dinner with him, if you don't upset him it should be okay for you to design the costumes. So I thought well, I'd like to work with somebody who's not in that kind of hierarchy that there was on *The Prince and the Showgirl*, I'd like to try another film. And I went to dinner and it was okay, and this was, by now it was 1958, yes, Alec had got out of hospital in 1957, *Expresso Bongo* I think was about then and then it was 1958. So Tony and Harry Saltzman and I started work in Lowndes Cottage, which was just round the corner from Eaton Square. Harry was marvellous. Every day he'd provide unbelievable breakfasts and he had the house that Larry and Vivien had been in, called Lowndes Cottage. He installed a French cook, unbelievable dinners, and if we were feeling a bit faint he'd make us bullshots – do you remember the era of the bullshot?

[25:38]

*RF: I do, yes, yes.*

He made the best bullshot...

*RF: Campbell's consommé and...*

That's right, and it had to be American tinned Campbell's consommé, which he'd get from the PX. And while we were working on the preliminaries John Osborne and Mary Ure arrived back from New York where Mary had been starring in *Look Back*. They decided to ask Richard Burton and Claire Bloom and Edith Evans, don't remember much else. And John and Mary arrived back and I hadn't seen them before, and they seemed to me to be the most glamorous couple I'd ever seen. They seemed to be a present day Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald. The first night they walked into Lowndes Cottage, they'd got back that day, Mary was wearing what used to be called 'nigger brown' suede, a Mary Quant dress with a low neck and she looked stunningly beautiful. She was very, very pale, her hair was taffy coloured. I mean I think she'd bleached it to buggery because if you looked close it had always a mass of split ends, but it was a very pretty colour. And John was wearing – he was very sun-burned and he had, he had small blue eyes, but they were like Cabochon sapphires - and he had a pink denim shirt on and a pair of khaki trousers with slanting pockets on the hips, very well cut. And they came in, just bubbling with delight at being back, Mary saying she didn't know if she'd do the film or not. One knew that she would do it. I didn't know what went on in their lives. Yes?

*RF: No, no, please go on. I just want to look from time to time.*

Okay. And eventually we all made friends and I got to know Mary and John slowly. I found working with Tony extraordinary and really a real act of collaboration. Loudon wasn't about, after he'd designed the composite set he disappeared and he, Tony found me one day and said, 'There's something wrong with Loudon's set. Come and have a look at it and see if you can put your finger on it, because I can't'. And I went in and looked round and I said, 'Tony, Jimmy Porter's only got one tie,

which he wears to a funeral, and the set dressing on this are ties everywhere, on every doorknob, on every cupboard knob, over the back of every chair. Just get rid of the whole fucking lot, then the set'll look alright'. And we did that and it did look alright. And Richard Burton arrived, Claire Bloom arrived. Monty Berman said to me, before I started working in the wardrobe actually there, he said, 'West Side Story is coming to London and Irene Sharaff's original designs have all been lost, I want your help. And I said, 'In what way, Monty?' And he said, 'If you can re-do the designs from photographs so that we've got designs to go by and do the patterning, I mean we'll do the patterning, you choose the fabrics. Then oversee the making up. The show, after *Look Back*'s finished shooting it opens in Manchester'. So I said, sure I'd do it. So I did the designs in the wardrobe at ABPC and that was nice because I didn't have to stand about on the set, which I've always hated doing. I mean I've only gone on to a set if I've absolutely had to. And, so I had something to do during the day and then we'd all go and have dinner with Harry Saltzman at night. Mary was, she was extraordinary, in a way she was only half there. She never seemed to displace anything. If we came back in the car at night, which we frequently did, John had brought, I think a black Cadillac, it may have been a Buick, but anyway it was a large boring American car, and she never seemed to displace the upholstery in the back of it, she just sort of perched on it. And into this there was, immediately Claire and...

[31:53]

*RF: Burton. Burton.*

Started the affair that they'd started years ago, again. By this time he was well married to Sybil, who was, I mean I thought Claire was a pain in the arse, but she wasn't bad in it. In fact I saw it the other day and I rang, I think I rang Ossie Morris to say how very beautiful she looked in one scene. And also I'd seen *The Entertainer* and I said it was extraordinary how he'd made Joan Plowright look respectable. And he said, 'Do you remember? I used to plead with you not to make Joan cry, because I could never photograph her after she'd cried, her eyes disappeared altogether'.

*RF: How did you make her cry?*

Well, she said to me one day, Larry had been to Paris and he'd brought her back from Balmain a white, it looked like mohair, coat. And she came to me and said, 'Jocelyn, can I wear my new coat in the film?' And I looked at it and said, 'No Joan, you cannot wear it. Where do you think you'd have got it from?' And she burst into tears.

*RF: Balmain, you mean The Entertainer? Yeah.*

And I went to Tony and told him and he said, 'You're right, of course she can't wear it'. But anyway, what else happened? Then, while... after shooting one night, the daughter of those people who ran The Actors' Studio, I've forgotten her name now.

*RF: Strasberg.*

What?

*RF: Strasberg.*

That's right. What was...

*RF: Susan Strasberg.*

[33:51]

Susan Strasberg arrived and she fancied Richard and Claire walked into his dressing room after changing and he and Susan Strasberg were at it, and suddenly all hell broke loose, which was the sort of thing that made Mary come alive. She came sparkling down to the car after it and I said, 'What was all that about?' And she didn't come out and say it, she was elliptical and hinting. Anyway, that was that. Other things that happened, Edith was marvellous, Edith Evans. I had to go shopping with her in Clapham Common – no, Clapham, not on the Common – at a place called Arding and Hobbs. She said, 'I know it's perfect for my costumes, whatever we find there will be right and I'll have my charlady's bag and I'll wear the same kind of stockings as she wears and I'll have her shoes, we just need to find the other things'. So we went to Arding and Hobbs and found her clothes, which I remember not at all, and then we went into Woolworth's to look for a hat and earrings. We found the earrings, which were little chains with a little crystal on the end of them, and she said, 'Those are ideal, Jimmy would have given them to me'. So I bought those and then she said, 'That hat would be superb if it weren't white'. And I said, 'Don't worry about the colour, I can change that with paint'. So we bought the hat and I painted it pink, so that was her. And then she arrived at a scene at a crematorium, God knows where, it looked on to a used tyre dump and the river, wherever it was, and when she arrived and she changed, she said to me, 'I'm too shy to go on to the set by myself, will you come on with me?' So I had to take her by the hand and lead this indelibly grand lady of the theatre with her booming voice across swampland. And I can't remember who else was there, Burton was there and whoever was doing the funeral service. It's not in the play, it's the bit where I think her husband dies. And the only other thing I remember was there was a crowd call one day when I overslept and Harry rang me and said, 'Where the fuck are you Jocelyn? We've got to leave' and I said, 'Right there Harry, just pass here and I'll be ready'. And they did and I scrambled into some clothes and got down to the studio on time for the crowd call and the wardrobe mistress had dressed Donald Pleasence, the market inspector, in his market uniform with an old Etonian tie. And I said, 'What's he doing in that tie?' And she said, 'What's wrong with that tie?' And I said, 'It's an old Etonian tie'. And she said, 'I didn't know'. I said, 'Well, let's change it for any other tie that's going that's not regimental and not immediately discernible'. So we did, and otherwise that film went very easily.

*RF: From what you say, Dame Edith had a wonderful sense of character off the set. I say, Dame Edith had a wonderful sense of character.*

Oh, she did. She did and I remember her going through the script with John Osborne saying, I'm a Cockney, I was born within the sound of Bow Bells and I can tell you immediately if a speech rings true. And she went right through her part, changing lines, and he just pencilled them out and whatever she said, he put in. And she was extraordinary.

*RF: Yes, a great, great lady.*

Oh, extraordinary. And I mean she was great to work with. I had no doubt that her decision on her clothes was bang right.

*RF: Working with Richardson, what was that like?*

Well, he was extraordinary. I found him marvellous to work with. It was, I mean that really suddenly taught me that I could work in films and we worked together very happily on that. I've got a lot more to say about him, but that'll come later.

*RF: That'll come in due course, okay, fine. Well, does that wrap up on Look Back?*

Yes, I guess it does, doesn't it?

*RF: Well, unless you have a further memory stirring?*

I don't think I have.

*RF: Burton by this time has become really rather tiresome, I suspect?*

Say that again.

*RF: Burton, by this time, has become really rather tiresome and full of his own legend?*

No, not at all.

*RF: Not yet?*

He was derisory about the script at first, but once he started work he was alright. He was, the thing that I remembered most about him was he was as mean as buggery. I remember one day walking over to

the pub and saying, 'Do you want a drink, Richard?' And he always accepted, but never offered you one.

[40:12]

*RF: Really?*

Never.

*I remember him coming to a New Year's Eve party of mine in New York in the early fifties, they were over there for... not The Lady's Not for Burning, or maybe it was The Lady's Not for Burning.*

Oh, was he in... I don't... yes, maybe.

*RF: The New York production, yeah.*

He maybe, with John Gielgud and Pamela Brown?

*RF: That's right, yes.*

Yes.

*RF: And he came to a party and he became thoroughly nasty, he got pissed and then was really, not violent exactly, but aggressive to other...*

Oh, he could. Yes, indeed. Well, he didn't drink while he was working on a film and Sybil, I loved, she was very beautiful, I thought. Do you remember her?

*RF: Yes, indeed. Oh yes, yes. Yes, she was very much in charge of him, I remember her saying, 'Richard, behave yourself'.*

And her hair was going prematurely white and she looked like an eighteenth century marquise. But I liked her very much. I mean Paul Scofield is practically the only actor I've ever liked, he and Robert Mitchum, but the rest, *je m'en fous, c'est ça*. And he, then it was over and I went up to Manchester for the opening of *West Side Story* and they all flew in with Jerome Robbins and...

*RF: Sondheim, Bernstein?*

No, not that.

*RF: They weren't around?*

Bernstein wasn't there, Hal Prince was there.

*RF: Uh huh. Did he stage it here or he just came visiting?*

Yes. And Jerry Robbins again, did the choreography. And when they'd sent the measurements from New York, I didn't realise this until we started to do fittings, but they'd send everyone's measurement and we started fitting them and nothing fitted, not one costume, except Chita Rivera's. And I mean when this happened, I said something's gone wrong, give me the lists of measurements and characters and the whole stuff we've had from New York. And I went down to talk to Jerry Robbins and I said something's fouled up and I don't believe it's Berman's fault, because Chita Rivera's is the only costume that fits and it's the most difficult to make.

*RF: A small break.*

[end of Track 3 – NB ends at 43:16]

[Track 4]

[00:28]

Chita Rivera's, I remember, was a pink, very bright pink shot silk, figure-hugging dress to the knees and then it burst into frills so that when she danced, the frills all sort of stood up, and it was difficult to make, but it fitted like a glove. And Jerry Robbins went through the list and said, 'Those aren't the actors you've got now, they've sent the New York cast measurement'. And I said, 'Well, that's what's gone wrong, they've all got to be altered'. So I'd gone up with a complete Berman's workroom, their head cutter, a man called Harry Schneider, their head woman cutter, a woman called Maria, and a whole workroom staff. And they worked their arses off for two days and a night until they got it right. And eventually the costumes all fitted, there was one costume I hated and I went down and said to Jerry Robbins, do you mind if I alter this one a bit? I don't like it'. And he said, 'No, do'. There were Jets and Sharks and Jets were in blue and yellow and Sharks were in red and purple and brown, I think, and Maria, the poor cow, in white. And I stayed until... I saw the dress rehearsal. There was only one thing that Jerry Robbins didn't like and there was a ballet in it and the dresses were almost like petticoats with shoestring straps and full skirts and they were marvellous colours and I'd had them made in lining silk and they all had net underskirts and he said they look like ballet costumes, and I said they won't if you take the net petticoats away. So we jettisoned the net petticoats and that was it, you know, bang, okay. Thank you. And I got on the train and came back and thought, thank God that's over.

*RF: Why did you feel that way? I mean you'd been mixing with Broadway big time.*

[03:19]

[technical problem – very low sound, inaudible]

[03:44]

*RF: Somehow that got switched off. Right, okay, continue.*

What was the last thing I said?

*RF: Well, I raised the point about Broadway big time, that you weren't happy on...*

I didn't like Hal Prince at all. I did like...

*RF: He was a shit.*

He was a monster shit. I did like Jerry Robbins and I had great respect for Jerry Robbins, but you know, the thing was, I was a very small part of that machine. I was a very small cog in the wheel and I do think I did a very good job for them and it got on. And as a result Irene Sharaff ever after would say that I was the only costume designer she reckoned in England, and I think she was a very great lady. I never met her but we had a mutual friend in common, Roddy McDowall. I don't know. Also, I mean I'd worked on the drawings. I'd enjoyed it in a way, but the pressure of those last three days was nightmarish and I just wanted a rest after it.

[05:11]

*RF: It's another story of the little people in the backroom...*

Yes, exactly.

*RF: ...actually getting the show on, isn't it?*

Yes. And so I got on the train and sat in the restaurant car and ordered a huge drink and arrived back in London. Now's the time for us to go and have a drink.

*RF: One final question on that – you didn't bring the show into town, you...*

It came into town.

*RF: Well, it certainly came into town, but...*

But unchanged.

*RF: But that was it for you.*

That was it, yes. And I can't remember the wardrobe staff - I suppose they were American – can't remember a thing about it. And once it was established in Manchester it was very easy to bring into town and I didn't have a credit on it and indeed they were Irene Sharaff's designs, I just re-created them. And I think, I mean the dancers all said to me, these are much better made costumes than any we've ever worn, they're made in better materials, blah, blah, blah. And they were in better materials because they had sent me little cuttings, tiny, you know, not even an inch square, of the original costumes, so it was a question of colour. And sometimes I did the colour better than they'd done it.

*RF: I was at the first night of that on Broadway. That will end our section on that particular one, good.*

Yeah.

*RF: Okay, a break, Jocelyn.*

Goody.

[break in recording]

*RF: Right, resuming after a most enjoyable lunch. You had just come off the stage version of West Side Story, and then what happened?*

Then, I don't know what time of the year it was, but I do remember by that time I'd said to Mary Ure and John Osborne, Alec and I are going to spend Christmas in Rome, why don't you come with us, and they did. And we became closer friends and I'd been having an affair with Wolf Mankowitz, which wasn't the greatest affair in the world because he was very much married and had children and was immensely a Jewish *pater familias*, which meant he wasn't faithful to his wife for one minute. And if ever I said to him, I'm going – I mean I never knew what was happening – but if I said, he'd say, 'What are you doing this evening?' and if I said, 'I'm having dinner with Graham Greene', 'Where?' 'At the Café Royal', and he'd turn up, so that I had no life of my own. It was a weird relationship but I was very fond of him. Anyway, then we all went to Rome for Christmas and when we got back John was working on *The World of Paul Slickey*, an absolutely disastrous musical, and he asked me if I'd design it. And I said yes and we talked about it and I said you ought to get Hugh Casson to do the sets and Kenneth MacMillan to do the choreography. And he did and I introduced him to Kenneth and to Hugh, and then we saw a great deal of each other, Mary was in Stratford rehearsing God knows what with... she did Titania and *Othello*. I've got a feeling she was working with Charles Laughton, and she was working certainly on *Othello* with Paul Robeson. Anyway, John and Kenneth and I became closer and closer and came the night of the last fog that I can remember, I mean the last real pea-souper. We'd all had dinner together and then...

[pause for adjusting microphone]

[10:40]

We went back to John's house, which was a beastly bijou residence in Woodfall Street, just off the King's Road, and we went back there to have a drink and at just past midnight Kenneth and I opened the door to go out and you couldn't see your, literally couldn't see your hand in front of your face. So we shut the door quickly and I said, 'I'm not walking home in that'. And John said, 'And I'm not driving you'. And Kenneth had another drink and eventually groped his way out into the fog and I think finally made his way home. And they didn't have a spare bed, John and I, who by that time had started to fancy each other, went to bed together and...

*RF: Sorry, Mary is on the premises or not?*

Mary is in Stratford.

*RF: Ah.*

When I got home in the morning, Alec looked at me in despair and said, 'Oh, Jocelyn, you fucking fool'. And I said, 'Don't worry Alec, nobody is going to get hurt'. We fast forward to the first night, which was, I mean we rehearsed all over the south of England... Bournemouth did it start, or Eastbourne? I can't remember which. And Nottingham? That's not the south. Brighton. And by this time I thought I must get rid of Wolf, I mean very early on I thought I must get rid of Wolf. He was a tender hearted creature, so I said, 'It's the end of the line, Wolf'. And he looked at me and said, 'Why?' And I'd had to have an abortion, and I said it was because of the abortion. And he said, 'Oh, I was frightened that this'd happen'. And I thought as long as you don't think, you know, as long as you're not attacked where you're most vulnerable, it's okay. So I lied my way out of it.

*RF: What was his vulnerability?*

He was in love with me and I knew there was nothing he could do about it because he had four children, four kids, he had a wife who had married when they were still very young, and he had gone into analysis and then into exhaustive analysis to make her fall in love with him all over again, so that he felt he owed her, I hope. I never asked him any questions about it. My own life, you know, he was incidental to my life. I remember asking Diane Cilento, whose sister had been at art school with me, to lunch one day and John was coming to lunch and Wolf was coming to lunch. And Wolf behaved monstrously, as only Wolf could, talking with hyperbole, and out-talking John who suddenly got up and said, 'I have to go'. So I went out on to the landing with him while we called the lift, and he said, 'I can't cope with that'. I think he just felt he'd been talked down – they both were at fault.

[15:13]

*RF: Well, I don't mean to interrupt, but part of Mankowitz was being a rather insecure, uneducated East End Jew, is it not?*

Who, who?

*RF: Wolf Mankowitz.*

Yeah, say it again.

*RF: Part of his person was indeed the insecurity in those days of being an East End, uneducated...*

No, he was highly educated.

*RF: Was he? Ah.*

Oh, very highly.

*RF: Oh I thought he was self-taught.*

No.

*RF: My fault.*

No, very, very highly educated.

*RF: But was that part of the problem, the Jewish/gentile relationship?*

It may have been, and also the fact that, you think about it, he felt he was physically unattractive. He was a very big man, huge man, and he, being brought face to face with John who was, it emerged later, was deeply anti-Semitic, I mean it emerged in the latter half of his life. But... and Wolf was also, had the greater intellect. He was the more intelligent man and John felt, didn't feel up to it, I suppose. And, what was, I can't remember what Wolf was talking to Diane about. I just don't remember. Anyway, we now go back to – what had I said before that, do you remember?

*RF: About which...*

John Osborne.

*RF: Oh, well we were in the house and then you'd begun the affair.*

Then we continued to tour with *Paul Slickey*.

*RF: Yes. Where you were is you'd kissed off with Mankowitz, so it's from that point, right. So Paul Slickey.*

Yes, and then when I got rid of Wolf that was, you know, John and I were concentrated on each other. *Paul Slickey* opened, to the worst notices anyone has ever had, terrible, it wasn't good. Kenneth was a marvellous choreographer, that was good. Hugh did good sets, I did good costumes. John directed it not badly, and John's greatest, greatest... now, it wasn't great anything, he just never could see that anything needed cutting and he should have cut that play and cut it and cut it and he shouldn't have directed it himself, nor he should have had a better composer. Because he was musically literate and jazz literate and he had the most dire composer. Anyway, John and Mary and I went to the first night. He literally was chased up the street after it by people with flashguns and we got into a taxi and I said, 'Well, you'd better come back to Eaton Square, at least I can give you a bowl of soup'. And they came back and had soup and bread and cheese and I opened a bottle of wine. And Mary had to go back to Stratford first thing in the morning, and John rang me and I went round and he was sitting in a sea of tealeaves and broken Spode cups which Mary had flung at him. And she said, 'I know you wanted to stay with Jocelyn last night, I just couldn't let you'. I don't know why she flung the cups, anyway.

[20:04]

*RF: It's what one did.*

I guess one did. But she anyway, she went back to Stratford and John and I took his – he had a new racing green Jaguar – and we packed ourselves in it and drove through the secondary roads of France so we would meet Alec in Rome.

*RF: Forgive me, may I ask, was it a Roadster?*

Yes.

*RF: Ah, right. The XKR, yeah. I had one of those.*

Oh, just marvellous.

*RF: Gorgeous.*

Just marvellous. And we, I mean we just stayed, we didn't book anywhere and we stayed wherever... one of the first nights we stayed in a place called Hesdin where, it was sort of commercial travellers' hotel. Hesdin was in the north of France, in Normandy, and there was a conservatory with a grapevine

growing through it and we had the most delicious dinner. Then we drove on to Soliers where the greatest chef, one of the greatest chefs of all time, he was called Maitre Dimene [ph] was cooking, and we stayed there. And then we drove on and we holed up eventually in the Camargue in a marvellous little hotel run by a very dignified gypsy woman and it was at Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, a tiny little cove with this minute hotel and a storm blew up and it was unbelievably romantic. We'd have bouillabaisse and when they could still fish they'd go out. Marvellous food. And we stayed there for almost a week.

*RF: Oh, stop it. They just don't make 'em like that any more do they?*

No, unfortunately they don't. It had, away from the centre of the town had a canal down the middle of it and it was like a Tennessee Williams' set with one storey buildings with struts down.

*RF: And people popping out on the balconies?*

Eventually we drove on to... I don't, from there I think we got to Sete, which, if you've ever been to Sete, it's the most marvellously unlovely French naval town with warships and docks, but again we had a good dinner. We went... no, we didn't, we had a huge room, we had to go and find a restaurant, which we did, where we had a good dinner. We went back and said could we have a drink, and the woman switched the light on in the salon and on every chair there was a different dog, and they all got up and looked at us, so we found two chairs [laughter] and we eventually, John, I'd just weaned him from being a vegetarian and he really was nut cutlet crunching, totally. Now he ate fish, he ate meat, he ate birds. We met Alec in Naples, the first night we went, we stayed, in Italy, we stayed at... now, let's go down from Genoa – do you know that coast?

*RF: Well, yeah, but I mean I'm not sure I can... my mind. Ligorno, as it used to be.*

I'm trying to remember what it was. It's the Ligurian coast, but...

*RF: Ligurian coast.*

[24:32]

Santa Margherita? Well, just before Santa Margherita's another one. And we thought this time we'd stay at a good hotel and we drove up to this one on the promontory like a beautiful decorated white wedding cake and we said could we have a room and a bathroom. And the hall porter said yes, and we put our passports down and he looked at John's passport and said, 'Ah, Signor Osborne, *The World of Paul Sickley*'. And dug down behind the desk and brought up a scrapbook of cuttings about *The World of Paul Slickey*. He was convinced it was called *The World of Paul Sickley*. 'Ah, stay here for dinner and you can have anything you like.' And I said, 'We can't stay to dinner, we've arranged to meet friends at Santa Margherita', because hotel food never seemed a good idea to me and I did know a

restaurant in Santa Margherita that was worth going to. So again we went upstairs, bathed, changed, went to Santa Margherita, had a marvellous, marvellous dinner. And I remember they produced unbelievable little pears. They looked as though they'd been carved out of soap, so perfect were they. They were exquisite, dinner was marvellous. We went back and fell asleep as though we'd been poleaxed, and next day we made it to Rome where we met Alec, and totally unknowing he said, 'You know, the whole of the English press is on your arse. They've been trying to track you since you left London'. Because he was a photographer, Alec, and by then he was working on *Queen* and *Tatler* and *The Sunday Times* colour supplement and the fashion page of *The Sunday Telegraph*, and he said, 'They also are running articles about the deep immorality of husbands holidaying apart from their wives'. We didn't have a clue that this had been going on. Well, next morning – morning? – next evening we all packed into the car, Alec in the back of the E-Type, and set out for Naples where we stayed at the Excelsior because we decided it was the only possible place to garage the car where they wouldn't change it for a Cinquecento engine.

*RF: Or nick the wheels.*

Yeah. And Alec came into our room for breakfast the next morning and I said, 'What are you eating?' and he said, 'Porridge, it's the one hotel in Europe where you get marvellous porridge'. [laughter]

*RF: Had he ceased to be quite so disapproving by this time?*

Oh yes, he'd stopped being disapproving and he'd done all the photographs for *Paul Slickey*. And I mean he and John became very close friends and John said to me one day about him, 'He's the only aristocrat I've ever met'. And I thought about John and thought well, probably he is, I mean Alec is. And...

*RF: Aristocrat in what sense? I'm not sure we touched on that.*

Alec what?

*RF: Aristocrat, in what sense? I'm not sure we covered that before in talking about Alec.*

Well, he, one look at Alec and he looked over-bred. I mean tall, thin, aquiline – not very aquiline nose – but his manners, his whole persona reeked of years of establishment, breeding, albeit that he was Australian. And his mother was one of the first English film stars, she was called Madge... I've forgotten what her name was. If I ask Alec he might be able to tell me. Anyway, she married Alec's father when he was at Cambridge. The first war broke out... no, maybe it didn't break out quite so quickly. Maybe it did. Anyway, I think his father was wounded in the war. She had a daughter and Alec. When Alec's father died she brought them back to England and found she was homesick for those huge Australian skies and took them back to Adelaide. Alec grew up in Adelaide. His whole

family were... his father, no, his uncle was Lord Chief Justice, his family had a great deal of property, which Alec...

[30:27]

*RF: There or here?*

There. And Alec worked as a jackaroo for a bit, but felt he had absolutely no aptitude for it, and then he said the one thing I'm interested in is photography, I'm going to Sydney to learn about it. And he did. And he worked there until he left Australia in... just before I did in 1948.

*RF: I love these avenues that you open up.*

What?

*RF: I love these avenues that you open up, but we must come back, I guess, to where you are in the south of France.*

We're not, we're in Naples.

*RF: I beg your pardon, of course Naples.*

And the next morning we took the boat over to Capri and we arrived, and took a taxi up to Caprile, which is one of the highest points in the island, and Graham Greene for the third time had lent me his villa there. And we walked along the footpath till we got to these high white walls and an iron gate that we could shut. And we went in, locked the iron gate, and there was the whole Bay of Naples spread out in front of us, it was amazing. We stayed there for two or three weeks and Alec's Italian assistant came down, stayed with us. When we all came back Alec flew back, John and I drove, still not, I mean we'd, no, the last night we were in Capri we were all running for a taxi and as... all the time there, Alec had been saying, I can hear a camera shutter Jocelyn, if you're going to walk along holding anyone's hand, you must hold mine. I don't know why I cared, but anyway. One played it that way. And the last night they got a photograph of us all strung out; me in the lead, John behind me, Alec behind him and Nino behind him.

*RF: This was what, on the Piazzetta or...*

On the... what's the piazza in Capri called?

*RF: Well, it's called the Piazzetta.*

That's right. And it was extraordinary there because every night another ship would come in and a great whinnying – or another boat, a yacht'd come in – and whinnying English people'd come off in full evening dress and walk across the Piazzetta. Anyway, we abandoned Alec in Naples and drove to Rome for the night and we went to a - we stayed at the Inghilterra – and I said let's go and get an English paper, we haven't seen one for however long. We got one and we were sitting in this restaurant just off the Piazza di Spagna, and I looked at the front page of the paper and there was this photograph of us all chasing a taxi, which was headed, 'My oldest, dearest, sweetest friend, says Mary Ure'. [laughter] And anyway, I said, 'Oh shit'. Anyway, we stopped at Santa Margherita again, we stopped in Torino, we came back and we were flying from Lydd to... no, Le Touquet to Lydd. So we got in and John drove up in Eaton Square and I went buzz, buzz, buzz on the front door thing, and Alex said through the entry phone, 'Just come in, there are photographers staked all over Eaton Square'. So I went in, told John, Alec went down and collected my luggage, I escaped them but they caught John in the corner of Woodfall Street. And he drove down to see Mary and I don't know how long that went on for, can't remember. And it became very weird, the whole thing.

