

Interview with Respondent 0589

Date: 18/12/2014

Location: Respondent's home, London.

Interviewer: Emma Pett

Interviewer: So, what would be really helpful for me, and for the purpose of the interview, would be if you just said very briefly where you lived, in London, in the 1960s, and what you did, and just explain a bit about your social background, in a broad sense.

Respondent: OK, well first of all I'll tell you my age, I was born in 1936, so in 1960 I would've been 24. I definitely see myself as being part of the "swinging sixties," only because it was, it really was. Where did I live? I've lived in Kensington and Chelsea all my life, and in the late 1950s I was at art school, and that's a time, in a way, when you're really up front with more rebellious people. For example. In the 50s I was living with a girl who was later my wife. We were travelling on a bus, and the bus conductor refused to give us tickets because he said my wife ... he noticed she was wearing black tights, and he said "I don't want any Chelsea girls, or Chelsea types, on my bus."

Interviewer: Oh dear ...

Respondent: ... and, already, one was doing something slightly naughty, because everyone was wearing liver coloured stockings, or nylon stocking with the line up the back ... so the 50s was the beginning of things happening. For example, there was a shop, Mary Quant, who was a great designer, opened up her shop 'Bazaar' in the 50s, and that was terribly advanced, different. Kiki Byrne also had a shop opposite, then Carnaby Street in the 50s, I'm starting in the 50s ...

Interviewer: Yes, that's fine, a bit of background

Respondent: You can't begin in 1960, it was more 1955-65, in a way, but Kiki Byrne, Mary Quant ... I remember when I was at art school, which was at the Regent Street polytechnic, walking down to Liberty's, you saw this little street, which was Carnaby Street. Now there was nothing, Carnaby Street was dead, it was absolutely dead in those days ...

Interviewer: Really?

Respondent: There were two shops, one was called 'Vince', and one was called 'Donors', and they had daring men's clothes in them! You almost felt, if you went and looked at these ... everyone was a little bit nervous of even looking at these clothes, because they were so different.

Interviewer: Eccentric, or ... outlandish?

Respondent: In fact, I bought clothes from there later, but then, from that, sprung up Carnaby Street, it was kind of a new place. When I think about the 50s, it is really glum, a really glum time. There was still rationing in the 50s ...

Interviewer: And London was still recovering?

Respondent: I think rationing finished in 1956, and there just was a general feeling of everyone being old-fashioned, you couldn't buy, for example, the tights that my girlfriend bought ... it was exciting to get tights, because you couldn't find them in shops, you couldn't find jeans ... getting jeans was difficult. It's extraordinary, you'd have to go down to a shop on King's Road, The World's End, to get your jeans. So it was a really, really depressing time, actually.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: So as for movies, still in the 50s, at art school we'd be going to see films by Ingmar Bergman, I'm not sure whether these are 50s or 60s, things like 'Wild Strawberries' ...

Interviewer: Yes, that's late 50s.

Respondent : Yes, these are late 50s films, 'African Queen,' I went to when I was at school, but in those days, of course, everyone queued, when you went to a cinema there was always a queue, and buskers paraded up and down the queue, to entertain you ...

Interviewer: Which cinemas were these? In Kensington?

Respondent: These were in the West End, and the Gaumont, in Chelsea, the Essoldo in Chelsea, I went to films an awful lot in the 50s, and also you could sit through ...

Interviewer: You got a ticket for the seat?

Respondent: You could get a ticket for the seat, and sit, and see it again, and in the Odeon in Leicester Square, or was it the Empire? That's gone now, the Empire, a great organ would come up, in the interval, with lights and things, and they'd play ... it was ghastly, actually ...

Interviewer: [laughs]

Respondent: but, at the same time, there was a tremendous grandeur about these wonderful organs, just rising up from under the stage ... so there were queues. Sixties, I got married in the early sixties. Are you wanting film titles?

Interviewer: Well, no, if we just pause there for a minute, already that's really interesting for me. So, you were part of the beginning of a culture in which things were beginning to change, in terms of what people were wearing, and perhaps the sorts of films that they were watching? You said you went to the cinema a lot

at that point in your life, when you were a young man, what did the cinema mean to you, was it ... did it offer, perhaps, a different way of looking at the world? Or a way of broadening your ...

Respondent: Well, it was an escape, I knew, for example, at the Fulham Forum, which has now got another name, it was on the Fulham Road, every Sunday they would show foreign films, so you'd go and see 'Bicycle Thieves,' just on a Sunday, and other foreign movies, and that was really exciting, because they were better, in a way ... it wasn't a snob thing, they were just really interesting movies. Yes, the Italian ones, French films, I can't remember their titles right now ...

Interviewer: That's OK, so Italian films like 'Bicycle Thieves,' and then at the beginning of the 60s, you have what film academics call the 'New Wave,' like the French 'New Wave,' the Nouvelle Vague, in Britain you had the British 'New Wave,' like Tony Richardson's films, can you remember any of those?

Respondent: No, I wouldn't have known they were 'New Wave,' Dilys Powell was the big critic in those days ...

Interviewer: Yes, Dilys Powell ... so the sorts of films I'm thinking of, in terms of French films, A Bout De Souffle, Godard films, Truffaut films ... and then British, the British 'New Wave' was never really lauded in the same way, in fact I think the critics in the broadsheets were quite harsh, but they were films like 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning,' 'A Taste of Honey,' ...

