



**Artists Documentation Program  
Video Interview Transcript**

**DAVID MCMANAWAY  
MARCH 5, 1992**

**Interviewed by:  
Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Founding Director,  
Artists Documentation Program,  
and Chief Conservator, The Menil Collection**

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This interview is part of the Artists Documentation Program, a collaboration of the Menil Collection, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, Harvard Art Museums.

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## About the Artists Documentation Program

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, artists have experimented with an unprecedented range of new materials and technologies. The conceptual concerns underlying much of contemporary art render its conservation more complex than simply arresting physical change. As such, the artist's voice is essential to future conservation and presentation of his or her work.

In 1990, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a grant to the Menil Collection for Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, then Chief Conservator, to establish the Artists Documentation Program (ADP). Since that time, the ADP has recorded artists speaking candidly with conservators in front of their works. These engaging and informative interviews capture artists' attitudes toward the aging of their art and those aspects of its preservation that are of paramount importance to them.

The ADP has recorded interviews with such important artists as Frank Stella, Jasper Johns, and Cy Twombly. Originally designed for use by conservators and scholars at the Menil, the ADP has begun to appeal to a broader audience outside the Menil, and the collection has grown to include interviews from two partner institutions: the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, Harvard Art Museums. In 2009, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a grant to the Menil Collection to establish the ADP Archive, formalizing the multi-institutional partnership and making ADP interviews more widely available to researchers.

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**[Speakers (in order of appearance): Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, Founding Director, Artists Documentation Program and Chief Conservator, The Menil Collection; David McManaway, Artist; Jim Love, Artist]**

**[BEGIN RECORDING]**

**[00:00:43]**

CM-U: Today is March 5, 1992, and we are very happy to have David McManaway here to talk about his piece entitled *Jomo Board #2* [1968, The Menil Collection, Houston, anonymous gift]. The piece was completed in 1968 in Dallas, and it entered the Menil Collection last year as a gift of Adolph and Bettiruth Susholtz. So I think really what we want to do is to start talking in general about the idea of the *Jomo Board* and how it became a part of David's work.

**[00:01:13]**

D. McManaway: I had been doing the Jomo thing for a long time, which was just – to make this sort of short – was a private joke with another student at Arkansas.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And we had Jomos. And I think you know the history of the word. It's...

CM-U: I do, but maybe – why don't you just...

D. McManaway: Well, when I was a kid, there was a movie called *Juke Girl*, [1942], which had Ronald Reagan starring in it, no less. And a black actor [Willie Best] who almost always played a kind of an Uncle Tom type, a shuffler, you know, but he was a wonderful actor, and he, in that movie, was called the Jomo Man, or he came around with a little board with these little pouches dangling. And it said, "Good-luck Jomos." As a kid, I picked up on that, along with a few of the other – my friends; and we would call each other at midnight or two o'clock in the morning and say, "Wanta buy a Jomo?" And it got to be kind of a joke. Or you'd – if we were out somewhere, staying overnight, you'd wake someone and say, "Buy a Jomo." And the Jomo was just this plaything. And later on, at this point, I see the importance of that. Of play in art, you know...



CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...from the artist, that is. And I forgot about it then. And at school, Harold Hill, who was some kind of country genius, you know, we got to talking about that. He had seen the picture himself as a little kid and thought it was pretty strange, this black guy, in that movie, trying to sell good-luck Jomos to a bunch of jerks, you know, like Reagan and the rest of those people who were having sort of *Grapes of Wrath* kind of situations between the farmers, and the combines, and the unions trying to take over; and they were having these big riots. And there was Willie Best in there trying to sell them a Jomo. So we started joking around with that. And before long, it turned into a little object that you could hold in your hand; and, if you offer your hand out like this, most people will do that. And you drop it into the hand, and they would instantly recognize \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible], or something akin to that. Or they thought they did. And look at it. In other words, that was the kind of object it was. That's what we declared to be a Jomo. And they'd finally stop and look at you and say, "Well, what is that?" And you'd say, "It's a Jomo." And we figured we'd sold them a Jomo. But just a little private fun.

D. McManaway: Well, because it became a small object, the objects began to be enhanced. They began to be put in boxes. They began to be wrapped and tied, and I, I can't tell you. We did everything we could think of, and over here on the side, painting away like real serious artists, you know. And not too bad at it, either. Harold was plenty good. And I got to where I could do painting pretty well at one point. But that was the beginning of the idea, you might say. Turning into an object. And at some point, it was as if something that I would see, if the Jomo expanded, what I saw was what I got, which was up in here somewhere (points at head); and it was either pick it up or leave it. And at some point, very early on, it was, anything that hits you that way, get it. Instead of saying, "Ah, I'm working on something. I wonder if that'll work?"

D. McManaway: Well, there's no way to know that.

**[00:05:12]**

D. McManaway: So I took to getting the things and sticking them in this studio now. And to bring you up to date on that, I am having my studio expanded because I've run out of room. You know, my studio looks like this board. And ninety-nine percent of the things laying around – Jim's studio, you know – (laughs) he'll never use ninety-nine percent of that stuff, but it's got to be there, see. And the object has become like that for me, regardless of what it is. And I'm not on a search for reality nor any of those things. I think the object is what it is,



and when you put them together, something happens. And maybe something else happens.

D. McManaway: In the past couple of years – this is current right now about these things – listen, when I found that bear, it was a V-day, you know. I start something with – I’m not sure how it starts, but, again, it’s all visual. I’ll guarantee that.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: There’s no philosophy here. You can make a nice one out of it after it’s made, but I believe the artist has to make something. You know, I’m old school. And I will see just as simple as this little thing with the head attached to a shaving brush, and in that box with the word “Yes.” And I say, “That’s it.” And I put it on here. Oh, I should say, when I was getting a lot of this stuff and making little things – and Harold would come visiting, and we’d always swap with each other – and oftentimes we’d stand with an object behind our backs...

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...on this exchange, and go, “One, two, three,” and hold it out. And on several occasions, it was the same object. So we had a communion there that was pretty special in some way.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: It would be nice to be able to say it’s the art process.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: You know, why not? That can explain a lot if you understand it. I found, not this, but some fence boards out in the back. In my backyard. I mean, they appeared, you know. But we were living in a rented apartment, and there had been an old wooden fence, and the landlord had it torn down, and those boards were stacked out there. And I looked at them, and they were beautiful, you know, weathered...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...that sort of thing. Which obviously I like a lot. And I thought, “I’m going to get about...” This is really dumb sounding. It’s like Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland, you know. “My daddy’s got a barn.” “And mine has some

lights.” And they say, “Well, let’s do a play.” “Okay.” And the next thing you know, it’s on Broadway. See. And that’s what this story sounds like.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: So I got the boards, and I thought, “I’ll put those boards up on my wall, almost as a bulletin board; but I’ll have it for a place to put these things that I find and collect, and maybe sometimes I’ll use one to make somebody a little Christmas present. Or whatever. Or Harold, or whatever.” No, I had made a couple of other things that were sort of serious Jomo, and – God! Got a long ways to go here.