[35:27]

And I need to think about it for a minute, Roy, because... I suppose our affair went on for three years, but during that time *The Entertainer* started to happen and Tony Richardson was directing Vivien Leigh in Nottingham in *Occupe-toi d'Amélie*, which Noel Coward had adapted and it was called *Look After Lulu*. I'd seen the Paris production with... who in it? It couldn't have been Madeleine Renaud. Maybe it was. And I said to Vivien, I like you better than Madeleine Renaud, and we all had dinner after: Tony, George Devine, Robert Stephens, Vivien, John, me, Noel Coward... I can't remember if anyone else was there, there may have been another. And I said, 'What have you done with Anthony Quayle?' He was sitting in the restaurant at a table alone [laughter] and Tony said, 'He won't break bread with sinners'. And I said, 'Meaning us?' and he said, 'Yes'. And I said... Anyway...

RF: *The beginning of Thatcherism with Mr Quayle.*

Absolutely, I mean I'd known him and quite liked him, but I thought, what's he on about, silly bugger. And then we sat up for most of the rest of the night in our hotel with Noel Coward, gossiping, and I remember saying to him – and he equated everything in terms of things he'd done himself – I said, 'I saw you at a charity matinee during the war and I've been a devoted fan of yours ever since'. And he gave me the year and said, 'The Last Time I Saw Paris'. And I said, 'Yes, you sang it'. And anything I said to him, he produced in reference only to his own work. Then the next day we all...

RF: *Other than that, what would you say about him?*

Noel Coward?

RF: *Yes, self-centred, we know he was, and...*

But so much charm and so funny and so engaging and so delighted that anyone else had ever been delighted by him. I liked him very, very much and... I didn't find him self-centred. I mean Vivien at dinner said to me, 'Oh Jocelyn, you're going to see Larry over the weekend, will you ask him if he'd come in and look at my performance here?' He was at Stratford and Noel said, 'Vivien', banging his index finger up and down on the table, 'That man has ruined your career for the last God knows how many years, he's not coming to stick his nose into this'. So then next morning I said, 'Oh, I have the worst hangover I have *ever* had, I think I'm going to die'. And I remember taking a Dramamine and I got into Harry's car and drove to Morecambe and I occasionally would open my eyes and look at the landscape, which was spectacularly beautiful, but I felt too ill to be able to enjoy it. We eventually got there and we all booked into this terrible hotel right on Morecambe Bay. And everyone was there by the time we got there, the whole... the camera crew, the... what do you call them? The chippies and the construction crew. And Ralph Brinton who was the production designer, and his assistant who was called Ted Marshall. And there we were on either side of the long table with Tony and Harry on one side, John and me on the other, and, you know, Ossie [Oswald Morris], Ralph, down to the lowliest chippy. And we were talking about the casting of the Joan Plowright part, which Tony had been testing Geraldine McEwan for and Joan Plowright and somebody else. And we'd taken, we'd gone to have a look at the clips with Michael Balcon and Michael Balcon looked and Tony said, 'Well no use, Geraldine McEwan's pregnant' and Michael Balcon said, 'Well, the other girl won't do'. And nobody said anything, and I thought, why are they all sitting about dumb? So I said, 'What have you got against her, Sir Michael? I mean, she won't be intimidated by Olivier, she's played it in the theatre'. And he roared like a wounded animal. John picked me up and hustled me out of the viewing theatre and he said to Harry, 'Who is that girl?' And Harry said, 'She's the costume designer'. 'Well, sack her. I won't be spoken to like that by anyone'. And Harry said, 'I can't sack her, she happens to be the writer's mistress'. So Michael Balcon humphed and vumphed and carried on. Now we're back to Morecambe. And Larry arrived... no, no, the first night, while we're sitting discussing this, and I said something and Harry – not Harry – Tony suddenly turned on me and said, 'You're engaged to do the costumes', 'You're en-gaged to do the cos-tumes, nothing else'. And Harry said, 'I thought her virtue was she had an opinion about everything'. And dinner came to the end and we went up to our room, we were meant to go to the Palais de Danse and look at it, and I said to John, 'I'm not coming and what's more, I'm not doing this fucking film with him. If he's going to behave like that he's got to find somebody else'. And John went down and Tony said, 'Jocelyn goes too far, don't you agree?' And John said, 'No actually, I don't. I think you behaved appallingly'. And Tony said, 'Where is she?' And John said, 'She's not coming and she's not doing the film either'.

*RF: Let's stop there.*

[end of Track 4]

[Track 5]

*RF: We're on tape three of Jocelyn Rickards. Yes, right, Tony said...?*

Tony said, 'I'm going up to get her'. So he came up to the bedroom and hauled me out and I very reluctantly went with them. And I remember going through the subaqueous light of this extraordinary Palais de Danse where there was very unbelievable music pouring out of... I can't remember what it was pouring out of, and I remember Ralph Brinton said to me, 'Come and dance, Jocelyn'. And all alone we took to this vast floor, like a huge skating rink. And then the next morning, I can't remember what happened with Larry that weekend, but next morning we all came back to London, and it was one of those terrible trains that took eight hours to make the journey from Morecambe to London – no restaurant car, nothing. So John and I bought all the papers and we found a compartment to ourselves and we shut the door and Harry was next door and Tony got on the train and put his head round the door and looked at us, and I looked at him with hostility, and I guess John looked at him with some hostility too, and he looked at us and said, 'You are weird', and went and joined Harry. Just before the train got to London Harry came in and said... I mean Harry had obviously... he was a man I'd grown very, very fond of and he could see the film sliding out the window, not because of me, but because of John's dis-involvement with it, and he said, 'John, come back to Lowndes Cottage and talk to Tony'. And John looked at me and I said, 'Yes, go John, you've got to go. It's your play, it's your film. Woodfall's producing it and you mustn't, you don't think about me, it doesn't matter'. So he went to Lowndes Cottage and he came round to Eaton Square after and he said, 'Well, Tony apologises, says he did behave badly and also said he thinks the whole thing was a result of his jealousy over you and his jealousy over me working in double harness and he suddenly blew his top, and he asked me to ask you to do the film – will you?' And I said, 'Oh, okay, I don't want to but I'll do it if it makes any difference to anyone'. And the film then, it had quite a big pre-production period...

*RF: Jocelyn, forgive me, because that's one of the things I'd like to raise now with you. Coming back from your trip to Italy, we're suddenly launched into The Entertainer, what previous awareness had you of the film, the film was about to be made? Had they approached you or was it purely, was it John Osborne?*

No, it was tacit that I'd do the film because Tony and I had worked so well on *Look Back in Anger* and I'd said yes, I'd do it. And then... then I'd worked with John while Tony was editing *Look Back*, and I'd worked with John on *The World of Paul Slickey*, and when *Look Back* opened John and I were in Cornwall, I remember that, but... And then I suppose it slid quite quickly into being pre-*The Entertainer* time.

[05:10]

*RF: And acceptance that...*

Yes.

*RF: Right, okay.*

And then...

*RF: He himself, Sir Larry, did he have any kind of veto over who worked on the film or not? He didn't particularly warm to you, I gather?*

He never warmed to me. And he was bringing his – oh, yes, this was the most monstrous thing about him - he brought his costume with him from the theatre, which he was sensible about, and that was, it was intelligent to do that, that check suit and a grey bowler. And he was appearing in Stratford, so he'd travel in an ambulance overnight from Stratford to Morecambe, and take a sleeping pill, obviously, and sleep and then wake up in the morning in Morecambe and go and shoot. But meanwhile, the pre-production went on in London and who was there to cope with? Not Larry, he did all his own clothes. Joan Plowright, who had no face and no figure, and I didn't know what to do about her figure, I had no idea, she had no waist and it was in the days of fitted bodices and full skirts. So I took her to the Queen's corsetiere – I've forgotten what her name was. All they did was to give her a bit of waist and she smelt appalling, you know. I remember getting her one dress from Mary Quant, I don't remember much else. Shirley Anne Field, I persuaded to wear all her own clothes because I thought they were dead right for the part. Thora Hird had to be seen in Blackpool and one was able to get a terrible fur piece on hire from there. And there were a few costumes that had to be made, or I don't remember them very much now. Miriam Karlin I got from Berman's and she'd just lost a huge amount of weight so that she suddenly had this marvellous figure, and I put her into a beaded, sort of reddish-orange dress which was too short for her, so I just had yards of red tulle so that it came down like that and shot out. And she used it to strut on the stage with a top hat with a red chiffon scarf around it, singing, [sings] *Put Me Amongst the Boys*. And who else was there? There was...

*RF: I saw a tape recently and there was an absolutely beautiful young Albert Finney in it.*

That's right.

*RF: One would never recognise him now.*

And Alan Bates.

*RF: Or Alan Bates, yeah. He was the brother.*

And Charles Gray as a television announcer. And there's Alec in a brief moment in it...

*RF: Yes?*

...as a press photographer. I mean he happened to be on the set with his camera and Tony said, 'Alec, would you mind?' Alec and Tony never liked each other, and then Alec couldn't have his hair cut for six weeks to be certain of continuity. And, can you remember anything else about it?

*RF: No, I think you've covered the principals.*

Brenda de...

*Brenda de Banzie, yes, right.*

She was a pain in the arse. I didn't like anyone on it and I hated being in Morecambe. I didn't like Larry, I didn't like Joan, I just wanted to be finished with it.

*RF: You seem to have gotten on much better with the boys behind the camera, rather than those in front of it. I mean Ossie [Morris] you've mentioned several times.*

Yes. I always liked cameramen, I was always interested in what they were doing and I really felt that their opinion was the most valuable, except in terms of character when I thought the director, the actors' and mine were possibly valuable.

[10:19]

*RF: Well, Mick Balcon wanted to fire you, did he turn up on the shoot?*

No, no.

*RF: How about Harry Saltzman?*

Oh, Harry was there all the time.

*RF: You liked Harry?*

I loved him. He was just divine.

*RF: Contributed or just a...*

What?

*RF: Did he contribute to the production? Was he a creative producer or was he just money?*

He didn't have any money so he must have been to some way creative.

*RF: Well, a great promoter, I suspect, yes.*

Yes. And he... I don't know, he just jollied us all along.

*RF: Yes, this is pre-Bond isn't it? So you're right, he didn't have any money, no.*

And he had an undesirable girlfriend who kept coming over from Paris and he said to me once, 'What am I going to do, she wants me to marry her'. And I said, 'Oh, what are you saving yourself for Harry, why don't you marry her?' And he did and she became the wife who died of cancer. She was a monster, but I mean it didn't matter. But he was an engaging man. He became a monster, but in those early days he was smashing.

*RF: So the shoot was what, just a shoot?*

It was a shoot but the whole thing was done on location and we had, I had some costumes made in Morecambe and I'd keep ringing these women and saying, 'Will you have finished those costumes?' 'Well, I don't know whether we will or we won't have.' And I tried to instil into them the horrors of film production and if the costumes weren't done on time what would happen, but it just rolled off them like water off a duck's back. Anyway, we got them and there it was. Then, what else? This, Britannia, I think we did with a couple of seashells and a string of seaweed. But it wasn't difficult, I don't think it was difficult. I mean there were nicer things that I remember about *Look Back in Anger*, we filmed at Joan Littlewood's theatre at Dalston, Dalston Junction, you know, the...

*RF: Stratford. Stratford East.*

Yes, that's right. And... but *Look Back* was a thoroughly enjoyable film to work on and *The Entertainer* was an 'orrible film to work on.

*RF: You seem perhaps to have ruffled feathers.*

Oh, I'm afraid so.

*RF: You're a great feather ruffler?*

I mean, yes, I used to ruffle feathers, I don't know why. Simply because I said what I thought.

*RF: Right. Did that have anything to do with the battle between the sexes? Because you talk about Balcon and Olivier who must have been so used to having their own way?*

I guess they were.

*RF: Then the little woman coming along and...*

Yes, and saying... Yeah. I mean yes, later I made friends with Mick Balcon and I was astonished. I mean I don't know why they couldn't... what I had to say was as valid as what anyone else had to say and wasn't, I wasn't slamming away at a typewriter all day, I did have some kind of vision and if they weren't prepared to accept it, they weren't prepared to accept it, I didn't mind, but I was going to say what I thought.

*RF: Input. Fair enough, why not? Absolutely. Right. I'm not sure this is relevant, I suppose it is, were you a premature feminist, would you say?*

No, no. Simply not. I mean...

*RF: But doing your job.*

Doing my job and if I'd have been a premature feminist, I'd have been a feminist at fourteen, I wasn't. I just got on in every instance doing what I wanted to do, indeed, what I wanted to do and what I had to do to get a degree at art school and, I mean if I was having an exhibition I'd have the paintings finished in time and my life just worked in that kind of way.

[15:14]

*RF: Yes, to be respected.*

And, I've never been a feminist.

*RF: Well, again, that depends on definition.*

Yes, of course it does. But maybe I'm a latent one.

*RF: Or a discreet one. So are we wrapping then on The Entertainer, because that on this list is number four, although for some reason, no... The next one according to this is From Russia.*

No, it wasn't. Oh, maybe it was, hang on. Yes, because... yeah. What happened was, John persuaded me to leave Eaton Square and he bought three floors round the corner in Lower Belgrave Street where I started painting seriously again and I did a bit of work in the theatre, but I didn't do another film until *From Russia With Love*. I mean I spent my life trying to escape from films, I guess.

*RF: Wholeheartedly?*

What?

*RF: Wholeheartedly or not? By this time surely part of your, if not your heart, your involvement, your dedication, it's not all bad is it, making movies?*

I wouldn't say I was dedicated to it, to films. I mean it's very difficult to think back now.

*RF: Well, forty years have passed, indeed. It's a foreign country.*

And...

*RF: Does that bring us to From Russia With Love?*

Yes, it brings us to *From Russia With Love*.

*RF: Which is, is that the Harry Saltzman connection?*

Yes.

*RF: Right.*

And that was after – are we on or off?

*RF: We're on. We're always on.*

Oh. That was certainly, that was after John Osborne went off with Penelope Gilliatt.

*RF: How did you feel about that?*

Not very happy.

*RF: A surprise?*

No. Because she was married to a neurologist called Roger Gilliatt, who was invited to be best man at the Snowdon/Princess Margaret wedding, and Penelope would often ask John and me to dinner and she'd give us watery scrambled eggs and curling smoked salmon. And eventually I said, 'I'm not going there to dinner again, I cannot bear the food'. So they'd come to Lower Belgrave Street, and then John was behaving in a very weird way. Do you want to hear all this?

RF: *Well, yes I suppose.*

I mean, in that...

RF: *It's all part of your life.*

He'd spend all day at Lower Belgrave Street, he would go back to Woodfall Street to sleep, despite the fact that he and Mary very occasionally would have a fuck and... but it didn't worry me then. And then, now let me think what happened. He passionately wanted a child, so with great difficulty and visits to a fertility specialist, I ultimately got pregnant. John then decided to go and see Tony, who was in Los Angeles, and Mary who was also in Los Angeles on tour with Vivien in *Duel of Angels*, it was a Jean Henri [Jean Giraudoux?] play. Naturally at three months I miscarried, because that was the way the cookie crumbled.

[20:02]

And then John came back, we met in Paris, went back to Lower Belgrave Street, we had the best time we ever had in all those years, all three of them, and I don't remember much about it. I remember one night we went to a play of Graham Greene's, and John, who always swore he wouldn't be jealous and never had been jealous of anyone, got to his feet and said, 'I don't have to stay in this theatre and watch this rubbish', and I could have killed him. And weird things like that would happen. And then the Gilliat's would come to dinner and she would light up like a one-armed bandit or a pinball machine when you hit the jackpot and she'd sparkle all over if John approached her or spoke to her. And I just watched it happening, like night following day, there was nothing I could do about it. She was determined to capture him and my God, she did. And they went off for a weekend together and Roger rang on Sunday evening and said, 'Is John Osborne there?' and I said, 'Who's speaking?' and he said, 'It's Roger Gilliat'. And I said, 'No Roger, he's not here, he's away somewhere with your wife, but I don't know where'. And he said, 'Oh, Jocelyn, would you like me to come round and comfort you?' and I said, 'No, indeed not, thanks'. And they arrived back and Penelope said... what did she say? She said, 'You don't seem to realise, we are in love, we're going to get married'. And I said, 'You can't, you've both got husbands and wives you've got to get rid of'. Anyway, eventually John had written *Luther*, which Tony was rehearsing by now at the Court and

after it came on it went to Paris, to the Sarah Bernhardt Theatre. We all went over for that.

I mean John went on behaving appallingly, which I just would disregard and go and do whatever I had to do. And then came the summer and Tony said, 'Do you know anyone who's got a house in the south of France we can all take?' And I said, 'Yes, as a matter of fact I do know a man who's got a very large house at Valbonne', which is between Grasse and Cannes. And we took the house and we were... John was there, Tony was there, Jocelyn Herbert was there with two of – no – three of her children. Christopher Isherwood and Don Bachardy were there. Can't remember who else. And every day by special messenger a letter would arrive from Penelope for John, every day I would sign for it, tip the *facteur*, and John started leaving them out of their envelopes round the bedroom and I one day said to him, 'John, I'm not going to read those fucking letters, just put them back in their

envelopes'. And then he started carrying them round in a small black briefcase with him and then one day his secretary rang and said, 'Will you tell John that the lira he wants for his trip to Venice will be at...' such-and-such a... maybe American Express. And I thought, he hasn't said anything about this, he's going to join Penelope at the Venice Film Festival. And I went and I said to him, 'John, you've got to come and talk to me'. And he said, 'I don't have to talk to anyone' and dived into the swimming pool.

*RF: He was a charmer.*

And he left the next morning. And he'd said to me, 'Just promise me one thing, you'll be here when I come back'. And like a cunt, I said yes. And the house, which had been bursting at the seams, they all left: Tony left, Jocelyn and the children left, Christopher and Don left, and I was there alone until John came back. And I said, 'You wrote a letter to *Tribune* which unfortunately they printed with this address on it'. All the time too, Mary was in hospital having Robert Shaw's baby. And I mean there was a huge mulberry tree outside the salon which was alive with photographers and they would ring, and eventually I answered the telephone, nobody else said anything, and I did, I said, 'Well, I'll tell you why nobody's saying anything. Mary is having a child but it isn't John's, it's Robert Shaw's'. And they said, 'Is that Jocelyn Rickards?' And I said, 'Yes' and they said, it was a nice man, he said, 'Actually, we did know all that, but we felt we couldn't print it until somebody said something and you haven't said anything we can print but I'll see that you're not bothered any longer'. And indeed we weren't, that was it. And Tony said to me one day, 'What is it that John carries round in his briefcase all the time?' And I said, 'They're the collected letters of Penelope Gilliatt. She may have omitted to tell you that she's been having an affair with John, she didn't not tell him that you'd asked her to marry you'. And he looked appalled. Anyway, they all left, John came back and I said, his letter had been called 'Damn you England', which was not only published in *Tribune*, it was picked up by every daily there was, and there was also going to be a CND meeting. And I said to John when he got back, 'Listen, they've printed this with a Valbonne address, if you are ever serious again you've got to appear at that CND meeting. You can't sit here and wait for it to happen'. So we left the car, which by this time was a convertible Alvis with a Park Ward body, very beautiful. We left that parked under the trees, got a plane back. As it drew up at the traffic lights just past Chesham Place, Clive - Clive? Clive nothing - John got out, saying to me, 'I'm going to behave badly again my darling' and of course Penelope had taken a flat in Chesham Place. And I went back to Lower Belgrave Street and that was it. And it was wonderfully shabby behaviour. Anyway, I guess I...

*RF: Did you carry any kind of torch?*

Did it what?

*RF: Did you carry any kind of torch, because that's extraordinarily bad behaviour on his part? Was it a clean break at that stage?*

No, it wasn't a clean... I mean it was a clean break in that he went off with Penelope and didn't tell me where he was going, and his secretary – he'd left all his clothes behind, naturally – his secretary came to Lower Belgrave Street to take his essential things and I said... it was Sonia who I'd engaged for him, the same Sonia who's still with us, and she said, 'I can't tell you, he doesn't want me to tell you'. And I said, 'Sonia, don't be an arsehole, he's probably gone to Hellingly', because he said to me, 'I'd like a house in the country, let's find one'. And I found an advertisement for a house in Sussex and we went down and I adored it, it was a double storey redbrick house, a granary, a cottage and a mill house with the River Cuckmere leaping through the garden. Divine. And that's where he'd taken her. And she did it up regardless, she did it up like a London flat.

[30:04]

And I mean we still talked and in a very short time she found she couldn't eradicate me entirely from John's memory because he was always calling in at Lower Belgrave Street, and by this time I'd got... I'd engaged an au pair girl. I ran into someone I knew in the street who said to me, 'Do you know of anyone who wants a very good au pair girl?' and I said, 'Yes, I do', because I had two dogs and two cats and I'd been given custody of the whole lot. And I got this marvellous au pair girl who was about twenty-eight and her husband was doing his *service militaire* and he'd said to her – she was working with problem children – and he said you can't do this while I'm away, go and learn English. And she did and it was marvellous, I mean every... she took everything off my shoulders, she adored the animals, I taught her to cook, she couldn't cook anything but she soon learned. And then Harry Saltzman rang me one day and said, 'I'm doing an Ian Fleming film'. He'd done *Dr No*, which I'd seen and liked, and he said, 'I want you to do the costumes'. And I said, 'Harry, I haven't got a union ticket, they'll all go mad', because it was being shot at Pinewood. And he said, 'Leave that to me, you get on with the costumes and I'll get you a ticket as soon as there's no-one on the books'. And that's how that happened. And he got me a ticket very quickly, he just rang every day. I'd been trying before, to no avail. But within weeks I had a ticket and there was...

*RF: That was up to the producer in those days when it was a closed shop, because all he had to do was to say I've interviewed everyone who's available and they're not suitable and so I want to...*

And at this time no-one was available.

*RF: Yeah, but even had they been, it was still, I don't want to hire them, I want my person.*

Yes. And I mean I thought the closed, business of closed shops, that was again what infuriated me about the film industry.

*RF: Well, the union rather than the industry.*

Yes. Yes, up the unions.

*RF: The only thing in its favour, Jocelyn, was that people were required to learn their craft, which they don't necessarily do any more. There was a kind of system of apprenticeship.*

I guess so.

*RF: Yeah, anyway.*

Anyway. But, God, you know, since I'd had the needles and cottons put in my lapel on *The Prince and the Showgirl*, I thought oh Jesus, you know, not still going on? Anyway.

*RF: But you can't fake costume design, but you can fake a great many other things and as a retired producer/director, I mean I don't like – and this is not my tape so I shouldn't carry on – but I don't like the fact that people go out and buy a camcorder or go to school for a year and say, I am a director and they can't direct their way out of a paper bag.*

No, exactly. Nor can a lot of designers direct their way out of, equally out of a paper bag. Anyway, there were quite a lot of... there was Sean, Connery...

*RF: Are you in at the beginning?*

I'm in at the very beginning. Daniela Bianchi was an Italian girl, pretty as a flower. She was so shy, she had such *pudeur* that she couldn't even bear to strip for a fitting. Anyway. Who else was there? Pedro Armendáriz, who was a very splendid man, but he was dying of cancer.

*RF: The great Lotte Lenya.*

Lotte Lenya, she was great. She really was great, I made friends with her.

*RF: Can we talk about her, because she's one of my goddesses.*

[35:00]

Well, she arrived and I'd done, I'd done a design for her as a sort of cod chambermaid and then I had to get a Russian uniform for her, and I went to... I wanted to look over the uniforms before she arrived so she could be fitted. And she... I went into Berman's and said she's KCGB colonel...

*RF: KGB colonel.*

Sorry, KGB colonel.

*RF: It's the civil service, a KCGB.*

Yeah. And I want a really very smart uniform. And there was a man called Tiny in charge of military costumes then and he said, 'Well I can't make one for you', and produced such a mouldy looking thing, and I walked round the corner and said to Monty, 'Look, she's coming from America, you know her name, I know her name, she's someone to be reckoned with, I wouldn't put her in the rubbish that Tiny's looked out for me and he refuses to make'.

*RF: Why would he not make the costume? Money? Budget?*

I don't know.

*RF: What's the story?*

He was just being obstinate. And he said... Monty was furious and got on to him and eventually sacked him over this, which must have made me popular, but I really didn't care, I thought he was behaving abominably. And anyway, we had Lotte Lenya's costume tailored and we fitted...

*RF: May I ask, what were your references for the costume? Was it authentic?*

Yes. And then this weird grey uniform with a white apron and a white cap and her shoe with the knife in the boot.

*RF: Legendary.*

Yeah. And she just was amazing. She was friendly. Constant Lambert's son was working on the film, he was called... what was his name?

*RF: Kenny Lambert?*

Kit Lambert.

*RF: Kit Lambert, that's right.*

And I asked Lotte to dinner one night and Freddie Ayer said, 'Oh, please ask me too'. So I asked Kit Lambert and Freddie and Lotte and they came and Jacqueline, the au pair girl, said to me when I was in France at Christmastime, 'I remember when she came, she taught me to play solitaire on your board'. And she and Freddie got on remarkably well, because Freddie knew all her songs and I remember Kit Lambert walking in and saying, no, saying to me next day, 'Goodness, I didn't expect to go out to dinner and meet one of the gods of modern philosophy'. I mean...

*RF: Quite a dinner table, that.*

He thought it gave me, not street cred, it gave me some other kind of cred. Anyway, that was okay and I don't... I'm just trying to remember the actual shooting.

*RF: It's the best of the Bonds, certainly.*

I like *Dr No*.

*RF: Well, yes, yes. Yeah, I think From Russia With Love is a better movie.*

Well, I haven't seen it again and I haven't seen *Dr No* since it first came out. It had that one marvellous joke in it, that...

*RF: Of the Rembrandt?*

No, the Goya. The...

*RF: Is it Goya or Rembrandt?*

Yeah, Goya.

*RF: That's right, it's Wellington, the Goya. Yeah. Rembrandt, oh dear.*

And then we shot part of it in Istanbul, part of it in...

*RF: If you're going to put that on, are you?*

Oh yes.

*RF: I'll switch off so we...*

[40:02]

A lot of the production we did on location in Istanbul and Terence Young was an extremely good sort of very thoughtful director. He'd worked it out amazingly and I think that may be why it stands up so well. His wife was there but he was always desperately unfaithful to her with someone else. He had a couple of girls, one of whom had been one of his ladies. And there was wonderful work done by a whole group of stuntmen. You're ready to turn off?

*RF: We're almost... no, we're okay for a while.*

And who were they? There was one called Jackie and one called, the head of them was called Peter Perkins and I've forgotten the others, but they were amazing and sometimes they'd double, one would double for the other. They did whole scenes with hanging out of those very rickety Istanbul wooden buildings on ropes and I found it extraordinary working there. I was standing watching them shooting one night with Dosia [Dorothea Bennett], Terence Young's wife. We were actually, we'd finished watching and we were waiting for the car to come and collect us. And we were just standing about two o'clock in the morning, waiting for the car, and suddenly a little squealing car pulled up beside us, young man got out and said, 'You fucking cunts, why don't you go home?' [laughter] And I remember thinking, what have we done to him?