Respondent: Yes, 'A Taste of Honey,' loved it, Rita Tushingham ...

Interviewer: Yes, Rita Tushingham's breakthrough role. Can you remember going to see any of those films for the first time, can you remember anything about the impact they had on you?

Respondent: Yes ... oh terrific, they were marvellous, but of course all of these, 'The L-Shaped Room,' was one, there were a lot of black and white movies, Albert

Finney ... see, there's another thing, Albert Finney was new, because he was not talking like I talk, sorry to put it like that ...

Interviewer: [laughs] That's OK

Respondent: I mean posh now is out of fashion, but back then the news was read by posh people, and actors were, on the whole, posh. So, when Albert Finney came and ... I'm afraid my memory is going with the names of the stars, 'The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner,' ...

Interviewer: They were all working-class men ...

Respondent: Yes, yes, and it was a new insight ... of course there was another one, which was Bill Haley and 'Rock around the clock' doing 'Blackboard Jungle', well that's 50s actually ...

Interviewer: Yes, it is ...

Respondent: It was huge, absolutely huge, that movie ...

Interviewer: What did that mean to you?

Respondent: It was so exciting, it was so exciting, and Elvis Presley also was .. was doing movies as well, there were huge queues, to go ...

Interviewer: Did you go and see films, when you were that age, did you go and see the films with groups of friends? Or a girlfriend?

Respondent: No, I'd go on my own.

Interviewer: You'd go on your own? Well, that's interesting, so it wasn't a social activity?

Respondent: Well, I was an only child, for a start ... I suppose, when I was in the army I went with a couple of friends sometimes, to the West End, to see 'The

Student Prince,' or something like that, but once I was married, then more with my wife. The fifties, yes, more on my own, but obviously with my wife, when I got married ...

Interviewer: So, how old were you when you got married?

Respondent: I was 24, I got married in '61.

Interviewer: The beginning of the sixties. So, when you went to the cinema in the sixties, you went ...

Respondent: Yes, we'd go to the Essoldo, and to the Gaumont, on the King's Road, because we lived in that area, and we'd see James Bond movies, of course, but at the same time, you see, my wife started making ties with flowers on (which is in my book), and then she graduated to making handbags, which were different. All handbags were kind of these ugly things then ... there was no handbag culture then, and she made lovely relaxed looking bags, there's one in my book, which you'll see, and this was part of 'swinging in', because she was opening up a new thing for young people to buy. For example, with the ties, David Hockney, who was about to be photographed by Lord Snowden, rang us up to ask if he could have a tie, because he hadn't got any ties, so he ... she gave him some ties, and in return he gave us two of his drawings, which is extraordinary ...

Interviewer: Wow! Yes, incredible ... so you were very much part of that scene, of young people doing things differently?

Respondent: Yes, yes. And it was through the handbags that we met ... they were illustrated in Vogue, and Queen magazine, and things like that, and so we met Sally Tuffin, and Marion Foale, I don't know if you've heard of them, but Foale and Tuffin was a huge 1960s shop, and Sally Tuffin is still one of my best friends, and Marion, actually. There was Mary Quant, there were all of these fashion people, and it was just terribly exciting ... forgetting about films for a minute, the moment ...

Interviewer: Yeah, that actual moment ...

Respondent: It just was a really exciting time. And my contribution to the swinging sixties was that, after art school, I had responsibilities because I got married, so I became a dealer, an antique dealer, and the thing that I happened to chose upon was considered kitsch in the general 50s/60s world, I wanted to deal in Art Nouveau, which was rubbish, it was so despised ...

Interviewer: Was it? Gosh.

Respondent: It was so despised that I was the only person buying it, it was an extraordinary thing, because antique dealers in those days, for some reason or other, thought antiques ended in the 1830s, when Victoria came to the throne, anything after 1830s – all Victorian, all Edwardian, Art Deco wasn't known – was rubbish!

Interviewer: That seems incredible now.

Respondent: And being the only one who dealt, I always called antique shops, the old ones, 'brown shops,' because they all had brown in them!

Interviewer: [laughs]

Respondent: Mine had colours in them, there were oranges, reds, gold, you know, what I did stood out, but at the same time, when I opened up a woman stopped by the stall in horror, and banged her umbrella on my table of goods, which made them bounce up and down, and said "How dare you lower the tone of Portobello Road?"

Interviewer: [laughs] Oh, that's brilliant!

Respondent: So, that's the atmosphere there, and I was the only person in England doing Art Nouveau ...

Interviewer: Yeah, that's extraordinary ...

Respondent: And I was also responsible for the naming of Art Deco, or partly responsible, there was no name for it, before that, it was called 'Odeon-style, Jazz Age' ...

Interviewer: Now, when people talk about their memories of the sixties, and the actual cinemas, of course, Odeon cinema architecture had a bit of that look about it, and when people are telling me about their memories, they talk about the "Art Deco cinemas," ...

Respondent: Yes, but they wouldn't have known them as that at the time ...

Interviewer: At the time, people didn't call them that? They didn't recognise that style as "Art Deco".

