UC Santa Cruz
Institutional History of UCSC

Title
“Study what is in your backyard”: Professor Virginia Jansen and the UC Santa Cruz Campus

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3s75k0n1

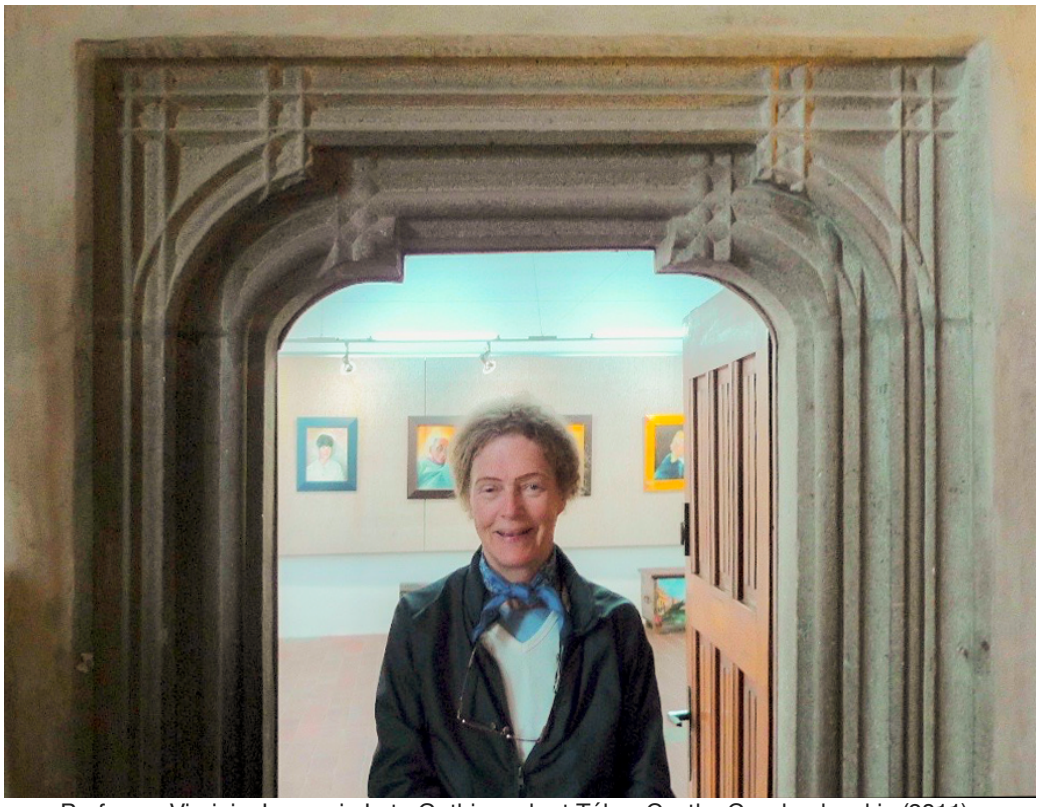
Authors
Jansen, Virginia M.
Reti, Irene H.

Publication Date
2021-05-25

eScholarship.org Powered by the California Digital Library
University of California

“Study what is in your backyard”:
Professor Virginia Jansen and the UC Santa Cruz Campus

Interviewed and Edited by Irene Reti



Professor Virginia Jansen in Late Gothic arch at Tábor Castle, Czechoslovakia (2011).
Photo by George Jansen, Editing by Fraser Muirhead

Santa Cruz
University of California, Santa Cruz Library
2021

This oral history is covered by copyright agreement between Virginia Jansen and the Regents of the University of California dated May 20, 2021. Under “fair use” standards, excerpts may be quoted without the University Library’s permission, as long as the materials are properly cited. Substantial excerpts require the written permission of the Head of Special Collections and Archives, and a proper citation, and may also require a fee. Under certain circumstances, not-for-profit users may be granted a waiver of the fee. For permission contact: speccoll@library.ucsc.edu.

Professor Virginia Jansen at the base of the spire, Salisbury Cathedral, about 220 feet above ground. Photo by Peter Wheatcroft.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Virginia Jansen was raised in Dayton, Ohio and attended Smith College as an undergraduate, where she earned a degree in German language and literature. She earned her PhD at UC Berkeley in the History of Art. After a few years teaching at colleges in the Bay Area, Jansen arrived at the University of California, Santa Cruz in the fall of 1975 to teach medieval art and architecture for the Art Department (or Art Board, as it was then known), and then in the new department of Art History (now called History of Art and Visual Culture, or HAVC) where she taught for three decades.

In the mid-seventies, UCSC had no freestanding program in art history and Jansen helped build an art history major at the fledgling university. Her passion for delving into the history of architecture inspired her to turn to "study what is in your backyard" and focus on the unique architecture of the UC Santa Cruz campus. She soon became known as an expert on campus planning and architecture and in 1986 co-taught an undergraduate art history seminar entitled *The History and Implementation of the Santa Cruz Campus Plan* with Reyner Banham, the renowned English architectural critic, who was a professor of art history at UC Santa Cruz in the 1980s. That course resulted in an UCSC exhibition and book *The First 20 Years: Two Decades of Building at UCSC.*

Decades later, in 2015, Jansen once again contributed her knowledge of campus architecture by working with UCSC emeriti professors James Clifford, Michael Cowan, and Campus Architect Frank Zwart on another UCSC history exhibition called *An Uncommon Place: Shaping the UCSC Campus*. This exhibition, mounted at Porter College's Sesnon Gallery as part of the celebration of UCSC's 50th anniversary and later in the fall of 2015 at the Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery at Cowell College, "called attention to

UC Santa Cruz as utopian experiment where architecture and environment conspire to create an uncommon place, a setting for teaching, research and imagination outside the bounds of the ordinary."[1]

I met Jansen at the reception for that exhibition, where she spoke eloquently about UCSC's unique architectural features. I immediately realized that Jansen would make an excellent oral history narrator. But during the next few years Regional History's mission was engulfed in editing and publishing a two-volume history of the campus entitled *Seeds of Something Different* and it was not possible for me to interview her for another five years.

This oral history was conducted through three interviews online on Zoom in the fall of 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when in-person interviews were not possible. The narrative covers Jansen's developing career as an art historian; her recollections of the growth of the art history department at UC Santa Cruz; her memories of Crown College; and her perspectives on some of the historically unique features of UC Santa Cruz, such as the residential college system and the narrative evaluation system. We also discussed her service on UCSC's Design Advisory Board from 1986-1996, a role which gave her a front-row seat on campus development.

I wish to thank Virginia Jansen for her careful eye during her review of this oral history and Teresa Bergen, transcriptionist, for her excellent work. I also wish to thank Teresa Mora, Head of Special Collections and Archives, for her unstinting support with this and other oral history endeavors.

[1] https://exhibits.library.ucsc.edu/exhibits/show/an-uncommon-place/constructing-the-core

Copies of this oral history are on deposit in Special Collections and in the circulating stacks at the UCSC Library, as well as on the library's website. The Regional History Project is supported administratively by Teresa Mora, Head of Special Collections and Archives, and University Librarian, Elizabeth Cowell.

—Irene Reti

Director, Regional History Project, University Library

University of California, Santa Cruz, May 2021

Early Life

Reti: This is Irene Reti and today is October 15, 2020. And this is the Regional History Project's first foray into remote recording. We are now in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic and I think it's important for the historical record to say that we now have no choice but to do this interview remotely, even though Virginia Jansen and I have met before in person at Special Collections. And you're in, where, Los Gatos?

Jansen: Yes.

Reti: And I'm here in Capitola, California. So we're going to give this remote format a whirl and do our best. This is our first interview. Virginia, let's start by talking about your early life, where you were born, and some of your early inspirations, formative influences.

Jansen: Okay. I was born in Dayton, Ohio in the rather WASPy suburb of Oakwood. It was really a pleasant place to grow up. It is in southwestern Ohio, about fifty miles from Cincinnati, and occasionally we would go to Cincinnati, the big city. Dayton at the time was about a quarter of a million. I remember something like 240,000. It was quite known for General Motors products like Delco and the inventor Kettering lived there. Another, more modern suburb, was named after him.

I was born in the middle of the war. My father left three days after I was born. I always said that's because I scared him. (laughs) But I was the middle sibling; I was not the oldest.

It was a great place to grow up. I remember there's a park called Hills and Dales, and that's what it was. It was all wooded and you could run all over it. There was a creek and

we used to swing on vines over the creek and had a great time running around the hills and trying to go through the big water culvert under the road, which was very scary, even though the amount of water was about three inches. I remember a very nice childhood.

Dayton had an art museum, the Art Institute of Dayton. It's quite a decent museum. In those days, it also housed a kind of zoo, so part of the draw going there with my mother was that I could go look at the animals. I was not interested particularly in art at that point. That came as a surprise later.

Anyway, the most relevant part of this for my becoming an architectural historian—it must have been in my genes—because I remember early on two things: the National Cash Register buildings. National Cash Register was started in Dayton. I thought they were wonderful buildings and other people did, too. But unfortunately, they've been torn down. They were big office warehouse-type of buildings but I thought they were very attractive. They were yellow brick, very rectangular, just square box. But nicely built with nice big windows and a calmness to the regular repetition.

And then there was also the Dayton carillon, which we could hear dong from our second house. I lived in three houses. My mother liked to move a lot. It gave her something to do, actually. (laughs) My father was a doctor. She should have worked, but in those days, you know, wives didn't do that. And we could hear this carillon dong the quarter hours. That sonic image, plus a big impressive tower—I remember these impressions.

The Dayton Art Institute was an Italian Renaissance structure, I think of the '20s, and it's still there. I haven't been back to Dayton since my parents left. Long before I had left; Dayton wasn't my cup of tea; I always had a broader perspective of the world.