*RF: Was that the time of Yankee Go Home?*

I suppose so.

*RF: I suppose, right. We will flip.*

[end of Track 5]

[Track 6]

**[no recording]**

[Track 7]

*RF: Tape four with Jocelyn Rickards. Yes, so Vanessa [Redgrave] produced. That was by Tony, presumably, still? Tony Richardson.*

What?

*RF: Vanessa's child was...*

Oh yes, yes.

*RF: ...still by Tony?*

Yes, yes. And she, Robert Stephens was in it [*Morgan - A Suitable Case for Treatment*] and David Warner, Irene Handl and a splendid man called Arthur Mullard.

*RF: Oh yes.*

And again, it was very enjoyable to do. Vanessa was still pliable and hadn't grown into the monster she's turned into. She didn't know about her own beauty, I mean she was so short-sighted she couldn't see anyway, so one just... I was able to dress her as I wanted to and it was marvellous, suddenly seeing this girl who had no idea of how to present herself, really, suddenly emerging as a beauty. Robert Stephens was easy, I'd known him for years. David Warner, also easy. What did we put him in? I mean, have you seen the film?

*RF: Yes, indeed.*

Well, you remember David Warner's character, he was a sort of revolutionary, and he had the same corduroy jacket and Arran pullover and trousers and a cap, a Lindsay Anderson type cap. And his gorilla suit, which was the most difficult thing to get made and fitted for him, but we did it, Berman's did it marvellously. And I do remember they had to make it so that it had a smoke pack in the back, because at one moment he's riding a motorcycle and he's on fire and the smoke's belching out of him, and this has only just come back to me now, I'd never thought of it. And Arthur Mullard was his crony and they escaped to the Lake District I think together, and they shot that when I'd gone to France. But I used Angela Conner, Penelope Giliatt's sister, she's a sculptor, she'd been trained as an art student, and she was nagging on at John, saying, 'I want to work in the theatre, I want to work in the cinema, surely you can help me'. So John rang me and said, 'Can you think of anything for Angela to do?' and I said, 'She can come as my assistant on *Morgan*'. She used to drive me fucking mad. Stephen Frears was Karel's assistant and there was a large production office downstairs with Leon Clore, whoever the assistants were, I can't remember, and she'd come in at half past seven or eight o'clock, whatever time we were starting, and she'd go into the production office and get on to the telephone and yammer for three-quarters of an hour. And I would be standing there drumming my fingers, either to use the telephone or wanting her to do something.

*RF: These were personal calls that she was making?*

Yes. I eventually think I said something to her about it. She was being, I think she was being fucked by Andrew Devonshire.

*RF: Oh yes. Was she very Sloaney? A Sloane? This was the time of the Sloane Ranger wasn't it? It was a little later?*

It was a bit later. She'd come from America. She too had blazing red hair and Penelope used to say, of course the tragedy of her life, she was in love with Dag Hammarskjöld. Well, Dag Hammarskjöld was a homosexual, she may have been in love with him, but she wasn't deprived of a lover when he was assassinated. But she came over and afterwards they had to bring her horse over. It was called Morgan and I asked one day, thinking of the Morgan car, if it only had three legs, and nobody knew what I was making the joke about.

[05:33]

*RF: Oh, they should have worked that one out.*

I know, they should have, but they didn't. Anyway, when I had to go to France I left her with notes and continuity notes and God knows what so that at least... she was going up to the Lakes with Vanessa and David and Arthur Mullard, and there was one, the revolutionary scene in it she had to do, and I must say, did it very well. What else is there to tell you about that film? Nothing much I don't...

*RF: And you actually shoot in Highgate Cemetery or was that...?*

In Highgate...

*RF: Marx, because...*

Oh yes, yes, yes, we did. And we also – I just then thought of something else. Just turn it off for a minute.

[break in recording]

We shot Robert Stephens' and Vanessa's wedding reception on the top of the Playboy Club in a howling gale. I mean I don't know how anyone stayed standing. Vanessa looked marvellous; she was wearing a khaki piqué - I mean I had it dyed, it was slightly a paler green than pure khaki - dress done up to the neck and buttons down the front, which had a marvellous silhouette to it; short in the front and long at the back, longer at the back. And a marvellous hat that I got James Wedge to make me, in matching organza, which was like a toque which sat on her head with an enormous either floating scarf or a bow with long ends. She looked great. The bow with long ends or the scarf floated round her head. And we weren't there for long, it worked. And that's where David Warner bursts in in his gorilla suit, and after that's the scene riding on the motorbike through Hyde Park. And what else? We didn't go out very much, we didn't go out of the house. I guess that is it.

*RF: Okay.*

While I was working on it I had to do the drawings for *Mademoiselle*. Jeanne Moreau was in wherever they shot *Maria, Viva Maria* with Brigitte Bardot – do you remember that film?

*RF: I think it was in Mexico.*

I think it was Mexico. So she couldn't be got, so no matter what I designed it had to be made by Pierre Cardin, because he was her lover and also knew her measurements inside out. So I was doing the

drawings and I spent a lot of time over them because they were difficult clothes to make. They were character clothes and Tony didn't want anyone to know when the opening scene came up when it was, if it was 1890, 1900, 1940, 1960. And so I did them, they were very un-chic clothes and I worked on them. Did Tony see them? Maybe, and I also did a few extra, sort of to give him some... to give Cardin some idea of the entire... have you seen the film?

[10:04]

*RF: No, I haven't, no.*

Of the entirely rural surroundings. It was shot in the Corrèze in France, it must be nearly forty years ago now, indeed it's probably more.

*RF: The date, according to this it was... '66.*

'66.

*RF: Thirty-five years.*

How many?

*RF: Thirty-five.*

Well, it wasn't, because I remember I did, '66 I did the Antonioni film, *Blow Up*.

*RF: Well, maybe what the BFI has is the release year, maybe it was shot earlier and not released until '66, right.*

And it was... I went... no. Tony was in Paris having meetings, getting assistant directors and a production designer or art director, as I believe he was still called, and I was to go over for the weekend and meet Cardin. Oscar Lewenstein said to me, 'I'll pick you up and we'll go to the airport together and is that okay?' and I said, 'Sure'. Leonard packed all the drawings for me, and packed them meticulously, and addressed them, Jocelyn Rickard, Hotel Lancaster, Paris, and the London address, and we set off for the airport with Oscar's secretary driving the car. We got to the airport to find that the boot was open and all the drawings had flown out.

*RF: [laughter] I laugh, but...*

And I said, 'Jesus Christ, Oscar, I don't want to come to Paris, better that I search for the drawings'. 'You have to come to Paris.' So I managed to ring Leonard, tell him what had happened, Sarah was still there, Woodfall offered a reward, and we went over to Paris. I was shown into my room and Tony

came and got me and said, 'Come and meet Cardin'. And I did and I told him what had happened, and he said, 'Never mind, I too, I've worked in the theatre, I've worked in film, just scribble them for me'. And I said, 'I can't, I can't sit down and do weeks' work in half an hour in a hotel with nothing that I'm used to working with'. So Tony said, 'Don't nag at her Pierre, leave her alone, she's understandably upset' and I don't even remember, I daresay we had something to eat, I don't remember. I came back to London and started to reproduce all the drawings. Fortunately, Tony had seen them all, he had seen them and liked them, so it was just a question of... I did very brief sketches this time.

*RF: In a circumstance such as that, Jocelyn, your original work, is that firmly in your mind or do you have to search for it to recreate it, retrieve it?*

No, I can remember fairly well. I can remember most of the costumes, for instance, the first time you see her, she's wearing a black suit with a black lace collar and a black straw hat.

*RF: And that's in your mind still is it?*

[14:30]

Yes. And also I remember a green, pale sort of, I guess eau de Nil green, maybe a bit darker, with a lace collar, buttons down the front. Another was a grey check cotton skirt and a brown blouse, pin-tucked diagonally, coming to the centre, again with buttons down the front and a high neck. And one of those teacher's pinafores that you slip your arms into and it wraps round. I can't remember much else, but that's enough. And she had various... a couple of hats, a shawl. But Pierre was marvellous. I brought the re-done drawings, I mean I took them over to Paris and he sent his staff out patterning for them and the next day I went and chose the fabrics and then I went away, I went, in fact by this time I think I was already in the Corrèze where Tony was about to start shooting, Jeanne still wasn't back, and we were staying in... Tony had taken, I mean the one decent house in the area – it was very, very poverty stricken – had been found by the art director who'd planned to move into it, and naturally Tony moved into it. So I think his name was Jacques Le Gris [ph], I think he was the same art director that Clive used on *What's New Pussycat* [Jacques Saulnier] and David was again the cameraman. I mean I'd said to Tony, I think he's the most amazing cameraman, I think you ought to use him. And I guess Tony looked at his work and thought himself that he ought to use him, because he didn't take anything on...

*RF: Recommendation, trust.*

No. And, what else? Oh, I know, in London we'd done tests with Ettore Manni, who was to play the bucheron, the log cutter, and because he had a scene jumping out of a burning building – I think it was a stable – I gave him wool trousers and a noile shirt – do you know what noile is? It's made from silk waste, I mean it's not inflammable, it's not as highly protective as wool, but I figured he could wear woollen long johns and woollen singlet underneath so that his body would be protected. And then,

because I'd learnt about it with the... on *From Russia With Love*, Tony was very worried about the stuntman's face – a stuntman was doing this, Ettore was shit scared of anything. I mean he had to play a scene with a grass snake and when we were doing the tests in London, was it at Lett's Farm on the way to Pinewood or ABPC? It was a farm on the outskirts of London, this inoffensive grass snake, which Tony adored, he loved birds and he loved snakes, and I remember sitting there beside him and Ettore saying, 'No, I can't touch it, I can't touch it, no. Couldn't I do it with a piece of leather? Or a bit of rope?' And Tony said, 'No Ettore, you couldn't'. And I put out my hand to take the snake from Tony, because I knew it was harmless, but I can't bear them, and they secrete through their scales the most horrendous stench if they are aware that anybody's frightened of them. But anyway, this cowed Ettore into doing the scene with the snake and as acting double, because we couldn't have Jeanne, we had Eileen Atkins to do the scene with him, and I remember meeting her at the gate and introducing myself and saying, explaining about Ettore and the snake, and she said, 'Oh, I don't mind them'. So she cowed him too, and she played the scene marvellously, and Tony said to me after, 'She could do it'. And I thought she was a marvellous actress and I said, 'Yes, she could, she'd be wonderful'.

[20:31]

Anyway, cut back to the Corrèze again and Ettore Manni and Umberto Orsini, who's a very distinguished theatre actor in Italy still, he's not done a great deal in films, but absolutely smashing, funny man, sweet, small, very lithe, blond. And they were two woodcutters. Tony had tested God knows how many kids to play the woodcutter's son, who's a pupil at Mademoiselle's school, and the locations were at a little village called Le Rat, which is quite high up, away from... we were between Limoges and Eymoutiers and Le Rat was an unbelievably depressed area, it didn't even have a tree in it. And we – do you want to change – we took some... a couple of plane trees, fully grown, and dug them in there and at the end, I mean the only thing the mayor had said, that we had to put the whole village back as we'd found it, and when it came to move the plane trees they'd started to put out roots, but these people said no, you said you'd put it back as it was, we don't want any trees in the village place, just put it back as it was. The whole crew was spectacular, they were marvellous.

*RF: Was it mixed French and...*

No, it was all French, except for David, Tony and me, and was Josie MacAvine there? She might have been. She's a set dresser. And she's a great set dresser.

*RF: Coutard was your cameraman?*

What?

*RF: Did you say earlier that Coutard was your cameraman?*

No, David, David.

*RF: Oh, I beg your pardon, yes. It's Coutard on L'Aveu.*

Yes. And we... then I had word that Jeanne was back in Paris, would I meet her at Cardin, and I got to Paris and Cardin said to me, 'Will you come round and have a look at the costumes on one of my models'. So I went round and this greyhound of a girl, very beautiful, showed the clothes as though they were the height of the couture season, which slightly changed their character, but I only asked him to change one thing. With the black suit he'd done a marvellous wide-brimmed black hat and I said, 'Oh Pierre, no, a smaller brim' and he carried in his pocket a little pair of scissors with a gold handle and he took the hat and just, I mean it was that straw that comes in a reel and, you know...

*RF: No, I don't.*

[24:19]

Well, it does. Anyway, he just, with his scissors snipped and took away about a good two inches all the way round the rim. And I made him remove the, it had, I think it had a rather exotic flower on it, I had that off too. Then I said, it's extraordinary, it's as though the drawings have come alive. And he said, 'Well, Jeanne will be here at seven o'clock this evening' and he said, 'I have to tell you, I don't know how she'll react to them, I don't think she's ever worn these kind of clothes in her life. And I said, 'Well, let's see'. And I took Nino, Alec's Italian assistant with me to the fitting because he was tri-lingual in English, Italian and French and I thought just in case anything happened where my mind wasn't on it, he'd get it, and he also could take notes for me. So I arrived, Nino arrived, Pierre was waiting, pacing up and down rather nervously, still saying I don't know how she'll like these costumes. And Jeanne arrived with a couple of battle-axe faced French women in black mink coats who sat down to watch the proceedings. I was outraged. And Pierre, I thought he would explode with fury. We looked at each other, and we shrugged and didn't say anything. So they sat there, Jeanne peeled off her clothes, put the first costume on, and I said to her what I had to say, 'Remember that these are character clothes, she's everything wicked, including an arsonist, I mean you've read the script, you know, and Tony wanted the film to start with uncertainty about the period'. So she tried the first costume on and didn't say a word, except she asked Pierre to clear the collar a bit, it was rubbing against her neck. And we also decided, it had a lace collar, to put white under the lace so that one would see it. His choice of shoes, she was also something of a shoe fetishist and he got, I'd asked for crocheted gloves, and crocheted gloves and a mohair, I guess one calls it stole, that she could wrap round herself instead of a coat. Anyway, we went right through... she eventually said to the two terrible women, 'I think you ought to go off and have a drink and I'll meet you later'.

*RF: Had they ever been identified?*

No. Certainly not by me. And...

*RF: But I mean at the time...*

No. I guess they were introduced but...

*RF: You had no idea who they were or what they were doing there?*

No. And we all settled down then and we finished the fitting and I said thank you, I'll see you in Eymoutiers, or wherever it was. She'd taken the local chateau. And then Tony wanted me to see some test rushes in Paris, which I did. I can't remember what they were of. Do you remember Leigh Aman?

*RF: I remember the name.*

He was part of Woodfall, part of the Woodfall hierarchy. He was called, was he Lord Aman or Lord something else? Anyway, he was a very nice man, I mean he was a funny, sophisticated man who was sweet and I grew very fond of him over the... oh, immensely fond of him. He was there all the way through *The Knack* and... Tony said to me, 'I've asked her to stay out of the sun' and I said, 'Well she hasn't, she's as brown as a nut'. And he said, 'I've also asked her not to have her hair bleached' and I said, 'That's useless too'. And he didn't believe me. And I said, 'Her face is brown, her hair is streaked blonde' and we had a marvellous French make-up woman, who not only did Jeanne, she did the whole crowd as well. She was the most economical make-up woman I've ever come across, and she did hair. She was amazing. And there was, the first assistant was called Christian de Chalonge, the second assistant was called Marc Gruenbaum and then there was a third assistant whose name I don't remember. Christian and Marc were marvellous. There were two women in the French wardrobe who, one was called Luce Boulet [ph] and one was called Yvette [ph] and they, we started in winter, and they had a room – we had the whole house, which had been swept free of livestock because you'd go to some houses in that village and come out eaten alive by fleas – and they got this room set up, it had a little, you know, wood burning stove in it and they'd strung up herbs which were drying across the wardrobe. And Luce [ph] took me into the first, or the nearest large town and we went into a shop and said did he have any old stock that we could look through, and it was amazing, he'd had stuff there since the forties. And we bought the whole lot for, I can't remember how much.

[32:00]

*RF: What was the period of the film? Was it contemporary?*

Yes, I guess. And we – this was enough to fit the crowds with. There weren't huge crowds but there were village people, there was a scene with a curé blessing the fields and it went to, there was a priest in the local town, he was - I must blow my nose again.

*RF: I'm going to stop there because...*

[break in recording]

[32:35]

What did I say?

*RF: Oh, about the crowd and the priest.*

And we went, I mean they sent from a French costumier a priest's gear that none of us were happy with, neither Luce [ph] nor Yvette [ph] nor me, so we went and asked a local priest, he was an intellectual who'd been sent away from Paris into this immensely *communisimale* area to minister to the – he was a Jesuit – to the crowds... not to the crowds, to the flock. No, he wouldn't have been a Jesuit... maybe he was? Anyway, it doesn't matter. And we asked him, we told him that the priest's stuff was dreadful and he said, he thought and said, 'I will leave the sacristy door open and I will leave in that cupboard there everything you need: biretta, surplice, stole, maniple, whatever else, just come in first thing in the morning and take them, shut the door after you and then when you've finished return them in the same way'. So I mean we were incredibly lucky. I remember the day we did that scene, it must have been sort of very early spring, and I was sitting on the edge of a tiny little pool that there were dragonflies flitting over and it was quite remarkable, I mean and lyric. Anyway, it was about the only lyric thing in the film. Eventually Jeanne has an affair with the Ettore Manni woodcutting... or is fucked by him. She's... wait a minute, what does she do? She floods a farm, she sets fire to stables, I can't remember what else. It was a Jean Genet script.

[35:14]

*RF: Oh, was it? From a novel or an original?*

I can't remember. And Jeanne was, I mean she was just a thoroughly wicked piece of work and you see her parading round her room in high heeled black patent leather shoes. Anyway, she comes back from her night in the fields in considerable disarray, and I remember that day the fields were then full of wild foxgloves and eventually – how does Ettore die? He does, somehow. The boy, in fury, kills his pet rabbit and Jeanne leaves the village in the local taxi to go and commit atrocities somewhere else. And that's about all I remember about the film.

*RF: Sorry – I was going to say, do you know what attracted Tony to it?*

Do I what?

*RF: Do you know what attracted Tony to the subject – was it Jeanne Moreau, working with her...*

Yes.

*RF: ...or was it the story? It was primarily working with her.*

Working with her. And after he'd finished he was in love with her. Vanessa arrived there. She'd left London for China and she got halfway there and decided she didn't want to go to China, she'd come to France. So she arrived in France with a nanny, maybe one baby, maybe two babies, I can't remember, and created havoc. I mean I'd been dealing... oh, what was his fucking name? Tony engaged a very good French retired chef and his wife as housekeeper in this much too big house for him. The house was nice, it was set on a little slope with a river running past it and a big garden and the grass snakes lived in boxes on the lawn with glass panels over them and they were left there a couple of days in a heatwave and they slowly fried, so David Winbury had to come from London with another grass snake and he arrived, he walked through customs with it in one of those airport bags and arrived with it and that settled in and that was the one we used. I simply have no memory of the ending of the film. Then...

*RF: Is there anything to say about Vanessa's arrival? Were Richardson and Moreau having an affair by this time?*

No, I don't think... I don't think they ever actually had an affair, because... I mean they behaved as though they were having one, but I would doubt that he'd ever had the courage to actually fuck her, because she was light years more experienced than he, more sophisticated, and I think his cock would have dropped off rather than...

*RF: It's not a bad way of getting your director's whole-hearted attention.*

No, it's a very good way. Anyway...

*RF: While we're talking about sexuality, in view of the way Tony Richardson finally died of AIDS...*

Yeah, I'll get to that.

*RF: You're coming to that are you? Okay, fine. I just wondered about his bisexuality, when it was apparent, but that will be later.*

Yes, it was. Now, at this time he had working with him Neil Hartley who had been David Merrick's assistant in New York. An absolutely amazing American gentleman: gentle, soft voice, marvellous looking, again homosexual, but very quiet about it. And he was, God knows what he was on the film, and his boyfriend, who was called Bob Regester – he died of AIDS too – and I remember saying to Neil after Tony died, 'What do you do Neil?' And he said, 'Nothing, I mean it's too frightening out there'. But... just turn it off for a minute would you?

[break in recording]

[41:06]

Tony moved from the south, I mean from the Corrèze to Rome to do... he had to do a bit of final cutting on *The Loved One* and he was also setting up *The Sailor from Gibraltar*. He had a production office in Rome with Anna, his secretary, Mary North, another secretary, Christian de Chalonge, I don't remember who else. I was in Rome for a holiday and I went into the production office and Christian said to me, 'Where are you Jocelyn, I need you'. And I said, 'Well, no-one's told me'. And he said, 'Well, you know, it's time for you to start on *Sailor*'. And in France Tony had discussed *The Sailor from Gibraltar* with me and said the thing about Jeanne's costumes, I think they should... she sails the world on this yacht and I think her costumes should be indicative of her last port of call, which I thought was interesting. I mean when she left Greece she'd be wearing pleats, you know. But then it was decided no, it wouldn't be like that, we'd just get clothes, buy them. And so I met Jeanne in Paris and she had chosen a particularly hideous – no, it wasn't hideous but it wouldn't do a thing to the camera – dark green dress from Cardin and a mink coat. And we went shopping on the Left Bank, I can't remember what it's called, it was a shop that sold cowboy shirts and madras cotton shirts and jeans and things like that. Anyway, when one had amassed the stuff, Ian Bannen was to be the actor, Vanessa, who'd suddenly appeared in Rome, was to be Ian Bannen's lady and they were on holiday in the south of Italy at Paestum. And... I didn't see the film... you look like you want to turn it over.

RF: *Might as well.*

[end of Track 7]

#### Queries

- p.10 Dimivich/Dimi – spelling? Landlord in Cranley Gardens
- p.12/13 Clermont Estates – spelling? Converted Eaton Square flats post-war
- p.17 Cathy McGill – spelling? Irish sculptor worked on Diaghilev exhibition
- p.53 Saulnier? French town
- p.53 Maitre Dimene? French chef
- p.80 Jacques Le Gris – spelling? Art director on film was Jacques Saulnier
- p.84/85 Luce Boulet – spelling? Wardrobe on film *Mademoiselle*
- p.84/85 Yvette – spelling? Wardrobe on film *Mademoiselle*

**BECTU History Project**  
**Interview No: 493**  
**Interviewee: Jocelyn Rickards**  
**Interviewer: Roy Fowler**  
**No of tapes: Two**  
**Duration: 02:03:07**

**This transcript (part 2 of 3) has been made from cassettes remaining after the interview had been partially digitised and transcribed for the Women in Film project. The third and final section of the transcript is due from the transcriber in February 2015. The tapes are numbered Tape 1, etc, but this refers to the tapes that the transcriber is working from, not to the sequence of the original complete run of cassettes.**

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 1 Side A.

Right. The date is the fifth of April 2001 and we are resuming with Jocelyn Rickards, and Jocelyn we're at the point I think of an important production for you 'Alfred The Great'.

*Mm, I think I'd just finished The Bliss of Mrs Blossom and I was waiting, I, I wasn't doing anything I was having a sort of quite welcome respite when the telephone rang and it was Paul Mills. Did you ever know him?*

Who?

Paul Mills.

No.

*He was in charge of publicity for, for MGM, an extremely nice man, and he said 'How would, I mean I can't, I'm not in the position to offer you this film, I know that there's several people under, under discussion but are you interested'? And I said 'I don't know Paul let me read up something about him'. And I read, I went down and found an encyclopaedia and I rang him back and said 'Yes, I am, it sounds absolutely fascinating'. And he said 'Well, I'll get on to Clive Donner and you'll hear from someone some time'. And then I rang my agent and she said 'Are you certain it's a very heavy film'? And I said 'Well, it sounds fascinating and yes, I am interested'. So she said 'I'll ring you back', and rang back and said 'will you go in and see Clive Donner this afternoon'? So I went in and Clive was there with Michael Stringer who was the production designer and two men who were working on, on battle sketches. And I talked to Clive and we talked for about half an hour, and to my astonishment at the end of the talk he said 'Well, I'm offering it to you will you take it'? And I said 'Yes, I will'. And he was going away, I think Mulberry Bush was opening in America and he was having, he was going to*

*have a holiday. And I sat down and started to read because there was an enormous amount of research to do.*

It was absolutely fascinating because one discovered exactly what one could use, what one couldn't use, I mean extraordinary. Most things, I need to think back about this now. They had wool, they had linen, they had cotton, they had silk, they had velvet and they knitted and they crocheted. They used, they, they were very hot on embroidery and I, I spent weeks reading, making notes. I had a marvellous assistant called Evangeline Harrison, and when I'd finished reading I folded all the books up, put them on one side and started drawing. And I think Clive had said to me he wanted to keep the, the Danes like a war machine and he wanted, he was going to, the cameraman was using blue filters so that meant if I wanted hot colours I'd have to force them.

*So I decided to do the Danes in, mm, well they came off their boats with horses and they were already armed [05:00] and they rushed straight in to war, and I kept them all a very slaty blue with the tunics they wore. I mean they, they were in uniform, it may not have been accurate and it probably wasn't but it was one way so that the audience would know where they were, they'd know who was doing what to whom. And the Saxons were all in hot earth colours. And I used, the Danes were, I based their trousers on a pair of trousers that had been preserved in a bog and they were, they looked like an elephant's arse. They had a drawstring through the waist and they were a square crutch and they came that they tied round the waist and then they folded them round their legs in a, from outside to the inside and then one wore boots over them. And then they had plated tunics and they, they looked as though they'd been plated with Gillette razor, Blue Gillette razor blades, they were that kind of colour. And the Saxon nobles were in leather or in furs. Mm, and there was a very tedious girl actress who was playing Aelhswith, she was called Prunella Ransome.*

Oh yes.

But she was so prim [Laughter] you'd have thought you'd asked her to have a double mastectomy. She could not, the idea of showing her tits I was so, I used to get so angry with her. She was quite pretty though and she had sort of pale reddish hair. And what else did I discover with the, the research? There was one scene with guns and there was an extant letter from a bishop to an abbess who was in charge of a convent saying 'Would you keep your nun, nuns under control they, they...' Let me think. 'They wear scarlet and violet satin, they curl the hair on to their foreheads and cheeks', they sounded like whores, well I guess they were 'and they drink too much'. I can't remember the exact quote 'and I'm now sending you a barrel of, of wine for your Christmas delectation', and these were all immensely useful things.

Right. The, it's, it's very much a designed picture, was there a close collaboration between you and the art director and the cameraman?

Yes, very. And, mm, I mean that is one from it I think it's worth...

We're point, pointing to the framed picture on the wall.

*Yes.*

That's been designed, yes.

And I think that's one too.

Right.

Mm, they may, I can't see that, I know this one but let's have a look at this.

Well, three figures on, on, on the one you're looking at.

They're acrobats, yes. They're, they're court entertainers, and it had lots of little treats like that, lots of hard work. I mean I did, I worked and worked and worked and when I had to go to Ireland when Clive... No, before I went to Ireland, Clive came back and I showed him the drawings and I said 'I'm afraid my drawings are a bit, a bit short on masculinity but they'll look alright when they're made up'. And think of what, I mean its essential to, to read what I write on the side of them. I, there's someone I think at BAFTA [10:00] who I gave all my old designs to. She, Clive met her there one day not long ago, she was doing a book on design and she came to see me and I said 'I want to get rid of these' and gave her the whole lot.

It's okay.

*And she's married to somebody who was a critic on The Times. Does that mean anything to you?*

No, it doesn't, no. I feel like slapping your wrist because that should have gone in to a proper collection surely.

Oh...

You know, The BFI or, or...