Respondent: No, no. It was exciting. For me, the cinema also ... once I began dealing, as I was the only one doing it, if I saw some Art Nouveau in a movie, I'd get, actually, quite upset, because they were taking away from my area ... so films like 'The Cincinatti Kid' had Tiffany lights in it, 'What's New Pussy Cat?' featured a wonderful Art Nouveau house in France called Le Castel Henriette designed by Guimard, who did the underground stations in Paris, and I was really, I ended up buying things from that house ...

Interviewer: Oh really, from the house that was used in the film?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: So, when you say you felt slightly upset when you saw ...

Respondent: I was a bit jealous, because I didn't want it to catch on with too many other people ...

Interviewer: Because it was your thing?

Respondent: It was my thing [laughs]

Interviewer: [laughs] That's brilliant. Can you remember when that started to change and it started to become ... I know this is moving away a bit from film, but I think it all ties in ... when people's interest in Art Nouveau and Art Deco started to take off? Did you see that change quite dramatically?

Respondent: Yes. I mean, when I first began people were shocked, it was a shocking thing and I liked it, I liked shocking people, like the lady with the umbrella, but there was a coterie of young people like myself who also saw it, and possibly were secretly collectors of it, so they came to me to buy it.

Interviewer: So, for young people in the early 1960s, Art Nouveau was a little bit radical?

Respondent: Yes, they didn't know it was called Art Nouveau then, it was just a style. For example, those two candlesticks [for the sake of the recorder I'm pointing at two Maiden Art Nouveau candlesticks in gilt] at the start of the 60s those would've cost £10 for the pair. Now they are £6-8000.

Respondent: It's completely changed. There were films stars, there was new money, I would sell to Rudolph Nureyev, or Monica Vitti, Luchino Visconti, The Beatles (not Ringo), but Paul McCartney particularly bought from me ... because it was a secret, no one knew what anything was, there were no books. These are all the books I've got now [points to bookcase], but I started with one, out of those huge pile of books there, and more downstairs ...

Interviewer: So people hadn't written on it?

Respondent: It was so secret, and there was this group of people that loved the secret, and it went on for years and years and years.

Interviewer: When did it start to change and become more of a mainstream interest?

Respondent: By the 70s, I would say. I had a good few years of doing it by myself, and by the mid 80s there were about 60 dealers in London, all just doing Art Nouveau and Art Deco.

Interviewer: And was it just furniture or were you doing art?

Respondent: Everything. Anything stylish. I had a little shop on Kensington Church Street. So the movies, what I noticed were those ... on TV there were things as well, like The Avengers, ...

Interviewer: So, you had a television throughout the 60s?

Respondent: Yes, it was new then, you had to get a license ..

Interviewer: When you got the television, did that change things for you ...

Respondent: Well, a lot of things changed, because when you get married you have children, so going to the cinema is a little bit more expensive because you've got to pay the babysitter, so I did cut down, to such an extent that I don't go at all any more [laughs]

Interviewer: [laughs] But you carried on going in the 60s?

Respondent: In the 50s I went a lot, in the 60s I went ... quite a lot, in the 70s still and then after that ... by the 80s I wasn't go to see anything, I just watched more TV.

Interviewer: I'm interested in what cinema meant amongst your acquaintances and friends that you had in the early 60s. You're talking about this time that was very exciting, presumably because you thought anything was possible?

Respondent: One took it for granted really, in many ways, but in any dinner conversation you would talk about the news, the latest fashion trends, what's in vogue,

which model you knew, which film you've been to, have you seen such-and-such a movie? So ... yes, it was there.

Interviewer: So, when you were having those conversations, and movies came up, can you remember which films were talked about? Which films were considered to be the more exciting?

Respondent: Last Year at Marienbad. I think, was that 1960? Last Year at Marienbad was an incredible movie, although absolutely nothing happens in it really. There was a wonderful game, a little match game .. have you seen it?

Interviewer: Yes

Respondent: And everyone was trying to do this match game, I can't even remember how you do it now... but that was extraordinary. Delphine Seyrig, even her name was rather wonderful ... and she never did anything else that I remember ...

Interviewer: Mmm. No, I'm not sure that she did ...

Respondent: So, it was really, I suppose I was with a group of people who went to continental films ...

Interviewer: Yes

Respondent: ... as well as the usual cowboy films, I mean, I loved every movie, actually ..

Interviewer: Mmm, but those were the ones that were more talked about, then, the European ones?

Respondent: Yes, I remember, they happened to come to my mind just then.

Interviewer: Can you remember what it was about them, that made them talked about?

Respondent : It was just talk-able about, really, there was a mystery to it, something quite strange, different. Whereas if you went to, I don't know, 'The Big Country,' or, I don't know, 'The Cincinatti Kid,' they were more ... you came out saying you liked them, or didn't like them. 'Whatever Happened to Baby Jane' was talked about quite a lot, because it was these great stars, Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, and also, I think my wife began having her labour pains after watching it.

Interviewer: Oh dear!

Respondent: And they were good, of course, there were all those old stars as well, which, there aren't any now, there was Liz Taylor, of course, and Richard Burton .. and how one followed their ups and downs, and loved their movies. I sold to Liz Taylor ...

Interviewer: Did you?

Respondent: Yes

Interviewer: Did you ever read, um, literature ... I know that there were journals and magazines about film stars ...