CM-U: Well...

D. McManaway: I’ll have to shorten this up.

[00:08:50]

D. McManaway: Anyway, I put the boards up on the wall in my studio; and I put – like these right here have a couple of – well, let’s see. How did this one get down? Anyway, they had a couple of 2x4s, and the boards – I put those on the wall, nailed the boards this way...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...vertically. Horizontally.

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: And when I had it done, I had a wooden board on my wall that was actually bigger than this. And I had four, five, or six things right there. And so I found a way to put them on the board. And as that was happening, I thought – this is really bad – but I thought, “I’ll bet I can make something out of this.” God damn! But that’s really just that simple. So I spent six months on that first board, which got destroyed later.

CM-U: So this was the *Jomo Board No. 1*?

D. McManaway: This is *No. 2* (points to *Jomo Board #2*, mounted on wall).

CM-U: This is *No. 2*, but then the one you were just discussing is *No. 1*.

D. McManaway: Yeah. It got destroyed, but...

CM-U: It was destroyed.

D. McManaway: Somebody jumped up in the air and landed in it...

CM-U: Hmm.

D. McManaway: ...and knocked it over. And that was the end of it. But even that, I threw a lot of that stuff out. Because I wasn't seriously bent on this yet.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And the little kids in the neighborhood, who knew stuff I was doing, kept finding these old Jomos and bringing them back to me, you know.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: And that, so help me...

CM-U: You need another one [sounds like].

D. McManaway: So there was that board up there. And I, because of being – you know, doing my homework on painting and drawing and design and what have you, I had – I took that initial phase and tried for six months, maybe longer, to start with a border or some unifying theme...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...get a bunch of bottle caps, maybe, and – whatever. And I couldn't even get close. And so I abandoned that idea, and I thought at that point, "Oh, well, I'll just go ahead and put the objects on it just like I intended to." So I got a nail, and I nailed something on. And I went to get the others ones, things that I could nail on fortunately at that moment. And I was going to nail that on, but I moved it a little to the left, see, and put it there. And I thought, "Well, hell, that's the way to do this. I'll just keep putting these things on there, and when it's filled up, it's finished." And I've never changed that except there are a lot more – I think there are probably a lot more ideas – or visual ideas – and concepts that have crept into it. I can point them out.

CM-U: Um-hum.



D. McManaway: But that still doesn't make any difference. The whole thing – I used to try to explain it to some degree by calling it a gestalt...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...where you get the sum of the parts is – how does it go? The whole is...

CM-U: Greater than the sum of its parts.

D. McManaway: ...greater than the sum of the parts. And that's the way I feel about these things.

CM-U: Um-hum.

[00:11:56]

CM-U: What about the shape and the – I mean, it's not just the board that you put on a wall. I mean, you've added other images and...

D. McManaway: Well, that was – yeah. That was just an urge for a long time with the things. I still like it. Any kind of a little structure that, if it could go on wheels, we liked the idea. Harold and I, both. And, you know, in some antique store, when you'd see those little Indian brass elephants...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...on a platform on wheels, I loved them. So this one got wheels.

CM-U: Was *Jomo Board 1* on wheels also.

D. McManaway: No. This is the only one.

CM-U: It's just the board [sounds like]. This is the only one.

D. McManaway: Just as well, too, I think. Now they are just big rectangular things. They have to be that shape because – no, I've made one other. And I've made a couple of long tall ones [e.g., *Bouquet with Rose*, 1982, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of William J. Hill].

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But I've made one in a kind of a modified cross shape. I was always sort of – dare I say – hung up on the cross.

CM-U: You can say it.

D. McManaway: I just did.

CM-U: (laughs) I think I've seen an illustration of that...

D. McManaway: Yeah. And I think that was one of the kind of major pieces.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And what happened to that, I just loved the shape of the cross...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and I did a pencil design of it, which I based on the Greek golden mean, the proportion...

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...so that cross has corners cut out of that golden rectangle.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: Like that. And I liked the shape a lot. You know, you are supposed to like that shape. So I did. But between the golden rectangle, and then making it into a cross...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and what happened there was, I had several things that were definitely religious, like an old Mexican icon, a partial figure of – you know, how they'd have them on their altar pieces of Christ...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and I started putting those things on, and I thought – well, I've done a few more like that with kind of a theme. So anything or everything that was religious, that's what I let take over on that board. And almost everything on

there, for me, had some significance, and some aspect of some religion somewhere, you know.

CM-U: Um-hum. Would that be true of a piece as early as this one, too?

D. McManaway: No, this was more – possibly more of a receptacle.

**[00:14:39]**

D. McManaway: But these things have to grow, you know. One thing leads to another.

CM-U: And the relationship of them, too?

D. McManaway: In some ways, yeah. But I still – a lot of times, I try to solve an area...

CM-U: I'm sorry? Try to...

D. McManaway: I try to solve an area. When I have, maybe, a little scheme like this that I like a whole lot...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...well, what do you put here? Or here? Or here?

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And I can't get it

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: So that's why these things take – now, this one I'm just about to finish is at least three years.

CM-U: Hmm.

D. McManaway: And so at times I just fall back, and I say, "Well, this is going to be on there," and I'll just put it there. And it always works.

CM-U: About – do you remember about how long this project was? This one?

D. McManaway: This one, I don't think was too long. I'd say – I'm guessing, a year.



CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But then each one has taken longer and longer, and this last one is, I say three years, and Norma or somebody else will say four. Is that right? Four? Hmm. I can't work like I used to either.

CM-U: Nobody can.

D. McManaway: And I don't want to, ever again, for that matter [sounds like].

CM-U: Exactly! (laughs)

D. McManaway: Boy.

**[00:16:06]**

CM-U: There are certain – well, let me just finish what happened to the piece then.

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: I mean, then, you owned it, and sold it privately, then, after...

D. McManaway: This?

CM-U: Yeah. You sold this. Did this go directly to Bettiruth and Adolph or \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]?

D. McManaway: I wonder how that happened, now that I think about it? Do you remember? They saw it. That had to be.

Jim Love: I don't know where they saw it.

CM-U: Maybe – was it – would it have been at the Atelier Chapman [Dallas, Texas] or not? At that period?

D. McManaway: This one. It could have been. No, no, this was in – didn't [Douglas] MacAgy stick in that, uh, Assemblage show ["The Art of Assemblage," Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts, January 9-February 11, 1962]?

CM-U: Yes. I think...

D. McManaway: I think so. Yeah. The Modern. William Seitz did “The Art of Assemblage”...

CM-U: Right. Art of Assemblage. Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...and it – because, I think because Douglas was in Dallas, they got it...

CM-U: Right.

D. McManaway: ...in the little contemporary museum. And it simply wasn't big enough to hold all the objects anyway, but MacAgy wrote to Seitz and said, “I've got three or four people here...” Or may even – Jim [Love] was one...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and Charlie Williams, and Roy Fridge, and me.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: The museum had just gotten a hall that was probably a hundred and fifty feet in length, and maybe forty or forty-five feet wide. Or, not – is that the size of a football field? No. No.