*Well, maybe it, maybe it was The BFI I give.*

Oh I see, right. Wasn't, wasn't Janet, Janet Moat [ph 10:45]

No, it wasn't Janet Moat. [ph 10:47].

Because....

Young, young. He got the sack not long ago. Clive will tell you who it was.

Yes.

Anyway.

But the danger is that they will be sold or auctioned off rather than preserved which...

I've always been astonished. I mean somebody came to me one day saying 'I think I've got some designs, could you tell me if they're yours'? And he, they were the designs for Lotte Lenya in *From Russia With Love*. And I said 'Where did you get them'? I, I always at the end of a film used to put all my designs in the wastepaper basket.

Yes, yes.

So...

Naughty, naughty.

*Yes, apparently, I've only just discovered that recently. And, but most of the ones, I'm certain Clive will know where they are. And I remember when she'd left I gave her a portfolio which she couldn't carry it was so crammed full of, of designs, and they were mostly mounted. But when Clive saw the designs he liked them and so that was, it was just a question then of having things made. I'd worked with David Hemmings before, a totally unreliable actor, but I almost crippled him on Alfred because I gave him sandals that kept getting tangled in his toes. But, also what else did I discover? We could, most, all the men, all the Saxon men wore sock boots, which are, you pull them on like socks, they're in a very sup..., supple, not a fine leather a quite a solid leather and then we reinforced the soles. So that in fact if people had red trousers on they had red sock boots and there was no demarcation between knee and foot and...*

Was it mostly flights of fancy? I mean you said you did a vast amount of research in, in to what was available, but I mean in terms of the actual design shape of the costumes, how, how much extant material is there on that?

I was, I was very strict with myself. I mean there were no inset sleeves that you could see, mostly things were cut square. And if I wanted something fitting, knitting or crocheted, I can remember one,

one dress for Aelhswith which I can't remember at all, but it had, the sleeves were knitted in and she had a tabard back and front and they, they were taken directly from a medieval manuscript.

I see. Did you say Bermans made the costume?

Yes.

Yes. And were you, were you happy with, with the...?

I've always been happy with them, yes.

Right. So we do have that kind of expertise in this country to, to make such costumes?

Yes. And with a film like this I mean I remember they made one prototype of the Danish plated uniform and I went in and they said 'We're, we're desolate, it won't work'. It, it was split up the front and up both sides and I think up the back, and I had it made with buckles under the arms so that one size would, would fit a whole lot of different sized men, and it, you could just let the buckles out. And they said 'It's scissoring on the, on the front', and I would look and indeed it was, [15:00] it was one panel overlapped another. And I thought for a minute and then she thought for a minute and they all, mm, they, I said 'Try it back to front', and they all said 'It won't work Jocelyn', and I said 'nevertheless try it back to front'. And they all again said 'It won't work Jocelyn', and I said 'I won't keep quiet, just try it back to front'. And they tried it back to front and it did work by some miracle. And thank God because I couldn't think of any other way.

[Laughter] Right.

To solve the problem. You better ask me some questions Roy.

Well, mm, one that came to mind was any allowance you made for the cast, for the actors? By which I mean, well here's Prunella Ransome not showing her tits so presumably that conditioned what you designed for her, or did it not?

It infuriated me, and there was a nightdress that I'd made for her. I can't remember it any longer but it was made I think on an yoke and open, it joined under the armhole but open all the way down. She wouldn't wear it so we had to stitch up the side. And, I'm going to blow my nose, sorry.

Alright, blow, blow thou winter wynd.

Yes. And if you have a look at that design and read me what's on the outside of them or what's on the note.

Right. This is the one of the three acrobats you say or three clowns?

Yes.

*Mm, well, there aren't that many notes. 'It's a cloak of multi-coloured leather thongs'. These are the court entertainers.*

Yes. Yes, I can remember that. The long strips of leather that moved when, when he or she moved.

Yes.

There was a bear but that one I think somebody happened, asked me if they could have. He was, I mean he wasn't a real bear, he was a, he was a violet bear.

Mm, mm.

With, with yellow pads and yellow mask. Marvellously made by Bermans.

And there are one, two, three, four, five, six colour swatches showing colours. Mm, and there's a word I can't, something gauze and leather it... Sense gauze and leather?

*Oh yes, yes and it was very, it was scenic gauze I remember.*

Scenic.

*With leather patches on it.*

Ah, right.

And this one is a court lady and that also was taken, that was taken from a medieval painting.

Mm, mm.

And I found that extraordinary length of, of sacking woven with gold thread. And it had embroidery I think, I can't see it any longer, I, I can always get up further and try and have a look. It was, it had black and white check in lining inside the sleeves. And I can't remember the embroidery but I think that's, and I think it had a high stand collar.

Right. How many costumes roughly would you say were designed and made?

*Hundreds, hundreds.*

Hundreds, right. So a very expensive budget then for, for the film?

Yes, and Monty was very good about it because he decided it was a, if they were a pattern made new to hire he could undercharge on them because he'd make it in years to come by hiring them out.

Sure.

For other films, and I think there are some still hanging about in Bermans.

Have you recognised them in other movies?

Yes.

*Mm, mm.*

What was the film that, Polanski made a film. Oh *Macbeth*.

Oh yes, right. So they're in there are they?

They were in that.

Yes.

*And I've, they've also been in other things.*

*Mm, mm.*

*I can't remember what but I do remember Polanski using them because I think Vangie designed it. [20:00] Somebody had been working on it and who hadn't worked out. And she went in [Pause] and said the costumes were deplorable, so she just went and got all the Alfred stuff that she could. And there were some, I used a lot of fur too. There was some, I mean it wasn't luxurious fur but I'd get young calf skin and pony skin and a lot of rabbit skin. I mean Prunella had an amazing cloak of ginger bunny and I made them use the whole skin and then outline it with, line it with red taf..., with an orangey red taffeta. And each skin was joined to every other skin with a, a gold braid that you could see through, so you'd see the red, the red lining through.*

Mm. Jocelyn where would you find the fabric, presumably you had to trot around a great deal to...?

Yes.

Yes.

I mean I found it all over the place. I found that, that piece of sacking woven with gold thread unbelievably in a department store that I happened just to be walking through in Kensington High Street. I don't know what I was looking for. It certainly wasn't Barker's, I can't remember...

Well, there were three weren't there?

Yes.

There was Barker's, Derry & Tom's?

I think it was Derry & Tom's.

Right.

And as I was walking through I thought 'I don't believe it, how marvellous'. It was something like five bob a yard. And I needed a lot of embroidery and I was in Coptic Street one day looking for stuff and I, I said to Vangie, Vangie and I went in and there was a great cardboard box on the floor and I said 'How, how, what's that'? And they said 'It's, it's embroidery, it's parts of, of Palestinian or Arab embroidery'. And I said 'Could I have a look at it'? And it was all embroidered on natural linen and I bought the whole box for about three hundred pounds. And it would have cost the earth to have had stuff re-embroidered, but I used it on a lot of costumes sinking it in, in leather sort of rectangles or squares.

Yes.

And I don't really remember much about it now but I do remember being delighted by it. And I had one dress made for the terrible Prunella Ransome which I had embroidered with shells all over. And I wasn't absolutely certain I was doing the right thing so I looked back over the reference and yes, they did use shells to embroider. And she had a, a straw hat. We cheated on it because it was, it was, it was an absolute period hat - round crown, round brim, very thick straw and we put clumps of shells like flowers on it, but otherwise I didn't cheat on the... I mean it was obviously, it was obviously a designed film because you'd never get people all wearing Gillette razor blades or all wearing hot earth colours.

Indeed, indeed not. Talking about people wearing, it's a, it's very, there's a kind of component part of a film which is modernity isn't there, it's, it's, I think in a sense of its time?

Yes.

Time it was made as well as period. Were you happy with the way the actors wore the wardrobe, wore the costumes?

On the whole, yes.

David Hemmings for example because...

Oh David's impossible.

He's not my idea of whatever it is, a 10<sup>th</sup> Century...

Eighth, 8<sup>th</sup> Century.

Eighth Century.

No, nor mine. [25:00] And he was always arseing about or getting pissed.

Yes.

*And falling off his castle walls knocking all his teeth out. Mm, sometimes he was alright. I mean in, in the moments when he was wearing armour or [Pause] when he runs in to the marshes he was good, and he then he was wearing loose white, whitish trousers, a little leather and fur jacket, I can't remember what he had under it. [Pause] There was one dress I did for Prunella Ransome which I liked, I had to cheat with the sleeves because underneath it was creamy wool, very fine with long sleeves, and over it there was a sort of tabard to the floor, caught at the sides but it was made of chamois, but the chamois hid the inset of the sleeves. And the jewellery was marvellous too, a girl called Patti Pope made it for me. And we were very lucky, we found a copy of the Alfred jewel which was, do you know it?*

No.

It was, well, it's a small almost triangular enamel set in gold, which was picked up on the battle site and it was thought that he, it's, it's set in a filigree of gold which has written in Anglo-Saxon 'Alfred caused me to me made'. And they think that he used it as a, as a pointer when he was reading, anyway that's the way we used it. Mm, ask me some more questions.

Yes. Mm, well, I can't, I've, I've covered all the points that I wanted to. The collaboration was the key to the film clearly, this is also the film on which you met Clive?

Yes.

Who, do you want to talk about that, your, your long time companion?

*Yes. I was married, unhappy, or irritated, I mean I was wildly unfaithful to him and I'd, anything, anything to get away. So when I was offered the film I just thought 'Oh thank God', and I chose a very good wardrobe staff. A man called Johnny Briggs who'd I first met on The Prince And The Showgirl and a young girl as wardrobe mistress who was extremely good, she was called... God knows what she was called, Diana something. And it was a very big wardrobe, very, very well organised. We had some Irish people working with us and there were, oh, there were some horrors of fitting because we had, had to have two tents in, at the back of the, of the wardrobe work rooms which were big, and we also had... [Pause] No, who, who was the wardrobe mistress? Oh, she was Barbara Gillett whom I eventually fell out with, because she, she got very hoity toity about... What did she get hoity toity about? [Laughter]*

This was on the picture itself?

Yes.

During the film, right?

She kept, she'd say to me 'You're not the Jocelyn that I've always known, you're, you're...' She, she complained about, I spent my time with, with Clive and I said 'If you're trying to tell me that I'm having an affair with him Barbara, I know I am you don't have to tell me'. [30:00] And she, she was an absolute monster but she had a good wardrobe staff and eventually, you know, the film was okay. The, Johnny was in charge of the men's costumes, she in charge of the women's and she always wanted to know what was going on. And I remember one day protecting the prop man who'd left Colin Blakely's, a marvellous surplice we'd had made and it had been embroidered all over with, with pictures but little embroidered pictures embroidered with sea pearls, all sorts of things. And they'd left it in a trunk out on location and I just was walking past one day and I lifted the lid of the trunk and looked in and lo and behold this magic surplice was there, and all the little pearls were peeling and I was furious and I went in to the Production Office and said 'Tell those fucking prop men', who I loved actually, 'that I could kill them'. And he sent them to me later and they came in and said 'Oh Joss we're so sorry, we're so sorry'. And I said 'Forget it', you know, 'I know you didn't do it on purpose, I know it had to be a mistake'. But Barbara came bustling in and said 'What was all that about?', and I said 'Nothing'. Mm .

..

This was all in Ireland was it?

What?

This was all in Ireland?

This was all in Ireland, we were there for months.

Had, had you taken props from here or were they Irish boys?

No, they were, they were props I knew, I had worked with.

Right.

*Certainly they had been on The Bliss of Mrs Blossom.*

Ah, ha.

*And, mm...*

How about the extras, were they mostly...?

No, the extras were Irish.

Irish Army or what?

We had army to play the army. We had just Irish peasants and the costume tents were alive with fleas, I mean it was unbelievable. Before I'd go in I used to spray my, the inside of my boots, the inside of my trousers with, I don't know what you spray anti-flea.

Flit?

*And I'd get a Kleenex and cover it in Dielle Roussimar [ph 32:35] and hold it to my nose. The smell was simply awful.*

Oh God, well, let's move on then. [Laughter] Yes, the trials and tribulations of filming?

*Yes, yes but then Clive, I mean the first few, first few weeks one was so busy settling in to Ireland that I would, I went up first with a boy from Bernams called Fred who helped me assemble the wardrobe.*

*And I'd had dinner occasionally with Clive who was living in a castle called Kilcolgan, or he was living in the, in part of the castle. The woman who owned it would cook for, for him at night and he had rooms I think that were over the, were they over the laundry or over the stable? It doesn't matter. And then one day he came in, I'd asked him if he would come in to Prunella's tent, not tent caravan, I wanted to arrange what she'd wear on her head for the marriage. And I'd got them to make a little marriage crown of wheat and it just didn't work. So then I got them to take it apart and with the hairdresser we arranged her hair and used bits of it. And Clive said to me 'What are you doing for dinner this evening'? And I said 'Nothing', and he said 'Come to Kilcolgan', and I thought 'yes', and suddenly I felt my tummy lurch and I thought 'oh God here I go again'. And we had dinner alone together that night and went to bed together and that was the beginning and...*

*And that's what? Thirty-three years ago? [35:00]*

*Yes, if not a bit more. And he was, at that time he was having an affair with Penelope Mortimer who used occasionally to come up and, [Pause] by the time, he was exhausted when the film was over and he said 'Oh I need to go somewhere to rest'. And I said 'There's a marvellous place in, in Tunisia in, at Hammamet, it's called the Centre Culturel and one has to go, either be invited to go, and it's ludicrously cheap but absolute bliss. There's a villa that was built by a German aristocrat in the '20s which is unbelievably beautiful right in a, set in an acre, a square acre of orange trees, datilera, the most marvellously sweet smelling scented plants. And there's the main building, there are various little houses that you can go to, that you can have a room and a bathroom and a terrace of your own. I think you should go there and you should get your secretary to write now and, or send a telegram'. And I said to him 'If you want me to come I'll come but I do warn you it will be the beginning of divorce proceedings'. And so eventually he went off, I think he went off, did he go...? I think he went straight from Ireland. And I, I'd been back for five minutes when he rang, I think he rang and said 'Come'. So I did and that was it.*

Mm, congratulations. it's a fascinating relationship and a very happy one I say by reputation?

*Yes, and I mean he's the only person I've been, no I've always been faithful to people but he's the one person I've been faithful to for thirty however many years.*

Formidable.

*And I do think, I mean I do think the only way relationships really work is if you work at them. And I suddenly at one moment, we'd bought a house in Buckinghamshire and my agent was ringing to see if I'd do this film or that film, we'd been there for some time by now, and I kept saying 'I don't want to Pat, I don't want to'. And I said to Clive one day 'I, I don't want to go on working in film', and he said 'You don't have to', and I thought 'oh thank Christ'. By this time I'd done Ryan's Daughter and Sunday, Bloody Sunday.*

Mm, mm.

So on to the next?

*Well, curious if it's not being too nosy. You were at the top of your profession, do you, do you have any recollection of what they paid you per picture?*

*I was paid a lot on, on Ryan's Daughter but I can't remember. I think I was paid equally a salary, salary and expenses. Mm, and I'd dropped a huge amount by the time I did Sunday, Bloody Sunday because I knew it was on a tight budget.*

Right. So that was more for love than money?

Yes.

Right.

*And... [Pause]*

Well, still then on 'Alfred'.

Yes.

What did you feel about the film when, when finally you saw it, by which time you're in a very close relationship with Clive?

I was so close to Clive I thought, I thought the dialogue in the film was deplorable. Mm... [Pause]

That's the problem with the film for me because it, as I said before...

Yes.

It's sort of its time, the '60s.

Yes, Seven, almost '70s.

Almost '70s.

Yes.

But I, it was the '60s coming to their climax if you remember? It was the King's Road era was it not?

Yes, yes.

Yes, Club Arethusa and Alvaro's and all that.

Yes.

And the mini skirt, which seems to have influenced the feeling of the film if nothing else and the...

I, I liked the way the film looked.

Mm, mm. It's the sound I guess more, more than the appearance that I'm talking about, it, it....

I mean I find it very difficult to be, mm, absolutely objective about it because it was a film that altered the course of my life.

Yes.

And [Pause] I've ne..., I, I haven't seen it since it first came out.

It was on television, oh, what? about six months ago.

Oh it's always coming...

Yes, yes.

*On, on to television. I mean I find it difficult now to see but I did watch this long programme on Graham Greene last night. I probably could watch it and see what I thought of it, but I have no idea actually. I did, actually one night we looked at it I think on television and Clive said 'That's the film I meant to make'.*

Really?

Mm.

That's interesting.

But I don't remember what I thought. Mm, but it's a film that I have happier memories about than I do about 'Ryan's God goddamned Daughter'.

Well, one final question then about 'Alfred' before we come on to the great David Lean is, right you've got happy memories of it, do you have, were there any unhappy aspects at all just for the record?

*Not really.*

No.

I mean they were marvellous actors. Mm, Ian McKellen, Colin Blakely, Julian Glover, Peter Vaughan, Peter Blythe, I can't remember any one else now. Vivien Merchant, who travelled up with Harold Pinter and her son. Mm, and I've always thought that Harold was a pain in the arse.

One's not allowed to say that about the great Harold Pinter is one?

Oh one is. I'm thinking of writing it too, I meant to write it in a piece I wrote on John Osborne and I forgot.

He's litigious I believe.

*Well, he can't, can't stop me from saying that I think he's overrated and pompous.*

I think I'd agree with both, subscribe to that.

Oh I mean I think he's a monster.

We've just got about, maybe a minute on this side of the tape so let's dispose of Harold Pinter before we come on to 'Ryan's Daughter'.

Okay. Who else was, was there? There are some marvellous scenes in it I remember where, there's a snow scene where you come across three men in, in red capes, one of them is Chris Timothy because he's had, he become Mr Herriot or the television vet.

Oh yes, that one, mm, mm.

And Michael Billington and I can't remember who the other was. But they're in various reds in this huge white landscape and they do look marvellous. There are some very beautiful moments in it, and there's a bit of Julian Glover on a white horse with a fur cloak that's beigey dappled. I mean not dappled fur, but I suppose it's old cow, that spreads right over the horse's haunches.

*Jocelyn Rickards.*

We'll stop.

Good.

[End of Tape 1 Side A 0:44:12]

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

*Tape 1 Side B.*

Oh, so now we're about to embark on 'Ryan's Daughter' are we?

Yes.

How did all that start?

*I came back from Hammamet and Clive was going away. Where was he going? He was staying, going to stay with Kenneth whatever his name who wrote the script of Alfred and I'd just moved in to my own studio and I woke up one morning with my face the size of a water melon. So I thought 'Oh Jesus'! I didn't bother to ring, I got in to the taxi and went to the dentist and she looked at, the dentist, dentist nurse looked at me and said 'He's in bed with flu, hang on I'll get on to someone else because you can't go round like that'. So she found someone who was prepared to operate on it even when it was swollen. And I went round and they said 'We must ring somebody who can be here to take you home'. So I told them to ring Vangie and she came in and they gave me a shot and put me out and removed the tooth and said 'Now go and lie down'. And I did and while I was lying down the telephone rang and somebody, I think it was Roy Stevens, said 'I'm ringing for David Lean, we would like you to come to Ireland to talk about his new film Ryan's Daughter. And I said 'I've just spent a year in Ireland' and put the telephone down. [Laughter] And he rang back and I said 'I've just had a tooth out, I'm not in any fit shape to talk about anything, who wrote the script'? And he said 'Robert, Robert Bolt', which was enough of an opening. I mean I almost turned it down out of hand but that was enough, they sent the script round. So by the time Clive got back I had the script, my face had gone down and I said to him 'I've heard from David Lean, they want me to go up to Ireland to meet him, what do you think'? And he said 'You, you'll spend your life regretting it if you don't do it', so I said 'Alright'.*

Did you have any preconceptions about David Lean?

*I had no preconceptions, I hadn't even seen many of his films. And I went up to Killarney where he was staying and met him and liked him very much. Met Stephen Grimes who I loved immediately and I said 'How come I've been asked aboard'? And David said 'John Box'. Well, I'd worked with John Box's wife on The Prince and The Showgirl, she'd been Bumble Dawson's assistant and she gave up films at that point and I very much see why. Anyway I said I'd, I'd do it. I loved Stephen. I came back to London, or Clive met me in Dublin and we spent, mm, spent the weekend driving round Galway and everywhere we went they'd say 'How's the film, when is it coming out'? Because he hadn't finished*

*editing, he hadn't even started editing. And I started working on the goddamned thing and I did drawings for spring, summer, autumn and winter.*

Was it at this point, Jocelyn, the simple little film they intended or had it already begun to expand?  
[05:00]

It had begun to spiral in to a simple little monster. I mean far too many people were involved with it. Mm, and when, there was a moment when David was stopping in London en route back to Ireland and [Pause] I asked him to come and look at the costumes, or he looked at the drawings and okayed them all. And I asked him to come to a costume fitting and he said he didn't have the time. What I didn't realise is he couldn't read a costume drawing. So when I eventually got to Ireland I nearly went mad trying to please him about what Sarah would wear for this occasion or that occasion and it just never came right. And one day in desperation I got up very early and went in to the wardrobe and wrote a letter of resignation and...

This was after how long?

[Pause] Mm, six weeks say.

Right.

*And he, Josie McAvin, who was the prop buyer and was absolutely marvellous, I've known her since the early Woodfall days, and she came in and she said 'What are you doing here at this time'? And I said 'Writing a letter of resignation', and she said 'Does Steve know'? And I said 'No, I didn't meet him on the way to the wardrobe', which was within walking distance of the hotel. And Josie was out of the wardrobe, zooming along the high street and I walked out after her and I couldn't even see the tail light of her car. And [Pause] Stephen came in and said 'Well'? And I said 'Oh you've seen Josie', and he said 'Yes, what have you said'? And I handed the letter to him and he said 'I agree with absolutely everything you say. I think it would be a good thing if you, if you didn't deliver the letter or until we have that other fitting this evening'. And I said, he said 'He will never say he's sorry to you'. And I said 'I don't want him to say he's sorry, I just want to go home, [Laughter] I don't want to spend any more time working on what I believe is a load of crap. And he is a difficult, exigent, demanding, appalling man'. I thought all, all of those things I thought to be true. I thought he didn't know what he wanted, I thought he was a man of very limited intelligence and I just didn't like him. He used to call Stephen and me 'you intellectuals' and, mm...*

[Laughter] What, once he saw something would then he make up his mind?

No, he didn't.

Change, change, change?

Yes.

Mm, mm.

*Mm, so that I, I mean for six weeks I'd worked on the principle that if I had something to shoot on the next day I couldn't expect more than that. And I mean all the, all the small part actors we, I got away with, you know, with maybe a change of a scarf or a jacket. Mm, people like Barry Foster and a lot, we used all the Abbey actresses, they went marvellously, it was Sarah who was my bugbear. And this particular evening, every evening people, every one would meet, it was the only entertainment they had in the Production Office, which was large, for a drink after shooting. And this evening I asked if Sarah's horse could be brought round and she could be seen through a window on the horse.*

I suppose we should say Sarah Miles? [10:00]

Oh Sarah Miles, yes.

Right.

And we sat, we all had drinks and Mitchum was there. I loved him too, I don't like actors on the whole but he was a marvellous, intelligent man. And he, in the middle of David's maudering he said 'I don't know what you're after David, Stephen and Jocelyn turn their guts inside out every day. Every day they come up with another imaginative solution for you and you turn it down and you can't offer them one word of guidance'. And Mitchum got up and stalked out, I could have licked his boots. Anyway we went through God knows... Oh, no. David then said 'What was all that about'? And I shrugged and he said 'I owe you an apology Jocelyn', [Laughter] and I couldn't believe it, I was very pissed off, I didn't want an apology. 'I do realise I've been, I've been whatever I've been, and I haven't given you any help or any encouragement'. So after that I mean of course, it was Stephen who'd been to him and said 'You'd better do something, we're going to lose her and you can't afford to lose her and you have behaved like a cunt'. And from then on he was okay with me. I mean he hadn't liked, I don't think he'd liked me. He couldn't understand why I wasn't licking his boots.

Yes. Was there an element of enjoyment do you think to...?

Of what?

Of enjoyment to his humiliation of people? Do you think or was it just that he was a shit in, in...?

*I think he was a, he wanted his own way. He was a shit. I don't think...*

Well, he had his own way didn't he?

He got his own way.

Yes, mm.

*Yes. Mm, he, he lived by the word of Eddie whatever his name was, his prop man.*

Yes, Eddie Farr.

Ed who? Who was a monster. And [Pause] I mean, I'd been, I'd been asked for a period parasol for Sarah and I found the frame of an original one and I had it recovered in very pale taffeta with a black lace frill and a black lace lining. It had a, I think it had a swan's head handle and came the moment they decided to use it over the, over the credits floating in the sky. And Stephen or Eddie came in to me and said 'Have you, how many copies of the parasol have you got?' And I said 'We have one, it's a period parasol'. 'Oh well, we'll need three hundred'. And I said 'Well, tough luck, I don't know what you're going to do about it but I haven't got them', and they sent to Hong Kong. Eventually I think everyone in the film unit had a copy of that parasol, terrible copies, they were pleased with them, they didn't have to use them. I didn't think they would have to use them either because I knew if they, they shot it carefully and had a very fine filament attached to it, it would be okay. And what else, what other horrors did we have?

Well, you said a moment ago that Sarah was a bit of a pain. What trouble did she give you, was she very much the writer's wife, was she pulling rank?

*No, she wasn't pulling rank. I mean she wasn't bad, I'd met her before, I'd worked with her on Blowup. She'd hated it because she had been mostly cut out of it. But, mm, dress, getting fittings done for her in Dingle. She had a, that little son Thomas who'd come in sucking [15:00] chocolates and I saw him one day going for her wedding dress with chocolate hands, I thought I'd kill the little bugger, I don't like children anyway and I think Robert eventually took him out. She wasn't bad, she used to get on David's tits because she'd decide she, she didn't want to show her tits either, so she, she'd decide she wouldn't go on to the stage. I mean the stage was a barn in somebody's field. And I remember David saying 'I'm not going into see her', and, he said 'don't you go in'. She had a dresser by this time, I'd got a girl, an English girl out of the Irish crowd who one day when I was fitting the crowd and we were going mad she picked up a tape measure and started to measure someone for us. And I said 'Thank you, what's your name?' and she told me and I said 'hang on' and I went back to the office saying 'I want us to take on this extra girl because Diana's got more than she can do with Pauline and whoever's working with us we need somebody extra'. And Rosula who by this time was, was dressing Sarah, and David said 'Send Rosula in, don't you go you can hide in my caravan, I'm going'. And he*

*got in his car and pissed off and Sarah was left waiting and nothing happened and eventually she discovered she'd displeased the master who'd left and she'd lost a whole day's shooting.*

Mm, mm. What was the relationship between her and Robert Bolt at that time, was it a, still a happy one?

Yes, apparently, though she was having an affair with Mitchum.

Yes.

*Mm, who, who arrived with a crate of pot.*

And?

He'd just get stoned every night and he'd, he'd cook and the prop boys would go in and eat with him, anyone. He had an, mm, he had a stand-in whom he liked. Mm, John Mills was I found good and very, very professional, and his was one costume that I, I did myself hands-on because I'm, I sew abominably and I just decided to do his because it didn't matter how badly it was sewn and...

That's the one I always think of - his costume, yes.