Respondent: I bought 'Films and Filming' in the fifties for about six months, and I kept these copies religiously for a while, but I've sold them now, a long time ago ... one would read reviews, though ...

Interviewer: Yeah, which reviews did you ...

Respondent: Always Dilys Powell, I suppose I can't remember any others. Dracula movies, Carry On movies I didn't like ...

Interviewer: No? What didn't you like about them?

Respondent: Just not that kind of ... I never liked Sid James

Interviewer: No? [laughs]

Respondent: [laughs] Or Barbara Windsor, for that matter, actually, not really ...

Interviewer: When the British film industry started to make films that reflected the swinging sixties, or swinging London, so films like, well, I guess first of all there were the Beatles films, but also films, Julie Christie films like Darling, or Alfie ...

Respondent: Yes, I like all of those ...

Interviewer: And later films by Antonioni ... what was it like seeing those films that were trying to capture that mood, and that moment in London, which you were actually part of? I was wondering what the experience was like for you going to watch those films, did you think 'Yes, this is my world, that I'm recognising on the screen?'

Respondent: Did I think that?

Interviewer: Or were you not so conscious of that?

Respondent: No ... no, they were entertainment, but there was the Antonioni film ...

Interviewer: Blow-up?

Respondent: Blow-up, thank you, where you knew some of the people, and that was a very clever film, and that was talked about ... but again, it's always these Italian directors, well in my case ...

Interviewer: Yes, those were the ones people talked about amongst your friends?

Respondent: Yes, more than ... James Bond. There was a wonderful James Bond, James Bond movies were great, I mean, I don't know how many were done in the sixties?

Interviewer: Quite a few, I think probably about six or seven ...

Respondent: I'm just trying to think of the titles ...

Interviewer: Dr No, From Russia With Love, all the early Sean Connery films ...

Respondent: Yes, all good, good crowds for them, there were crowds ... and even cartoons, you see, were good ...

Interviewer: Really? So, which cartoons? A few people have mentioned this to me, because obviously the programmes were quite different in the sixties, you had newsreels, Pathe news and other elements, as well as the main feature films. So, you can remember cartoons being shown at the cinema? Which ones?

Respondent: Tom and Jerry. Always good.

Interviewer: And you enjoyed watching them?

Respondent: Loved them, absolutely loved them. Still do, yes. I watch The Simpsons every night, in this household [laughs]

Interviewer: Do you? [laughs] I love The Simpsons, as well. So when you were watching those ...

Respondent: The whole thing of going to the cinema was much more of a ritual, you'd go and pay for your ticket, get your popcorn, or not, and you'd have your favourite seats, my case it would be the middle, not too near the front, not too near the back ...

Interviewer: Mmm, can you remember anything else about the ritual of cinema-going?

Respondent: Yes, the beauty of the cinema, one would be in this lovely room, this big atrium, I suppose you'd call it. And also, funnily enough, my uncle, my aunt's first husband, designed the Art Deco nudes in Leicester Square Odeon ...

Interviewer: Oh really?

Respondent: Which have been pulled down and destroyed now, I don't know whether you've seen the pictures of them? They had a wonderful, deco interior, although I didn't know at the time they were by him ...

Interviewer: Didn't you?

Respondent: No, I only discovered afterwards when I became interested in the period, and he was dead by then.

Interviewer: But you can remember seeing them, and appreciating them?

Respondent: Mmm, one would look around, and the lighting and everything.

Interviewer: Can you remember any other ...

Respondent: There was the trailers, which you had to sit through as well, which were also interesting, actually. Pearl and Dean.

Interviewer: Yes, I can remember some of this from the seventies ... and the advertising? Some people have told me there was a lot less advertising in the sixties?

Respondent: I suppose so ... as I don't go now, I don't know. There were two movies, you saw.

Interviewer: Did you actually ... did you pay attention to the rest of the programme?

Respondent: Mmm. Although people talked more during the adverts. But you didn't mind. If you had noisy people while the film was on, one would turn around ... or say 'Shh!' And try not to sit in front of small people!

Interviewer: And you had popcorn, do you have any other refreshments?

Respondent: Yes, chocolates, bought them at the cinema.

Interviewer: And what about the national anthem at the end, can you remember that?

Respondent: Yes. You tried to rush for the door, but you did stand. I'd say towards the end of it, I'd say in the late sixties it probably stopped, I think it stopped partly because everyone did begin to walk towards the door. There was always the news, which was lovely, the Pathe news, and you'd see General de Gaulle kissing somebody, and everyone would roar with laughter ...

Interviewer: Really?

Respondent: Because men never kissed like that, you know ..

Interviewer: So continental habits seemed quite exotic, and funny?

Respondent: Foreign, yes. Whereas now, you see, God mercy, footballers hugging each other. You know, the thought of that was out, completely out.

Interviewer: Those sorts of things are fascinating ...

Respondent: The other thing I did during the sixties was join in the fashion thing, which was men never wore ... men only wore plain shirts, striped shirts, that's all they wore. So, I went to Liberty's and I bought flowered ... and made these into shirts, and called the "fun shirts" and sold them at ...

Interviewer: Fun shirts?