And of course Wright-Patterson Air Force Base was close. The Wrights lived and worked in Dayton and invented their airplane in Dayton, Orville and Wilbur. Wilbur, I think, lived three blocks from the elementary school I went to. I remember walking past his house frequently. It was a big house on a hill. A lot of houses in Oakwood *were* big houses. A friend of mine had quite a large house. We used to play hide-and-go-seek in it because there were a couple of stairways. It was fun. So that was basically my childhood.

I don't remember that much about my education until high school, except in sixth grade we had a wonderful social studies class. We did a series of reports from Egyptian history up to the twentieth century. For the Greek one I remember I chose the topic of classical columns, for China I wrote on jade, and for the twentieth century, I wrote on Germany, topics that continued and have continued with me. But I really liked languages. I've always been interested in languages. We had some French in sixth grade, which was unusual. In eighth grade, I had this wonderful grammar teacher and I just loved the class, diagramming sentences, which is visual. (laughs) I have a spatial brain, as I've learned from teaching. I thought everybody could analyze and see space the way I did and I learned no, no, no, maybe 10 percent of the population. So I used to introduce my UCSC classes that way: "I understand that a lot of you don't have a three-dimensional sense."

I remember in graduate school at Berkeley, in fact, there was a seminar with a history professor, Robert Brentano. We were reading medieval documents and there wasn't enough room for all the seminar students to look at the documents from one side of the table. So I just went around to the other side of the table. And when it came time for me to read, he turned the manuscript around. I said, "I can't read it this way. I can only read it upside down." (laughter) He thought I was showing off, but I wasn't; I just had been

learning the paleography upside down and it was as if it was upside down to me when he turned it around. I had no trouble doing that. There is something in one's physical makeup that makes you able to do things like this or not.

So, okay. I love languages. That's what track I was on. The grammar class was fantastic. She was quite a popular teacher with most students. A lot of eighth graders just did not like grammar, but I thrived on it. I thought it was the most interesting class. In some ways, I probably should have been a linguist, but I'm too visual for that in many ways. But anyway, she was also the Latin teacher. So in ninth grade, I started Latin. Then in my junior year, I started French. And they hired a new teacher that year to teach German. I thought that would be really cool. That made too many courses in my program, but I convinced the principal I could do them all, so I took an extra course. And I love German. I became a German major in college.

Reti: And when you were a young high school girl, what did you think you were going to be when you grew up?

Jansen: I don't know that I knew that when I was young. But at some point, maybe in my last years of high school or maybe even in college, I thought I would work as a translator at the UN, because I loved languages. That was foolish, because people in other countries know languages so much better than we do in the United States. I could never have gotten a job because there are just too many people from foreign countries that would be so much better with languages than I would be.

Reti: So what kinds of expectations did your parents have for you? Was it expected that you would go to college?

Jansen: Oh, yeah. My mother went to college. I don't think her parents did, as far as I know. Her mother died when she was quite young, too. My father was the first and only person of his family to go to college. He went to the University of Michigan. And then he became a doctor, a surgeon. My mother said, I don't know if it's true, she said she did a double major—a BS in biology and a BA in English. She went to Chatham, which was Pennsylvania College for Women in her day. Oh, yeah, it was absolutely definite—all the children in our family (I had two siblings), definitely all three of us would go to college. In fact, in Oakwood, about 90 percent of the high school students went on to college, though most of them went to Miami University or Ohio State. But we were a Michigan family. There's one in every generation, however, who did not go to Michigan. My mother, me; a nephew went to Stanford. But everybody else went to Michigan.

Reti: And had your family been in the United States for a long time?

Jansen: My father's family was 100 percent German. There's a lot of German ancestry in southwestern Ohio, Cincinnati, of course. He actually was born in Louisville, Kentucky. He was, I think, fourth generation. Some of his family came over I think in 1848, that time period of tumult in Europe, mainly from Hesse, I think from Darmstadt. My sister-in-law, who married my brother, was a history teacher. She was quite interested in ancestry, so she researched my father's and mother's family. My mother came from Pennsylvania, outside of Pittsburgh; she had Scottish and British ancestry, but my sister-in-law's research revealed a number of German names, Pennsylvania "Dutch." This discovery is really funny because my mother was always teasing my father about his "gruff" German ancestry, and she looked down on anything west of Pennsylvania. She had an ancestor who was a private in the Revolutionary War. So my mother said to my sister and me, "Oh,

you can be DAR members." My sister and I looked at each other and said, "What?! Are you nuts?!" (laughter) But since then, I met somebody who was DAR. She was very nice and interesting and not at all terribly right-wing and all like that. So evidently, they do good social things. But it was never an interest of either mine or my sister.

Smith College

Reti: So then you went off to Smith College.

Jansen: Yes. My mother would not let me go to school in Ohio.

Reti: Why was that?

Jansen: Well, she thought Ohio was the boonies, because she was from Pennsylvania. (laughs) My sister and I did remind her that Pittsburgh was west of the Appalachian Mountains. But she didn't want to hear that. Anyway, Pittsburgh's a very cool city. I've since visited (on an architectural tour with the Society of Architectural Historians) and I liked it and found it an interesting place with many excellent buildings and fascinating history. My mother, her final year at college, lived in the Mellon House, because the Mellons had given it to Chatham. It had a swimming pool in the basement.

But, anyway, so I did apply to Michigan. That was sort of guaranteed. I didn't think I'd get in Smith, actually, as my SAT scores weren't the best. But I was second in my high school class, so that was good, and Smith had taken people from Oakwood High School on a regular basis. That may have been what got me in, I don't know.

But because of languages, I was really interested in Middlebury. That was actually my first choice. My mother took me on a tour of various schools on the East Coast. Her brother

lived on the coast of New Jersey and we had wonderful summers visiting them sometimes. I could swim in the ocean. I really love the ocean, always have. Anyway, we went to Connecticut College for Women and Smith. And maybe Mount Holyoke. I can't imagine, I wouldn't have gone there, since they're so close, but I don't remember going there. But I know we went to Connecticut College for Women and Smith. I don't recall what other schools we visited. But I remember, Smith was really beautiful because, again architecture—old brick buildings among huge, stately trees. It was a beautiful campus. Connecticut College for Women with its gray stone buildings and lack of trees looked barren and desolate in comparison. In the end, I didn't get into Middlebury and Smith accepted me, so I happily went there.

Reti: Some women who I have interviewed who went to college during that period has said that the main idea was that women would go to college basically to find a husband.

Jansen: Oh, yes. Well, I was told this. "You have to go to college," which I didn't mind. That was okay, because I was fairly studious and quite athletic, which is why I ripped up my knees. I was on all the athletic teams in high school. I loved field hockey. And basketball was fun, too, but it was the old-fashioned women's kind, where the court was divided and you didn't cross the center line. I couldn't shoot that well and I was fairly short at that time. I was like five-three. I grew three inches my senior year. (laughs) Yeah, it just happened. I finally got going. I was sort of a runt.

But I was told that I should be educated because until I got married, I needed to support myself with a good job, or if my husband died, I needed to support my family. And a good husband would want an educated wife. Those were the two reasons. But my father always

encouraged me to be anything I wanted to do just be happy. I know he would have been very pleased if one of his children had been a doctor, but none of us wanted to work in medicine.

I actually think my husband was somewhat attracted to me because I was educated—we met at Berkeley in graduate school—and I think he was impressed with meeting a girl who went to graduate school and one who had already traveled a good amount. He was from Australia, not American. I had this interest in other countries. I would never have married an American at that age. It's just *ausgeschlossen* [out of the question]. I don't know why, but sometimes I can't think of English words. The German pops into my head.

Reti: So, what was Smith like for you?

Jansen: It was tough because even though I had done well in high school, a lot of the students were from prep schools. I had not really been taught to that high standard. I had good instruction in high school, but I had not been taught how to think about an answer to a question. I just thought you learned everything you could and then you took the test and you got, you know, 95 or 100 or whatever it was because you knew all this information. So I had to learn how to write an answer that showed thinking. I didn't do very well my first semester and I went to see all my teachers, and so on and so forth. And one said, "I've never had so many facts in an exam in my life." (laughter) "But," she said, "There's no coherent thesis here."

I said, "Oh. What's that?" But there were people from prep school that had been trained like that. So I had to learn that sort of thing. I had done extremely well in French in high school. I had taken a state exam in it and I'd come in in the top ten. I don't know, fifth or

fourth, whatever it was. But it was just sort of multiple-choice facts. So I wasn't very good in French class at Smith, because we hadn't had much oral material. It was more book learning. So French was quite hard for me. I also have a hearing problem which has always made oral comprehension difficult, even in English.

German, I was good at because the German teacher taught more oral conversation. I can remember coming in like the fourth day of the class, since I joined late, because I had to get permission from the principal to add this extra class. And the teacher only spoke German. I thought, oh my God, how am I going to understand this class? I don't have the foggiest idea of what he's saying. How should I? I don't know German, that's why I'm here. But in a couple of days, you did catch on.

But the French teacher spoke mostly English. She was the drama teacher and I don't think she knew all that much French.

Reti: Were you exposed to art classes at Smith?

Jansen: I was working on my distribution classes, so I was taking a variety of things. And the second year, I decide to tackle, I don't know what the distribution area was called, but it consisted of philosophy, music and art history. And maybe art. I don't remember art being in the distribution. I had art classes, of course, in high school. But I didn't take any in college. Except for an architecture class. That can come later.

I do not have a philosophical brain. That's one reason I like architecture, even though there might be a philosophical component. Architecture combines art and thought and society with practicality. You know, you make structures, so they've got to stand up.

There's a sixteenth-century Persian description of an architect. "The building must stand." (laughs)

Anyway, I knew I liked music. I didn't know much about it. But I liked it and could enjoy it. But I had no idea what to do with art. So I thought, oh, I'll take the art history class. That was it. It was fascinating because it combines history and culture and society. Economics. It combines everything, really. So I took that. But after that point, I was still very passionate about German and I was going to Germany for the junior year abroad program. Another big advantage of Smith. So I decided I'd continue with the German major and just take art history classes on the side, which is what I did.