CM-U: Douglas MacAgy was the first director of the...

D. McManaway: At that...

CM-U: ...of that – was it a new institution?

D. McManaway: The first officially hired, yeah. They had been a little loose organization trying to get something going. And they finally put some money together, I assume, and hired him.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And it was a very good thing for all of us 'cause he was a real inspiration. He was just very good at that. You know, he was a real art person.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: So, for example, in my terms, in being included in a show like that. And then when Seitz came, he told Douglas, he said, “I wish you would have told me

about these guys 'cause I would have included them. I didn't know there was stuff going on like this out in the provinces." He didn't quite say that, but that's what he meant.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And he was right. But this long room, Douglas, was always kind of – did kind of interesting installations. We painted it and papered it black, so everything in it was lit with a spotlight. And down at the end, a platform was built – black. This board was sitting right up in the middle of it with a big spotlight on it, and you could stand all the way down – oh, way down there, see – and look at it. And I was thrilled, see.

CM-U: Oh, yeah.

D. McManaway: And it also helped a few years later, when I decided I was going to stop painting and do this stuff – I couldn't leave it alone...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and it gave me kind of a legitimacy. Because I – you know, I would look at the – I still do, I think – “What the hell's going on here?” you know.

[00:19:05]

CM-U: Before we get off of the Dallas Contemporary Arts Museum, sort of – how, what was the interaction with MacAgy? \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] he did exhibitions of artists who were living in the area?

D. McManaway: He always included the artists he met, and wanted to. And he would do these other things that were very sometimes philosophical, and sometimes – well, he had a dozen or so – how many – the Op artists, when they first hit.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: Must have had thirty or forty pieces borrowed out of New York. And he did a show of them.

CM-U: And that incorporated work from the area as well [sounds like]?

D. McManaway: Yeah, once in a while. Or he would – I had a three man there one time.



CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But also, at the time, I was floundering, and I walked in to meet him just to ask him for a job. I had been working in a store, and I was getting sick. And Norma [McManaway] saw his picture in the paper and said, “Go talk to him.” And I said, “But he’s a museum director.” And I wasn’t going to do that. And anyway it worked out that I could. And when I went in his office, you know, I’ll never forget this. Here is this dapper little man looking a bit like a childish David Niven or something, you know, with this pipe. And we introduced, and I was a very – shy about it all. And he sat me down on the couch and asked me some questions about what I’d been doing, and what I was, and this, that, and the other. And so I gave him a short history of going to the University and all of that. And mentioned that I had done installations for their gallery as my job to make extra money.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: For maybe four or five years. Unpacked crates and so on. Just in relating all this. So I said, “What I really wanted to talk to you about was...” He thought maybe I was going to bring slides to show him, you know.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: Which a lot of people did. And I said, “I need a little job, and I would prefer it to be part time so I could have time in the studio, and so that...” That’s easy to understand. And he said – he looked at me, and we talked a little more, and he said, “You say you did installation for four or five years?” And I said, “Yes.” And he said, “Can you come back tonight?” And I said, “What?” (laughs) You know, just like that. He said, “We’re – our first show – will open the Museum is a Picasso show, and we’ll be starting the installation tonight. I figure it will take a week. And you can work a week. You’ll be paid thus and so. And then you’ll have the time in between the show to be in your studio.”

CM-U: Hmm.

D. McManaway: “Would you like to do that?” And I said, “Yes.” (laughs) And that was that.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And I didn’t really know – at the moment, I was flabbergasted. But I started out, and he came up alongside me and kind of put his hand on my shoulder,

and he said, “I never hire anyone but artists.” So that was a start with him, and we all very quickly decided this was one good guy, you know.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: Roy – he went to look at Roy’s work. These little wooden carvings that he used to do.

CM-U: Roy Fridge?

D. McManaway: Yeah. And this was one of the really first things. And turned to Roy, just like he did to me. He said, “Would you mind displaying these as part of a show in the Museum?” And of course Roy said about like – I am sure – about like I did, “Oh, well, yeah.” You know. (laughs) And he turned to this one little piece that had been in Roy’s studio for six months, and had gathered cobwebs. And Douglas said, “Do you suppose you could get that piece over and in place, keeping the cobwebs on the piece, see?” And Roy said, “I think I might can manage that.” And we talked about that within the hour, and we said, “God, this is one hell of a guy!” You know. To be that thoughtful about showing something, you know.

CM-U: Yeah.

D. McManaway: So he was a real inspiration in those years, and probably for me, just at about the time I needed that, you know. I wish I had one now.

[00:23:40]

CM-U: In this “One at a time” – “One i at a time” – there is a photo of this *Jomo Board #2*, and there are certain discrepancies in the photograph from the work as it is today. And so I thought I would point some of those out to you and see – like that, for example, is not in the photograph.

D. McManaway: I was wondering about that.

(laughter)

CM-U: It’s interesting that your eye went to that.

D. McManaway: That’s probably a Bettiruth kid that stuck that in there.

CM-U: Well, that’s what I’m wondering. If some of these might...

D. McManaway: I'd bet on it. Sure. I don't think that was on there either (referring to a small toy bear on the board). "Junior Yeoman?"

CM-U: Well – well, there does seem to be a little tag hanging from the bear.

D. McManaway: Okay.

CM-U: So that might have been there. But we don't see the gun. We also...

D. McManaway: Something missing there.

CM-U: Yes. Here. Yes.

D. McManaway: I don't think...

CM-U: I think this pig belonged up here. Again, based upon this photograph.

D. McManaway: Oh.

CM-U: There we go. We think this pig – how about... (holds toy pig up to board)

D. McManaway: Ah, that sounds right.

CM-U: ...something in here. Does that seem right?

D. McManaway: Yeah. Yes, indeed. Sure.

CM-U: Except we don't see a nail hole that would have held this on.

D. McManaway: Well, I'm – see, at this time, I was putting these together; and I didn't know they'd end up somewhere twenty or thirty years later...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and I just would put them together just till they got – and I've noticed a lot of these things are one little nail. And I probably just stuck that pig in there. It's possible that I put him in there...

CM-U: Yeah. We think he – he seems to – or, there is a pig behind that little figurine. Just above "yes."

D. McManaway: Yeah. I think that's him.

David McManaway Interview Transcript, Artists Documentation Program, The Menil Collection, 03/05/1992

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CM-U: Yeah. Okay. Well...

D. McManaway: But I probably didn't nail him on 'cause this little figure would hold it in place.

CM-U: Um-hum. See if you can wedge him back in there.

D. McManaway: Okay. I think I can. Damn pigs. There he goes. Yeah. Now see, that becomes firm. So I probably was happy with that at this time.

CM-U: Okay, then. There was something else in here, there was.

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: The photograph is very indistinct.

D. McManaway: Do you know what was in – let me see...

CM-U: What do you think might have been there?

D. McManaway: It was something I think I probably never liked.

CM-U: Looks like some...

D. McManaway: Oh! Gosh. Well, how do you feel about, if and when I find the right thing to replace that...

CM-U: I think...