Respondent: Because they were so different, and anyone who wore, a man who wore a flowered shirt could be considered 'pansy' or 'gay' or whatever, so I made those for a while. But I bought my fabrics at Liberty's and asked if I could buy at trade price, and they said we have a franchise already with a shirt company, it was Rael Brook, I think ... big shirt makers at the time ... Liberty's said we'll ask them, then we'll give you a trade price. And then they said I'm afraid Rael Brook have declined you because they want to do flowered shirts themselves, now.

Interviewer: Oh!

Respondent: Yes, it was quite interesting. And Michael Fish, who became a big, famous shirt designer, took over, and I went back to my antiques.

Interviewer: It's interesting, for me, because I'm fascinated by those changing attitudes you're talking about, that there was a sense in which if a man wore a floral, patterned shirt, people would say ...

Respondent: He'd be put into a little compartment that meant 'odd,' 'weird'

Interviewer: Yes, 'odd', 'weird', calling them 'a pansy', there were obviously ways in which attitudes were changing towards the way people were expressing themselves, particularly in terms of gender and sexuality, and the sixties is often remembered, I suppose, as a decade in which a lot of those things changed ... the role of women changing as well, the pill being available, there was perhaps the opportunity for women to lead different lives. What I've found, when I've been travelling around the country, is women saying 'well no, my life, our lives didn't change that much, they weren't that different to the fifties, in that we got married very young and had families'

Respondent: Well, they had the pill, didn't they? So already, that's a huge change.

Interviewer: A lot of the women I've talked to, maybe because of the communities they were from, said their lives didn't change. Do you think that was different in London?

Respondent: Well, when I was doing my shirts, I expanded and I started doing "Op Art" shirts, and so when you wore a tie, you couldn't see if you had a tie on or not, because they were the same, it was all zig-zags, things like that, so when I went into the Dorchester for lunch one day, the doorman said 'I'm sorry, you can't go in there, sir, you haven't got a tie on,' and I just went like this [lifts imaginary tie] I had this invisible tie. That's one thing. And for women, my good friend Sally Tuffin, who is actually a swinging sixties person, I'm more on the edge, she went into Claridges for dinner, with her husband and a friend, wearing a trouser suit, which she had designed, and she was stopped from going in, the doorman said 'I'm very sorry, we don't allow women with trousers in here,' so she took her trousers off and walked in with a jacket, which was like a mini skirt.' Now, you see that made an idiot, both those events made them idiots, but it was a kind of .. it was this mood, it was a ruse. So, any films that were in a way just slightly rebellious

Interviewer: So, there was a kind of ridiculing of the establishment?

Respondent: So, any films that were just slightly rebellious, I suppose encouraged everybody, possibly. You don't ... I wouldn't have rated films as part of, as any influence in my life, but maybe they were?

Interviewer: Mmm, I'm just thinking about that sense of ... sorting sending up the establishment, and the rules of the establishment, and ridiculing it slightly, and there are scenes like that in various films, like, for example in 'A Hard Day's Night' the Beatles do it, they tease the people who are interviewing them, and mock them, and give them silly answers ...

Respondent: They were clever, the Beatles, when they answered, because they were different, they just were different, they were disrespectful ...

Interviewer: They were, yes ...

Respondent: And of course, that's what we liked, in a way, but they were disrespectful in a very polite way ....

Interviewer: And a witty way?

Respondent: Yes, particularly John Lennon, he was always naughty. But when it came to the 70s, the punk people, they weren't ... they were disrespectful, but rude, so it was a quite a different thing...

Interviewer: They were quite aggressive?

Respondent: Yes. So we loved them [the Beatles]. The Rolling Stones, they were more serious ... the Beatles were ...

Interviewer: Playful?

Respondent: Yes. But I mean ... a film that affected me, really affected me, was in the 50s, which was James Dean. I don't know if his last film, 'Giant' came out in the 60s? No?

Interviewer: I think they were all 50s films, but carry on ...

Respondent: But James Dean profoundly affected me, because I, like a lot of other teenagers of my time, identified with the kind of father he had, maybe there were just lots of fathers like my father, because I've heard since, so many kids of my age, which was 1920, that kind of thing, were affected by it ... I would have rows with my father, the same old family row, and I'd start to quote what James Dean said, to see if I could get the same reaction, but it never worked! I's actual7 try to turn it around so that I was in the film, really strange ...

Interviewer: Yes, do you mind me asking what profession your father had?

Respondent: He was a journalist. But, of course, I didn't know my father very well, he was away during the war, so you have these whole gaps, lots of people my age must've had that, I was shoved off to boarding schools and all that, but James Dean, that was very powerful, there were two that really profoundly affected me, just because of his relationship with his father, in both cases ...

Interviewer: So he was a bit of a role model, really? And that was a 50s thing, by the time the 60s came along, you were older and had got married, so perhaps you didn't look to actors or film stars in the same way?

Respondent: It's just that we were ... I mean in '66 I was in New York and I wore a bright yellow suit, and my ex-wife was walking down 14<sup>th</sup> Street in a mini skirt and a woman threw stones at her legs, little stones at her legs ...

Interviewer: Really? Because it was ...

Respondent: You could shock people. Andy Warhol, that kind of area of things ... but the average English person I don't think knew of these kinds of things, it would be more the artists, the designers, the film-makers, the TV makers, that kind of area ... but I'd say, I don't know who you've been interviewing before, I don't mean to be rude, but the general run of people, they didn't get involved in it...