I had a wonderful time on my junior year abroad. First, we had a two-month language study in the Bavarian Alps at a Goethe Institute, where people from all over the world came to this idyllic landscape. Smith was afraid the nine of us would stick together and not speak German, but we didn't. Instead we made other friends. Two of my best friends there were Argentinian and Italian. We struggled to speak German together, as their English wasn't so good, which was great because German was then the common language. The Italian had a car so on weekends we could travel all over the area. After that we Smithies went up to Hamburg, where we spent the rest of the year abroad. To this day, I still have a penchant for northern Germany and Hanseatic history. I have even published an article on Hanseatic trading houses of the Middle Ages. At the University of Hamburg all our classes were in German including our group tutorials to help us understand the material and have graded assignments as per the American system. At first we understood next to nothing but gradually we understood the lectures, and were fluent by the end of the year. We lived individually in families. The German semester system had a long break

between the winter and summer one, so three of us went traveling with a Eurail pass for two months through Greece, Italy, and Spain. It was an amazing time, our days filled with art and architecture. It's crucial to experience physical objects, especially buildings in space. It was so cheap to do it at that time. I bought my first slide camera for the trip. I took some wonderful slides, such as a step-by-step sequence walking up the Acropolis and approaching the Parthenon, as if "you are there" that I used many years later in teaching at UCSC.

Reti: tell me about the architecture class you took.

Jansen: Okay. Well, so after I went abroad for my junior year ,I came back my senior year and there was this new class; it was a basic architecture studio class. It was taught at Smith, but it was taught with the four-campus (at that time) consortium. There are now five campuses. Because the campuses together founded, in 1965, the same year as Santa Cruz, an experimental kind of college—Hampshire College (so you see, we're just one of many). But at that time, it was Amherst, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Mount Holyoke, and Smith.

So I took this class, which taught you the beginnings in a liberal arts way, not a professional Bachelor of Architecture manner, about making architecture. We had like six projects or something like that. One of them was to design a diner; I can remember that one. One was a space diagram. So you'd learn how to draw to scale and draw perspectives and make models and things like that. And we had students from Amherst, the University of Massachusetts and Mount Holyoke. So it was interesting and varied.

Reti: Do you remember if there were other women in the class?

Jansen: Oh, yeah. There were Smith girls, the majority in fact in the class. I don't remember anyone from Mount Holyoke, but there could have been. I know there were a few fellows, boys. It was definitely more women than men. I remember that.

Reti: Interesting.

Jansen: Well, it was at Smith, right? Smith is divided into houses, not quite residential colleges, but houses. It's been was called the cottage system, as I've learned since. Our house was maybe sixty students divided among three houses, actually, because we had a big main house and then two annexes. One of my best friends in my house went to Italy for junior year abroad. She knew what she was doing, unlike me—she was very much interested in architecture and art, particularly art. She was in that class. That's all I remember. And there was one girl who was spectacular. She did go on and become an architect. But she never did the assignment right because she was so good, she just went way beyond it. I thought, hey, she's cheating here. (laughs) Because we're supposed to make something 2,000 square foot and she did like 4,000 square feet. But it was spectacular.

I learned that I could not be an architect in that class and that I was an architectural historian. That's one thing I learned. My designs were just ghastly except for my space model, one of the best in the class. I could see that so plainly. So unimaginative.

UC Berkeley

Reti: And so then you went off to Berkeley to study the history of art.

Jansen: Yes, but there's a year in between when I went to Germany.

Reti: Tell me about going to Berkeley.

Jansen: So I was quite close to the gallery director who taught a print class. I really liked graphic arts. In most ways, I thought sixteenth-century woodcuts and etchings were very much more interesting than painting. First of all, they were black and white, usually. I wasn't so keen on lithographs, which can be color. So, of course, I'm speaking of block prints and such. But I did like the sixteenth century, particularly in the northern area. And Gothic isn't very far from that.

I said to the gallery director, I had grown up in the eastern Middle West. I had gone to summer camp in Wisconsin. I'd gone East to school. I wanted to try the West. And he said, "In that case, there's only one place to go. And that's Berkeley." I applied to graduate school at Penn and Berkeley. I don't remember what happened about Penn. I don't even remember hearing from them. I don't think I did, which was strange. But anyway, Berkeley accepted me. And this Smith friend I mentioned earlier, she went to Berkeley, too. We drove out together and roomed together the first year. And then the second year she got married.

Reti: So this would have been now—

Jansen: That was 1965, September of '65, when I began graduate school.

Reti: Oh, okay. So there you are at Berkeley. And the Free Speech Movement was happening.

Jansen: Yes. All of the above. I was a TA later. And because I'm a late person, not an early person, I usually took the 3:30 afternoon sections, 3:30 or 4:30 or something. And

the riots always broke out—they would have the meeting and the pep speech in Sproul Plaza at noon and by one o'clock they'd be marching to the chancellor's office, which was right next to the library. The art history seminar room overlooked the entrance to the chancellor's office from the third or fourth floor. We could watch the riot begin. The policemen were all there. The students would throw stones and sooner or later the police would break and start chasing the protestors. Then tear gas would break out. I usually had to walk through tear gas to teach my section. A couple of times, you couldn't do it. Yeah, I was in the middle of all that. And also, for the invasion of Cambodia.

Reti: And what were your politics like during this period?

Jansen: Sort of mute. More centrist. But more left-leaning. Definitely not right-leaning. But I grew up in a Republican family. My father always got scolded by my mother because he voted for FDR during the war. He didn't want to change presidents in the middle of World War II. I thought that was very reasonable.

Reti: And how did you end up going more left?

Jansen: Just listened to the arguments over time. I mean, I've always been kind of a socialist. I can remember discussing racism in our family at dinner and stuff like that. And my father often took under his wing—there were these foreign interns, doctors, that would come to the hospital and he often took one under his wing in his office. I can remember one was Pakistani and people thought it was surprising that he would do that, but it seemed very natural to him and to me. And my mother, at one point I argued with her and I said, "But, Mother, you're such a racist." She said, "Yes." I said, "Why are you a racist?" And she says, "I don't know. I am." (laughs) There was no arguing about it after

that. But she wasn't aggressive about it and was decent to individuals, but still her views were different from mine.

Reti: Because you would have been growing up still during a rather—

Jansen: Late '50s. Yeah.

Reti: So this was during the civil rights movement and the segregation. I mean, Cincinnati, Dayton, are on the edge of the South, right?

Jansen: Yes, i.e., just north of border states, but I never thought of southern Ohio reflecting the culture of the South at all.

Reti: There must have been a bit of dissent.

Jansen: I have a friend who lives between those two cities. I think of her as my "quasi-stepsister." After my mother died, my father got back with an old girlfriend who lived back there, and that was her daughter. We still keep in touch. She's very liberal and she gets so depressed. She says she walks out the door and there are all these Trump signs and she just can't stand it. I call her once in a while so she can go on a wild rant. (laughs) Yes, it's much more conservative there. I know PBS interviews people around the country in order to give views of what's happening in different areas. There's one from southern Ohio, so he's a little more east of the Dayton/Cincinnati line. I think it's around Chillicothe, but I'm not sure about that. And people there are very conservative.

But my father was very open-minded. I inherited that from him, I think. My brother's rather centrist. His two sons are pretty rightwing. My sister, who came out here about four years after I did, she's very liberal. In fact, she didn't want to enroll in either major

party. She ended up enrolling in Peace and Freedom. (laughter) Berkeley made me more liberal and then Santa Cruz made me more liberal still. Actually it started at Smith. I went there as JFK was elected President. And then my two years living in Germany exposed me to European liberal values. But my political drift toward the left was just emphasizing certain attitudes that I already had.

Reti: What about at Berkeley? Because not only was there the Free Speech Movement, but you've got the Black Panthers; you've got the Vietnam War and the protests around that. All this is going on while you're in graduate school, right?

Jansen: Yes. I was at Berkeley mainly from '65 to '72, pretty much working very hard since I hadn't been an art history major; I had lots of ground to make up. And then between my master's and PhD, my husband's job took him to Toronto and Montreal, so we spent 1968-69 in Canada. Then we came back to Berkeley. And at that point, I was starting my PhD. And then in '71, I was in Europe doing research for my dissertation. I was at Berkeley for like two years, and then off a year, and then maybe two years or a year. Probably two years until I passed my PhD exams. And then in Europe during 1971. Then I had a year when I came back. After that I was done with everything except for finishing writing my dissertation. I got a one-year sabbatical replacement job at that point at Foothill College so we moved to Sunnyvale. But throughout graduate school, I was working as hard as I could in art history, so I wasn't really paying much attention to politics.

Reti: Okay. And at some point, you met your husband-to-be.

Jansen: The third day I arrived in Berkeley. (laughs)

Reti: Wow. And what's your husband's name?

Jansen: George Jansen.

Reti: George. What was his major?

Jansen: He was in engineering. He was doing transportation engineering. So his degree only took a year and then he had a job. It was sort of interesting. Our second date, we went to Santa Cruz. It was in fall of '65. So we drove up to the campus. And that pullout as you drive up on McLaughlin Drive and the bend—we pulled off there and I said, "Wow, isn't this beautiful? Woo, wouldn't it be nice if I could teach here one day? Oh, impossible." (laughs)

But also for him, the second project he did when he first started work was a transportation study, of the campus.[2]

Reti: Oh my goodness!

Jansen: He had to go down to Carmel and talk to Admiral Wheelock, who otherwise I don't think is that well known in campus history. I can't remember what his role was. Oh, he had been an engineer at UCSD, I think, as well as an admiral.[3] I looked him up once. And so when Reyner Banham and I were teaching the seminar class, I don't know how this came up, George says something about, "Oh, yeah, I did this study," or whatever, I

[2] Intra-campus transportation study for the University of California, Santa Cruz. Traffic Research Corporation. 1966.
[3] Admiral Wheelock was a Naval architect and engineer who served on UCSC's original Campus Planning Committee.

don't know. Originally, the idea was there'd be no cars at *all* on campus. That would have been something. (laughs) So I got a copy of the report and gave it to Special Collections.