Yes, I still think of it. And there was one, I said at one moment to them, 'I'm sorry but I'm going up to London it's the premiere of *Alfred* and I'm just am going to be with Clive'. And while I was in London Stephen rang me and said 'He wants another costume for Sarah'. And I'd resisted yellow in any of the costumes and I said 'Where's it to be done'? And he said 'On a beach with...' Oh, the one who, Christopher...

For the boy?

Yes.

Jones.

So I said 'I think we should have yellow', and he said 'I didn't think you'd liked yellow', and I said 'I think it's appalling mixed in with other colours but just on a beach I think it will work very well'. And he said 'Have something made for her and if you can find an alternative bring them back with you'. And I said 'Well, it will probably take the best part of a week to get these out of Bermans', and he said 'Well, we've got enough cover'. So I had that yellow dress that they used on all the posters of her walking on a beach with bare feet and a large hat laden with roses and I think of that and Johnny Mills.

Right.

And I mean he was alright after we'd had that, that flare up and he thought I was going. [20:00] I also remember one night we were night shooting and [Pause] Tony Havelock-Allan, I said 'Well, I've been here long enough I'm getting in the car, I'm going to find my car and go home'. And Tony said 'I'll walk you to the car', and we walked out together and he said 'Isn't it marvellous, the glamour of film making at night', blah, blah, blah? And I said 'Tony, I find nothing glamorous about this film I find it an ineffable bore and there's nothing that you can say is going to make me find it glamorous'. By this time I'd moved out of the hotel because and they'd found me a cottage in Ventry where it, there wasn't a water filter. And one day I was running a bath and looked in and I hadn't, you know that green stuff you put in baths which I'd been using every morning I hadn't put it in and I looked and I thought 'Jesus I've been drinking that stuff that's full of tadpoles'.

God.

And it was one series of things I didn't like after the other.

Christopher Jones, I suppose you didn't have much to do for him or with him but he was a problem on the film was he not?

He arrived with two keepers and there was a notice put up on the, on the board saying 'No members of the crew will speak to Christopher Jones without calling him Mr Jones or', I can't remember what the rest was.

Oh dear God.

And I mean Johnny Briggs and I just fell about, Johnny was marvellous with him. I made it, I'd had to leave his uniform to somebody else because he was shooting in Rome I think, and one of my assistants, girl called Ruth Miles, decided he was so small he'd better be in, in total khaki instead of khaki with lighter trousers, which is what most officers of, of the period wore. And Bermans sent up his boots and I looked at them and I said 'Johnny, come and have a look at these boots, they don't look like proper leather to me', and they weren't they'd painted them brown. So I had to take him... No, we went to Dublin in separate cars and I had a pair of pale breeches made for him and got a pair of, of proper boots by, it was the only time I was furious with Bermans.

However did that happen, they would paint pretend leather?

*I don't know.*

I mean that's extraordinary isn't it?

Very naughty.

Yes.

Anyway.

How long were you on the film altogether, do you remember?

About nine months.

Oh right.

*And eventually I said to Roy Stevens one day 'How long are you going to keep the crew'? And he said 'Until everything's established'. And I said 'Roy, we've done spring, autumn, summer and winter. All Sarah's costumes are established, all Robert's are established I want to go'. And then one day a bit later he said 'I'm going to have to start pulling people', and I said 'Me first'. And he came in a few days later and he said 'Yes, okay you can go'. And I got back and they, I had a message to say they'd like a lot more black clothes for the women for the, the storm scene, but Bermans had done it and got them off before I even went in. And what, I don't, there were some marvellous things that happened. I mean there was one Irish actress arrived in the most magic black cloak called a Kinsale cloak, [25:00] which they're black lined with satin with the most amazing hoods in to a button on the back of the head, then lined in satin. They've got little pockets with satin lining the pocket, and huge, I think they're sort of almost cartridge pleats and they're the most beautiful cloaks I've ever seen. And there was a tinker who used to come and sell us things and I said 'Can you find Kinsale, some Kinsale cloaks for me'? David decided he was so obsessed by this cloak he wanted as many as we could get. and I said I'd like twelve. And he went off with his horse and cart and came back a week later with thirteen, which I think I got for a hundred pounds and I brought one back for Vangie because it was so spectacular. Otherwise I'd guess that's the, that's the story of that fucking film.*

Right, right.

I hate it.

What did you all do when you were sitting around either waiting for Mr Lean or for the weather or whatever it was?

Well, we never spent a day not working I don't think.

Right.

There was a very nice make-up girl called Linda DeVetta who when I moved from the hotel she came to see me and said 'Please let me come and, and live here with you', and I said 'Well, let's try and see how we get on'. And I mean I used to be astonished. We had a little store in Dingle main, the Dingle high street where I used to buy Chateau Belbeau [ph 27:01] for a pound a bottle, and I'd get *fillet de beuf* unbelievable for a pound a pound I think, or maybe probably ten bob a pound. And Linda and I would cook, Stephen would dine with us very often. Mm, don't remember many other people being asked to dinner he was the only person we really liked. Then Linda found she was, her husband came up to stay and she found she was pregnant, he was a monster, and then she had a miscarriage and then she left so I was there by myself. Vangie came and stayed with me and the girl who'd done a lot of the research on *Alfred* came and stayed but...

*Was it a demoralised unit or did you just rub along and, and...?*

*We rubbed along.*

Yes.

I mean Stephen and I always had something to say to each other, usually about the film and... [Pause]

It sounds like a sentence though?

It was a sentence.

Mm, mm. [Laughter]

It was absolute sentence and I thought David was a shit.

Did that feeling stay with you, did you see him ever subsequently?

Yes, I did and I said to him 'You know you behaved like an absolute shit', and he was astonished.

Right.

And [Pause] I was getting more and more *dégoût* with films, I thought I just, this isn't any life I should be leading. [Laughter]

*No.*

I want to go back to being a painter. And so I got back to London. Clive [Pause] had decided to buy Michael Birkett's mother's house, she was Norman Birkett's widow and she'd died, she died. I mean she'd been saying 'I've just got to keep alive for another seven years so the money's there for Michael'. Mm, she'd had this marvellous two brick and flint very early cottages knocked in to one in an almost two and a bit acres of, of garden and meadow and [30:00] was full of fruit trees, and she'd looked after it for seven years and then she'd caught pneumonia I think and died, and we bought it. And it was a question, the first day we went to measure things up we both had stinking colds and, mm, we went... No, we went to look at it and Clive said to me 'Do you like it?', and I said 'Yes, it's smashing'. And he said 'I couldn't live here without central heating', [Laughter] which there wasn't so he didn't ever say any more to me. Now when, at what moment did I, I get pissed off with Clive? Because he, he never would say when I left in the morning 'What are you doing this evening'? But he'd ring in the evening and I in no way was able to plan my life. Do you want to change tapes?

No, no, no, no, no, pay no attention to me.

*So he had an office in oh that road that leads, [Pause] Park, Park Street, Park Road on the outside of Regent's Park, he had an office in David Birch's building and I thought 'I've had enough of this' so I said to him 'I'm going to Paris for the weekend', and I'd had a French lover and I, so I went and spent the weekend with, with Narmio [ph 31:50] and Clive was understandably pissed off. I came back early Monday morning having meant to stay longer and I rang Clive and I said 'I'm back', and he said, and I said 'we're meant to be judging a children's competition about, of paintings about Alfred. So we met for lunch and Clive wasn't hostile [Laughter] but he was, he was questioning. And I, I didn't say what had actually pissed me off, but I think it occurred to him that he'd better be a bit more punctilious. And it wasn't that I didn't see him every night but I liked to be able to, to plan my life. And from that moment on we were just together all the time.*

Right.

*And once we'd, we'd found the house Clive, Clive had to go. When did he go to America? Oh that was, he had been coming up to Dingle but couldn't make it, he had to go straight to America to finish the editing of Alfred. And I've got muddled now, let me work it out. [Pause] Well, I think it's irrelevant this. Anyway having decided to buy the house I'd, I didn't question it again. But one day months later I said 'What's happening about the house at Speen'? And he said 'Well, I'm buying it. I thought you liked it', and I said 'Yes, I did'. I just, I hadn't asked, we were still on rather formal terms with each other I guess. But then he said 'It'll be through next week we can do what we like with it'. I don't know why everything in those days seemed to take a ridiculous amount of time. Anyway once we'd got possession of it we had central heating installed and it was, and I was working on Bloody Sunday. I hadn't, only met John Schlesinger once before, I didn't like Midnight Cowboy much.*

Who?

*'Midnight Cowboy'.*

Ah, right. [35:00]

[Pause] But he, he'd asked me if I'd go in and see him and I did and he said 'You've worked with Ian Bannen, what's he like to work with'? And I said 'Impossible', and he said 'Penelope wants him'. And I said 'Penelope doesn't have to work with him, he's a neurotic and it's a difficult part for a neurotic man to play'. John and I immediately got off to a fine start and it was pure pleasure working with him. I mean Peter Finch when he changed, decided he had to change actors was marvellous. I'd known him for a hundred years, I'd known him in Australia and...

That's a lovely performance isn't it?

*Marvellous, marvellous. Glenda's an odd actress. [Pause] I mean I don't think she's a very good politician now, I didn't think she was an outstandingly good actress either. But it had, it had a lot of very good things in it and it was immensely enjoyable to work on and it was very good to get the taste of Ryan's Daughter out of my mouth and to work on a film where everyone was working together. And John was both funny, Joe Janni was funny. I remember we had a crowd call for Jewish extras. John, me, Joe Janni, and Joe said to me after they'd gone 'In many ways Jocelyn I don't see how you'll make any of these people look middle or upper middle class'. And I said 'The first thing to do Joe is to make them wash their faces and the next thing to do is their clothes'.*

Yes.

*Because we had those, a period Bar Mitzvah and a later Bar Mitzvah. And one had sort of pleasant things to do in it. And one day we were at a synagogue and I found myself, I was wearing a Djellaba and Maurice said 'Oh dear God I forgot, Arabs and Jews are at war'. 'Well, can't be, there's nothing I can do about it'. And but it was, it was immensely enjoyable. Is there anything you want to ask me?*

No. It's, it's such a pleasant film and again it's of its time. Murray Head, whatever happened to Murray Head? What, what do you remember of...?

He was a, he really was a singer.

Yes.

And he went and lived in France.

Ah, ha.

And was a hugely successful pop singer.

Right.

He was, he was a scatty boy who would never be where you wanted him. His hair always needed washing but otherwise he was okay and...

Mm, mm. Any stand out memory on the film?

About him?

No, not about him but about the film generally? Any, anything particularly that sticks in your memory?

No. I mean very enjoyable to make.

Right.

*Luciana Arrighi, it was nice to work with. Mm, it was her first film and... [Pause]*

I remember you did one scene in, in my building where I was living then in Albert Court, I came down one day. [Laughter]

Whereabouts?

Albert Court, the one behind the Albert Hall.

Oh yes, yes.

Do you remember that?

Yes, with Peggy Ashcroft, Glenda, whoever Peggy Ashcroft was meant to be married to.

It, that's right, yes, his, that's, they were his...

*Was it Mark Bidden? [ph 39:30]*

Mark? Basil, was it Basil or Mark? I can't remember.

Oh, no.

Basil lived in the building.

Well, I guess that's how we got in.

His brother. Well, maybe, although it was such a... Do, do you remember the lobby?

Yes.

That, that extended.

And I can remember Glenda going out. She had a grey, grey, long, longish grey tweed coat with a stitched high collar [40:00] and she has the most dreadful legs which I was trying to disguise all the time. But also I'd bought her an amazing grey, dark grey knitted scarf with bright pink stripes and fringed edge, because she'd got a long neck and that was round her neck, and she was walking along a corridor.

She looks a terrible scruff these days doesn't she?

Yes. She's got no idea about clothes.

No.

None.

No.

I mean she did look alright in the film but... [Pause]

You said you, you were very fond of Joe Janni. Any, any memories of Joe, because he, he was such a sweet man wasn't he?

*He was, he was a funny man, he was a sweet man. And I can remember one day Joe and John had an absolutely screaming row, and afterwards John said 'That's better, it's the first row we've had on this film'. And I don't think I've got much else to say about it. I've got something to say about costume designing though, and that is that I think it should be totally at the service of the audience, it ought to be there to take short cuts. I mean you should be able to tell from people's clothes what kind of, of, what newspaper they take. I mean you can, you should be able to tell a Guardian reader from a Times reader, from an Express reader, you should be able to read all kinds of their preferences, whether they're... I did write a piece about it once which is in my autobiography which I can no longer read but*

*Jocelyn Rickards DRAFT.  
Tape 1 Side B*

*which says it all, and if you want to read it switch that off and I think it's behind you and you could read the bit out.*

*Right, okay. Well, alright, fine. We're unable then to locate that particular passage but we'll look again. Right, I think then we'll change the tape and we'll move on to the next credit.*

*[End of Side Tape 1 Side B 0:42:39]*

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

*Tape 2 Side A.*

Now whoops. We're now on to Tape 7 with Jocelyn. Yes, so the next title I've got is 'Charlie Chan and the Curse of The Dragon Queen', US 1980?

Well, mm, I'd, I'd very much opted out of design except [Pause] sort of vaguely offering an opinion now and then, but we went to live in Los Angeles and, [Pause] which I hated, and the first thing I was asked to do. Do you remember Hilary Mackendrick?

No.

Sandy's wife?

No, no, I didn't know her.

*Well, she asked me if I would take on, I think it was a term at the University of Southern California with, working with the design students. So I said yes, I would. And that was very enjoyable. And then [Pause] Clive was asked to do this very weird script called Charlie Chan and the Curse of The Dragon Queen, which had in it Peter Ustinov. Oh I've now forgotten, Roddy McDowall, Michelle Pfeiffer, her first movie. Mm, [Pause] quite a lot of other actress's names I've totally forgotten. And he, Clive, said to me 'Please design it for me, I think they're such sloppy designers here', so I said 'Sure, okay', because I hadn't been able to settle down and start to paint. And, [Pause] oh, she'd been married to, the Dragon Queen was... Dear God what was her name? She was married at one time to was it Burt Bacharach?*

I couldn't tell you but it would be a matter of record so it's easily, it's easily traceable, right.

Yes, exactly, traceable. And there was a very good actress whose name I've forgotten again. Anyway we shot on Hollywood location and San Francisco. [Pause] There were, there was a woman producer whom I didn't like and I remember at a production meeting she said 'I haven't seen your designs yet Jocelyn', and I said 'No, nor will you, I never show them to producers I show them to the director and the lighting cameraman and possibly the actor who's got to wear them but otherwise I don't show them to anyone' And I enjoyed the whole thing of getting up people's noses. I enjoyed getting up the Teamster's nose.

Mm.

And, but once we started on the film it went ahead very easily. What I was amazed by we were doing one bit actually in the MGM studio and I couldn't... Oh, Rachel Roberts was in it and I've, no, I won't remember the other name because it's gone from... It might have been Lee Grant, I think it was. But [Pause] I literally haven't thought about it from that day to this. I took, as wardrobe mistress I took a girl from US, University of Southern California with me and somebody from The Ahmanson Center who I had been meant, where I had been meant to be working with Franco Zeffirelli, but while I was in Rome seeing Franco and The Ahmanson were *bickering about the price of costume.*

*I got a message to say was I aware that the [05:00] costume budget was simply ludicrous but worth then at a maximum of four dollars a question - a costume, this for Hamlet. And I said to Franco 'I don't believe this', and he looked at it, and Dyson Lovell was staying with Franco who'd just had jaundice and we were on a terrible diet of, of pasta with no butter, with nothing. We couldn't even get a drink, Dyson and I would go to a local bar for a drink because we couldn't get one in the house, and a ravishing house on the Via Appia with outsized begonias in baskets all the way round the veranda. But Franco, when I said 'Its less than four dollars a costume and I'm, I'm quite good but I'm not as good as that', he said 'Dyson ring whatever his name is and just ask if they're really meaning what they say'. And Dyson rang and said what, oh Bobby something he was, 'Do you mean this Bobby'? And Bobby whatever his name was said 'Yes' and Dyson said 'You know no one can produce costumes for Hamlet at that price', and he said 'yes, I do know', and he said 'are you trying to persuade everyone to, to leave'? Anyway there was a dreadful row and Clive and I came back to, flew back from Rome to New York and I, we stopped the night, and then I saw Santo Loquasto that morning and I said 'Santo, no, no dice'. And he said 'I do know headlines in all the New York papers'. And the one thing that, that Franco did was to force them to pay everyone their total fee for non-performance.*

Why did they want to close it down, did you ever find out?

I think they were frightened of Franco.

Oh.

*It's the only thing I can think of. I've forgotten who was in it and also I mean I remember Charlton Heston saying he'd, he'd do a television commercial, he'd do anything to make the money up for them but they weren't interested.*

Mm, an extraordinary story.

I know. But now what was I, what did I say?

We're on 'Charlie Chan' still.

Yes. How did I get on to...? Well, never mind. Yes, *Charlie Chan* was later than the Ahmanson venture with Franco. And [Pause] also I'd got, I'd got a union ticket and they're like, they're like gold teeth.

Had that been difficult to, to get in?

*No, I'd found it very easy. But I'd spoken to the secretary of the Designer's Guild who said 'No chance', but I knew I had some kind of chance because I'd written to UA, MGM and maybe Paramount, all of whom I'd worked for and who I knew various people, and I'd just written directly to them and asked them to get in touch with the unions, and I got a ticket like that. And this secretary rang me and said 'You're being paid an outrageous amount of money for The Curse of the Dragon Queen, I think you should share it', with a man called Burton something? And I said 'What for'? And she said 'He's been very kind to you'. I mean I'd known, he'd been working with Clive on Maxwell Smart and he wasn't a designer's arsehole, he was a nice man who I think gave me some prints which I didn't want, they were Victorian crimps which I didn't like. [10:00] And she said 'I mean you're being paid three thousand dollars a week', and I said 'I didn't come all this way to be paid less than I was being paid in, in London, so whatever you say stuff it'. So I had a lot of unpleasant, mm, [Pause] God knows what one calls it. I was intransigent and they were hostile to me because I'd come, come from the outside and managed to get in on what they considered to be the top floor.*

You know how difficult the American unions are?

Yes.

Yes.

*Anyway...*

The designers one was a corrupt one too in, in my experience, you know, it took some back handers to get in.

*Well...*

You had, you had to hire the, the business agent for, for lessons as I remember.

*You had to what?*

To hire the business agent to give you lessons as I remember. That's....

Really?

Yes. That's, that's, that's oh what? You know, thirty, forty years ago but...

*Well, this is quite a lot of years ago, 1980 but, mm, I did get in and I got myself in and so I was lucky. There's also something else, I've been, for Morgan I didn't get an Academy Award but I was nominated.*

Yes.

*Which I think makes it easier. Anyway let me think, ask me about The Curse of the Dragon Queen.*

Well, I've never seen it, so it was an independent picture or a studio picture?

No, independent.

It was independent, yes. And I fear I've never seen it so I can't ask you questions. It, I remember it being around but I don't, I don't, it didn't have much of a reception did it?

No, it didn't have a great reception.

No.

It's got some nice performances in it. Rachel's good, Roddy's alright.

What were they trying to do, create a franchise? A whole, was it going to be a series of Charlie Chan revivals do you think?

No, I don't think so. There was ah, the producer was a very schlock New York wide boy.

Mm, mm. Is that all the help I'm allowed? [Laughter]

I can't remember his name.

I mean there were so many, there are so many, that's exactly, that's the prototypical producer isn't it?

He was, he had a passion for Oriental women and he had a very nice Oriental girlfriend but more than that I don't remember. Jerry Sherlock I think he was called and...

Yes.

I really don't remember much about it. Except I remember one day we were doing a scene downtown in Los Angeles and Rachel was wearing, she was a maid in it but she was wearing, they were going to a funeral I think and she was wearing black. Black sort of pillbox hat, black coat and I had a bunch of violets in my hand and I said 'Rachel would you mind fixing these in your hat? I'm not going to do it, I may put them in the right place I just want you to put them in the wrong place'. So she did and it was perfect. I mean she just perched them right on top. And we had an amazing lunch at that huge hotel downtown, what was it called?

The Roosevelt, The Ambassador, The Beverly Wilshire, the, oh God, mm?

*Very old-fashioned hotel I think.*

The Roosevelt, I said The Roosevelt didn't I? That was, that's quite old fashioned. Downtown in LA?

*Yes. [Pause]*

Can't, I can't think.

*I can't either. My memories about this are hopeless. Because I was not very interested in the film, Clive was under the most enormous pressures from the, the unions and from the extras union and I didn't really enjoy the film nor did I think it was good. But I think, thought there were very good things in it [15:00] and I was just so relieved when it was all over. I mean I'd, I'd gone back to work for Clive's sake and I think and Michelle Pfeiffer was an astonishing find.*

Yes. A beautiful, beautiful creature.

What?

A beautiful, beautiful creature?

Oh beautiful and totally, I mean unspoiled. She'd, she'd come from what she called Orange County and she wore sort of cheesecloth dresses. And I, I saw her and I said 'We haven't got time Michelle to have anything made for you but if you can keep yourself busy here for the rest of the day Elaine and I will go out and buy some clothes for you', and we did. And we bought I remember an evening dress, sort of beetroot coloured with shoestring straps which went in three tiers and, oh, a pleated cream silk... Mm, what else did we get? I can't remember what else.

Where would you go shopping for such a thing? Bullock's or...?

I can't, no.

No.

We went, Elaine said to me 'Let's go downtown there's a', it may, might have been Bullock's downtown and might have been Neimam Marcus even, but wherever we went we found extremely good clothes, very simple, extremely well cut and in pure silk because they don't fuck up the sound track. And we brought, took them back and they all fitted her like a glove and so we were away.

Mm, mm. And you say that was her first picture?

Yes.

Really?

And [Pause] I can't remember much else. We went to, well we went to San Francisco, and [Pause] another film that I was delighted when it was over. I could remember more about the other ones on your list like those.

Yes. Well, I get the feeling there isn't a great deal to be said about 'Charlie Chan'?

No.

And these days I suppose it would be regarded as racist having Peter Ustinov playing a Chinese?

Who, what?

I say these days it would be...

It would be considered as racist because of what?

Because of Ustinov playing a Chinese, China, Chinese man.

Well, I suppose so.

Yes.

*Yes. And...*

We have, we have to behave ourselves these days.

I know we do, a load of rubbish.

Yes.

Mm, oh I know what I've got to say. Maybe I said this to you before but I don't think I did. Pavla was playing a lady's maid in a bit of it, and Pavla Ustinov, and this bit we were shooting at MGM and I said to an ancient MGM hairdresser 'I would like her hair done like Greta Garbo in *Anna Karenina*, and she said 'Who'?

Gosh.

*And I couldn't believe it. So I said 'Get a still from the library'. So she had to write 'Greta Garbo' and 'Anna Karenina' down and she came back and I said 'That's right, I want her hair done like that, up at the sides, up there and down at the back'. And it was things like that about Los Angeles which appalled me. I mean these people working in the film industry with no historic knowledge at all.*

Well, especially at a studio like MGM.

Yes, exactly.

Which had been the greatest of the, of the factories.

Yes.

Yes.

*And, mm...*

Whatever else they did they got things right in terms of...

I've just remembered. Angie Dickinson was the name I couldn't remember.

Ah, right.

She was the Dragon Queen.

*Mm, mm.*

And who main, who seemed to wear fancy dress most times, mm.

Tell me about your memories of living in LA?

We hated it.

Yes.

We first of all had had a, had an apartment off La Cienega in Al Paloma [ph 18:42] which was okay, and I said to Clive 'This is costing an arm and a leg let's...' No, first of all we were at Universal, we took a house on Mulholland [20:00] and I loved the house. It was very big rooms and not many of them, verandas. Did I tell you about this, the, the day I was...? Clive was out seeing someone and I was there alone. We were having Mary and Max Shulman to lunch. I was farting about getting lunch and suddenly the front door opened and in walked this coloured man with two others and I said 'Who are you and what are you doing here'? And he said 'Who are you, this is my house', and I said 'Don't be ridiculous, we're living here and it's not your house'. Did I not tell you this?

You have.

Yes.

Yes, you did.

*Well, there's no point in telling you.*

Hardly, no, no. Unless, right.

And, mm, we had to then the Universal police made us get out of there and we took this apartment off La Cienega and then I said 'I'm sick of living in an apartment, let's see if we can, it's better to buy a house'. And I asked the, did I tell you this? I asked the estate agent to find a house in Hollywood Hills.

Yes. I can't remember the amount of detail we went in to, it might be a good idea to cover it again.

Well, I mean the first places he took, took me to were are they called the Holmby Hills?

Holmby Hills, yes.

And I said 'Harvey, I'd never find my way home, they're just a row of identical hideous houses, no'. And he said 'Well, what do you want'? And I said 'I want a Spanish house or something like a Spanish house in the Hollywood Hills', and he said 'They come expensive', and I said 'just see what you can find', I think I told you this.

We did, yes. Yes, I think probably we did cover it fully.

And once we'd got back working I was happier there because I liked it very, very much. I liked the house, I liked the atmosphere and I was able to paint there and then...

Mm, mm. And Clive is what? Very busy during all this period?

And Clive was busy.

*Mm, mm.*

And I just did enjoy it – that. But my God as soon as it was possible to get back I couldn't wait.

How long were you there altogether?

I've got no idea.

No?

However long it was it was too long.

Another sentence?

Yes.

Yes, right.

*And we came, he came back to do... I can't remember whether he came back to do The Scarlet Pimpernel or Oliver Twist. I think it was The Scarlet, it might have been The Scarlet Pimpernel. Anyway...*

*Okay. So you're back here?*

Yes.

The next, I don't know if there's anything in the interim, you were painting during all this period were you?

Yes, yes.

Did you do any theatrical work at all?

I had an exhibition and... [Pause]

Mm. Did you have a gallery and revenue?

Yes.

Yes.

*In Langton Street, next to La Famiglia.*

Ah, yes, right. It's still there.

Yes. No, it's not.

Well, I don't know about the gallery.

No, yes.

But the restaurant's still open.

Yes it still is, we had lunch there yesterday.

Mm, mm. Well, then we have in '88 'Stealing Heaven'.

*Stealing Heaven? Yes. I painted a mural around Heloise's bedroom. And I paint..., actually there's a painting in the drawing room too that I did for her set.*

Right.

*But the mural was rather nice. It was just trees, fruit, flowers all the way round, very high key.*

You have a credit on that picture what is it? Artistic Consultant or some such and I can't remember precisely. Did you have any input in to the general design or appearance of the film?

Mm, I worked, Voytek did it and I always had some kind of input because I've always got an opinion.

Right.

*It's whether if anyone's...*

And Clive relies clearly on your visual judgement?

Yes, yes.

Right, mm.

*And Stuart, and then there was the other one Arthur The King that I did very little on [25:00] but again I worked in the same way. Phyllis Dalton did the costumes, a nice Italian did the sets who was forever coming and saying 'Help, come and have a look at the set, I've brought some things from Rome and Martin Poll doesn't like them'. And I said 'Well, I'll, let me come down and we'll redress the set and if I say that I like them I'll go and tell him not to be an arsehole'. So we did and, and what was his name Franco, Franco Chianese was the set designer. And, and the only other thing I interfered with desperately was the placing of the extras. Did you see the film?*

*Yes, I have, yes.*

*Well, you know where Alfred's body goes out to sea?*

Mm, sorry, no, no, no, not 'Arthur The King'.

I mean Arthur.

I beg your pardon, no, not 'Arthur The King', no.