Interviewer: Going back to what you were saying about watching the news, I find this fascinating, because for my generation we never saw the news at the cinema ...

Respondent: They don't have the news now? No, they don't...

Interviewer: No it stopped, when I was growing up in the 70s and 80s there was no newsreels at the cinema, that stopped in the 60s, so for me that's something quite fascinating

Respondent: The news was wonderful. It was lovely, British Movietone News ... I remember they were black and white...

Interviewer: Did you ever see any big news stories at the cinema?

Respondent: The Beatles, arriving in Hew York, the crisis of ... the Cuban Crisis, of course, one saw ... that's 60s, isn't it? We all thought we were going to die.

Interviewer: It is. How did ... when there was a big story like that, the Cuban Missile Crisis, or Churchill dying, how did people respond?

Respondent: I queued up, I was part of the queue for Churchill, so I'd have seen that on the news.

Interviewer: What was the atmosphere like in the cinema when there was a big story like that?

Respondent: No cheering, no sound. You're left with your own thoughts ..

Interviewer: Everyone was very quiet, were they?

Respondent: Yes, except if you got de Gaulle kissing, I always remember that, because everyone burst out laughing, and I didn't laugh, because I thought, this is the French way, I'd been to France, so I knew that the French did that ... but the average, the whole audience roared with laughter, when they saw them ... that's kissing me, it wasn't Margaret Thatcher, although she was much later ...

Interviewer: You said you were in a queue when Churchill died ...

Respondent: Oh yes, for the lying in State, we queued from the other side of the Thames, we had to cross right over Lambeth Bridge, it was about six hours we queued, freezing cold ... but we just had to, we just had to pay our respects to thank

this man, because he got us through the war ... but we're all much more disrespectful now, no one cares so much, it's funny, it really has changed.

Interviewer: So, that's interesting, if you watching a big story in the cinema, there was a sense of respect ...

Respondent: Well, people, for example, queued for buses , there's no queue now, I don't know how that rule ever came in, because you'd think it's automatic that the first come to the stop should be at the front, but now it's gone. You couldn't get wine in pubs. You couldn't get garlic bulbs, it was all garlic salt.

Interviewer: So, consumerism is obviously one of the key things that changed in the 60s, was that part of the excitement?

Respondent: Well, they creep in, in a way, you don't notice it at the time.

[Discussion about shops with respondent's wife]

Respondent: The other thing about movies in the sixties, the big ones, the casts were so enormous. You think about the size of the cast in 'Cleopatra', it was just huge. I've just got a list of films here, and I've seen them all. 'A Space Odyssey', very influential, particularly with that furniture designed by Morgue, who did that, I was always looking for that.

Interviewer: So, when you went to the cinema, a lot of the time you were actually looking at furniture and design elements?

Respondent: I was always looking at it in the movies, I would get upset if it was Art Nouveau. At that time, I've got used to it ... 'The Graduate' was another great movie, opening the window, it was wonderful, marvellous movie, Anne Bancroft I remember, Hoffman, the first time we'd seen him, I suppose, and also it had some New York dancing scenes in it, I remember, which I could identify with because I'd been to New York, what date was the movie? '67, yes, I'd been to New York in '66.

Interviewer: So, going back to what I asked you earlier about seeing your world, the swinging sixties world on the big screen, you're saying you saw that in 'The Graduate,' so you do, there's some sense you identified with particular things?

Respondent: Yes, they had, I think in 'The Graduate' there's a scene at a party, I might be muddling it up with another movie, and there were members of Andy Warhol's group of people and I vaguely knew them, as well ...

Interviewer: Did you ever go and see any of the more experimental films, because Andy Warhol made films ...

Respondent: Yes, he did. I went to Andy Warhol's studio and saw ... one, I think, yes, I sat on the most hideous sticky sofa, it was horrible. In New York I went to The Factory and he's done, he's ironed silver paper onto the walls, which is exactly what I'd done to my shop, my shop was all silver, it was like silver paper that you ironed on, and when you ironed it, it stuck to the wall. My shop which I opened in '65 we decorated like that, it was terribly daring and modern, and his studio, his factory, was also the same silver walls, much better done than mine.

Interviewer: Did you ... I'm really interested that you saw one of his films there, were you with a group of people, or ... how did that come about?

Respondent: I went there with a photographer, Maurice Hogenboom, who had a tragic end, he walked backwards on the Sugar Loaf mountain while photographing somebody and fell off ... but Maurice, he was also the boyfriend of the daughter of the Duke of Bedford, and he took me round, he wanted to open my eyes about New York, so we went round New York, and we ended up in the factory, and Andy wasn't there, but there was a movie going on and I just sat and was talking to somebody, and watched this movie, on a sticky sofa, and it was just very tedious, very long, black and white film, somebody was

shutting their eyes, and I can't remember his name I'm sorry to say, but I remember that the man who said ...

Interviewer: Was it screened with a projector? Can you remember anything about the way it was screened?

Respondent: I can't remember, it was an empty room, but there was that famous man who said 'Tune in, turn on, drop out'

Interviewer: Timothy Leary?

Respondent: That's it, he came in, he had this most wonderful smile, I remember ..

Interviewer: He was there, was he? So people just wandered around ...