Reti: Oh, good, good. So this was a study for the city bus, or was this for internal transportation like shuttles?

Jansen: Well, I think it was a study of campus transportation and what would happen if you did this or not. I don't know. Banham looked at it and said, "Oh, this is a classic mid-'60s transportation study." You know, all the jargon and just totally bad, dry writing. I read it and it was pretty funny from a stylistic point of view.

Reti: Okay. So you're studying art history. And you get your PhD. What was your dissertation about?

Jansen: That was complicated, because I wanted to work on a German subject. I love German late Gothic churches. I just think they're fantastic. Well, they *are* fantastic, literally, too, with all their dynamic moldings, tracery patterns, and vaulting. But the professor . . . there were three medievalists. That's one reason I ended up in medieval. My interests were really late nineteenth, early twentieth century, circa 1900.

We skipped a year here. After I graduated, I went with one of my German major friends to Berlin for a year. It was on a DAAD Stipend—Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. You were funded by the German government to teach English to high school students for ten hours a week. And you got something like a hundred dollars a month for that, which sounds like nothing, but it was enough to live on in the mid '60s, because also, you were eligible for student discounts. You could get a monthly bus pass for about ten dollars a month. So you could go anywhere in West Berlin.

I did spend a lot of time looking at architecture in Berlin because of this bus pass. And I had the time.

Reti: That was at the height of the Cold War in Berlin.

Jansen: Oh, yes. Anyway, so I did that. And I was placed in one of the most posh schools in Berlin. It was the Französisches Gymnasium. It was founded by the Huguenots tossed out of France in the 17th century. A lot of them came to Berlin and founded this high-brow school. It was very good. All the German students spoke fluent French in that school. It also encompassed the French children of the French military. At this time Berlin was a divided city—the French, the British, the Americans in the west zone, and the Russians in the east zone. So it was a very interesting school to teach at, except they didn't like my English because it was American. They said that I didn't speak English; I spoke American, *Amerikanisch*, (laughs) and they couldn't always understand my accent.

I somehow, I don't remember how, met up with a British fellow who was doing the same thing from England. And the English guy knew this Australian fellow. So there were like three English, two Australians, we two American Smithies, and the French fellow and we all sort of hung out together. That was a lot of fun and very interesting. And one of the English people, not the one that I originally met, but another one, I became quite good friends with him—he knew an artist in East Berlin. So a couple of us would go almost every week through Checkpoint Charlie over to East Berlin to visit this artist and his artist wife. So that was quite interesting.

And once we met the East German girlfriend of the French guy. And that's when I really realized how important a free press is. Because she was saying all these things about the

Americans and I was saying, "No, no, you don't know because you don't have a free press." I started thinking, well, how do *I* know that I have the right answer? (laughs) That made me think more deeply about who tells what story.

It was a very interesting year. I almost stayed there. I got a job at night school teaching *Amerikanisch*. They wouldn't let me teach English, but there were a number of Berliners who had either children who had married American military people or for various reasons they wanted to learn *Amerikanisch* and not English. So that was satisfying. I enjoyed it.

But I couldn't get enough work to support myself, so I bit the bullet and decided to come home. I had already applied and decided I would go to Berkeley in art history. But it was very hard to leave Berlin because it had been so interesting and so much fun. We'd go to the Philharmonie, that wonderful showroom building by Hans Scharoun, Sunday afternoon concerts in various churches and then out to dinner, and of course the German museums. I would spend hours going to the Dahlem Museum and I'd go to the print room and call up Dürer's *Mother* and sit and look at it like I'm looking at my computer screen with you. The Dürer's *Mother* right there in front of my eyeballs! And I enrolled at the Freie Universität and even gave a seminar report in German on a work in the Dahlem Museum, standing in front of the statue I was discussing.

And occasionally we did go to the East German museum and I could see the Pergamon altar. I had studied Greek art with Phyllis Lehman at Smith and Greek art was a strong interest of mine. But they didn't have anybody at Berkeley who taught Greek sculpture and I didn't want to do vase painting.

Reti: So I don't know if you want to jump back to Berkeley at this point.

Jansen: Yes. There were these three professors teaching the Middle Ages—I really wanted to study modern architecture, but that was in the architecture department, which did not have a PhD at that time. It had a master's of architecture, and as we know, I was no good as an architect. I love history. I'd rather read history than novels in most cases, not in all cases, but in most cases. And there were these three medievalists: Walter Horn, who established the department. He was the first art historian in the UC system. He was wonderful and totally devoted to his work. And Jean Bony, who was very famous and a brilliant, exciting scholar. He was probably the most famous person in the architecture of the central Middle Ages in the world at that point, competing with Robert Branner of Columbia. They were quite good friends. And Peter Kidson at the Courtuald Institute of Art. In the English-speaking world, I'll say. But then, the Germans really didn't have a reputation then in the early '60s that they have now. There's quite a few good scholars since then.

And then David Wright, who taught early medieval. (And David's father had been president of Smith College the years before I went. Also, I had studied art history in Wright Hall, named after his father.) So there was a lot of depth in the area of the Middle Ages, which there isn't at this point. And then Spiro Kostof was over in the architecture school teaching Islamic architecture. I audited a course my final year with him. I didn't need credit, so I just audited it. But that was quite interesting to learn about a culture that I didn't know much about at that point.

And also, running around Europe my junior year abroad, I visited a lot of medieval architecture, as well as modern architecture. I've always been interested in the two fields. I've never been interested in Renaissance architecture, although I do like Baroque

architecture immensely. And I love Roman architecture. If I hadn't have become a medievalist, I might have become a Romanist. Roman culture is so fascinating, partly because of its breadth and range of cultures that it encompasses.

Since Jean Bony focused on Gothic architecture and was such a dynamic lecturer, I chose to work with him, although I did my M.A. thesis with Walter Horn. Having been imprisoned as a Resistance fighter in World War II, Bony did not want to work with a German topic and my French wasn't very good, and I had developed a taste for the wilder English medieval architecture, we settled on a topic in England, not my favorite topic but my third choice, Chester Cathedral. It had two interesting problems to deal with so it was OK in the end, providing a good foundation for a research career. Also, I published a substantial article on my second choice, Exeter Cathedral, eventually anyway, but I think my first choice, the church of the new town of Winchelsea, would have been the best, but Bony thought I would have to spend ten years doing the research. I don't think that was true, but as a student one tends to believe one's learned professor.

Reti: Okay. So I'm going to have us skip ahead a little bit. After you graduated from Berkeley, you were at Foothill. Then were you looking for an academic position at a research university?

Jansen: Yes. Well, first of all, I hadn't yet received my doctorate because I hadn't finished my dissertation.

Early Career in Teaching

I left Berkeley in '72 to take up the post in the fall of '72 at Foothill. I also had applied to Santa Cruz in '72. They had a temporary job open in the Middle Ages. Nan Rosenthal was

the first art historian on our campus, i.e., the first trained PhD art historian; she worked in nineteenth- and twentieth-century art. She and Jasper [Rose][4] and Mary Holmes were teaching art history, but Mary was an artist, and Jasper was a historian who loved art, painted, and taught art history. None of them knew too much about the Middle Ages. That's typical. People know a smattering of the ancient world. At this point, we're only talking about Western culture because the study of cultures beyond the West in art history was basically just starting. Berkeley had James Cahill in Chinese painting, he came, I think, the same year I did. That was one of the earliest positions in the U.S., I think, other than places like the Freer and Harvard. I don't even think there were non-Western classes offered when I was taking classes at Berkeley other than in Chinese art. But I didn't take any Chinese classes because there was plenty of courses I needed to take since I hadn't majored in art history for my B.A. and also it was not particularly an interest of mine since I was so European focused.

Anyway, I applied to Santa Cruz the year a position in medieval art was advertised, and I was interviewed, but another Berkeley student got the job. The Art Board wanted medieval because there was nobody who was really informed about the Middle Ages teaching that. Jasper knew a fair amount about Greek art, and of course he knew a lot about the Renaissance through the nineteenth century. I'm not quite sure what Mary taught in art history. I don't think she taught that much in art history in the '70s, but I'm not sure about that. She was doing a lot of studio classes. And Nan taught nineteenth and twentieth and particularly contemporary. Anyway, that's why they picked medieval.

---

[4] See Cameron Vanderscoff, Interviewer and Editor, *For A More Humane World: A Family Oral History of Professor Jasper Rose* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2020). Available in full text at https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8m9346m7.

But I didn't get the job. The Art History department at Berkeley was actually quite shocked that this fellow, whom I knew at Berkeley, got the job over me. But he was also a poet and that really attracted Jasper. He wanted an art historian who also made art of some kind. And I said, "Well, I shoot photographs," which I did, and of course I've always been interested in photography given that it's the basis of most research in art history.

So, David got the job. His name was David Schaff. He only lasted a year. I'm not exactly sure what happened, but things didn't go as well as they might have. I'm not sure he did art history after that, actually.

So I taught at Foothill College that year [1972-73], but it was a sabbatical replacement, so it was only a one-year post. For the second year, I sent out letters asking about jobs to every post-high school, post-secondary school that I could find within driving range. Oh, yeah, that year at Foothill I also taught a quarter at Davis. And because I couldn't manage twice a week because of my Foothill teaching, the chair let me put the two classes per week—it was history of decorative arts, about which I knew very little— (laughs) both on one day. That was quite something. I would get in the car early Thursday morning. I taught at Foothill Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and got in the car early Thursday morning and drove ninety miles to Davis, and gave a class before lunch. That's when I first started driving a Porsche, (laughter) which helped. There were certain sections of the freeway that you could go quite fast on. Once I passed a sheriff doing ninety. I thought, oops! But he didn't pull me over. I have no idea why. And then I would eat lunch and teach a second class and then drive home.

Reti: Wow.

Jansen: Yes. That was a wow year. But you know, I had a lot of energy at that time. It was stimulating. I loved the Davis campus. It was interesting to view a third UC campus.