D. McManaway: ...to do that, or what?

CM-U: Um, I think when one part is missing, that would be appropriate, I do. We generally don't condone reworking, because it can lead to another piece of course. I mean, you understand that. An artist understands that better than anyone else. But I think in one – I think that would probably make sense to put something there, to rework one area...

D. McManaway: Yeah, maybe.

CM-U: ...because there's something missing.

D. McManaway: Well, do a little a little bit of repair, like the match at the top?

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CM-U: Well, that's another thing we need – I mean, I think we can do that.

D. McManaway: You can do that.

CM-U: I mean, that's just a question of reinforcing...

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: ...the match at the top.

D. McManaway: You probably can do it better than I can, actually.

CM-U: We do it a lot. (laughs)

D. McManaway: I know that, I know.

CM-U: We spend a lot of time doing those things.

D. McManaway: And I – frankly, if you would do it, I'd be obliged. (laughs)

CM-U: Well, usually our technique or our method is to speak to the artist, to do the best we can, and then have you look at it again the next time you're here and see what you think.

**[00:27:16]**

D. McManaway: Well I – yeah, there are a few places where I would have a tendency to want to add something now.

CM-U: Well there are some things missing, we think.

D. McManaway: But I mean...

CM-U: Like here. We think – do you think there could have been – isn't this, Margaret [last name unknown], where you found the little blue...

Woman: Uh, yes, I think it might be balloon fragments [sounds like].

D. McManaway: Yeah, a balloon, yeah...

CM-U: You think it was a balloon there?

D. McManaway: The balloons tend to dissipate.

CM-U: AC, you're not going to be able to get this, but there are just little fragments...

D. McManaway: (laughs) Well, that's – I kind of like that!

[both voices (Mancusi-Ungaro and woman off-camera) speaking at the same time; cannot distinguish]

D. McManaway: Well...

CM-U: And we're wondering if maybe the blue one was there.

D. McManaway: Oh, I'm sure that's right. I can tell from the – see above the nail? And I used to do that – I would nail balloons...

CM-U: You would nail a balloon...

D. McManaway: For God sakes, it's ridiculous to nail a balloon on something.

CM-U: Huh, here's another one. But this one was glued on – this was glued onto a square.

D. McManaway: Ooh.

CM-U: Where did we find that, Margaret?

Woman: I found that, uh, just about in the center – do you see the arm? \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]. Yes, to the side of that \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

CM-U: Right here?

Woman: Up a little bit. Right there.

CM-U: Right in there?

D. McManaway: Uh, that's possible. This I really don't remember, but...

CM-U: Oh yeah, look, there's green up – oh no, yeah – there's green up there, so maybe this was turned this way.



- Woman: I thought that it was attached to the wall \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].
- CM-U: Attached to the wall with paper? Yeah.
- D. McManaway: Whoa, God, I'm stepping on myself here.
- CM-U: This may come from here.
- AC Conrad: Carol, will you please hold it up? It's completely – yeah.
- CM-U: (holds green balloon up to work) This may come from here. Would the – can you see it in the photo?
- D. McManaway: I'm not sure. Oh, I know. Yeah. That's where it was.
- CM-U: It – where?
- D. McManaway: It was probably under the paper...
- CM-U: Uh-huh.
- D. McManaway: And there was some message on there.
- CM-U: Could this have been on there?
- D. McManaway: Yeah. I think so.
- CM-U: One hundred percent combed [sounds like] cotton?
- D. McManaway: No. Oh no. I don't know what that is. (laughs) "Made right in the USA."
- CM-U: It could have been glued on there.
- D. McManaway: No, I don't think so, see?
- CM-U: No? Okay.
- D. McManaway: But, uh, gosh, I cannot tell you that, on that one.
- CM-U: Okay, we also had a feeling – if you look in the photo – that there was something glued here (points at area in center of work).

D. McManaway: That wouldn't surprise me either, yeah. See, I think, and it's happened to one or two other boards of mine, where little kids have been around. They end up – things end up in their pockets or something.

CM-U: Well, this we don't see anywhere. [referring to a small toy monkey head]

D. McManaway: Now, I thought that was a little funny. I wouldn't have put him in there like that, either. But maybe he could go somewhere.

CM-U: But maybe this is \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: Well, the addition – see, now, back in the earlier days of the Jomo, the addition of something, if it hit just so, by another confederate, you might say...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...was acceptable.

CM-U: Huh. Well, we would like to know what you think about this, David. Is this – I mean, if we're thinking this is Bettiruth's child with the gun...

D. McManaway: Yeah. I wouldn't – that's not mine.

CM-U: Yeah.

D. McManaway: And I'd veto it, I think, actually.

CM-U: Okay. Okay.

D. McManaway: If you want to add something like that, I've got a better one anyway, see.

CM-U: Well, you know, it doesn't – no, it's up to you. It's not us.

D. McManaway: But I'll take him.

CM-U: You'll take him? Well, okay. Why don't you.

D. McManaway: I don't...

(laughter)

CM-U: You \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]. You \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] something else.

D. McManaway: No. Keep him around. He might bring you luck.

CM-U: It comes in his \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]. Oh, I hope it does! And so we would take this out, too? [referring to toy gun] Yes? I mean, is that your – what do you think?

D. McManaway: I've got a better one at home, too, anyway. No, this – I wouldn't have gotten this gun either. [attempts to dislodge toy gun from board] God, the kids were pretty good at it. Bull's eye.

CM-U: And this guy, I think, is straight \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]...

D. McManaway: But I have put things like that on. Yeah, he's pretty good. You go to a flea market now, and you have to give fifty dollars for something like that.

CM-U: I know it.

D. McManaway: Reaganomics. I don't think he was that way either. I'll bet he was standing.

CM-U: There is a picture of him in there.

D. McManaway: Yeah, he's standing.

CM-U: He is standing up straight?

D. McManaway: Um-hum.

CM-U: Okay.

**[00:32:02]**

CM-U: Another big discrepancy is this. [referring to a rolled-up piece of paper wedged into a space on the board]

D. McManaway: Yeah, I don't know – what?

CM-U: There's something written about Jomo on that.

D. McManaway: Yeah. That wouldn't have been on there.



- CM-U: No? Should we take it and read it?
- D. McManaway: I think so. God. Now, see, that's blocking...
- CM-U: Oh, it's blocking the clothespin.
- D. McManaway: Yeah. Oh, well. [reading from paper] "Jomo dog." Oh.
- CM-U: Jomo dog?
- D. McManaway: That's what it is.
- CM-U: [reading from paper] "Jomo dog. Artistic, well designed, to be rolled and inserted into Jomo Board." Is that your handwriting?
- D. McManaway: I must have given that to – I probably – that's a little conceptual thing, isn't it? I probably gave that to Bettiruth, or mailed it...
- CM-U: And then that's where she...
- D. McManaway: ...and she stuck it there.
- CM-U: All right.
- D. McManaway: So that's okay. Or...
- CM-U: All right.
- D. McManaway: Well, maybe we could find a – maybe there's an empty place that this could...
- CM-U: Well...
- D. McManaway: Well, that's up to you.
- CM-U: ...unless we – no, it's up to you, really. Because I think we ought to keep it, but I think you should place it. We do have something – we do have a few other empty...
- D. McManaway: I forget that I've got this thing on. I'll probably walk off with it.
- CM-U: See, there was something here, too.