Respondent: He was there ... Andy Warhol, anyone was on street corners, selling his paper, or giving it away, one saw him all the time, and I had lunch with him, because he bought from me, he came and pretty much cleared my shop of any Art Deco I had, and I was invited for lunch with him over the road. It was one of those funny lunches, because it was him, Fred Hughes, his assistant and John Morrissey, who was a film director, and him and myself, five of us, and everybody saw me having lunch with him, all my friends somehow managed to go past the restaurant the day I had lunch with Andy Warhol. So they all said to me 'what did he say,' and of course my answer was he didn't say anything at all, he didn't say a thing. He just had his dark glasses on. Not a word. Which I thought was a wonderful answer, actually, I loved it. Because it made him seem so peculiar.

Interviewer: Did you see any other films while you were in New York?

Respondent2: The film I do remember was 'Sunday, Bloody Sunday,' that was a great 60s film, because it ...

Respondent: It had a naughty gay kiss in it.

Interviewer: Did people talk about that?

Respondent: Yes, oh yes. We went to see it because of that.

Interviewer: Because it was a bit daring? Rule-breaking?

Respondent2: It was Peter Finch, wasn't it? It was very, very ... that was a big thing.

Interviewer: I find that fascinating, that people went to see it because there was a gay kiss in it, because that was not seen?

Respondent: That was the publicity for it.

Interviewer: That was how it was marketed, was it?

Respondent: I don't think anyone would say they went to see it for that reason, but I'm telling you now, I'd say that was one of the reasons why they'd go. It was a black and white movie, quite an intellectual movie. Because all of these gay movies coming out, they could ruin the career of a film star. Dirk Bogarde played somebody, I think the film was called 'Blackmailed' or something like that ...

Interviewer: So, that fact that it wasn't ... it wasn't culturally acceptable even though legally things were changing in the 60s, it could change someone's career ... made it a point of interest, for you?

Respondent: Yes. It would certainly be mentioned in the reviews, otherwise you wouldn't hear about it.

Interviewer: Were there any other ... towards the end of the 60s ... when there was more unrest, can you remember any other films like that?

Respondent: What do you mean, more unrest?

Interviewer: Well, in Paris you had the riots ...

Respondent: Oh yes. I was there as well. The riots in France ... it was amazing in Paris, because there was rubbish piled up everywhere, there were no buses, no transport, or anything, and I remember just sitting on Boulevard St Michel, at a cafe, and there were just hundreds of police, they were a special police, the riot police, all kind of like Nazis in a way, zig-zags all over them, and suddenly they charged, and we just upped, chairs flying, and ran for our lives, all the way up, and I remember some professional people, who were knowing what was going on, could see that we were tourists, and said 'get off this main street, go inside quickly, so we went into a side street, and we were affected a bit by tear gas and things like that ... it was terribly exciting.

Interviewer: Were you scared?

Respondent: Yes, but in a wonderful, exhilarating kind of way, it was really, really exciting! I was with my sister-in-law, who was Susan Fleetwood, and she was an actress, and she had to be performing somewhere or other in London, and she couldn't get back. It was the only time she ever missed a performance.

Interviewer: Did it feel different in London towards the end of the 60s?

Respondent: Well, when was the Winter of Discontent?

Interviewer: That was later, wasn't it, in the 70s.

Respondent: There were strikes all the time, you see, every day there were strikes, the other thing that happened in the 60s, of course, was that we became smoke-free. Suddenly, in Winter time, like now, you can see across the road, before it was fog, foggy, smoggy, it was misty all the time,

Interviewer: That was early 60s ..

Respondent: It was wonderful, cleaning up, can I look it up?

Interviewer: Yes, of course.

Respondent: Dr. Strangelove. Wonderful movie. It was just the most amazing movie, a bit spoilt in the end by the ride on a plane. West Side Story. Incredible, although that was a 50s musical, no 60s ... It's A Mad World,

Interviewer: If you could pick out one film from the 60s, what would you pick out?

Respondent: I love them all. 'Seven Samurai' was my favourite movie of all time. But that, I think, is 50s. There's so many wonderful movies. I hated 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,' 'The Magnificent Seven' would be one of my favourite movies, that was good. Which is like 'The Seven Samurai' it's based on it, Dr. Zhivago. Easy Rider. I can't say I really liked Easy Rider, too upsetting. Have you seen it?

Interviewer: Yes. What did you find upsetting about 'Easy Rider'?

Respondent: I'll tell you what .. it was the random way they were shot, at the very end, just two idiots getting in a car, let's get these cyclists off the road ... bang! Bang, gone, it's all, it was terrible. Bonnie and Clyde I loved, as well. Is that 60s?

Interviewer: It is 60s, yes. It's interesting that you found that violence in 'Easy Rider' upsetting, because other films, like 'Bonnie and Clyde' had violence in them ...

Respondent: Yes, I didn't mind it, it was the random, it was the waste, because they were killed for no reason, none at all, whereas in 'Bonnie and Clyde' they were killed for a reason, they were dangerous. But there were certain films I'd never go to. 'Play Misty for Me'. I'd never go to a movie like that.

Interviewer: Not your thing?

Respondent: I just ... no, too frightening. Really scary. The revenge of women. There's another one that had Kirk Douglas' son in it ...

Interviewer: Fatal Attraction. That's an 80s film.