The second year, I got an interview at Sonoma State. They wanted a kind of Santa Cruz core course experience. I came in second but I thanked my stars I didn't get the job because it was a long drive and I wasn't really that interested in being a jack of all majors. It just wasn't my thing; I wanted to teach art history. I got a temporary job instead at Santa Clara. That worked out well and I was there for two years.

Meanwhile, Santa Cruz advertised again. I applied again. I don't think I was interviewed. A good friend of mine from Berkeley got the job; she was fabulous; her specialty was Carolingian manuscripts and she was an artist as well. She did wonderful sketches of houses and things like that— She, of course, had this dual interest that I didn't have, except for photography. (laughs) Well, as Jack Zajac said, "Photography isn't an art! It's not done by hand." (laughs) I thought, oh, no. Fortunately, in the end, they did have photography in the Art Board, the Art Department.[5] And sometimes photography is done "by hand" now as well.

Coming to UC Santa Cruz

So I taught at Santa Clara for two years. And then the job opened again at Santa Cruz. I wasn't going to apply. I mean, you know, I hadn't gotten it twice. But all my friends at Berkeley said, "You have to apply. You just have to. It's the best job going in the Bay Area." And my husband had a good job and he was always going to make a lot more money than

[5] In 1997, UC Santa Cruz adopted the standard terminology of departments rather than the original "boards of studies" term, which was used by campus founders to describe the more cross-disciplinary, college-based, less siloed structure of the early UCSC.

I was, so there was no point in moving. So I was really bound to this area, although I did apply at USC [the University of Southern California] and I did get that job. But they didn't want to give me a good schedule that I could fly down to teach without moving right away and USC in those days was not so good, so I turned it down.

Reti: Why was Santa Cruz known as the best job in the Bay Area?

Jansen: Well, it was the University of California. The medievalist at Stanford was alive and kicking, so Stanford wasn't going to come up soon. It did come up after a while, but not right away. And what other school could match Santa Cruz within driving distance of the South Bay?

Reti: I guess what I'm getting at is how much did you know about the campus itself, its unique educational character? Or were you attracted to the landscape—

Jansen: No, I think it was the University of California. The campus was an added benefit.

Reti: Okay.

Jansen: I'm trying to think what I knew. No, I think it was the quality, that it was a UC school. It wasn't Cal State. It wasn't a community college. Mills would have been another choice, but they weren't offering a job. And I don't know what other school, you know, maybe a private school. I mean, it was definitely better than Santa Clara by a long shot.

Anyway, so I applied, got an interview. It was going to be a kind of position where the person would also be involved in cross-disciplinary work, medieval studies. I think Kristine Brightenback was on the committee. She taught French literature of the Middle Ages. And Marsh Leicester who taught medieval English, especially Chaucer, was also

involved. Nan Rosenthal was basically running the search. She wanted a solid art historian. She didn't want a poet. (laughter) Besides, David was who knows where. Last I heard he was in Washington, D.C. But that was years ago. Walter Leedy, I think had been offered the job the second time but turned it down to go to Cleveland State, which was a permanent post whereas UCSC's was only temporary. He had a Ph.D. from Santa Barbara. He became quite a good friend of mine later on. But anyway, that was the second time.

Nan and I and Kristine got along very well. I don't know if it was the bonding of the female, or— She respected my work and at that point, I wasn't green. The first time, I was very green. I was still in graduate school. Of course, I had a lot of teaching experience as a TA and had even team-taught a lecture course with two other graduate students, and I knew how to teach and all like that, but I was still very green about everything. I mean, I can think back on that first interview. Jasper asked some tough questions that I didn't answer very well, honestly, I didn't.

But by this time, I was in the middle of my third year of teaching. I was the only art historian at Santa Clara and I was building up the slide collection. So I knew budgetary issues and things like that. And also, I was very concerned about the library and a budget for buying art history books, so I insisted on an interview with a librarian. I ended up seeing Bob Fessenden. He was a lovely person. He was in charge of acquisitions. After my interview with him, Nan was impressed. She told me she didn't know anything about library budgets and so on. I came back with what the budget was and what they planned for art history and everything. I think I went down to the slide library, too. I don't know.

But anyway, I was sort of in the driver's seat. And Doug McClellan[6] told me that my lecture was accessible, whereas there was a fellow who was more advanced than I was. He was in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. He had published three or four articles and he was already an important scholar. But they said he was as dry as could be. I don't know who else applied. But the Art Board liked me best. And Nan liked me best and Kristine liked me and so on, so I got the job offer.

Reti: Wow, great.

Jansen: And grabbed it. (laughs)

Reti: That's fantastic.

Jansen: So the third time was the lucky time. (laughs)

Reti: You were persistent.

Jansen: No, I almost didn't.

Reti: If your friends hadn't encouraged you.

Jansen: Yes. I thought well, twice. I mean, what, do you need? To be slapped around a third time? But Nancy Pelosi, who I heard had given the commencement speech for Smith this year, said, "Smith girls are relentless and persistent." (laughs)

Reti: I love it.

---

[6] See Nikki Silva, Interviewer and Editor, *An Artist with Shoes On: an Oral History with Founding UC Santa Cruz Professor of Art Douglas McClellan* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2014). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9tn727hf.

Jansen: Yeah, I thought it was amusing, too. All the Smith girls I know are like that, too. Sheila Crane went to Smith as well. She taught modern architectural history for several years, but went off to the University of Virginia Architecture School to teach there.

Reti: So did you and your husband move to Santa Cruz at that point?

Jansen: No. He was working somewhere up on the peninsula, maybe Redwood City. We were living in Sunnyvale. We had a tract house in Sunnyvale that was decently laid out and comfortable so that it wasn't worth spending twice the price to get the same kind of house in order to save a fifteen-minute drive, because Sunnyvale's only like fifteen minutes up the road. We spent a long time looking for a house. Eventually we found the house we are living in, which is a kind of builder's design pseudo-Eichler house—very open, lots of glass, and with few right angles, which is a bit wacky. Late fifties. And it has a great backyard, which I'm looking at. It's very close to Highway 17. It's like five minutes from 17. So I just hop on 17 and go over the hill. We looked up in the mountains, too. But we could see what a disaster the mountains were, that when 17 is shut down, you have little access. Water can be iffy. There are fires. So we said, "No, we don't want to live there. We'll live in Los Gatos." I actually live in Monte Sereno. But I just think we live in Los Gatos.

Reti: So, what were your first impressions of the campus, outside of the Art Board itself?

Jansen: You mean the physical landscape?

Reti: Well, however you want to answer that.

Jansen: Okay. Well, I already knew the physical landscape and I knew it was drop dead beautiful. There's nothing like it anywhere in the world. Some friends of mine who taught at the University of Constance said, "Oh, we're on a hill overlooking Lake Constance." It's beautiful too. But it isn't like Santa Cruz even though the University of Constance is an incredibly interesting place—another mid-'60s campus but one which is mainly one continuous building, basically. It's fascinating and the views over Lake Constance do have breathtaking beauty, but it's not the spectacular forested site of UCSC with its gorgeous weather. And the buildings there are less congenial than ours, despite their liveliness.

Crown College

But I like the college system. I'm a strong proponent of the college system. In fact, a former student, Matt Waxman, he's been an alumni counselor, he and I have talked about getting some kind of collegiate group going. We've talked a lot about the college system and its pros and its cons.

But for me personally and professionally, it was great. I was put at Crown because that's where some medievalists were put. Kristine Brightenback was there, Marsh Leicester was there, and I was there. And was it my second year or third year, we taught a course on the Middle Ages at Crown. Marsh and Kristine were in literature and I was in art history and Mark Traugott joined us to add history. I liked the idea of teaching a college course because it made you think of different ways of teaching your material, even if you taught the course by yourself. But it also gave rise to team teaching, which I did quite a bit of. And I enjoyed all my experiences. I did some kind of a course on the monastic life with Richard Mather. That was a complicated experience. (laughs) Richard was interesting and thought-provoking. I really enjoyed working with him. He had been a student of Robert

Brentano in medieval history at Berkeley. Brentano encouraged me to work with Richard, so I did. It wasn't altogether successful, but you always learn something, one way or the other.

I liked being at Crown. I liked the fellows, and I enjoyed the mix and talking to people about different subjects, not just art history.

Reti: Crown was a primarily science college.

Jansen: Right, except a lot of the scientists weren't there.

Reti: They were off in their labs?

Jansen: Right. But Jake Michaelson in economics was across the hall from me. I talked a lot to him; he gave me good advice, serving as a kind of mentor. And Bill Hitchcock was there, and he was fascinating to talk to. I'm trying to think. Was Mary-Kay Gamel there? Maybe not. I think she was always at Cowell. I can't remember. Because with reorganization, of course, I was only there for three years before I was shunted off to Arts Land in Porter. I really wanted to go to Cowell, but Nan (Rosenthal) told me I had to go to Porter to be with the rest of the art faculty. (laughs) And since I was a junior faculty member and she was a senior faculty member, I thought, I'd better do as I'm told.

Reti: Right. So you arrive at UCSC a year after Dean McHenry has retired.

Jansen: Yes, I know. I'm really sorry I wasn't there when he was there. Except you know, I did keep in touch with him.

Reti: You did?

"The Study of Architecture Begins in Your Backyard"

Jansen: Yes. One of the things you and I wanted to talk about was my interest in the campus.

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: I've always thought the study of architecture begins in your own backyard. My backyard, the campus, I knew, was interesting. Also, my senior year at Smith, I took courses from Henry-Russell Hitchcock, who was the doyen of architectural history, maybe even created the field in the United States. He talked about the West Coast architects. So I came out here knowing that LA had a great coterie of important modern architects who largely came from Germanic lands. You know, Vienna—[Richard] Neutra and [Rudolph] Schindler, and so on. And the Bay Tradition. I mean, I had heard of [Joseph] Esherick and [William] Wurster before I came out here. And I knew about [Bernard] Maybeck. And of course when I was at Berkeley, I ran around and looked at all the Maybecks and the Christian Scientist church, which I didn't have really good respect for at first. I just thought oh, it's a Gothic knockoff. But it really is a great building. The space of the church is thrilling and dynamic.