It's got some bad things in it but it's got some, some good things in it. But I used to interfere with where they put the extras. Because then, then one day they said to Phyllis 'Will you, will you place the extras'? And she placed them and she said to me 'They look terrible', and I said 'Yes, do you mind if I, if I redo them'? And she said 'Anything'. And I said 'It's just something that I learned from working with Antonioni', which is to put blocks of colour together not to break it up, and we did that and it looked okay. Mm, but she was marvellous on that film, she was just great. And I think her, I think she's a very good designer and she worked her arse off. The only thing I made for it was a fertility doll for, to be carried in procession, and she was rather nice. I, I was planning to bring her back but she got smashed up. She was, she had a total egg head and I did her hair with wheat and her hands with wheat and a dress that shape.

That shape being what?

Oh.

Describe it?

Very wide 'A' shape and underneath where her body was meant to be I had a little batten with four - one, two, three, yes, four, mm, screws, capped screws, and on to them I hung four little, little tiny rag dolls of figures as though babies. And at one moment Edward carrying her in procession just pulls a string and she gives birth to all of them. I was quite pleased with her, I was always pleased with small things that I did myself that didn't rely on any one else. What else is there? Nothing else in that film.

Well, there's nothing else on the list I think so...

Goodie.

Ah you say 'goodie'. What, I think we're in to the area of words of wisdom now looking back, a short trot down memory lane, we haven't done the long one. I will draw the attention of future historians to your autobiography *The Painted Banquet* published in Seventy...?

Eighty-seven.

Eighty-seven, Eighty-seven, right. And that is as forthright as I think the recording has been. You certainly have, well you are forthright is I guess is the word, you're unsparing both with your praise and your criticism, which is interesting or rewarding, useful.

*Mm, yes. I was astonished listening to that programme last night which is a re-editing of the Arena programme about Graham Greene with a lot of, I mean every film that's ever been made about him, every interview he ever gave, and I was ex..., I was astonished about how forthright I was in that. I mean I wasn't expecting to be faced by myself and, mm...*

When was the original footage made?

*After he died.*

Oh that was about ten years ago wasn't it?

Yes.

Yes.

*And, mm, I was talking about [30:00] Catherine Walston [Pause] whom he, he dedicated The End Of The Affair to her and I, I thought she was a reprehensible woman, but I did love Graham until the day he died. And have I got anything else to say? I think I wasted my life working on films actually. I didn't waste my life, I wasted a great deal of time. I was good at it because I found it very easy to do. It was a question for me of solving problems, and every problem you have there's a solution to it, so that I did find it easy. I mean some things I don't think I did very well, other things I do think I did well, mm.*

As a painter Jocelyn were, was it, were they difficult births, your paintings, or, or were you very adept at that?

No.

Were you prolific?

*I, I used to struggle as a painter. I mean [Pause] though if I ever had a commission I could do it very quickly, it was another problem that had to be solved. I didn't like portrait commissions but I was, I wasn't a bad portrait painter. And I mean extant there's a very good painting I did of Freddie Ayer's son, Nicholas when he was a baby, and there's quite a good head I did of Freddie. But there are two paintings here that I like. One is the one of, of the head from Stealing Heaven. Another one's in the bedroom and it's got a sort of feeling of a primitive [Pause] almost Etruscan painting, that's a painting I quite like it's a sort of...*

Right. It's always difficult to talk about visual things on an audio tape.

Yes, yes.

I don't know if you want to describe it?

No.

No?

No.

Okay, I'd embarrass you if I were to, I'd embarrass myself, mm.

*Actually it's me lying in bed with two Siamese cats on the end of the bed.*

Ah. Well, now I'm craning around I can see it because the light was all on the front of it?

Yes.

From life?

Yes. Well, I guess so.

Yes.

Sort of from life.

Mm, mm, yes. Well, I, foolish question I suppose but what's your proudest accomplishment as it occurs to you?

*What's my...?*

Your proudest accomplishment as, as it occurs to you as you look back?

*I'm not particularly proud about anything. The thing that I'm delighted about is writing now for The Oldie.*

Yes.

*Because when my sight went I thought 'Jesus that's the end of my life', but it wasn't, I've gone on. I mean I've written a piece about Graham Greene, a piece about going blind, a piece about Barbara Skelton, a piece about Freddie Ayer, a piece about John Osborne which they've just published, and I've written all of those since maybe March last year, and it's marvellous to have. I enjoy writing and I find it easier, much easier than painting and I've always enjoyed it and I've spent the last ten years or so honing my ability to write and it's marvellous now to have an outlet for it.*

Yes.

*So there we are.*

Losing your sight, that's now what a progressive thing or has that stabilised?

*No, I don't think it is going to stabilise. It's a question of the, mm, the retina in my right eye has almost gone. In the left eye, I mean it's as though they're made of [Pause] old lace. And the peripheral vision is better. I mean the man who makes my specs is a genius and, you know, I can see. [35:00] I, I, I almost say I can see, I can't see, I can't read any longer and that's very boring.*

Yes.

*But at least I'm not in a state of savage gloom I was in when it first happened. I mean I didn't care if I lived or died. I did, I wanted to die.*

And this what began quite suddenly?

*My sight, my night sight's always been bad and then about three or four years ago I was worried by it and I went to a very good eye specialist. A terrible job for them telling you that your sight's going because it's the most terrifying thing.*

Yes, yes.

*And anyway I've now come to terms with it and that's that.*

Well, you're a feisty person there's no doubt about that. I've enjoyed this immensely. I don't know if you have any final valediction or benediction?

*No, I haven't got any final anything.*

Right, okay. Well, thank you very, very much Jocelyn.

*Well, thank you. You're the best interviewer I've ever had.*

Oh well, that's nice to hear too, thank you.

*[End of Tape 2 Side A 0:36:16]*

*Transcript Queries – Jocelyn Rickards*

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4 10:45	<i>Janet 'Moat'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Times Critic.</i>
4 10:47	<i>Janet 'Moat'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Times Critic.</i>
15 32:35	<i>'Dielle Roussimar'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Fragrance?</i>
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30 27:01	<i>Chateau 'Belbeau'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Expensive wine.</i>
32 31:50	<i>'Narmio? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Lover of Jocelyn's.</i>
33 36:53	<i>'Joe Yani'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Actor or technician.</i>
33 37:08	<i>'Joe Yani'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Actor or technician.</i>

*Jocelyn Rickards DRAFT.  
Tape 4 Side 2*

35	39:30	Mark 'Bidden'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Actor or technician.
36	40:43	'Joe Yani'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Actor or technician.
Tape 2 Side A		
47	18:42	'Al Paloma? Spelling/Doubtful Word – District of Los Angeles.

**BECTU History Project**  
**Interview no: 493**  
**Interviewee: Jocelyn Rickards**  
**Interviewer: Roy Fowler**  
**No of tapes Two**  
**Duration: 02:13:41**

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 4 Side 1. *This side has been transcribed previously.*

*Tape 4 Side 2.*

Side 8 B. We're running, sorry, you were down in Paestum

*Yes. Coutard had come to see Tony in France, he'd been outraged by Tony's jokes about David Watkin.*

Well, what were the jokes?

Oh well, I can't remember now.

No. But, but nasty?

*Oh yes, naturally.*

Yes, malicious, yes.

*I mean David was there.*

Yes.

*But, mm, there was this huge lunch party on the lawn outside Tony's house, and I remember I was sitting next to Marguerite Duras, who's a real cow, she wore pebble specs and she looked like a frog.*

She'd written the script, right?

Yes.

Yes.

*She'd, one of her closest friends was a friend of mine called Sonia Orwell, George Orwell's widow. And I said something to her, I can't remember, fell on deaf ears so I thought 'Oh fuck you, I'm not going to try again'. Mm, I said to Coutard 'Would you, what do you like, I mean what do you shoot on for white?' meaning did he want cream or white, and he said 'White'. And I thought 'Oh goodness, he's an attractive man'. And then we met again in Paestum. [Pause] Bef..., I'm just trying to think of, I know, Vanessa turned up in Rome pre production time so Umberto Orsini, I, I said 'Where can I find clothes for Vanessa'? And he took me to a place in the Piazza di Spagna where they had absolutely the sort, the sort of clothes that were right. I didn't like them but they were right from the point of view of character. I mean a right bathing suit, a right, a couple of right dresses, and then we used a dress of her own. And again it wasn't a very heavy film to do. I used to freak out because Ian Bannen kept a crucifix in his pocket, and every time I picked up his jacket from the floor to hang it up the crucifix would fall on the floor and I'd say 'Jesus fucking Christ', and eventually I said 'Can't you keep this away. Because I'm committing blasphemy every day'? And he, oh he was a boring actor.*

Was he a nutter, religious nutter?

Yes.

Yes.

*He was a religious nutter. And so nervous, I don't remember his performance at all.*

He, he could be good I think in all fairness.

*I think he wasn't bad in this.*

No, no.

*We shot in and around Agropoli, which is on the borders of Paestum. And [Pause] Vanessa's rather a prim character going everywhere with a guidebook. I remember I had to play a scene with her in Florence, and in the, near Uffizi she, Coutard crept in with a concealed camera and Vanessa and I were walking past The Primavera. Anyway it was getting to the stage where Tony was more neurotic than I've ever known him to be and [Pause] he drove me mad. He, Vanessa was also getting very anti. When she'd been in, in France with us she came to my room in the hotel one day and she said 'The, the cameraman who's come to be second camera, I was doing some work with him the other day I think he, he rather fancies me, will you deliver this note to him'? And I turned to the window and saw him, it was Alex Thomson walking down the village street with his wife [05:00] and I said 'Vanessa, there's his wife over there with him, she's not called 'Tiger' Thomson for nothing'. And Vanessa thought and said 'Oh well' and tore the note up. So I thought, I didn't think anything of it. I mean I did think a whole lot of things of it but it didn't worry me in particular.*

*And [Pause] then when we were all in Rome we often had drinks and or and/or dinner with Franco Zeffirelli. And one evening we were there and I don't remember, I know Maggie Smith was there, I can't remember who else, but there was also a young Italian there and before we knew where we were, I didn't know because I had too much to do but Vanessa was having an affair with him. Tony, Jan, Tony had a driver called Jan, was he Czechoslovakian? Maybe. Anyway he was hideously ugly but loved Tony, thought the sun shone out of his arse. Vanessa instead of using taxis would get Jan to drive her to her assignments. Jan told Tony, Tony freaked out to me. And one day, I don't know, I tried saying to him 'Tony, why don't you face up to your own sexuality, it's not going to keep her satisfied for long', and I virtually did say it but elliptically. He chose not to notice.*

*By this time I'd had dinner in London with an art historian called John Richardson whom I'd known for years who lived in Albany and he had a dinner, dinner party and he said 'How are you getting on with Tony'? And I said 'Oh God, if only he'd, I mean I don't, I can't give you chapter and verse about his sexuality but if only he'd come clean because I think it would be easier'. And he said, he said 'What do you mean'? And I said 'Well, I assume he swings both ways', and he said 'Sure he does, I've been to bed with him' and told me chapter and verse. And I didn't say anything to Tony but there I was, I now knew and accepted, again accepted it. And anyway we started shooting this film. We moved from Agropoli to Florence. No, from Florence maybe to Agropoli. And from Agropoli the unit went to Rome to see rushes. Simone and I were left in Agropoli to fly next day to Athens. And Christian said 'Why haven't you gone to, to Rome'? And I said 'Nobody asked us to go'. And he said 'That's ridiculous, I mean for Simone not to see the rushes, for you not to see the rushes is ludicrous, you should be, you should be there'. And he ordered a car, he got a hotel room for us and Simone and I went to Rome. By this time I was having an affair with Coutard. [Pause] Jan tried to get in to bed for years and he said 'No', you know, just 'no, thank you but no'. He was, I loved him, he was an amazing cameraman, I mean more inventive than anyone I've ever worked with and faster than the speed of sound, or the speed of light for that matter. He used to, he used to top up his batteries every night and he used to work but he carried, they carried his equipment his crew, and they were the halt, the lame and the blind. One had a wooden leg, I can't remember what the rest were like [10:00] but they, they were all, I think they might well have been North African partisans at one moment but anyway they just worked like clockwork and... [Pause].*

He was his own operator was he?

Yes.

Yes, right.

*Absolutely. And I remember him one night in Agropoli shooting on Ian and Jan on a tiny little dance floor set almost in the middle of a river in a reed bank and he, he shot three hundred and sixty degrees round them. Jan, they danced and he walked round, I think someone else was steadying the camera, and it was amazing. And on the way back he said 'Did you design that dress'? And I said 'No', and he said 'I didn't like it', and I said 'I don't either'. And things were getting very nasty. I, Christian got Simone and I back to see the rushes and then next morning we all went to Athens. [Pause] Mm...*

The undercurrents presumably are what the disturbing threat?

Yes.

Or, or, or making the film?

Yes, and...

Which, is it the personalities at play?

Personalities.

Mm, mm. How was the shoot going, was that fairly smooth or...?

*It had been smooth up to then but crisis time.*

Right.

*After the rushes had been seen in, mm, we did see a few rushes when we were in Agropoli, we'd see them in the local fire station as far as I remember. But unsatisfactory and then...*

Performance?

Performance was okay, I...

Well, of course...

*He decided, he decided to change the format, I think it had been wide screen.*

Ah, right, I see.

*And he decided to bring it in. And the first day of shooting in Athens on the boat which we'd been shooting on anyway, mm, I got to the set. Ruth Myers I'd taken with me from The Royal Court and Oscar, so cheesy, wouldn't, wouldn't have a wardrobe mistress so there was quite enough to do. Ruth had been in hospital, she'd got some kind of I can't remember what, I think allergy and her eyes swelled up like they had elephantiasis, but anyway she was back in Athens. And I arrived there for the first day of shooting and Tony said to me 'You're going back to London today and on the way you're going to stop in Madrid. Did you know you're going back to London today and on the way you're going to stop in Madrid and see Orson Welles, did you know'? And I said 'No, of course I didn't know but if you say so I'm certain it must be'. And I said to Ruth 'Now are you alright, you've got notes of everything, you're on your own'? And I was furious because... 'Then you go back', said Tony 'and start The Charge Of The Light Brigade I said, as I stepped off the boat, I touched Coutard who was lighting and I said 'Goodbye'. [Laughter] And he said 'Goodbye'? And I said 'Yes, don't ask me why'. I mean thank God by then I was colloquial in French or English because he didn't, he didn't speak English 'But I'm going back to London and I've got to see Orson Welles on the way, I don't know why'. Neil drove me back to the ho... Oh, and then I saw Christian on the jetty and I said to him 'Goodbye, [Laughter] 'and I don't know why, you know, I don't know why this is happening but it is and I think you'll be alright with Ruth'. In the end Marc Gruenbaum came to see me in London and said 'Ruth was impossible. She, [Pause] she spent her time being teacher's pet to Tony. [15:00] [Pause].*

Yes.

So what?

No, go ahead, no, I'm listening.

*Mm, she didn't, I mean it was okay in the end but...*

The mike has become, that's it fine. Yes, it, it got slightly buried, yes.

*Mm, [Pause] now let's think.*

Had you, Jocelyn had you been fired without it being said, was that it, dismissed or, or what's your status?

*I'd been, I was to come back, no I was to come back, Ruth would carry on. I hadn't been fired, I was, mm, I was to come back and start work on The Charge Of The Light Brigade.*

Oh I see, right. But you were off 'The Sailor'?

*I was off The Sailor. But I felt that I hadn't finished The Sailor, there was a whole lot to do on it, there were a whole lot of people we hadn't shot on. Anyway I was very angry and I wrote Tony a letter which I gave to Neil to deliver saying 'I'm not going to work on The Charge Of The Light Brigade I'm going back and I don't ever want to work with you again, I find your behaviour un, un...' whatever, unprofessional probably, 'and I feel that I've left the film before it's half started'.*

I'm uncertain what precipitated this, the fact that suddenly you're, you're moved from one film to another?

*To another.*

Yes, right.

*And, you know, I'd, I hadn't decided on what Shands [ph 16:45] changes of costume would be. I hadn't, I mean I hadn't done, I hadn't fitted Umberto, I hadn't, I hadn't fitted Orson Welles. I, you know, and so on and so on and so on.*

Right. Had, you'd, you'd had the meeting with Welles in Madrid by this time had you?

*It, what?*

You'd had the meeting with Welles?

*I had the meeting with Welles.*

Yes.

*And...*

That might be interesting to describe don't you think?

*Well, it's not very.*

No?

*Because by this time I was, I was angry, I'd... They'd booked me in to a hotel. The, the lines from Athens to Madrid, you might as well have been semaphoring, nothing got through. No hotel booking for me and they got me in to another hotel where in fact Dick Lester and his crew were staying for, mm, I guess The Musketeers, but I stay... Orson Welles was ringing one hotel where I wasn't, I was trying to ring him at his apartment and couldn't get on to him, eventually I did. I didn't have enough money and I longed to get back to London. I saw Orson Well's, we had a not satisfactory meeting because I*

*said to him 'Ruth Myers will deal with your costume in...', mm, in wherever he was meeting them. And what else did I? I, I said 'Can you lend me some money, I need a very, about the equivalent of ten pounds to get out of the hotel'? And he said 'No', and I tried, I then went to the British Embassy, shut. And I went back and asked for my bill and I couldn't pay it, and I thought 'Shit, what am I going to do now'? And I'm standing there looking very agitated and a man put his hand on my shoulder and said 'Come and have a drink'? So I did and he said 'What's happened'? And I told him and he said 'How much do you need'? And I said 'Ten pounds'. And he said, I said 'I can give you a cheque on my English bank', and he said 'That's fine' and, and he gave me the money. I gave him the cheque, paid the bill, got a taxi, went to the airport and got back. And I went, when I was back in to see Lee Allen to tell him about the horrors of what it was like on this apparent round the world cruise being done on, I can't remember what the boat was called, and where were they going next? Maybe Egypt. Anyway I was away from them [20:00] and I said 'I'm not going to do, mm 'The Charge Of The Light Brigade, it's too big, I think Tony's in no, no state to take it on'.*

I want to change the battery.

*Yes. And then David Watkin had had a totally dozy idea about The Charge Of The Light Brigade, he said 'Can't they wear blue and silver instead of red and gold'? [Laughter] And Tony said 'No', but it had been decided by this time that Ruben Haroutunian [ph 20:51]. Do you know who I mean?*

Sorry, who?

Ruben Haroutunian [ph 20:57]

Yes, yes, indeed, yes. I'm a little worried because I'm getting distortion and I don't quite know where it's coming from.

*Well, how much distortion?*

Mm, well, enough to worry me. It may be the, the earphones which I think are a bit clapped out, let me just... I'm sorry about that.

*That's okay, mm.*

Yes, really we're talking around 'Charge Of The Light Brigade'.

'Charge Of The Light Brigade'.

And you were saying Watkin had some peculiar ideas?

*Mm, David wanted it, wanted all, all the British Army to be in, in blue and gold, blue and silver, nobody would have known where they were. And David was to be cameraman, Ruben Haroutunian [ph 21:45] was to be production designer and [Pause] there was a letter for me from him wanting something, wanting samples of red and I said to Lee 'Well, I'll do that but I'm, I'm absolutely at the end of the line I don't want to work with Tony again, he's been mercurial, impossible and unpredictable and I can't imagine what it would be like in Turkey with him with a huge crowd'. Apart from that John Osborne's script had been pinched from Cecil Woodham-Smith's The Reason Why and there was a huge court case over it because Larry Harvey had the rights. Mm, by this time Jan and Tony were daggers drawn, I can't quite remember why. I mean I remember things were getting very dicey between them. When I'd been in Istanbul doing From Russia With Love and [Pause] he, he, they went on squabbling and falling rapidly apart. Mm, [Pause] so I guess Tony had taken it aboard that I was pissed off and I settled down, now what did I start doing? Mm, [Pause] God what is the next thing?*

'Blow-Up' according to this.

*Well, I think it probably is, what's the date of The Sailor From Gibraltar?*

Sixty-seven. Mm, which it has to be release date because 'Blow-Up' is listed as '66.

Yes, and we shot that in '66.

So yes, mm.

*I got back to London, I was exhausted because I'd done one and a half films. Oh no, I'd done The Mac, Morgan, Mademoiselle, and half of Sailor From Gibraltar on the, on the trot. And I was, the only thing I was faintly interested in was [Pause] all news of Antonioni coming to London. And the telephone rang one day [25:00] and it was Assheton Gorton who said 'Listen, I'm working with Antonioni can I bring him round to your studio and any others you can get me in to'? And I said 'Sure Assheton and you're not to tell him that I'm a costume designer, he can be, I can be a painter because you mustn't, you mustn't pressure him'. And so they arrive. Antonio, Tonino Guerra, who'd written the script of Blow-Up and Assheton and I showed them our studio, I showed them Richard Dolheim's [ph 25:45] and I showed them a couple of others and then took them round the corner to see some more and they set off to look at more studios. Telephone call from Assheton who said 'You didn't tell me I couldn't tell them after we'd left you that you are a costume designer and he wants you to come in and see him'.*

*So I said 'Okay, I will'. Well, they had offices in St James' Street in The Economist Building. And I went in and Antonioni had said to, I still don't believe this, had said to Assheton 'She won't be too sophisticated for me will she'? I mean certainly one of the most sophisticated men I've ever met. Anyway there we were sitting on either side of this large desk and he said 'Do you speak Italian'? And I said 'No', and he said 'Oh what are we going to do'? And I said 'Francese'? And he said 'Yes'. And so we spoke French, and we spoke French right through the shooting of the film. He, I'd read The Treatment which was fascinating and he said 'Are you interested in it'? And I said 'Absolutely, totally interested', and he said, I then said 'it's too important for you to trust me without knowing if I can, I can deliver'. And he said 'Would you go over to Paris and write an essay for me on the state of fashion there'? And I said 'Yes', and he also said 'And then you could do a few drawings'.*

*So this took a week I think. I went to Paris. Duly, I mean I, I went to the fashion houses, I went and saw Victoire who had, who had been Christian Dior's favourite model and she'd opened her own sort of Prêt-à-Porter in the Place Victoire and we talked about fabric and she said 'There are amazing fabrics coming out' and she showed me some, which, which changed colour under different lights and one had never seen it before. Anyway I got back to London, I wrote my essay and delivered it and did, then did some drawings and went in to see him with the drawings and I put them on his desk and he threw back his head and laughed, which was always a very good sign with him that he liked what you'd done and he said 'Sa va Jocelyn, bien, merci', [Laughter] and then I... Did I go back to Paris? I think I did and I bought fabrics. No, I didn't buy fabrics, yes I did buy fabrics. There was a place that sold fabrics, the offcuts from the couturiers' collections, which you got for almost nothing. And I bought fabrics for all models, or maybe not all of them, but any fabric that really pleased me. [30:00] And I got, they gave me an office where I, I was quite happy working, I didn't do drawings there but Michael Seymour, Assheton's assistant, had a girlfriend called Ann Mollo. She'd been working as, mm... [Pause] No, her husband was one of those Mollos who was great with, with... Oh Jesus, with uniforms, historical uniforms.*

Oh yes. He, he....

Andrew Mollo.

Right, he did work with Kevin Brownlow originally hadn't he?

Maybe.

On, on the film they made about the Occupation.

And one was called John Mollo and one was called Andrew Mollo.

Yes, this was Andrew.

I don't remember which she was married to. She nearly drove me mad as an assistant but she was very willing. We worked in St James's Street and I'd send her in to Jermyn Street to go to Fortnum's to get something for Leonard to eat in the evening and she, she was very good with cheese or smoked salmon

or some things, she was great in that way. But if I'd show her a piece of fabric she'd squeak and say 'You, Jocelyn, I think you're going too far', and I knew then that I was going in the right direction if Ann thought I was going too far. She became very, later very well known as a set dresser but she hadn't turned herself in to anything with any creative input at all, she was just a very boring girl, upper class girl. I, eventually casting took forever, we started, we started trying mod..., trying to decide on. David Hemmings had been decided on and we started working with models and eventually we got those sorted out. Peggy Moffitt was, you've seen *Blow-Up* I think.

Yes, yes, several times.

*Peggy Moffitt was extraordinary. I mean he said to me one morning 'Peggy Moffitt is coming in today, have a look at her she's just an astonishing piece of self-creation'. And she came in with this white mask of a face and eyes painted on, absolutely astonishing. And I can't remember what she was wearing but it was dark blue with a white clown's collar and this sleek cap of black hair cut in a very short. And we had her, Jill Kennington, I don't remember the others, or not very well. We had one, two who were great, Jill and Peggy, and then did we have two who...? I can't remember whether there were four or five. And David's costume we decided on very early, a pair of white jeans, a pale blue shirt and a green corduroy jacket. Then I started to get the [Pause] the models' clothes made and I said to Antonioni 'Listen, you've got to come to one fitting of one model, I mean, and you've seen the drawings, you like them but you ought to come and have a look at the clothes'. So he came to a fitting of Peggy's and he sat there and again said 'Sa va Jocelyn' and went off. And Bernam said 'Does he ever say anything more than that'? And I said 'That's the best one hopes for, sometimes he says more' and...*

Had he ever talked about the film, what he wanted, how he saw it, what it was about because there are degrees of enigma in the film are there not?

*Yes. I think I'd decided, I think we had talked about it. I had immense respect for him. I mean I remember Assheton coming round one day with some little model aeroplanes saying 'They were khaki with, with targets on them', I think this is how he sees the costumes. [35:00] And I looked at them and I said 'Well, leave them here', and I looked at them and thought, and I thought 'Well, I don't think he sees the costumes like that, I'm just disregarding them'. And I, I think Assheton in fact was totally bewildered because he didn't speak French, I at least got more from him and... [Pause] Then he would, kept testing Joanna Shimkus who eventually married Sidney Poitier and he wanted her in the part that Vanessa played. MGM said 'No, not well enough known'. So I kept saying 'Try Vanessa Redgrave', fell on deaf ears. Then he got Maureen, who's that, that harpy with dark hair, pretty, very, oh what was her name, mm?*

Maureen?

What?

You said Maureen?

*No, not Maureen. I'm, I'm wrong, mm, oh.*

Can you think of something that she was in?

*A star, she was a Hollywood star. Oh [Pause] what the fuck was her name?*

No idea.

*She came over to be tested and I said 'What do you want to test her in'? And he said I showed him some clothes we had and he said 'Sa va', it was a sort of Madras check skirt and a green handkerchief linen shirt as far as I remember. And she arrived and she had the most astonishing figure. She had large tits and, oh God what was her name? [Pause] I've got to think of it. Maybe I, maybe I can't, Clive will remember later. And she, she didn't like what she was to wear and I said 'Well I can't help it this is what Antonioni wants you to wear'. And with very bad grace she did the, the test and when she finished and went to say 'Goodbye' to him he said to me after 'You don't like her'? And I said 'No, I don't like her', and he said 'Why not'? And I said, he said 'I think, I think she's great looking', and I*

*said 'I think she's, she's of the '40s, I don't believe she's a correct person of the present day'. And then Peggy Moffitt, I remember, came in, she was wearing a navy blue dress, I've remembered that, with a white frilled collar with a red bow there, with a red bow falling to her hem. And we were getting, we were getting in to short, shorter skirts, and eventually I'd had all the models' clothes made and I'd, we'd talked about, I said 'What sort of thing'? And he said 'Well do one in black, white and grey and the one, and the other collection in colours and do one for morning, one for midday, one for evening and one for whatever, four dresses or whatever'. And we, mm, we were shooting in Princedale Road and in Knotting Hill in a photographer's studio where it was a living studio but a huge photographic studio and Assheton had built gantries from the living part along the wall so he could go from the darkroom to the living part. There came, Veruschka came, came and I decided not to have anything made for her but to see what I could find in period stock and I found [40:00] an amazing beaded tunic which came to a point and it was, it was scarcely on her, it had little strings of beads across the hips and her body was astonishing and she looked amazing in it. We had, he said to me 'Who could I use for make-up'? And I said 'There's a French make-up man', I mean a French make-up man, 'who speaks French, he's a Frenchman called Paul Rabiger'. And he said 'Hair'? And I said 'Well, there's a girl I know called Stephanie, at least she's younger than most of the others you can probably, she'll probably do what we tell her', so we settled with those and...*

Were there, were there not a union, union problems hiring them?