Respondent: And I wouldn't watch 'The Missing'. I don't like films where children are at risk in any way .. kidnapped or damaged. There are certain areas I just won't go. I didn't go to 'The Exorcist,' I've seen it since, but when it came out I didn't go.

Interviewer: Did you have favourite genres? You've said you liked continental films ...

Respondent: Comedy. I like them all. God, when I look through these, how lucky one is to have seen these films. Judy Holliday in 'Phffft'. Was she playing somebody called Gladys Glover? 'Born Yesterday'? But I think that's 50s. 'Monsiuer Hulot's holiday', that's the funniest film I've ever seen.

Interviewer: In the 60s there were cinemas, the Classic Chain, that showed older films from the 30s and 40s, did you go to those?

Respondent: Yes. That's what I was talking about when I said I went to the Fulham Forum. And places like the Everyman in Hampstead, but again that's 50s. You'd go to the Curzon to see foreign movies. With it's wonderful armchairs. Is it still there, the Curzon?

Interviewer: I don't know, I don't think the chairs will still be there if it is.

Respondent: The Electric I've heard has got armchairs. There was the cinema in Draycot Avenue, the Paris Pullman, where the David Hockney film was shown, what was it called, 'A Bigger Splash' or something like that. That was 1970s, though.

Interviewer: I'm not sure, yes I think that was a bit later.

Respondent: I mean, all the big films of the 6s, you're clever to have chosen this.. La Dolce Vita, I think that was on general release, 'The Hustler' ...

Interviewer: Did you have particular stars that you liked?

Respondent: Yes. Elizabeth Taylor, my favourite star of all is Marilyn Monroe, without a doubt. It makes everyone laugh.

Interviewer: What do you love about Marilyn Monroe?

Respondent: She just was extraordinary. I went to every movie she did. There was something ... it's still odd that 60 years after she's died, or 50 years, that she's still, you see her, they always pop her photograph in papers, everywhere, why do they still do it? She still has an allure. She sang well, she acted well, everyone laughed at her, she was amazing.

Interviewer: Can you remember when she died?

Respondent: Yes. Quite vividly. It was August Bank Holiday. It was terrible. The last thing you expected. But I think it's clever of her, actually, to have died then, in a way. Because, you know, she's have got older, it would've been more difficult for her. I mean, she just was incredible, I followed her life, the same with Elizabeth Taylor, although I never found Elizabeth Taylor had the beauty that Monroe had. Monroe had an extraordinary beauty, which is uncanny, because I still can't pinpoint it today. Why is it, when you look at her, she's got something. She had something that makes a star. I mean, I've seen stars, I went to a ... Mick Fleetwood is my brother-in-law and I went to his wedding, and George Harrison was there, and George Harrison was a most peculiar man, was wearing a white suit and he sat in the garden of the reception afterwards, completely separate from everybody, and you thought, this is amazing, his charisma was just shining out, this white suit ...Yul Brynner, Montgomery Clift, he was still alive in the 60s.

Interviewer: Going back to, because I'm interested in this, when Monroe died, was there a sense in which people wanted to back to some of her films, how did people respond?

Respondent: I don't remember, but I do remember being really shocked. There was much more of a star culture then, I mean Brad Pitt now I suppose is up there, but not really.

Interviewer: Do you think people's relationships and attitudes towards film stars was different then? There was more of a star culture, you say ...

Respondent: Well, there was the star system, so we were all moulded to look at them, and we were never told anything nasty about anyone, unless it was a really bad scandal like a murder or something like that. Somebody getting divorced. We were controlled by their publicity.

Interviewer: But Liz Taylor and Richard Burton you read about?

Respondent: Yes, fascinated by in, but everybody read about it, they were, who's the equivalent of it now? Not Brangelina, Becks, a little bit, but they're such a model couple. They're nice, they really are good role models. Whereas Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton were fiery and drank a lot and had public rows, and were larger than life.

Interviewer: Were you aware that, that fascination about them for certain aspects of society, would that have been mixed with disapproval? Not necessarily amongst your friends ... I can remember my grandmother talking about them disapprovingly, because they rowed, they drank ...

Respondent: No, I never disapproved, I liked it. It was a good read. After all, that's what you were reading papers for. I love a little bit of scandal, as the British do. So any bit of tittle-tattle that's kind of a bit naughty is a bit exciting really, even now.

Interviewer: Did you read about it in the newspapers, then, because obviously there were magazines ...

Respondent: Well, in the 60s, if there was a court case, the Evening Standard would, you'd read the court case, you'd read what the lawyer said, what the defendant said, in the box. Now they just give you a precis of what was said. Then you'd go through three pages of the whole thing.

Interviewer: So it was like a drama, like a soap opera in a way?

Respondent: Yes. And as for covers, Jimmy Goldsmith running off with somebody to Gretna Green to get married.

Interviewer: There are aspects of the culture that were the same, but people found out about it in different ways...

Respondent: We were much more sheltered in those days, no one swore on TV at all.

Interviewer: Is there anything else we haven't touched on that you want to mention. Were you aware of 60s fashion in film?

Respondent: I also knew Ken Russell's wife, she borrowed things from me, they borrowed a wonderful black and white striped fur coat, but they never gave it back.

Interviewer: OK, well thank you very much for your time.