D. McManaway: Um-hum. You know, I wonder. Damn those balloons. This was another balloon.

CM-U: Yellow balloon [sounds like], yeah.

D. McManaway: Well, that's the end of my balloon career.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: No more balloons. I ruled out rubber bands, too, a long time ago.

CM-U: They don't – yeah, they don't last, I can assure you. Rubber masks aren't real good, either.

D. McManaway: And I'll be damned. I guess I had this thing pretty well finished 'cause I don't find a place to put this. In terms of keeping, say, with – this is more conceptual than anything else, and maybe it could just be tacked onto the back...

CM-U: Okay.

D. McManaway: ...and sprayed or something, you know.

CM-U: Well, we could do...

D. McManaway: Could you do that? Just tack it on a nice place on the back like a legend? I like that idea, too.

CM-U: Okay.

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: Okay.

D. McManaway: And you can retouch the dog if you want to. But he has to have hard edges like he's got.

CM-U: Whose dog was this?

D. McManaway: This is a newspaper. Yeah.

CM-U: \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] out of the newspaper.

D. McManaway: I think it probably was a AKC show or something.

CM-U: Okay.

D. McManaway: I liked the newspaper, what happens to even good photographs when they get printed in the newspaper...

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...some of them, I've got a whole collection of them that just enhanced themselves into a really nice thing. And I've never found a way to do anything with them except short term...

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...'cause they won't stay, you know. They fade.

**[00:35:21]**

CM-U: What about – are there other areas that either seem different or, in terms of their aging, you feel at this point really need some work?

D. McManaway: Well, it certainly could be cleaned and brushed, you know...

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...and all of that. A little judicious...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...air pressure. God, I don't like some of these things that I did on here. This little pig in there... [referring to an object inside a red velvet box]

CM-U: You know, it's interesting. In that photograph, this box was closed. I don't know why.

D. McManaway: Well, that – those – I have done that, too. I've put them on, and the viewer is welcome to open them and look inside. But of course on something that gets old and fragile, it – but I'd say, for showing...

CM-U: Just keep it. [speaking to someone off-camera]



D. McManaway: ...it probably would be better to keep it open...

CM-U: Yeah.

D. McManaway: ...and – uh, this little bird, with his little \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] tails. Well, I'd say, all in all, it's okay. I honestly think the last two, and this one I'm working on now, are better pieces, generally. But this is kind of a – you know, a prototype. No, no, not a prototype. What – how does that fit in to make it so that it's not a complete throwaway? Because some of the first few things I did, I realized that I had to make everything.

CM-U: Right.

D. McManaway: And, boy, I've come across some real, really bad stuff. But this one's all right. This – you can see – I think probably the idea of – well, see, again, the distance...

CM-U: The distance makes it...

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: ...and it seems to my eye, or to our way of looking at things, as just having aged well. I mean, it – other than a few missing parts.

**[00:37:28]**

D. McManaway: Now this little lady, see, [referring to the face of a woman holding an object between her thumb and forefinger] there is no reason to put someone on there like that as part of collage.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: If I were gonna do a collage, I'd use something more arty, probably.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But she's got the Jomo thing.

CM-U: She has the little Jomo.

D. McManaway: This is a stupid-looking woman with this little (holds thumb and forefinger together) – and that was the idea, you know. That, in the earlier days,

anything that indicated that, or this, (cups hands together) or the finger pointing (points right forefinger at top of left hand). You know, usually the finger would be pointing at a kidney stone or something like that; and we did a lot of Jomo paste up that was intended as humor. My – Harold made a medal and sent it to me. You know, a medal of valor?

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: I was going through one of these old catalogues, and I flipped a page, and here was a gold-framed print of *Whistler's Mother*. And I kept flipping through. You know, searching these little things for good clip-outs. And five or six or eight pages later, here was that one very corny pop-like painting – popular art – of Jesus sitting in the Garden.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And I looked at that, and I thought, “That guy ripped off Whistler.” Which he did. Once you see it. Well, anyway, ripped that out. Went back to this page. Anyway, very carefully cut out the figure of Jesus and slipped him into the place of Whistler's mother. Very carefully done. It just worked perfectly. And I sent it right off to Harold, and he sent me back a medal, you know, a Jomo medal.

(laughter)

CM-U: This wasn't in the original photo, was it?

D. McManaway: No.

CM-U: But it's nailed on. It's like its intention – there's some sort of intention there. Intentional.

D. McManaway: Actually, this wasn't, either. So whatever was in there got out of there. I've had – occasionally I've had things eaten off of these boards and just disappeared, you know...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...in that manner.

CM-U: So this is one area [referring to bottom left-hand corner] you might think about reworking some things. Is that what you were saying? Put something in there?

D. McManaway: Sure.

CM-U: Yeah.

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: That would be great.

D. McManaway: I'll make a note of that, and at least one thing – or a criss-cross, or something of things that should try to keep it in keeping with this, you know.

CM-U: And then do you think – did you finally decide we should replace balloons, or not?

D. McManaway: Well, they're balloons, aren't they? I suppose I could...

CM-U: Yeah.

D. McManaway: ...get a package of...

CM-U: They don't last, but we can put one in, and then just keep...

D. McManaway: Sure.

CM-U: Well, and this seems to be what the technology is anyway with \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: Well, I'll tell you what. I'm serious about this, too. I really do mean this.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: You guys are plenty good, and obviously love art.

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: So be my guest.

CM-U: Um-hum.



D. McManaway: And I – it’s kind of a Jomo thing...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...but be careful. You gotta get exactly the right balloons.

CM-U: Well, I’d just as soon you found some balloons, and when you bring back a piece for that, next time you come, maybe you could – we could put the balloon on...

D. McManaway: Well, you can’t tell. You might go out this afternoon and find a perfect balloon.

CM-U: I might just find the perfect balloon.

D. McManaway: Yeah. Balloon.

**[00:40:52]**

CM-U: What about the glass painting? I mean, I assume it was pretty much in that state when you...

D. McManaway: Yeah.

CM-U: ...when you bought it and put it on?

D. McManaway: Just went straight up over that. Probably at Goodwill.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And, as always, what I think this started – and then onto the third and fourth, more pronounced than now, there’s no mistaking it – that you start with the center piece, or a vertical that runs up the center...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and when I finally got over trying to place objects or images in just the right place on the canvas – thank God that passed! – I just thought, “Just put them in the middle, and they’ll be fine.” You know, if you get the picture made...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And so that may have been the first thing to go on. And the original Jomo board had a picture that was something along this line.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: It was a large group of figures, faded and worked over like this, and had a lovely look to it. And that went right across the top...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and started the whole thing. And everything after that came down.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But I still do that. I've got this tendency to do vertical and horizontal.