So I was interested in the campus because of its architecture, its landscape, and then the college experience. I had to sort of settle down and teach medieval until I had tenure and then I could cut loose a bit, although I did a really enjoyable course on California architecture. I also decided I wanted to do a course on the development of the UCSC plan. [Reyner] Banham was really interested in it, too. So he said, "Well, can we team teach it together?" I don't think I was up to saying no. And it was fun.

So we taught it together. It was out of that class that the exhibition "The First Twenty Years" developed, partly because his wife Mary was very involved with galleries. But actually, the first work of the exhibition was done by Louise Newberry, Todd Newberry's wife. She had been in a lot of my classes finishing a BA in art history, so we all knew each other. She started with the exhibition and then for some reason, she couldn't keep it up. Mary took it over with the students and everything. But it was before that point that I got tenure. Reyner Banham,[7] who was chair at the time told me that I had gotten it. He stretched his hand out and said, "Congratulations, Chair." (laughter) Oh, wonderful. I got tenure. But (groans) I got the chair as a brand-new tenured associate professor. (laughs) There went my research career.

Reti: So Reyner Banham had come here to teach around the same time you did?

Jansen: He came in 1980, five years after I did.

And then Banham left. He got offered this new, funded chair at the Institute of Fine Arts at NYU. I said, "Why would you ever leave Santa Cruz to go to New York City?"

He said, "Well, believe it or not, I have asphalt deprivation." (laughter) Yeah, he and Mary were really big urban people.

[7] Reyner Banham was an English architectural critic and writer best known for his theoretical treatise *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960) and for his 1971 book *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*. He was a professor of art history at UCSC from 1980 to 1987; he left the campus in 1987 and moved back to England, where he died of cancer in 1988.

Reti: I saw the booklet *The First Twenty Years* from 1986 that went with the exhibition.[8] I know we're skipping around and we'll circle back to some of this next time, because I'm sure we can talk about it more in depth as well.

More on Crown College in the Early Years

So you come to Crown College. How involved were you with the college? Did you go to College Night?

Jansen: Occasionally. When I was at Cowell which I moved to after I had gone to Porter during reorganization, I used always to go at Thanksgiving, because they wanted faculty to come. I did that for quite a while, for several years. At Crown I was involved in various activities.

Reti: One of the things I've heard from faculty who were here before reorganization is that the demands for faculty for college service were so great that sometimes it was difficult to get tenure because they'd be giving so much to the college.

Jansen: Well, I did some things. I was on the provost's search, so that was a lot. And I did a few other things. The faculty wanted to know what I did, so somebody, maybe Sig [Puknat], maybe, I sort of remember somebody else, thought maybe it would be interesting if I gave one of their talks. They had, I don't know, monthly talks from the Crown faculty. Oh, and they had a social hour up in that wonderful senior commons room in the tower with a Hearst fireplace. I often went to that, if I was already on campus. But

[8] See Reyner Banham and Taina Rikala, *The First 20 Years: Two Decades of Building at UCSC* (Santa Cruz: UC Santa Cruz 1987). Publication a result of an undergraduate art history seminar *The History and Implementation of the Santa Cruz Campus Plan* in the winter quarter of 1986 under the direction of Professors Virginia Jansen and Reyner Banham.

the Thanksgiving dinner was on a Thursday, and I always did the intro class in the fall, so that was Monday/Wednesday/Friday. So the night before I had the big class, I had to drive over specially for the dinner. That was a bit tough for me but I thought it was a nice thing to do.

But gradually I realized, the students didn't care if you were there, you know? At one point the college said, "Well, the faculty can sit at their own table if they want." I thought, no, that's not the point.

I would be dishing out this meal. The potatoes would come and they'd pass the potatoes around as I'm trying to carve the turkey. I'd never carved a turkey before, but I read about how to do it and took my sharp knife and so on. Finally, one of the male students, not a female student, said, "Professor, you're not going to get to eat anything if you don't stop carving for us."

And I said, "Well, I've got to finish carving for all of you." I think the last year I didn't come. I said I would come if somebody invited me and arranged for a group of students where I was part of the group, but I didn't want to come and sit there like some den mother at the head of the table serving. No, they wanted to talk to themselves. They didn't really want to talk to me, a stranger. I made effort to make conversation, but it wasn't that successful.

Reti: How aware were you of the enrollment crisis that was going on?

Jansen: Oh, I was very aware because I got asked to call students who had applied but wanted to go to Berkeley instead. So I called up and explained the two-three program, where they would do two years here with a guaranteed transfer to Berkeley.

And a lot of the parents were bothered by the evaluation system. I loved it. I thought it was terrific. It was time-consuming and it was very annoying that it cut into my summer research about five weeks, though others said they didn't take that long. But it took me roughly a half hour per student, no matter what. I didn't do the big class, because I had TAs do that, because there were sections. Well, not the first year. But I did read all the evaluations the TAs wrote and corrected them and had them make corrections when the prose was not very good. I did have one T.A. write, "X's work was good. The first midterm was good. Knowledge was good. The second midterm was good." I mean, the whole thing was like that. I said, "Why don't you say, 'Her work was overall good. In all aspects, it was good.' And be done with it." (laughs) She did not want to change it.

She said, "Oh, this is so much more information."

I said, "It isn't much information at all." (laughs) —

Reti: So you were calling parents to talk about the Berkeley redirect program—

Jansen: And also just about coming to Santa Cruz and what the narrative evaluation system meant. It didn't mean that they wouldn't be able to get into graduate school. They thought it meant the student didn't have to work hard at all. I said, "No, you have to work harder because if I give you a B, you don't know what you've done. But if I tell you your papers were good and your exams were terrible, you know exactly what you did."[9]

[9] I once sat on an airplane next to a professor from the University of the Pacific and he told me he remembered McHenry visiting and being interested in their narrative evaluation system—Virginia Jansen.

It convinced the parents. I don't say that the students decided to come. But they would always say, "Well, thank you for explaining it. I have a better understanding now." So I felt calling was important and I actually liked doing it.

Reti: And who asked you to do that?

Jansen: I don't remember.

Reti: I was wondering if a lot of faculty were doing that.

Jansen: I don't know.

Reti: I've never heard that before. So were you aware that the campus needed help?

Jansen: Yes, and I heard it might shut down and everything. I just crossed my fingers. (laughs) And see, it worked.

Reti: (laughs) Here you are, yeah. Okay. I think we should call it a wrap for the day.

Jansen: This has been fun.

Reti: I've had a great time, too.

The Early Years of the Art Board

Reti: So today is October 26, 2020. This is Irene Reti with the Regional History Project. I'm here with Virginia Jansen on Zoom for our second session of the oral history that we're doing together. So, Virginia, we're going to start today by talking about the Art Board. And you came here as a member of the faculty of the Art Board, right?

Jansen: Yes.

Reti: Okay. People that I've interviewed in the past have told me that in the early '70s and throughout the '70s, they felt that the Art Board was not well supported. In the early vision of UCSC, the arts were kind of a "bauble," as one person put it. How would you evaluate that statement?

Jansen: Well, I know we never had enough money. And I'm not sure how much I was aware of it, because first of all, I was at Crown and most of the faculty were at Porter, since there was no art building in those days. That was part of the problem. I think the studio arts—and I think it's now realized, because music has the same problem, film and digital media and so on—but at that time the Art Board needed equipment, and so did art history, in order to teach basic classes and for research. They hired Doyle Foreman, who worked with metal sculpture, so he needed a foundry, and all the artists needed studios. I don't think the administration realized that art had needs like the sciences needed laboratories, so there wasn't money allowed for it. I think, I have no idea, but I suppose they thought that people could paint in their houses or something like that. Sculpture, of course, is a different issue. And big painting is a different issue, too. Eduardo Carrillo did a lot of mural painting, and he needed to think on a big scale and Fred Hunnicutt made sculptures on a huge scale and so did Jack Zajac, not as huge as Fred, but still, good size. And Kay Metz worked a lot in lithography, so she needed equipment, too. And then art history had the needs of slides and projectors and a darkened room with note-taking lights to show them in.

But I was over in Crown and expected to be a medievalist, which I was, and I enjoyed that very much. I feel I'm more of a medievalist and an architectural historian than I am an art

historian, per se, although of course my degree's in art history and I went through the usual program that an art historian does.

So the argument had to be made for the equipment and I think gradually it did get understood. But money was always tight, particularly in the late '70s. I always said that with each job I had, each school I taught at, it was a higher-ranking school, but the equipment got worse. I started out at Foothill College as a sabbatical replacement, and there was a wonderful, equipped hall for teaching art history. It was fully equipped with sound, and I could play music as background to my lecture as the students were filing in and stuff like that. And wonderful microphones and everything.

Then I went to the University of Santa Clara. They had some rooms that were equipped. Then I went to Santa Cruz and there was nothing. There were the big halls. But most of my classes didn't require a big hall. I used to have to go get the projectors, haul them in. I can't remember who hauled those screens. We'd set up two screens in an ordinary classroom. There were no blackout curtains. The first thing I did for three years was set up rooms that you could actually teach art history in.

Reti: You mean you actually physically did that yourself?

Jansen: No, I had to order A/V to supply, rent out the equipment for the quarter, whatever. I remember lugging projectors sometimes—two slide carousels, two projectors.

At first, I did it at Crown, and then the second or third year the Art Board moved to Applied Sciences. They had better spaces there and we had a good room. But Nan and I had to set it up. There's a funny story to this room. It had a small window at the front, so the request went in to paint it over with black paint. Nan called me laughing uproariously.

She said, "You'll never guess what happened." I said, "What?" She said, "The guy came in and painted out the window all right, but it was the window of the projection booth!" We were both in stitches!