*No, they were both union members. I mean Paul Rabiger was a union man.*

ACT?

ACT.

Right, I see.

*And, or NASMAH weren't hairdressers...?*

It was NASMAH of course, in those days, yes.

*And the hairdressing girl called Stephanie. Ad, mm, Peggy Moffitt did her own make-up always but Jill Kennington and the others were made up by Paul but they, I mean once one talked to Paul and told him what one wanted he got the message very quickly and Jill said to me one day 'Why has he chosen those, I mean there's Peggy and me and then there was those two others who'd got two left feet'? And I said 'God knows whether he can show it on film but he wants, what he wants to show is the fact that you - Jill and Peggy - are super models and the others are also rans', and she settled down at that. And then we started still trying to find a replacement for Joanna Shimkus. Maureen, no it wasn't Maureen Swanson, she looked like Maureen Swanson [Laughter] this girl from America. And eventually he said to me one day 'Do you know Vanessa Redgrave'? And I said 'Yes', and he said 'Could you ring her and ask her to come in and see me'? And I said 'Yes'. She was appearing in Miss Jean Brodie. So I rang and I spoke to her and said 'Vanessa, are you free to come in and see Antonioni'? And she said 'Oh God, yes', I mean so she came in, they met, they got on and Vanessa spoke good Italian and they got on very well and he said he'd like her hair darkened so Stephanie arranged for her to go to Vidal Sassoon to have her hair darkened and I said...*

Its okay, we'll just change this, another, another tape finished.

[End of Tape 4 Side 2 0:43:46].

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 5 Side 1.

This is Tape Five with Jocelyn Rickards. Yes, Vanessa has gone to see Antonioni and, and they hit it off and, yes.

*And, mm, I said 'What do you want her to wear'? And he said 'A shirt and a skirt'. So I have a, a marvellous silk shirt made at, at Turnbull's and he said 'C'est tres triste Jocelyn' and so I, I took it. It was, I wore it for a hundred years and I eventually got her a blue denim skirt and a check shirt, I think it may have been a very thin Viyella so it didn't crease. And a black silk scarf which she knotted at her neck with a, with a silver ring and a pair of 'T' strap flat black, black patent leather shoes. And she looked alright, it wasn't amazing but it was sort of okay. And then came Joanna, no, not Joanna, Jane Birkin and the other little girl who came as two teenagers and romped with David Hemmings in a rolled up sheet, huge sheet of mauve paper.*

A very famous scene.

*Yes. And they were... [Pause] I drew what I wanted them to wear and said to Jane, to Ruth 'Now I don't want these costumes made at Bernam's I want them to look as though they're home made'. And we, she tried and went hopelessly awry but however I then took them in to Bernam's and got them sharpened up a bit. One was white sort of turquoise and apple green in broad sort of maybe six inch stripes. No, what I mean the three collars went horizontally round the body and the other one was pale blue with a green print on it. And they had coloured tights and I went to Charles Jourdan and bought the most amazingly expensive shoes for all the models and I bought endless pairs for myself, they had a sale on, [Laughter] and flat shoes in beautiful colours. I mean like [Pause] Jane's were pale green with, they had dead flat with geometric motifs on them, and on the toes, not on the toe but on the whatever that's called – instep. And the other one had another pair and they played their scene ripping their clothes off. I adored Jane, she'd just had a baby I think and her marriage had bust up. She was married to John Barry and she said 'You know, he wanted a child, I produced one and then he couldn't bear it so that's it and I'm now going to live in Paris'. And then we did the scene with Veruschka, do you remember that scene?*

Yes, yes, I remember the movie very clearly.

*And, mm, [Pause] again the costume I chose for her was a huge success. This extraordinary little, it was like, they were like beetles' wings back and front and she was extraordinary. And David, David played it as though he was fucking her with the camera.*

Mm.

*Then we all moved to whatever the name of the park is where... [05:00] Is it? I don't remember, somewhere I think...*

It, it was in the East End I think wasn't it?

Yes.

Yes, mm, mm.

*I think and Assheton had arr..., had clad all the houses that showed beyond the trees in black and white - in white I mean with a bit of black detail. The grass was sprayed greener, the tennis court was marked in with hugely definitive marks. And Vanessa played that scene with Dyson Lovell where someone's shot and Antonioni said to me 'I want him to have a very special tie', and I said 'Alright, I'll get you a selection'. And I went on, I went out in to the park with about forty ties hanging round my neck and I said 'Choose one'. So he chose, I think he chose a brilliant very vibrant blue and we got that scene out of the way and then came the moment for the, the mimed tennis thing. And that we... Now let me think, I've got to think about this. It was Julian Chagrin and his wife played tennis but I think they played*

*without racquets and without balls on the tennis court. The soundtrack Antonioni had played tennis himself because he was a great tennis player and they'd recorded his soundtrack and they just, they mimed tennis.*

And the camera swings back and forth?

Yes.

Yes.

*And [Pause] Julian was wearing, I can't remember, I think he was wearing a pair of dungarees and a shirt, and a T-shirt underneath. And she I gave a very tight fitting little horizontally striped red and black broad striped mini but with a, I think she had a leotard under it.*

Yes.

Because I don't remember any bare flesh, and I know that there was a ladder in her tights and when I said to him 'Do you like the ladder in the tights?' he said 'Yes, yes, leave it', so we stitched it so it didn't go any further. And then for the, the people who came to look I had a terrible fight, I didn't have a fight with him, he had a fight with me. I did some designs and he, he said 'No, they're too elaborate' and...

This is for that motley that turns up?

Yes.

Right.

*And I said 'I'm very worried about the, oh, I'm very worried about this scene, I think what you're asking me to do is to produce the negative of a Fellini film and I don't want you held up to scorn'. I gave it to his secretary to give to him and read to him and he hit the fucking roof, and because I'd said I didn't want it to look like the negative of a Fellini film.*

Right, right.

*It just happened that Fellini, as far as I was concerned, was the greatest Italian designer, mm, director there was. Anyway I eventually, we went on shooting in, in the studio, in the photographer's studio and I walked in every day and walked past him and didn't speak to him until after a week he said 'Jocelyn pourquoi tu ne parles pas'? And I sat down and said 'Hello, hello Tonio', and I said 'you're in, you're angry with me but I'm angry with you let's sort it out, and it, it's about the costumes for the spectators at...' And he said 'I want it to look like a student rag, I don't want them to look as though they're, they've had any money spent on them'. So I just took the clothes home and painted them myself or, you know, gave, I can't remember them very well. There were someone... [10:00]*

Rather clown like as I remember.

*Yes, very. Someone had a top hat that was bashed and I painted checks on it. And, mm, one had, had a leg in plaster cast and I think was wearing a smock. But I think they were all in very, in black, white, grey. And one I gave, I had a horizontally striped black and dark grey pullover, short.*

Yes.

*And I gave that to one of them with a, with a knotted scarf, red, and a broad rimmed black hat. So one just worked on those costumes.*

They come over as students, I think that's what everyone read them as, as students, yes?

*Yes, that's exactly. And well they... And also there was a character living on the edge of the park who ran a small antique shop where David Hemmings goes in and buys an aeroplane propeller.*

Mm, mm.

And I can't remember who she was, maybe she was a good actress, and I said to Ruth 'I want you to dye a skirt for her but dye it in such a way that it looks fragmented and split like a sapphire', and Ruth did that and that was all of them wrapped up. Then Antonioni said 'I'm going to cut as much of the film as I've shot'. No, no, no, I'm lying, this happened later. Then there came the, the party scene where, which we shot

*in a very grand house that belonged to Christopher Gibbs in Cheyne Walk, an amazing house, very beautiful, and the wardrobe and hairdressing were in the house next door. And I said to Antonioni 'What do you want me to do about the costumes'? And he said 'Ask them to bring things with them and, and go through them and control the colours'. So I asked them to bring things with them and I saw them all before and I made them change and we had a few things to give them. I mean I had, I had quite a lot of period stuff there. I mean I remember giving one of them a, a little blue period beaded coat to wear over her mini and, mm, I can't remember any of the details of those costumes. David was always in his trousers and green jacket, his white trousers and green jacket, mm. The, I, I was pleased with the crowd after I'd worked through them and, mm, and by this time Paul and Stephanie were amazing with make-up and hair. And they all went in to the house and when they'd got in [Laughter] I thought 'I'd better go and look at that crowd now' and I looked at them and I went in and I went 'oh my God', I'd never smelt so much pot in my life.*

[Laughter] Ah, right.

*Never. I mean if I'd stayed in there breathing deeply I would have been out of my skull in a second as they all were.*

Yes.

*And then Veruschka arrived and she'd brought, I guess it was a dance skin from New York which was snake, yellow snake skin patterned and she wore a giant leather belt around the waist studded and marvellous boots with fringes on them, and I thought she looked great. And that was it. Then he said 'I'm going back to Rome to cut as much of the film as I've got', and I said 'I'm going to have a holiday, I'm going to Tunisia for six weeks.*

*So I got to Tun..., Tunisia, it was divine. I, just to lie down in the most marvellous hotel. It wasn't a hotel it was called The Centre Culturel [15:15] at Hammamet, right on the beach in a '20s villa built by a German, Rommel had used it as his headquarters during the war. It was, I mean it was part barhaus, part, the top floor was Siralio, [ph 15:24] that was Rommel's bedroom with, with latticed windows with marvellous breezes blowing through it. It was in an acre of garden with only white flowers, Datura, lilies of various kinds. Datura I've always loved, double Datura which smell unbelievable, and orange trees and lemon trees. And we had a little, little house, not, we weren't in the main house. There was a swimming pool which was the most beautifully designed swimming pool I've ever seen with an enormously long granite table at the end carved out of a solid, legs and, and top carved out of one piece of granite.*

*And we got there, got there in the middle of the night as far as I remember and they said to Leonard 'There's a friend of yours here, John Cranko, he, he has never met your wife but he knows you'. And I said 'He has met me, he's one of my closest friends'. And he then had moved to Stuttgart from Covent Garden and he was there for a holiday and all of Roger Planchon's company were there too. And I asked for a table for two, because I don't like a lot of people and I like getting to know the people surrounding me slowly. And the second night John arrived, Cranko, so sunburnt he could scarcely, I mean he had the most amazing hooked nose and it was bright red with sunburn, he'd been out with the local fishermen and, but very sunburnt. And his eyes were, were blue with long black lashes and they were like, like huge blue lamps at his face. And he came in and he looked at me and said 'You haven't married each other'? And I said 'You may well wonder but we have', and we all dined together after that. And John and I had always, often played this game of saying remember such and such a tune and we would, we'd sing it. I cannot sing in tune but John always said 'You, you sing a perfect second Jocelyn'. [Laughter] But anyway we were, we were singing in very low voices, you know, very, very low one night and from one of the adjoining tables everyone was eating in a little enclosed part of the garden under grape vines. Somebody whistled the song we were singing and a Frenchman came over and introduced himself, he was called Robert Narmiou [ph 18:30] and he was a left wing intellectual*

working on *The Nouvel Observateur* in Paris, he was responsible for the layout. He had also been the close friend of Carmous [ph 18:48] and afterwards he started having dinner with us. Anyway things, what happened? What time is it Roy? I think it may be time...

It's a quarter to one.

Let's...

Do you want a break?

Yes.

Okay, you've been marvellous.

*It, it was a perfect place to relax. As I said Rager Planchon's company were there and John Cranko. The, there was a little, mm, apparent, a sort of on the principle of a, a Greek theatre, a theatre right on the beach, or at the bottom end of the garden where if you drop, literally if you dropped a pin on to the stage you could hear it in the back row. And [Pause] the year before John had taken his Stuttgart ballet company there. [20:00] Roger Planchon had played there and the Frenchman who appeared at our table said to me, one night we were all, we went down and the theatre was up, virtually on the beach, so with a full moon we were all lying about talking to each other and Narmiou [ph 20:24] said to me 'Do you know John Littlehood'? And I said 'John Littlehood'? And I, I thought he's talking about Robin Hood. And I said 'No', after a great deal of thought and he said 'You must know her, she's a very famous English director'. And I said 'Oh you mean John Littlewood - Joan Littlewood', and indeed he did and he talked about her being there year, the year before. And she'd brought, she and Jerry Raffles had taken her aged father to Tunisia. I mean this is totally not about the film industry but I think it's rather a nice story, and they beached a little boat and they put rocks at the back and rocks in the front and they left him on the beach with a huge umbrella over him and bottled water and fruit and whatever he wanted to eat and he'd sit there happily all day while they rehearsed.*

Aged, aged P?

Yes. And he, then it was time for us to go and we went to Tunis for the, to actually to Tunis for the night because I wanted to go to the Bardo which is full of amazing Roman, mm... Oh Tesserei [ph 21:57], what are the, mosaics.

Yes.

*And, and beautifully, beautifully displayed, it was a marvellous museum. And John Cranko came and Pierre Narmiou [ph 22:12] came and Namiou's [ph 22:14] son, no, Robert Narmiou [ph 22:20] and his son Pierre all came. And we eventually got back to London and I rang to find out what had happened to Antonioni and they said 'He's here, he's said he can't do any work until you get back'. And I said 'Okay'. So I went in to see him over his Steinbeck and he, they'd decided to shoot the jazz club scene in an actual jazz club that was more than thirty miles from London. When they went to arrange about it it no longer existed as a jazz club so it had to be recreated as MGM, and Assheton and Michael Seymour recreated it. And [Pause] I said... Oh, I looked at a bit of film and what had David been doing? He'd been doing something because we had to give him a wig. And came the time to unpack the clothes the wardrobe mistress, who was extremely good, she was called Jackie Breed, unpacked the clothes which didn't have a padlock on them and David's jacket had been nicked. And I got on to Berman's in a panic and said 'Can you get me another and I'll send a car up'? And the car came back with an identical coloured jacket except it had a pocket in it which his original jacket had never had, and I said to Jackie 'If they can't tell that he's wearing a wig they won't be able to tell that this jacket has a pocket in it so let's not worry, I'm not going to tell him'. And I told Claude Watson and Groynyer [ph 24:39] and then again one had to do the business of the, a crowd call and, mm, again I said Anything you have to say about the costumes, any, anything you particularly want', and he said 'No yellow', so I said 'Fine', [25:00] and again got a mixture of... I mean it was, oh, I've also forgotten Sarah Miles in that film, she hated it, hated working with him and then she was mainly cut out of it. Anyway it was the time when people were wearing either minis up to their cunt or, mm, period clothes, so I got a mixture of them and dressed the crowd. And it didn't take long, they bashed their*

*guitars to buggery and we finished that. And, mm, Monica appeared to see as much of the film as he'd cut and I remember being introduced to her before we went in to the theatre.*

Monica Vitti?

*Yes. And I'd, I'd just, I'd been chewing some gum, unlike me but I had, and I'd just got it all out so I had to shake hands with her with my other hand so she didn't get a hand full of spearmint. And it was fascinating watching what he'd cut and...*

Which took you was it more or less in sequence and then took you to which point? The...

*Yes, yes, it was in sequence, totally in sequence except for the jazz club bit, which we were shooting that day. And that was it, mm, it was over and I very much, I regretted it because... No, I didn't regret it I'd enjoyed it thoroughly. And while I'd been working the Production Manager said to me one day on the pavement in Notting Hill 'Jocelyn I've never known a costume designer pay so much attention to detail and always be here, be here, you ought to be paid more than you're being paid'.*

Kind of him.

*'What do you say'? And I said 'I'd be delighted'. And then his immediate superior said to me 'We're going to give you more money, okay?' and I said 'Yes, naturally okay'. And then Leonard... Was this then? Was going to, I'd advised him, it was the first year of The Churchill Fellowships and I said 'Leonard why, if you want to travel through America why don't you, why don't you apply'? And he said, I can't think why he said 'Why, what, what should I say'? And I said 'Well, it's got to be something constructive, why don't you say you want to investigate the state of, mm, of art education in the States'? And he did and actually sailed home with it and, and was the first Churchill Fellow awarded.*

Jocelyn before we leave Blow-Up.

*I haven't left it.*

Oh you haven't, right, okay, I thought may be you had, sorry.

Mm, did you turn it off then?

No, no, no, please go on.

*Mm, and...*

I'm getting a hum on something or the other. My, on, on my microphone it comes and goes but it's no problem on your side.

*Mm, and I, I thought, I said 'I might come with you'. And Paul Mills, who was in charge of publicity for MGM, rang me and said would I have lunch with him, and I said 'Sure' and he said [Pause] 'I hear you're going to New York, mm, will you do some publicity for us there'? And I said 'Yes, okay', and he said 'Will you take the designs with you'? And I said 'Oh Jesus Paul my designs aren't to be looked at by those kind of people, mm, they all, they all need redrawing. I mean they're ideas on a piece of paper and the idea is basic to the costume but I will need to present finished drawings'. And he said 'Okay, go ahead' and paid me for the extra drawings. And we went over on The Queen Mary and we, I said 'I want to stay at The Algonquin'. [30:00] And I had to go and see the MGM powers-that-be in what is it? The Avenue of the Americas? And I walked in in a mini and a mini overcoat, and there were three rather chic pretty girls sitting behind a reception desk and as I went in they went whistled, 'We're not allowed to wear shorts as skirt, skirts as short as that', and I said 'Well, mores the pity you're all sitting there in skirts to your ankles'. And they sent me in to see a man called Mort., I can't remember his other name.*

Abrahams?

*Oh God knows. I can't remember.*

There was a Mort Abrahams but anyway right, go on.

*Was he a large man with...?*

No, actually he was quite, the one I know was quite small.

*No, this was a big man who was chomping on a giant cigar.*

Ah well, they all did.

*And he had a couple of cronies with him and I went in and said, you know, maybe you know the gun, 'I'm coming because, or 'I've come with an introduction from Paul Mills and I've got the designs here'. And he said 'Wait a minute, we should call Lily in'. So Lily arrived, she was all of four feet tall but she was very funny. She was, she'd been trained, she was wild about music and I think she'd been trained at The Julianne. And I left Mort and his cronies and Lily arranged that I'd meet people. She arranged radio shows, she arranged television shows, she arranged God knows what and suddenly I was the toast of New York. I mean it was very weird. I'd always found publicity very easy to get. I mean since the days when I'd, I'd first started designing things, I don't know why I just had a gift for it. And if I was doing it for someone else and not myself it was even easier. I hadn't seen the film so I was able to go and see it, it was showing on Third Avenue and I, I'd adored it, I thought it was, I mean I thought it was extraordinary. They'd sent the clothes over and they were handed over to Lily with my designs, which I think ended up in The Vogue offices and Lily arranged a kind of a showing of the film with all the clothes shown by models, and the clothes well tarted up by a pair of marvellous women, I can't remember what their name was, you know, if there was anything missing they'd sew it back in place. The, one of Peggy Moffitt's costumes was in, in sort of dark blue and green irreg..., they were irregular stripes, a bit of khaki and I was looking at it and I put a peacock feather on it one day and it brought all the colours together, so I got Bernam's to make up the costume and I said 'I want peacock feathers sewn all over it', and they said 'You'll have to place them yourself, we think they're unlucky'.*

Pa. [Laughter]

*So I said 'Okay, just put it on a stand for me', and I placed peacock feathers wherever I thought they'd look great. And then Peggy had a hat which had I think a peacock, a couple of peacock feathers rising into the sky and she'd put another one here in the, between her eyebrows and then painted her eyes so that they were slightly smaller peacock feathers. But we showed the costumes, we showed the film, we showed the drawings and then people asked me questions and that was that. It was a, a riot in New York and...*

Had the film opened here?

*No, I don't know.*

No.

*Oh I don't, I don't know.*

No, no.

*It hadn't opened, opened when I left. [35:00]*

So that your experience was, was the New York opening?

Yes.

Right.

*And it may have opened while I was, while I was in New York.*

Yes.

*I stayed about, did I stay three months? Maybe. And, mm, [Pause] I got, they then said to me, because they'd got so much publicity, The New York Times, the, I mean television, endless publicity and radio and all the papers and they said 'Would you, would you go, would you do a twenty-three city visit in twenty-one days'? And I said 'No, I want to go home'. [Laughter] And the day I left a photographer came and I was standing on Third Avenue and he took a photograph of me which appeared in that days Women's Wear Daily, which was the bible of the, the clothing.*

Mm.

I mean both the gossip columns and the clothing industry.

Yes.

*And I got on a plane and came back and sort of laid down for five minutes. Leonard thank God was still away and... [Pause]*

Your marriage is then what, in what sort of condition, what sort of stage?

*Oh it was hopeless.*

Yes.

*I mean we were alright if we were both doing something else.*

Right.

*But, and we were, we were perfectly civil to each other. Mm, I had a close friend called Marion Cummings, she was the wife of E E Cummings.*

Oh really?

*And...*

In lower case?

*Yes. She was, she had been the most extraordinary and beautiful and glamorous model and anywhere she appeared people would get on chairs and gawp at her, she was... And then she married Cummings and the curls, the ringlets, the jewels were all put away. She pulled her hair back in to a knot on the back of her neck and she wore a raincoat and flat shoes and that was it.*

Yet another 'hausfrau'?

*What?*

Yet another 'hausfrau'?

*No, she was never a hausfrau.*

Not a 'hausfrau'?

*No.*

Ah, ha.

*She's still, they were a supremely elegant couple.*

Yes.

*They were, they were like a couple of racehorses. And he was a, he was an angel of a man. And I'd seen Marion. I mean I couldn't see many people because life was entirely taken up by MGM but she did say one night, we were having dinner and she said 'Leonard, drink doesn't agree with you'. And I said 'You're quite right Marion. I was going to say that to him too'. And he had, he'd got some kind of virus which only actually arrived at a point of horror when he arrived back in London but it was fed by alcohol and he'd... Anyway I came back and...*

Can I...?

Yes.

Dwell on, on 'Blow-Up' just for a couple of questions?

Yes, yes, yes.

Probably the best studio that ever was in this country was MGM, Boreham, Borehamwood?

Yes, yes.

How much of the film was, was made at Borehamwood and how much...?

*The jazz club only.*

Only that one scene?

Yes.

Right, okay.

*The rest was made on location.*

All on location?

*In Notting Hill.*

Yes.

*Or in, in Cheyne Walk, the park and that was it.*

Right.

*And one restaurant in the King's Road, or just off the King's Road.*

Right.

*Otherwise that was it. And David driving about in his Rolls Royce.*

Well, one of the things I remember of course, is, is that section of, of a building painted in what? Bright red and bright blue with...

*Oh that, I'd forgotten that.*

Right.

*That was Battersea Market and...*

Yes, yes. I'd seen it before the film was shot and I, I'd never, I don't remember now where I'd seen it but it did exist didn't it?

*Yes. And he, he wanted it painted dark red and black, and that was easy. And then we had that marvellous model called Donyale Luna She was a, she was pale, she wasn't black but she was dark coffee [40:00] and she subsequently died after playing in Satyricon, but she, there was one bathing suit he had his heart set on and it was, I, it was in French Vogue and I thought 'How the, how am I going to get it'? It was knitted, a knitted top with a pair of knitted shorts, little, tiny top with sleeves and a drawstring square neck in dark red, yellow and pale cerulean blue, and the knickers were the same, drawstring through the knickers. And I rang, I think I rang a man, a Durée [ph 40:58] who I knew and asked him if he could get it., if he could do anything. And he rang me back and said 'It's on its way to you'.*

Antonioni then what, was triggered by various influences? He'd see magazines?

*Yes.*

A shot or whatever?

*Yes.*

And that would give him an idea, right?

*Mm, I mean it was the idea of a, a particular costume he wanted.*

*Mm.*

*And I remember the day we shot it. It was winter and she arrived in a huge pale, a blue fox coat. So she climbed up on top of this, this kiosk that was painted dark red and black on her hands and knees and she appears at the top of it. Most of it's cut out of the film and she arrived up there with this amazing fur coat on and she just dropped it and then sashayed along the, the top of the kiosk.*

*Yes.*

*I think that, that was all we shot.*

Tell us as much as you can then that we haven't touched on about Antonioni himself, Michelangelo Antonioni?

*On?*

On, on, on Antonioni the, your memories of him specifically as a man, as a director?

*Well, as a director there was no doubt that what he knew what he wanted. He specifically knew what he wanted like the day he asked Assheton for three shoots, three sheets of grey smoked glass and he was prepared to sit down and wait for them. And he said to me one day 'Don't worry about the budget, just remember that when Sophia works for Carla her clothes are made at Baumann and you know what they cost. So just spend as much money as you've got, as you have, I mean don't worry about it', so I didn't worry. And I, I've never liked going hog wild on costumes if I thought it was, you know, there was no point in it so I just did what I wanted to do. I mean and in each case he liked what I'd done and he, he had in his head a specific vision of how he wanted it to come out.*

Was he happy working here do you think?

*I, there was no sign that he wasn't.*

*Mm, mm. And...*

*As, I mean he, he had a very spartan lunch every day I think sent from San Frediano.*

*Really?*

*Jocelyn Rickards DRAFT.  
Tape 5 Side 1*

*Of bread sticks, cold meat, salad, maybe half a bottle of wine, maybe not. May be a bottle of, certainly a bottle of mineral water. He never drank on the set and he never drank off the set either while he was working. He was staying at The Savoy, and I do know he was staying at The Savoy because one day I went to see him there and I arrived at the, the desk and Peter, Peter Brooke was standing beside me and I asked if Antonioni was in and they said 'Yes', and Peter said 'Well, I know where you're going and what's he like'? And I told him and then he was a very, very quiet man.*

Yes.

Only once did I see him lose his temper and it was with David arriving late after we'd been shooting somewhere else and David driving the Rolls back decided to have a little fun on the way.

I must, I must stop.

*[End of Tape 5 Side 1 0:45:16]*

NB: The time codes given here are estimates based on readings from the original cassette recording.

Tape 5 Side 2.

David, David in the Roller?

Yes.

Having a little fun on the way?

*Yes. And he, he arrived back late. Antonioni had been waiting and he went up in to the Make-up Room where David was and he went in, and it's the only time I saw him lose his temper, he just blew and he broke down the Make-up door which was a solid oak door with his hand and a karate chop.*

Really?

*Mm, otherwise he was a man with greying hair and a very sallow face. He always had on grey clothes, grey sports jacket, grey trousers, grey pullover.*

Yes.

*But nothing flamboyant at all.*

What was your farewell to him?

*Do you know I don't remember it, I do not remember. Mm, I, [Pause] I know that we had a farewell telephone call because when I was doing the publicity in New York he'd been in Los Angeles and then I came back and the film opened here and I rang him and said 'You're not at the premiere', and he said 'I don't like premieres, you're not there, what are you doing'? And I said 'I don't like premieres either but I saw the film in New York and I thought it was marvellous and congratulations on your Oscar nomination', or maybe it had come through. And he said 'Jocelyn you should have been, you should have got an Oscar for the costumes and there was nothing else to equal it', so I assumed he liked them.*

Mm, mm.