CM-U: Um-hum. This goes back to your interest in the cross.

D. McManaway: I've always wanted – wished Mondrian were alive 'cause I always wanted to send him a crate of oranges, you know. I figured it would drive him crazy, you know, having all those circles around.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: That's a Jomo thing, see.

CM-U: And these are Jomo bags? Good-luck bags, hanging? What are those little hanging...

D. McManaway: Oh, of course. Yeah.

CM-U: Yeah?

D. McManaway: That would have to be. And the yellow wheels, I'd love it if they'd go away; but they're not going to.

CM-U: No. They are part of it.

**[00:42:51]**

CM-U: One final question about the *Jomo Board 2* is, what about installation? Have we done it – I mean, is this the way you see it, as the wheels on the floor, and it mounted on the wall?

D. McManaway: Pretty much.

CM-U: As opposed to on a platform or something?

D. McManaway: One idea I had was like a railroad tie, or that kind of wood that has, well would you say, about a 12x12 beam...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...that would come out maybe at some proportion on either side of the wheel, and wide enough for the wheels to be up about that ten or twelve inches off the ground [sounds like].

CM-U: So the wheels would be on top of the railroad tie.

D. McManaway: Just a solid chunk of wood, and one that's like an old beam out of an old building.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: So that it has some weather on it. That's what – I have visualized it that way. And I don't know that it ever got done that way. But somehow it seems okay, and it seems that the wheels – in one sense, I've never lost the image of a painting...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...so that the wheels, even though they are three dimensional, and they conflict with the floor...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...so that theoretically that thing could go up even as high as you would like it to. So that you get this rectangle with the little – what do they call that?

CM-U: The pediment on top?

D. McManaway: Yeah. It's French...

Jim Love: Same thing on the \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] in New York with Bill Johnson [sounds like].

D. McManaway: Yeah. Copycat! But so that all forms a shape with the wheels at the bottom.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: I mean, that...

Jim Love: The \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible], it almost has to be attached to the walls because it won't...

D. McManaway: Oh, yeah. Definitely on the wall.

CM-U: Yeah.

D. McManaway: And, you know, when we've installed that, [art preparator] Urban Neininger made the defining comment about – Urban was MacAgy's assistant and just kind of a genius at stuff, installing and what have you. And when we brought this in, I said, "Those wheels are supposed to work." So instead of putting it on a dolly, we just rolled it in, and Urban made an appropriate comment about art that moved itself, you know. Rolling art.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: Well, I'll tell you what. This is going too long, so you all can quit. And if something comes up, I'll be glad to talk on the phone or whatever...

CM-U: Well, I think what I'll do is send you details of areas. Another one, an area that we didn't talk about was, we really think maybe something was stuck on here at one point. There seems to be a little bit of glue left. So maybe what we'll do is send you front details of it...

D. McManaway: Hmm.

CM-U: ...just to see. And the next time you're here...

D. McManaway: Yeah, you're right. But I don't mind that.

CM-U: Yeah. Well, it wasn't clear in the photo. It may have been like that. You may have found it like that and never – maybe something had already fallen off of it. Because it wasn't clear in the photo that there was something on it,



actually. But I'll just send you details of it, and then maybe next time when you come, if you think about something else...

D. McManaway: Okay. Whatever.

CM-U: Well, thank you. This was great.

D. McManaway: You bet. You're welcome.

CM-U: It was really good. We're thrilled to have the piece, and it's a new accession.

D. McManaway: Well, I am glad. I really am. I mean, this is – for me, this is absolutely one of the best collections in the country, you know. I've always thought that.

**[Break in video]**

**[00:46:20]**

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] David McManaway returned to the Conservation Studio later in the year on October 27<sup>th</sup> with an assortment of Jomos that he thought could be used to fill the blank areas left by loss on the board. The first area of loss that he addressed was in the upper left hand quadrant where a blue balloon once hung.

[Footage of McManaway reworking *Jomo Board #2* in the Menil Conservation Studio, with very little audio audible for transcription]

D. McManaway: ...\_\_\_\_\_ [sentences inaudible]. \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] something else that might appear to be attached to that blue thing, you know.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]. Nah.

CM-U: In your studio, do you have tables and tables full of items?

D. McManaway: Hey, that's not bad, huh? Y'all haven't got a band saw around here?

Man: Downstairs.

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] He decided to fill that area with a corn on the cob of an appropriate size that he brought with him from Dallas. He cut off the top of

the husk, added a string, and applied the corn to the board with glue and nails. Jim Love assisted him in this treatment.

[Footage of McManaway and Love reworking *Jomo Board #2* in the Menil Conservation Studio, with very little audio audible for transcription]

D. McManaway: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] hanging down there. Ah, hm. Nah, that ain't gonna work. Well, this is – just go for broke. You say you had a variable speed?

D. McManaway: Damn! Jim? Will you just grab hold there? No, I'm not gonna nail. Just hold onto that for me. [speaking to himself] Get out of there! Come on.

[both voices (McManaway and Love) speaking at the same time; cannot distinguish]

D. McManaway: Okay, that will hold it. You might want your finger on this notch. All right.

[Both voices speaking at the same time—only partially transcribed]

D. McManaway: Don't do that at home [sounds like]. (laughs) You can let go.

Jim Love: You think?

D. McManaway: Yeah. Definitely.

Jim Love: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: Well, it's tied.

D. McManaway: Now. Strategic.

Jim Love: You have to get a variable speed, David. \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: I do have one, but it's too big. If I could get a little tiny one...

D. McManaway: Okay, sir.

D. McManaway: I'll just let that glue set. It will hold as well as anything else that's on the board. On the other hand... That damn Jesus. I put him there, and he really doesn't need to be there.

D. McManaway: Okay. I need your finger again. Not too hard. All right. That will do. Thank you, sir. Break time.

**[Break in video]**

**[00:57:13]**

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] After securing the corn, he turned his attention to other areas. He would choose a Jomo and then try to find an appropriate place for it on the board.

[Footage of McManaway working on *Jomo Board #2*]

D. McManaway: Well. Look at that. Now see, nowadays – you see this little female figure with the frog coming out?

CM-U: It's so good.

D. McManaway: I would like – I almost would be – I'd do that on its own.

CM-U: On its own?

D. McManaway: Yeah, because the boards – that's what they started off being when I put these things together or find the Jomos, I was just going to put them on a board. Which I did on the first one, and that became a piece, and so I did a second one. The first one got destroyed. But I always had the option when I started making things – particularly when I went whole-hog in that direction – if the board were over there – I could – if the thing I made wasn't good enough to stand on its own, it could go on the board. Frugal. (laughs)

CM-U: Well, you know the other thing is, remember that little box that you found last time?

D. McManaway: Oh, that was an addition, uh-huh.

CM-U: It has a \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] – if you open it up.

D. McManaway: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]

CM-U: I think it had something in it.