It's sort of going off on a tangent a bit, but directly related. Art history as a field really got started in the late nineteenth century. So it was a relatively new discipline. Before, they used to teach it with drawings. A professor would put up drawings and illustrations, etchings and woodcuts of famous paintings to teach students. So art history really got a start once photography came in.

Reti: I never thought of that! Of course, it would be connected.

Jansen: But it wasn't a separate discipline, I don't think, until basically—I don't really know the history of art history that well, because I'm not that interested in it. But it started in the late nineteenth century, particularly in Vienna. Otherwise I think it was probably taught in studio classes such as Mary Holmes did. She's a good example of art history being within art. But it became a proper discipline, more of a historical, scholarly discipline, with the Viennese and probably also in Berlin. It was very much a Teutonic invention, which is why German used to be a required language for a master's degree in art history. I doubt if it is these days. But anyway, I was well-suited for that. I think that's what got me into Berkeley, actually.

So, it was natural for art departments to hire someone who could teach modern art because of course that's what the artists were doing. Usually they would be interested in Renaissance, and occasionally a Greek statue would be thrown in. The Middle Ages were completely overlooked.

Reti: Yes. (laughs)

Jansen: Because of course they weren't considered important. They're only the period when the word "modern" came into context, in the twelfth century, however. It was a big word in the twelfth century. The twelfth-century people felt they were the moderns. So there was a break with the ancient world. The Middle Ages are very important for our Western culture.

So as we were discussing last time, Jasper [Rose] would teach the Renaissance through the early nineteenth century. He was very good on the eighteenth century, for example. And then Nan [Rosenthal] would pick up with the nineteenth century and go to contemporary times. I think Jasper sometimes would teach some of the ancient world, too. I'm sure he did. But he didn't feel comfortable with the Middle Ages, and Nan didn't. So they decided they would hire a medievalist. And that's when I was hired, as I relayed last time.

Reti: So I'm curious about this cast of characters that were part of the Art Board when you arrived. You've already mentioned Jasper Rose and Jack Zajac and Fred Hunnicutt, and I know the Fluxus movement was big on campus at that time. There was a lot of experimental work going on at UCSC. Can you give me some of your recollections of the people that you were thrown in with at that time?

Jansen: Well, I don't know what they had to do with Fluxus, but I'm not very knowledgeable in that area, either. I know Don Weygandt was there doing really fine drawings, delicate drawings. Hardy Hanson was there. He may have been the chair at the time. I know he was chair at some point early in my career. Of course, Doug McClellan,

he did his fabulous prints and little shadow boxes that were always really fascinating. I mentioned Kay Metz.

Reti: What about Pavel Machotka—did you have much to do with him?[10]

Jansen: A little bit later on. Not then, because he wasn't part of the Art Board. He was part of College Five as it was then called, which became Porter.

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: But then I wasn't a fellow of Porter. I was a fellow of Crown. So I did get to know him. But again, I'm not very knowledgeable after about 1700, I would say, except partly in architectural history. I've had some Renaissance, of course, the first course I took in graduate school. And I love the Baroque, so I'm fairly knowledgeable about Baroque art. But after that, there's a big jump, really, until the 1890s in decorative arts and architecture. And I don't know that much about painting and sculpture. It's just never been a large interest of mine. I don't believe in art for art's sake, exactly. I mean, that's sort of an overstatement. But I like art that works within social spaces. The contemporary movements are much more interesting to me than Picasso or Matisse or any of the people. Duchamp is of interest.

When I did the core course at Porter, I think I did it for three years. We had a reading list and then we were supposed to take that basic reading list and then add whatever we wanted to add. Nan helped me here a lot. I wanted a readable book that was about art, so

[10] See Irene Reti, Interviewer and Editor, *Founding the Aesthetics Studies Major at UC Santa Cruz: An Oral History with Professor Pavel Machotka* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2016). Available in full text at https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4xm9n444.

she suggested Calvin Tomkins's book. *The Bride and the Bachelors: Five Masters of the Avant-Garde*. It had chapters on various artists in different media including music and dance, and Duchamp played a role in it. So that was exciting, and using the Tomkins gave me a good scope for discussing the arts.

Reti: We did an oral history with Doug McClellan just a few years before he died.[11] He talked about the fractious nature of the Art Board at that time. That there were a lot of very heated board meetings.

Jansen: Yes, I remember that.

Reti: You remember that, too

Jansen: I sat quietly in the corner because I was untenured.

Reti: (laughter) I get that.

Jansen: Plus, I didn't have a stake in the arguments, really. Nan was not particularly well liked except by people like Doug and Jack Zajac. She was quite good friends with them, as I recall. Doyle was really humorous. I could see all their arguments, basically. I mean, how does one decide whether painting, or the foundry, or lithography should get funded. They all needed enough money for supplies and equipment, but there wasn't really enough to go around. That sort of argument.

[11] See Nikki Silva, Interviewer, and Irene Reti, Editor, *An Artist with Shoes On: An Oral History of Founding UCSC Professor of Art Douglas McClellan* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2014). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9tn727hf.

Art History Separates from the Art Board

Anyway, we broke off from the Art Board and went our separate ways, "we" being art history, which at that point was Nan, me, and Reyner Banham, as well as Jasper, who taught in art history, but his appointment was always history and then art was added to it as he became more and more involved in the Art Board. In fact he was chair, I think, at the time we broke off. But he always taught some curriculum in art history. So basically there were the four of us. And we had an administrative committee with other people. Doug McClellan was on it; Jim Clifford[12] was on it. I think there were eight of us. Oh, Harry Berger was on it—because Harry at this point had discovered his interest in seventeenth-century Dutch painting, Rembrandt and Vermeer.[13] So he was on it, too. And John Jordan.

After we broke up [i.e., art history and art], I had lunch one day at the Porter café. Doyle was sitting there, so I joined him. And he was saying, "Well, after the art historians left, we didn't have anybody to attack anymore, so we started attacking each other." (laughter) He has a lovely, wry sense of humor. Or mischievous , maybe.

Norman Locks came much later.[14] I think he was there before we broke off, but I can't really remember. So, I didn't really get into much of that.

---

[12] See Cameron Vanderscoff, Interviewer and Editor, *James Clifford: Tradition and Transformation at UC Santa Cruz* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2013). Available in full text at https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0r64t762.
[13] See Cameron Vanderscoff, Interviewer and Editor, *The Critical World of Harry Berger, Jr.: An Oral History* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2015). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4rg173mr.
[14] See Irene Reti, Interviewer and Editor, *Picture to Picture: An Oral History with Photographer-Teacher Norman Locks* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2018). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/19j1h7b3.

Reti: So what were the events that led to the splitting off of the art history folks from the Art Board?

Jansen: Well, all of this was largely Nan's doing. She was quite political and that's why a lot of the studio staff didn't like her. But she was bent on building a proper scholarly department and she pushed very hard for that. So she was always a thorn in the side of the members of the Art Board. And as I said, there'd be arguments about: do we get another lithographic stone? Do we get more clay? Do we throw more into the foundry? What about slides for art history? We felt that we were sort of the stepchild. I think this is natural. I don't think one should blame anybody. I think this is just the way things happen because they're different disciplines. I think it's a myth that art history and art should be together. Really, I don't even think they should be in the same division.

At the time that we split off, they said that we were too small to be our own unit, so we had talks with history and so on. History was willing to take us and still let us teach art history, but the division was not in favor. I think legally or jurisdictionally, the arts were still part of the humanities. They were under their own sort of subordinate dean. But they were run without any interference from humanities.

I think that was something when [Helene] Moglen came that she worked out.[15] She could see problems separate from humanities. She didn't want to deal with the foundry, anyway. I'm picking on the poor foundry. But she didn't want to deal with mechanical things

[15] See Irene Reti, Interviewer and Editor, *Helene Moglen and the Vicissitudes of a Feminist Administrator* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2013). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7fc7q3z8.

because, you know, she was in theory, right? She didn't want to deal with all the equipment.

So anyway, they decided we would stay in the arts, because the arts was too small without us because we had the big numbers with the introductory classes. Plus, you know, music is basically a studio class. They had their big lecture classes, too, but they weren't as big as ours. Art obviously could not really do a lecture class, although later they developed some. And Richard Wohlfeiler, I know, taught them quite successfully. Richard was one of my TAs sometimes when he first started, and he was excellent. I don't think we had a problem with his teaching a lecture class.[16]

And theater arts, of course, was a studio discipline as well. So it's true, if we left, it would be more limited. Now I think it's different. But I'm not there so I have nothing to say about that.

So anyway, we finally reached an agreement. I have no idea how it happened. I don't think I was involved. I think Reyner Banham and Nan Rosenthal were the parties. At that time, I don't think I had tenure and I was madly working on publication because, it was down to the wire with me. I think I'm a slow producer and I research very thoroughly. That's my personality and it's also the way I was taught under the professor I worked with at Berkeley. He was extremely thorough and had fewer publications than you would have assumed for someone of his reputation, but every one was a zinger. And my material is just harder to access than a lot of material. It requires trips abroad, which requires money,

[16] Richard Wohlfeiler was a lecturer in art for twenty years. See http://www.richardwohlfeiler.com/about.

requires time, requires permissions to gain access to sites and special places, which have to be set up ahead of time, and so on. So my nose was to the grindstone, in other words.

Also, the administrative staff for the Art Board didn't like dealing with our problems. So we made an agreement we would hire a part-time administrative staff member. We would be our own unit. But because we weren't big enough to be a board, we would be called a committee of studies.

Reti: I see.

Jansen: And that's why we had outside people from the campus, to make sure we weren't too ingrown with the three or four of us making decisions.

Reti: Oh, and hence the committee that you were referring to before.

Jansen: Yes.

Reti: All right.

Jansen: Yes, so then we became our own unit.

Reti: And once you split off, did things really change?