I mean he was clearly satisfied with them.

Mm, mm, yes.

*And the next time I saw him was at a midnight screening years later of Zabriskie Point and we, we just spoke very briefly. I was there with Clive and Nick Roeg and I didn't think much of Zabriskie Point.*

No, I don't think anyone did.

*And what else have I to say about him? He was always totally, controlled, polite. Ask me questions Roy?*

I can't think of any about him because in some ways he's now a distant figure and we, we see him somewhat enigmatically.

Yes.

Through, through his films of that time.

*And also he by this time was having an affair with the girl who married Bertolucci.*

I don't know who that is.

*Clare, Clare Peploe.*

Oh really? Oh I didn't know that she'd married Bertolucci.

Yes.

There you are, shows how out of touch I am. Right.

*And, mm...*

That explains a great deal about those....

*Why?*

About those scripts...

*Oh.*

That, that Mark Peploe writes - the brother-in-law.

*Mm, yes. And I don't know that I can tell you much more about him.*

Well I just...

*But I thought that he controlled the whole film.*

Mm, mm.

Mm, [Pause] not, I mean God knows how he did it, and it wasn't in a very aggressive hands on way but through Assheton and through me and through, he was called Carlo, the cameraman, he just controlled it completely.

Right.

*And he worked in a very solitary way. He edited it, as far as I don't, I know he edited it all himself.*

With far more shots perhaps than finally ended up in, in there?

*No, not a great deal.*

No, no, right.

*No.*

Right, right.

*No, I can't remember any scenes being, I mean only that, that scene in Battersea Market.*

Yes.

*Which was initially longer, but that was... And it appeared under the titles I think.*

What did you make of the film?

*When I saw it?*

Yes.

*Well, one's always looking at one's work. Mm, [05:00] I, I liked it, I liked it very much. I thought, in a way I thought it was groundbreaking and I don't think I think, thought much more about it than that.*

It's very '60s.

Yes.

And it was even then very '60s.

*Mm, I...*

Mm, shall we talk about the '60s now or later?

*Yes, yes, let's because...*

Right, okay.

*I remember one day, do you remember that huge article that Time Magazine came out with?*

Yes.

*On swinging London.*

Swinging, swinging London.

*And...*

Which took everyone by surprise.

*Absolutely. And I was in the St James' Street offices when Claude came in one morning with Time Magazine under his arm and he said 'Now I know what this film is about'. And I said 'Don't believe a word of that article, it's got nothing to do with it and nor has it anything to do with what's going on in London'. And then you ask me questions now.*

Well, okay I'm reaching back in to my memory. You were then what? In the '60s you were in your forties and a far from respectable lady I would have thought.

*Was I?*

Oh don't worry, I'm teasing you.

*Oh no, no, I wasn't respectable in those terms.*

No. But you know what I mean?

Yes.

In other words you weren't establishmentarian.

*No, no, no. I was very much for living.*

Were, were you part of the, the King's Road set?

*No.*

That set 'Time Magazine' off?

*No, I wasn't.*

I remember Alvaro's, I, we've mentioned San Frediano...

*I guess I...*

Which was a bit later I think, San Frediano I think was the late '60s wasn't it?

*Well, maybe it was some other Italian restaurant.*

Yes. Well, Alvaro's and The Arethusa were...

*Oh may be it was The Arethusa yes.*

Yes, yes, right.

*Was that in Rotherly Street?*

No, no, no. That was on the King's Road.

*Oh.*

Right. The, it was either late night or Saturday lunch The Arethusa.

*No, The Arethusa...*

It was a club.

*I remember, yes.*

It was a club and it was a token of one's acceptance.

Yes.

Either one was a member of The Arethusa or one was not. It, Al..., Alvaro was part of the ownership.

Yes.

And it was all bullshit but we all thoroughly enjoyed it.

*Oh I know, I do remember that. And, but I, I certainly didn't choose to be where the movers and shakers were they bored the arse off me. And I could, I could plug in to anything that was happening, understand it and think 'That's not for me'. I mean I still, my friends were still upper middle class, Oxford or Cambridge educated Intellectuals. I mean still Graham, Freddie.*

Yes.

*Mm, they were the people I chose to see. And John, now married to Penelope, had, she'd had a baby and she'd gone off to write her novel and John rang me one day in the wardrobe of Blow-Up and said 'Is there anywhere close that we can have a drink'? And I said 'Sure, there's a pub on the corner', and I told him its name and I said 'I'll meet you there in twenty minutes'. Told the assistants where I was going, and John came in and said 'Do you know I haven't had a fuck for a year'? And I said 'Why not'?. I didn't know then that, mm, [Pause] some ladies after they've had a child just imm..., immensely go off sex, whether she had or not I don't know but she certainly appeared to have. And she, he said 'She's, she's gone to Italy to write her novel and has left Jill Bennett to look after Johnny'. And I said 'Watch it John she's one of the most dangerous women I've ever known. She's had an affair with my doctor, she's also had an affair with Joe Losey, she had an affair with Godfrey Tearle and she's created havoc in everybody's life'. I'd no sooner said it of course, than they were, they were at it like knives and the next thing I, I knew that was it. [10:00] Mm, he'd left Penelope and...*

But he wasn't a stayer anyway was he?

No.

No.

*Not so's you'd notice.*

[Laughter]

*And...*

Everyone bolted I guess in those days.

*Absolutely. And what else do I remember about? I remember the clothes of the '60s, which I liked.*

Yes.

*I mean I thought, I thought they were good, inventive, great.*

Are you still in touch with The Court, The Royal, the...?

*No, no.*

No? Because they were doing quite, quite adventurous things then.

*Yes. I remember I designed something for John.*

Yes.

*At the Court. It was a play called Meals on Wheels by Charles Wood.*

Oh, I don't remember that.

*And it was fun to design. I designed it while I was doing Morgan.*

Did you have anything to do with A Patriot For Me which was John?

*No, no.*

Mm.

*I had quite a lot, no I didn't. He asked me if I'd write the costume notes for it because I told him about Bunny Rogers drag parties and then he said 'Will you write me costume notes'? And I did and I think they're the costume notes that are published in the play.*

Yes.

*They're not very well written as far as I remember but they're fairly accurate.*

Right.

*And, mm...*

He was very prolific at that stage, 'Luther', did he, did he consult you on anything, did he ask your opinion or advice, guidance?

*I usedn't to ask while he was writing, I'd, I'd read them when he'd done them. And, mm, [Pause] he wasn't very open to advice. [Laughter]*

No.

*Mm, let me think. [Pause] And he left me I guess at the end of '61, so by '66 we were on a very even keel of friendship and...*

Mm, mm. You would see each other or...

*Oh yes.*

Was it phone calls...

Yes.

Or just...?

*Constant telephone calls.*

Right.

*Letters.*

Okay.

*I sold his letters the other day to The University of Texas.*

Yes.

*And I also gave them all to John Harper who's writing his official biography to go through and he said, I said 'Now you've finished with those John I can throw the fucking things away, I've just been waiting for somebody who I knew inevitably would write his biography', and he said 'Don't do that'.*

Good God no.

*'Sell them to Texas'.*

Right.

*And he wrote to Texas and told them to get in touch with me.*

Mm, mm.

And, mm, what else have you to ask me?

Mm, well, you're a prime source clearly on, on Mr Osborne. You would know more about it than, than I, and I guess this was his most fertile period in terms of plays, no?

*Yes. I'm trying to think.*

Yes. Well, the...

*The Inadmissible was a marvellous play I thought.*

Yes, right.

*And...*

*'Luther', 'Luther' I mentioned. We didn't really touch on 'Luther', do you remember 'Luther'?*

*Luther he was doing when we were in the south of France and he went to Venice. No, it had already been done. That was immediately, that was the last thing he wrote when he was with me.*

Really?

*Then he wrote with Penelope, when with Penelope he wrote Plays for England, both of which are bad I think, two short plays. Then there came Inadmissible Evidence and I think then A Patriot for Me.*

Yes.

And...

What was the one 'Amsterdam', 'Room in Amsterdam'?

*Oh I was away then.*

Right.

*It was Hotel in Amsterdam.*

Oh 'Hotel in Amsterdam', yes.

I didn't think that was good.

No, I don't.

*In fact and West Of Suez.*

Based on experience, yes, and again 'West Of Suez'.

*Mm, but I think after...*

Scribble, scribble, scribble still at it eh Mr Osborne I suppose is he?

*Yes but...*

He, did he write painlessly, did he just sit down and, and...?

*He sat down and wrote and...*

Mm, mm. And was that it?

*Yes.*

Or, or did extensive revision or not?

*No.*

No?

*And, mm...*

What was it out of his experience, his loathing of various aspects which we, I think a lot of us share but he could put them in to words.

*Mm, he some of it, those two plays called Plays For England he'd got the ideas from newspaper paragraphs.*

Mm, mm.

*He, I think we'd, [15:00] had we seen Galileo together? That may have sparked off Luther.*

'Luther', yes.

*And I remember I gave him a large book of, of Dürer engravings and a book of Hieronymus Bosch which I thought were very central to the vision of Luther. And [Pause] he made an impossible note about the set. He had this vision that it should be seen through a tube maybe of glass, maybe not and he would, I mean it was from The Garden of Earthly Delights and I thought he doesn't, he's not thinking about what he's writing, there's no way of being, of doing that on a, on the stage. So, but I just didn't bother to tell him because it was better that he thought he had his own ideas. I remember doing a large sheet of, of drawing paper with all the characters that came from a, from Luther's life. And, [Pause] well, I like some, I can't remember the others. Anyway I pasted them all on to it and I put arrows and whatever and pasted the ones down so that they all related to each other and you could see at a glance where the people were who were round Luther, who were involved with him. The man who was selling the indulgences. Mm, and he took it off to go over and see George Devine and Tony and he unrolled it and Sophie Devine said 'Where did you get this from John'? And he said 'I did it', and she said 'Don't tell me that, you couldn't have done it yourself somebody did it for you'. [Laughter] And he was outraged but I don't think he admitted to not doing it.*

The violence in his writings Jocelyn, did, did they exist also in his personal life, in his, in his real life? Because there is so much hatred and everything.

*Yes, it would appear. I remember one day Alec was taking his photograph at Lower Belgrave Street and he, for some reason, started sounding out, off I mean about 'You Australians who've come over to...' It was almost as though we'd come to rape England.*

Because surely you did?

*Indeed.*

Why not?

*And, mm...*

We needed to be shaken up, we still do.

*And I can't remember what, I mean we let him rail on.*

Yes.

*And...*

But there's, there's an enormous amount of truth in, in what he was saying.

Yes.

His attitudes. We were fucked up, we still are.

Yes.

Yes.

*And he, mm, I mean there were things about John that I thought were reprehensible. So anti-Semitic.*

Mm, mm.

*That unbearable and, mm...*

And he meant them did he?

Yes.

Yes?

*I've mentioned one which...*

That wasn't his mum?

No.

No?

*Mum wasn't Jewish.*

No, no, no, I didn't mean that. But, but mum what, you know, I've, I've read the two volumes of autobiography which I think brilliantly written.

*So do I but almost none of it's true.*

Really?

*I mean apart...*

About mum?

*Oh the part about mum may be truer than quite a lot of parts. But the, a lot of the second one is invented.*

Mm, mm.

*I mean I was there and I know that's not the way it happened.*

The way he wanted it to be?

*It was the way he wanted people to read it.*

Right.

And he did say to me, I'd always said to him 'Why don't you write a novel John'? And I think he thought I'd denigrated play writing and thought that real men only wrote novels and, mm, I think that's what brought forth his ire about Graham Greene.

Mm.

And he hated Freddie, absolutely loathed him. And then I discovered, Sonia only told me this after he'd died, [20:00] that one day he said to her, they had a terrible falling out when she was eight and three quarter months pregnant by her second child after a lapse of something like seventeen years. She had flu and she was so ill that he sent her home and sent the chauffeur after her with, it was just before Christmas with a letter firing her. I mean imagine doing it. Because it had, it had made his Christmas with Jill impossible, they'd arranged so much and Sonia wasn't going to be there so that's, she had to go.

What a charmer.

*Have you finished?*

No, no, no, no, no, I'm getting the buzz on my side of things again. I don't know what causes it. There, it's stopped, there we go.

*And he, he'd said to Sonia after, I mean years later when he asked, he asked, they used to have parties. He had a house in Edenbridge, which was a horrible house and [Pause] he asked Sonia down, he asked her, and he said to her 'What's Jocelyn doing with that little Yid'? - Clive. I mean if he'd said it to me I would have spat in his eye.*

Mm.

*Mm, and Sonia said 'She seems to me to be happy for the first time in her life and I don't think it matters whether he's Jewish or not'.*

Where did the anti-Semitism come from do you think?

*Oh God knows, I don't know.*

No?

*A lot of people suffer from it, and a lot, mm, I just don't know. Mm, I've got no idea.*

I, I keep getting a buzzing sound, forgive me.

Yes.

I'm trying to solve it without, yes, it's gone, yes. Well, you're knowledge of John Osborne is both fascinating and important, I don't know enough about the man to pursue it so that may be that's something you can think about for an article for 'The Oldie'?

Yes. Anything what?

An article for 'The Oldie'?

*I've done an article for The Oldie, it's coming out next month.*

On, on him, on him?

*Yes, but it's, it's very short.*

Yes.

*And I haven't said a lot in it. I mean I've said quite a lot, he doesn't... [Inaudible 23:05] that.*

Oh your foot?

*Oh shit.*

No, it's alright, that's alright, there we go, all done, yes.

*He doesn't emerge as a sympathetic man, he just emerges as a mess.*

He wasn't that good a writer really was he? Again he just wrote in his time and, and he had a facility for...

*He, I mean I ended up the article in The Oldie by saying, mm, 'I grieved when he died but since then I seem to have moved light years beyond him and I remember him as a flawed man, disappointed, who occasionally wrote like an angel' and I left it at that. And occasionally he did write well. I think all of his plays need editing, he wrote too much, the plays are much too long and I always think they could do with a great deal of judicious cutting. The trouble is his, his widow carries such a flame for him that you'd think he'd written the Bible. And she used to work on The Observer, she's called Helen Dawson, she was a gifted journalist, not any more than that, and she worked, she worked with him I think editing the autobiographies. But, as I say, they were almost, the second one certainly is two thirds fiction. And [Pause] [25:00] then the affair with Jill, mm, came to an end. No, he didn't, it didn't come to an end, he married her and then he was sexually obsessed by her and suddenly I think he couldn't, couldn't face it after seven years or so and he lit off with Helen Dawson and that was it.*

Was he a good performer in bed?

Yes, he was great, great.

Mm, mm.

*But, mm, Sonia always says that in the end Jill was screaming at him, you know, he can't get it up any longer. I mean in writing for The Oldie I said that I'd never had a younger lover before and it was great, just marvellous.*

Mm, did he have any other habits, alcoholism or drugs or...?

*Oh, he ended up certainly being alcoholic. I mean he, he died of sclerosis of the liver.*

Yes.

*Though Helen has never recognised that he drank too much, I suppose she thought he'd got it off a lavatory seat, mm, but I don't know where she thought he got sclerosis from. He, he was, I never saw him drunk, I mean not perceptibly drunk. He developed diabetes, the only time he ever showed signs of shakiness was if he was suffering from an insulin overdose, otherwise he was always polite and always well behaved. Get him home and his ire would rouse, rise higher than the highest Gothic cathedral. He was very, he didn't seem to feel that he owed loyalty to anyone. Except in the second aut..., autobiography he's remarkably loyal to me. I mean not to Mary, not to Penelope, not to Jill, although just is very loyal to me. But, mm, I don't know that it was worth it.*

Interesting, as we call it.

Yes.

Right. Well, there we are that's fascinating.

Well...

RIP John Osborne.

Yes.

And we move on or what?

Yes.

Right, we do. 'Interlude' I guess we've covered in, in that it wasn't a particularly remarkable film was it?

*No, it wasn't. And I'll tell you something I haven't touched on yet was Vanessa arriving at my studio one day in tears after Blow-Up and after I'd got back. And she arrived on the doorstep and said, [Pause] I said 'Good God Vanessa what's the matter, come in'? And I remember we walked over there was a wall that Leonard had free standing that he could, if he was working on very large paintings he could attach them to that and work almost as though he was working on a mural, and I remember walking immediately in to the corner and there was a little set of steps and us sitting on those and she said 'I've been to John and Penelope and they don't know what I'm talking about'. And I said 'Well, I don't know what you're talking about, what are you talking about'? And she said 'I want to know about Tony, did he have an affair with Jeanne, Jeanne'? And I said 'I think not, I...'*

Jan was the...

Jeanne Moreau.

Right.

*'I think he was in love with her, I'd be very surprised if he had an affair with her'. Then she said [Pause] 'Do you know of any homosexual experiences'? And I said 'Why the fuck have you had to*

*come and ask me all this, can't you ask anyone else'? And she said 'John and Penelope won't say I'm talking nonsense. I mean it's the rest of my life Jocelyn, you've got to tell me'. And I said 'Okay', and I told her the story of, of John Richardson, the, the man who'd been to bed with him above Woodfall where the top floor, the window was painted black [30:00] which would have made me suspicious anyway, but anyway John had told me chapter and verse of their going to bed together. And I said 'Yes, I do know that he's had one affair'. And she said 'Now you've got to tell me who it is'. And I said 'Okay', and told her who it was and she went away satisfied. And I said, I rang John and said 'Why didn't you tell her'? And he said 'Why did you tell her'? And I said 'If people ask me a question John and I know the answer I usually tell them, and particularly if she was so upset about it'.*

Well, it does spread the waves a bit doesn't it?

*It what?*

It spreads the waves a bit?

Yes.

Yes.

*And anyway the result of it was that Tony absolutely freaked out, said 'She'll never work in the British film industry again'. This was before 'Blow-Up actually I remember.*

Mm, mm.

*And as it happens that I worked on Blow-Up and I worked on Interlude, and then I started work on a film called The Bliss of Mrs Blossom with Assheton and Joe McGrath.*

*Joe McGrath, right.*

*And that and...*

And Dickie?

*And Dickie and Shirley MacLaine and James Booth. That again was a thoroughly enjoyable film to work on and...*

Joe is a very funny man is he not?

*Oh he's very funny and I love him. And, mm, I mean Assheton was very inventive. For the first time I had Vangie Harrison as my assistant, who was great, and I just need to oil my lips.*

Right. [Pause] The oiling of lips is taking place.

*Sorry you don't get it on the soundtrack.*

No, yes, yes, on camera.

*Mm, anyway came the last day of shooting. Had, did you see the film?*

Oh well, years ago yes, I don't remember it.

*I mean not a very good film.*

I don't remember it at all, no.

*I mean she...*

I was very fond of Joe and we worked together on, on some commercials but I, you know...

*Particularly as a painter and she fantasises about her life and then she paints it and then one goes in to, [Pause] to fantasy sequences all the way through it. I mean she fantasises that she's [Pause] the maiden with some, with the dragon and St George saves her. She, she, she's in Viva Zapata. She's in an eighteenth century film as Vigée Le Brun, the, the French painter. She's the lady with The Three Musketeers and on, on, on. But it was immensely enjoyable. She's Juliet in Romeo and Juliet. She's in a gondola, Venetian eighteenth century Harlequinade. And [Pause] it was a very long and quite tough film to do. Geoff Unsworth was the cameraman and he was just smashing, I loved him.*

The greatest, the greatest of hem all.

Just marvellous.

Mm.

And he... The last day of shooting I knew that they were getting a bit antsy, I don't know how I knew, in the Production Office. So, we were in the Accounts Office so I got the final account of, from Bernam's and from anything they'd got apart from that so that I knew it was the very last figure. And I took it to the Accounts Department, and the accountant on the floor was a man called Stan O'Toole, and I walked in with a drink in one hand, because it was about seven o'clock, and the bills in the other and I said 'Do you want the very last account Stan and there are no more to come in'? And he said 'Great'. And I said 'I'm having a drink because it's the end of the day and he went through the accounts and said 'Great, I've won the bet'. [35:00] And I said 'What bet'? And he said 'Hang on, I'm going to our myself a drink too'. And he said 'Paul Hitchcock some other accountant and I all had bets on how much you'd go over budget', and I mean they'd gone into astronomic figures, and I said 'I've never gone over budget in my life Sid – Stan I mean. And he said 'Well Paul Hitchcock had this weird story that not only did you did you go way over budget but that you were an alcoholic. And I said 'That had to come from Tony Richardson', and he said 'Yes, it did'. And I thought 'You creep'. And I, I vaguely thought of, of writing to him, I vaguely thought of... [Pause] I didn't think of having a, suing him for libel but I thought 'You monster', and if Stan hadn't been open with me I'd never have known.

Were you bumping into each other during the...? No?

Well he'd moved to Los Angeles by then.

Ah right. Because you mentioned earlier 'The Loved One', when, when, yes.

Yes.

And so he was already working in the States, yes.

Yes.

*Terrible film*

Awful film.

*It's a travesty of, of, of a wonderful novel, 'The Loved One'.*

Yes, terrible.

Yes.

I mean, and no one more upset by it than Aidan Moore.

*Mm, mm.*

But...

*So what you've written off Mr Richardson by this time have you?*

Well totally, I mean after I'd heard that story yes. And then when he moved to Los Angeles for that short time we lived on, what was it called that? North Kings Road, and we lived on mat level and immediately above us Tony lived, but we never ran into each other. Occasionally we'd go, we'd appear at the same restaurant, he'd always just looks through me. And Neil was still seeing him and I saw, used to see Neil constantly. I mean and I don't know how Tony felt about me by then but...

*How secret were his lovers? Were, was he always in the closet?*

I guess he was, yes.

*Wasn't he, because he, he was in denial at the very end and, yes.*

Yes. And he had a daughter by Grizelda Grimond, who I think went on loving him maybe till the end.

*Mm, mm.*

And I know they were all grouped round his bed when he died.

*That's the story, mm.*

And Vanessa said to the doctor 'What's he died of?' And the doctor said 'AIDS', so maybe they all believed me by then.

*Yes I, well difficult to avoid. I think he was in 'Variety' as having died of AIDS, they, they couldn't miss that either. Right 'The Bliss of Mrs Blossom' then what, what more to say about that or was that...?*

I don't think there's much to say about...

*Another notch on the gun.*

Yes.

*Right, okay. Mm, I've got something here called 'Wonderwall' which doesn't mean anything to me.*

Well I know what happened about that, it's later and I didn't do it, Vangie did it. I was, I was going to do it and I said, I was asked by Roy, I was asked by David Lean to do *Ryan's Daughter* and I said to Dennis O'Dell who was producing *Wonderwall* 'Goodness you're costing me quite a lot of money Dennis, I've been asked to do *Ryan's Daughter* for David Lean. And he said 'Nobody else has that kind of load to Jocelyn [Laughter] go and do it.

*Fair enough.*

And, mm, I just handed it over to Vangie, who was my assistant.

*Right. Do you have a credit on it because according to the BFI you were the costume designer?*

I have a credit on it.

*You do? Right.*

But I didn't, I think I didn't, maybe a costume for Jane Birkin but that's all.

*You, you wished them well.*

Yes.

*Right, okay. Well then I've got 'Alfred the Great' coming before 'Ryan's Daughter', is that the way it worked?*

It did.

*Yes, okay, 'Alfred the Great'? [40:00] Now at some stage you had met Clive, Clive Donner.*

Not yet.

*Not yet? Right, on the picture?*

Mm...

*Is that right, is that a fair guess?*

Yes? Well yes. Paul Mills again rang me.

*Mm, mm.*

And said 'Jocelyn, they're considering a whole lot of designers for *Alfred the Great*, would you be interested? And I said 'Let me go and read up about it Paul and then I'll ring you back'. And I, I read about, I mean I think I went to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and I read and I rang Paul and said 'Yes, I am interested', and he said 'Good, I'll see what I can do'. And I got on to my agent, who was called Pat Shard and she was at... Oh, I can't... London Management, and she said 'Are you certain, I think it's a man's film', and I said 'Well, I don't know Pat, I haven't read the script but I should, it sounds interesting'. And she said 'Okay, I'll ring you back', and she rang me back and said 'can you go in this afternoon and meet Clive Donner'? So I went and I met Clive and I liked him and we talked with Michael Stringer who was Production Designer and we discussed the way Clive wanted to do the film, the way Michael wanted to design it and I said 'It sounds fascinating I would love to do it', and Clive said 'Well if you'd love to do it it's yours'. And knowing Clive now and how he... [Pause] I mean he rarely makes up his mind like that, he had, as far as I knew, he only knew me from work that he'd seen, he certainly didn't know me, we'd never met before, And then he was going off to, it was something to do with *Mulberry Bush*.

*Mm.*

And he was coming back in however many weeks... Oh he was going to the West Indies I think. And I sat down with a huge pile of reference and... [Pause] I think we should switch off for a bit.

*Indeed. We're about to go in to 'Alfred the Great' for which we need a fresh session, fresh thought, fresh mind so with about one minute to go we'll, we'll run out this tape.*

Okay. I'd...

*Anything to add on what we've...?*

Oh a lot of research, which was fascinating, I mean I read and read and read, and then I put all the books away and started drawing. And I found instinctively I used things that they'd used. I mean they, mm, I did a, a dress for Aelhswith with shells on in a peak pattern all over it. I used, they didn't have gloves or only... I mean people had hunting mittens but they didn't have gloves with one, two, three, four fingers and a thumb and...

*Jocelyn, what sources in, for those sort of thing because it's, it's somewhat in the mists of time is it not?*

It is, but then I looked... That's what I'd like to think about for you.

*Okay. Well there's no reason why we shouldn't conclude here after a very fruitful day. You know, we've done three tapes, three ninety minute tapes.*

Good.

*Added to which we carved a lovely lunch.*

Good.

*Right, so we forego a...*

Oh.

[End of Tape 5 Side 2 0:44:39]

*Transcript Queries – Jocelyn Rickards 2*

<i>Page/Time</i>	<i>Query</i>
Tape 4 Side 2	
6 16:45	<i>'Shands'? Spelling/Doubtful Word - Film person.</i>
7 20:51	<i>Ruben 'Haroutian'? Spelling/Doubtful Word - Film person.</i>
7 20:57	<i>Ruben 'Haroutian'? Spelling/Doubtful Word - Film person.</i>
7 21:45	<i>Ruben 'Haroutian'? Spelling/Doubtful Word - Film person.</i>
8 25:45	<i>Richard 'Dolheim'? Spelling/Doubtful Word - Film Person</i>
Tape 5 Side 1	
16 15:24	<i>'Siraglio? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Top floor of Himmler's house in Tunisia.</i>
17 18:30	<i>Robert 'Narmiou'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – French film person.</i>
17 18:48	<i>'Carmous'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Friend of Narmiou.</i>
17 20:24	<i>'Narmiou'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – French film person.</i>
17 21:57	<i>'Tesserei'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Mosaics in Bado in Tunis.</i>
17 22:12	<i>Pierre 'Narmiou'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Son of Robert Narmiou..</i>
17 22:14	<i>'Narmiou'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – French film person.</i>
17 22:20	<i>Robert 'Narmiou'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – French film person.</i>
18 24:39	<i>'Groyner'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – Context uncertain.</i>
23 40:58	<i>'Duree'? Spelling/Doubtful Word – French film person..</i>
Tape 5 Side 2	
38 23:05	<i>...he doesn't... [Inaudible] ...that...</i>