D. McManaway: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] I think that's probably why I liked it.

David McManaway Interview Transcript, Artists Documentation Program, The Menil Collection, 03/05/1992

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CM-U: Yeah, so if you want to keep it up there, you should stick it on. Or take it off and take it with you. Or I can put it among those that were added by the children.

D. McManaway: Well, we could just – it wouldn't have to stay there, though. I'm sure the \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] if there was somewhere for it to rest. God! There's a turtle – a broad turtle \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] on there. See? You know...

CM-U: Do you want me to hold it so you can step back?

D. McManaway: Well, I think it's a little too much for that space, but it's not too bad. Yeah, would you? Yeah, probably too much. \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] Well, maybe this little jewel, huh? I'll put it up. See, that looks like it's \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible]. How about that? It looks like it's coming right out of the paper, see.

D. McManaway: Hmm, well it kind of works. I think the idea was something that would be dangling out here, see? Except obviously nothing dangled out of there. Oh I see, it was – I took the part you blow through on the balloon and put it around that. Dumb idea. Hm, that was easy. (laughs) Well, that's not so bad. \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] Sort of melds in. That's what I decided. I'd better not try to do something that \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]. Right here? Yeah, I like that. Oop, see how that gulls? [sounds like] How is that, anyway? Plastic.

D. McManaway: It's pretty good, isn't it?

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: I'm just – I'm gonna reserve my opinion on that.

CM-U: Okay, well you can just – you can just put it in, so you can see...

D. McManaway: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] a fun little guy. He's pretty good, isn't he?

CM-U: Um-hum.

**[01:03:56]**

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] Eventually, he focused on an area of loss in the bottom right quadrant of the board.



[Footage of McManaway working on *Jomo Board #2*]

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] The metal ring with a circular clay form that may be seen behind him in the bottom left corner of the board had erroneously been filled with a pink balloon when the piece entered The Menil Collection. McManaway painted the wood black within the ring before adding the circular clay snake. Later, he glued a velvet and beaded decoration within the exposed circular space created by the snake.

CM-U: After carefully selecting a metal toy policeman from among his Jomos, he proceeded to add the figure to a circular black and yellow metal tray in the bottom right quadrant of the board.

[Footage of McManaway working on *Jomo Board #2*]

D. McManaway: Oops.

Jim Love: Do you want me to hold it? [sounds like]

D. McManaway: No, I think I'm all right. I just want to get him about in the right place so that I get the hole drilled in the right place.

Jim Love: \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible].

D. McManaway: Well, this is the best epoxy, unless there's some space-age kind that you can buy. And these two deals like this [holds up two plastic bottles], it keeps them separate. You know, the little tubes that lie in a basket [sounds like] together?

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: Just a mess! And these, it even has the measuring, if you need to do that that way.

CM-U: Is that the Devcon five-ton, five-year?

D. McManaway: It's two-ton.

CM-U: Two-ton.

D. McManaway: Sets in thirty minutes, not the five-minute.

CM-U: (laughs) Five-year? What am I thinking?

David McManaway Interview Transcript, Artists Documentation Program, The Menil Collection, 03/05/1992

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D. McManaway: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

(laughter)

D. McManaway: I'm thinking [sounds like] maybe I'd better drill first.

**[Voices inaudible]**

D. McManaway: What?

D. McManaway: Oops.

Jim Love: Do you want me to hold it? [sounds like]

D. McManaway: No, I think I'm all right. I just want to get him about in the right place so that I get the hole drilled in the right place.

D. McManaway: Uh oh. Well, that's fun. Well, I wonder what that stuff is. I don't think that's going to go through. Nah, I'll just do the epoxy \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible]. With this stuff, it will hold.

Jim Love: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: I don't know. I thought it was plastic. Good stuff, huh? Cut and run. What was that one, Jim?

Jim Love: Bait and switch.

D. McManaway: Bait and switch, yeah.

Jim Love: Illegal.

D. McManaway: What?

Jim Love: It's illegal.

D. McManaway: I know it. But you make your own bed and you have to lie in it. And that's what I did.

**[01:10:07]**

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] In order to secure the figure properly, he decided to insert a small piece of yellow foam between the toy policeman and the circular metal tray attached to the board. He adhered the foam and the toy with five-ton epoxy.

[Footage of McManaway working on *Jomo Board #2*]

D. McManaway: Have to hold him on there for a while. Yeah, I like that little guy on there a lot. I've been trying for years to use him.

CM-U: (laughs) \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: You know what, I almost always – almost always – stick what I call a “portrait” of people, and Jim’s almost always one of them.

CM-U: Oh yeah?

D. McManaway: And I don’t think that I have an obvious one on here.

CM-U: Well, there’s that one little girl.

D. McManaway: Huh?

CM-U: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]. That, you mean that type of thing?

D. McManaway: No.

CM-U: Oh, what do you mean?

D. McManaway: Uh, just a certain combination of objects....

CM-U: Oh!

D. McManaway: ...that signify

CM-U: That recall a person?

D. McManaway: Yeah, and I always have something on Jim, see?

CM-U: Oh, \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible], yeah.

D. McManaway: This is it.

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(laughter)

CM-U: Jim, you've been added to the piece.

D. McManaway: You just got up here, Jim.

[Voices inaudible]

**[01:12:16]**

CM-U: [Voiceover narration] Choosing from among his Jomos, he tried alternative additions but finally decided to leave the board as it was.

CM-U: That looks good.

D. McManaway: It's a little – I like that there, a lot.

CM-U: I do too.

D. McManaway: Just even technically speaking, the whole thing starts – besides the content – becomes surface too. It's like, say, a painting, where there's a place rubbed out.

CM-U: Um-hum. Absolutely.

D. McManaway: That's what I've thought too, with at least this current one that I'm doing, um, it would be really nice to have light from a pretty sharp angle above and just washed over [sounds like] – washing over the surface, so you kind of tend to lose places like this, just a little.

CM-U: Oh yeah, that could be done.

D. McManaway: Gotta have some fun.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: Well, that grabbed ahold okay. Everything's fine. I think I can glue that on now.

CM-U: I think so.

D. McManaway: Whoops. That's good – I put my chisel down in the epoxy.

David McManaway Interview Transcript, Artists Documentation Program, The Menil Collection, 03/05/1992

Video: adp1992a\_19920305\_003va.mp4/ Interview #: VI2000-020.1992a / TRT: 01:32:30

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[Video with inaudible background discussion and remarks]

D. McManaway: God, that's still wet. Why the hell would that be wet? I wonder if I put two As together. Well, what the hell did I glue with that? Oh, maybe that's what it was.

CM-U: It could be, because it should have set up.

D. McManaway: I put the two reds or the two blues together.

CM-U: Or uneven amounts.

D. McManaway: Houston just throws me every time. I just come down here, and \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

CM-U: (laughs)

Jim Love: I saw you \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible], you had both bottles in your hand.

D. McManaway: Yeah. That's what happened. Well, this ought to really go on, now. God, look at that glass – I hate to ruin that.

CM-U: You won't ruin it. We'll scrape it off and use the other [sounds like]. Maybe. Oh! Margaret thinks that I'm going to make her do it.

D. McManaway: Okay folks, that's the blue. And that's the red. \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]

CM-U: Is it absorbed into the sponge \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]?

D. McManaway: It has, yeah. So that should really do. I feel like Jeff Smith, the frugal gourmet.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: I always add a little garlic. How can you eat this without garlic?

D. McManaway: Oh boy, he's great. (examines work at length) Now, some more. Stubborn thing [sounds like]. Okay, I think that will work all right. What else was missing? Any other places where you detected – I've gotten so...

D. McManaway: Oh, there was a – well, no – let’s see. Another balloon somewhere? Well, this. We still don’t know about that.

CM-U: And there is a hook here, but I don’t know if anything is on it. There’s a hook there.

D. McManaway: Right, okay. I probably had something. I’ll bet you a dollar that was another balloon.

CM-U: Probably. No, it probably was. Because there seems to be some kind of glue – plastic – I don’t know, rubber?

D. McManaway: Nothing harder than a thumbtack. In that Jomo film, when Roy [Fridge] pans on this board...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...I think he centers down onto this thing, and right at the tail end, that thing is doing that, like that. And then the scene fades.

CM-U: I’d love to see that.

D. McManaway: What was there? \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]

CM-U: The odd thing is, in the photo, I really can’t see \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: I think...

CM-U: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible].

D. McManaway: ...I don’t really know if anything needs to be there.

[Voices inaudible]

D. McManaway: That’s plastic. See that frog coming down out of there? I could cut that down. (cuts frog toy)

[Voices inaudible]

CM-U: Would you like a scalpel?

[Voices inaudible]

D. McManaway: Now, see, he might be okay there. What do you think, guys? This whole thing is kind of frog-like anyway, see?

[01:25:21]

CM-U: Ultimately, he chose not to use the frog. In sum, then, the actual additions he made were a circular snake with beaded fabric insert in the bottom left quadrant, a corn on the cob in the upper left quadrant, and a metal toy policeman in the bottom right quadrant.

[Break in video]

[01:25:43]

[Transcriptionist's Note: A new interview begins with David McManaway concerning his work *Love Fetish, 1971*]

D. McManaway: I was probably, with this...

CM-U: Let's move it over \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible] the white wall.

D. McManaway: I began to – this – with Mr. Love over there, he – I mean, I could see imagery in things, you know. It's no problem seeing a face in there. But that might have had a little bit to do with Jim, but this thing, finding this, and being able to do that with it, and putting that together, it was not so much to make a figure as it was – uh, in the early days of doing this stuff, I found myself drifting very easily and quickly into some kind of primitive or African-looking business. And I don't know how many pieces, as I got a little more experienced in my own view, that I would stop making because they were – it's too easy.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: And I don't think all that stuff is all that great anyway.

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But this little guy, when somebody said, told me that whoever the owner had been had donated it to this Collection, I thought, "That's a rather nice thing."

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: As this is. But I didn't remember it. And whoever it was was simply trying to describe it verbally, and they didn't get the job done. But then when I saw a picture later, almost by accident – 'cause that came and went, and I forgot about it, but then I remembered.

CM-U: I think it entered the collection in the early eighties. I think it was '82. And I don't know...

D. McManaway: I've forgotten who...

CM-U: Don't know?

D. McManaway: It probably was bought out of a – I've had one or two shows here. [Houston Gallerist] Louise Ferrari...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...maybe one of her people. Or possibly a show at the Contemporary [Arts Museum Houston].

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: But I can't be sure. My records are deplorable. I can't – even if I try to keep them, I lose them, so...

CM-U: Would this have been a metallic form that you would have smashed? Or do you think you just probably found it that way?

D. McManaway: Oh, no I found it.

CM-U: You found it that way.

D. McManaway: And I found it because it looked that way. I mean, I got it. And it's a – I even later discovered that it's probably mine. Well, that's a thermostat that comes out of a car.

CM-U: Oh.

D. McManaway: I always had cars that boiled over...



CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: ...and didn't work properly. And so that may have come back to me, you see.

CM-U: We wondered what this was.

D. McManaway: I think that's what it – don't you think so?

Jim Love: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]

D. McManaway: They used to...

CM-U: Why don't you come over and take a look at this, Jim?

D. McManaway: They would stick these things down in the old radiator, you know, right under the cap. Or, I think.

Jim Love: Yeah, that's \_\_\_\_\_ [word inaudible] that you find stuff in the street. That's probably a street item.

D. McManaway: Oh, well, it was. This may have come out of...

Jim Love: \_\_\_\_\_ [phrase inaudible]

D. McManaway: ...even come out of Gachman's [Gachman Metals & Recycling Company, Fort Worth, TX] or one of those places, see? Yeah, mashed and...

Jim Love: When Charlie [Charles T. Williams] used to go to Gachman's, you would go with him occasionally.

D. McManaway: Oh, yeah.

Jim Love: Which is a junkyard. Where you get...

CM-U: Uh-huh.

D. McManaway: These guys would go pick up metal, and I'd go along where the dirt roads...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...and pick up old milk cartons and stuff. And we'd get into the office where you have to pay. And Charlie would go through his thing 'cause he usually

had great big stuff. And Jim would have a pile. Each – this was so much. This was so much. And I'd say, "How much for that?" And the guy would say, "You can just have that."

CM-U: Just take it away.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: But I would find these other things. And that would be a little bit of...

CM-U: Um-hum.

D. McManaway: ...because of Jim and Charlie.

Jim Love: There was a time when you came to see me once on Truxillo, and I remember that you found three things on the path that I used everyday, going from my car to my building. Sometimes going out to the car. That I walked over.

(laughter)

D. McManaway: You don't see any on that board, do you by any chance?

Woman (Norma McManaway?): Well, you know what Roy [Fridge] always said? Roy said there was this little genie – or some little creature – that walked along only in front of David and dropped these things...

[Several people talking at once—impossible to distinguish among them]

D. McManaway: But you know what's very curious? Harold Hill gets a great deal of credit, and even – I remember one time, Jim met Harold. Remember that? At the "One i" installation? And Harold had stopped by. And Harold had this eye – and we had like an identical eye. We'd always find the same things, I swear sometimes even later on phone calls, I'd say, "Harold, I found something for you," and he would say, "Well, I got something for you." I mean, Harold would say that even if he was lying, but...

CM-U: (laughs)

D. McManaway: ...and he had – this happened a couple of times as well – I said, "Well mine's in a jar." He said, "So is mine. And it's got a yellow and green label on it,

about three inches high.” “Like Vaseline?” “Yes.” “Mine has that, too.” And I said, “It wouldn’t be Hills” – because of the name – “Egyptian pressing oil, by any chance, would it?” “That’s what it is.”

CM-U: He wasn’t making collective objects, was he? He was painting?

D. McManaway: He was doing things a little bit differently. They were, I mean, you know – He had his own style, and I have some things on some of the boards that he would send me, and maybe there’s one on here, even. But, at this point, probably not.

**[END RECORDING]**