Jansen: Yes, because we were in control of ourselves and we decided who got what and we were very amiable. It was a golden period as far as I'm concerned. But it didn't last very long because Nan got an offer from the National Gallery of Art in Washington to be the curator, which is a huge position. So she took a leave for two years to see if she liked it and everything. She's from New York, so she's an East Coast person, though she loved the West Coast and she loved the life. She had chickens in her yard and did the whole nine

yards, and she had a lot of good friends out here, too. The McClellans, especially, were, I know, good friends.

Anyway, so she left in '85. I got tenure in '83. I knew if I got tenure, I was going to be chair. Because Nan had done whatever—it wasn't called chair because it was too small, but she was basically responsible for the program since her arrival. I think she came in '71, if I remember correctly. And then Banham had come and he said he wouldn't be chair. But then, she was very good at twisting arms, very good. So he was chair then. And she appealed to his fatherly instincts and said, "Well, we can't make Virginia, she's untenured, be chair. And as you know, I've done it for about ten years." And so he was stuck. (laughs) But he did it very well, I have to say, and very efficiently. But he didn't always pursue things with the same rigor that Nan did. She twisted every drop of water out of those old rags, let me tell you.

So then I got it. I'd get the nightly phone call from Nan, usually about midnight when I was trying to go to bed, saying, "Did you do this today? Did you contact these seventeen people today?" (laughter) Anyway, meanwhile, I had a five-course teaching load, I think, with one course relief for being chair. So I was busy. She pushed me to do a lot. I did a lot as chair because that was the model I had from her. So I wasn't involved, really, with the Art Board after that, at least not officially.

Reyner Banham

Then Nan left and then Reyner Banham in '86 or '87 got the job offer from NYU, in a named chair. He and Mary had lived in London forever, so they couldn't wait to get back to a big city. He loved Santa Cruz and everything about it. He rode this famous collapsible

Moulton bike up and down the campus and everything. He was excited about going. I was tearful because he was a really great colleague. Super great.

Reti: What was great about him?

Jansen: Well, he always had your welfare at heart. And he was good for advice. He was witty. He was brilliant and kindly. He wasn't kindly to everybody. He had a reputation, really, as a—oh, what's the word I want? Disruptor. Which he was. He loved to play that role. And he loved to write things quickly out of the brilliance of his mind. And he said, "Really, I'm sort of doing first-line scholarship. In other words, it's up to other people to see if the ideas hold up. But I'm putting them out there."

I'd go to the Society of Architectural Historians conference. I would go to a session where he was speaking and the room would be half filled and then when he was due to speak, there would be this influx of hundreds of people crowding into the room. After he finished speaking, they would all exit, leaving thirty of us to continue with the session. It was this great swell for everybody to see him because whether you liked his ideas or not, he was always interesting to listen to. He and Doug McClellan and also Jack Zajac also got along very well, too.

Reti: That must have been a difficult moment when you lost both Nan and Reyner. Then who was left? And did they hire someone?

Jansen: Me! Me! [laughs] I was left. That was it, this brand-new associate professor. At that point (1985), we had hired Donna Hunter, but she was a lecturer. She had not finished her dissertation and she was in a non-tenure track post. It was renewed year to year. We had a position in Renaissance-Baroque sculpture. Jasper helped us define the

position because he really preferred to deal with painting. But he thought that would be a good position. It was the position we eventually hired Cathy Soussloff in. And at the same time (1987) we hired in 18th and 19th century. We had two searches going for junior faculty and Donna eventually got that latter one.

But Reyner Banham, instead of being able to leave us, got colon cancer. Nine months later, he was dead. So he never got to take up the position at NYU and he couldn't teach for us because he was quite sick. He was operated on in the summer and they thought they had gotten it all. In December, he found out it had come back and he was terminal. He died in March 1988.

Reti: Gosh.

Jansen: Yeah. When I called him, I said, "Oh, this is terrible news." I was breaking up and everything. His death hit me harder than my own father's. But my father lived to be a ripe old age and Peter, as we called him, was only sixty-five. He was sixty-six by the time he died. His mother had died of colon cancer and he had not had his colonoscopies on a regular basis as he should have. And I said, "Oh, that's terrible news!" Weep, weep, weep.

He said, "Well, I admit the news isn't great. But the details are fascinating."

Reti: [laughter] Oh my gosh.

Jansen: I know. So I had to laugh, right? He had done a book called *The Well-Tempered Environment*. I think this was the first major piece of writing he did that really attracted a lot of attention from the world. It was about the heating ducts and the ventilation and

so on in buildings. So he was referring to the tubes that keep you going and all that sort of thing. So that was comical. I said this is just terrible.

We had a new interim dean of the arts, Geoff Pullum, and at that point, I hadn't been formally introduced to him. So, just after I got over this phone call with Reyner Banham, Geoff Pullum comes in and I'm sort of still in tears, right? So whenever he introduced me, he said, "When I first met her, she was crying." I thought, thanks, Geoff. I really appreciate that. [laughs]

Reti: Really.

Chairing the Art History Board

Jansen: But Geoff was okay. He was a pretty good dean. I mean, I could argue with him, so that was okay. And he was supportive. But yes, the golden age didn't last very long, minding our own affairs and dealing with the problems on our own. But then as I said, we hired Donna and Cathy. We did hire them the same year. So I was very busy. (laughs) Two hires.

And then the next year (1988), we had searches for two senior appointments. So they were the ones for which we hired Victor Burgin and John Hay. We hired them both the same year. Ronnie Gruhn[17] was the vice chancellor at that time. I think Ed [Houghton] at that point was the dean, but I'm not sure. So that's four appointments in two years.

Reti: Wow.

[17] See Irene Reti, Interviewer and Editor, *Professor Isebill "Ronnie" V. Gruhn: Recollections of UCSC, 1969-2013*. (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2013). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7hn0655w.

Jansen: That's why I didn't do any research at that point. And I missed a lot, too. There were some really good conferences I wanted to go to and I just couldn't go. So then it was me as the chair and the tenured professor working with two brand-new juniors. Donna had been here as a lecturer, so she wasn't brand-new to the campus, but she was brand-new as tenure-track faculty. Two brand-new tenure-track faculty and I doing the search for two senior faculty. I'll tell you, that's not easy. I don't know who else helped us at that point, but obviously we had help. Jasper must have been involved. I know Harry and Doug and John and Jim from our committee helped us. So that must have been the group, we three art historians, Jasper, and then the four of what was called the augmented committee. Somewhere along the way then we became a department. I think when we got to be six, we asked to be. The next hire was Carolyn Dean and I think at that point we asked to be a department.

Jasper Rose

Reti: I'm curious about your recollections and impressions of Jasper Rose, who's quite a UCSC figure.

Jansen: Well, I understand why the students liked him, because he was definitely a character. I had trouble with him to start with. And he and Nan were generally at loggerheads, though occasionally they agreed. Jasper had good ideas, some workable, some not. And it was definitely different when Reyner Banham was there, because now there were two English males in the room.

Reti: [laughs] Just imagine that.

Jansen: Both of them had the English facility of word-play trained into them, I don't know if this tradition still exists, but definitely in the '60s and '70s it was still apparent, where they are very facile with speech. Americans aren't trained that way. They either are or they aren't. But it may be a self-selecting tradition, because of course not many people in England went to university until fairly recently, probably as an influence of the expansion of higher education in the U.S. I don't think it's necessarily been good for the English system. [laughs]

At one point I decided that I would treat Jasper as if he were an ordinary, regular human being. Once I decided that, everything was fine. But before that time, I had trouble with him. Basically he liked people who were very animated in speech and could banter with him on the topics he knew about. He didn't know much about the Middle Ages and his ideas were sort of weird. But I didn't want to say, "Your ideas are not very relevant to the Middle Ages."

I did have some trouble with the university because I was raised to be a polite person. [laughs] Nan kept telling me I was too polite. I think I said thank you on my first memo for a request. She said, "You don't say thank you. You demand they give you this!" [Reti laughs] I know, it's sort of funny. I said, oh, okay.

Jasper Rose could be nice. He could be difficult. Once I decided I'd just treat him like a normal person, it was just fine because I said what I wanted to. I was courteous. I think he sort of resented me because, as I said last time, he really wanted the other person who had been teaching art history to get the permanent job. She was one of my best friends from graduate school. I wouldn't have even minded too much losing to her, because she

was really good, but she decided she wanted to have children and didn't want a full-time job, so that left a clear field to me. I think there would have been an argument had she decided to stay in the running. She was in Carolingian painting and there was some preference for an architectural historian, I think. And actually, that was something that Nan, Jasper, and I all had in common. We had a strong interest in architectural history.

Female Faculty at the early UC Santa Cruz

Reti: So, in *Seeds of Something Different,* the book that I co-edited recently about the history of the campus, we have a chapter called "The Male Academic Locker Room." It's based on oral histories that we did with some of the early women faculty at UCSC. I was curious as to your recollections of that period. I realize in your own department, there were other women. But on campus as a whole—

Jansen: I think only Kay Metz in art, right? And Nan Rosenthal.

Reti: So you weren't the only woman in art history.

Jansen: No.

Reti: But as far as being one of the few women faculty in the early '70s, and certainly tenured later as one of the few women tenured faculty, what was your experience? Is it accurate to say it was a male academic locker room?

Jansen: Well, I didn't come till '75 and I think by then, things were changing. I know in my hiring committee, Kristine Brightenback in French literature, and Marsh Leicester in literature, Doug McClellan from the Art Board, I think, and Nan—they're the four I

remember who were most involved. So I didn't see that there was an overwhelming amount of males.

In art history, things are different because it's a field dominated by women, which is one reason, I think, it's had a struggle. I know a friend that was at a SUNY school in an art department. She was the only art historian and she was the only female. They would hold meetings at a time when she was teaching classes so she couldn't come. When she did come, they told dirty jokes and they made her feel totally uncomfortable. They didn't understand why she couldn't teach the whole world of art history, you know: Chinese, Japanese, African, Western. She did all of Western and she did something non-Western. But they didn't give her tenure. So definitely, even after my early career—she's probably ten years junior to me—the dominance of male faculty was still occurring around the world. I know another case, too, where the female got hounded out of a studio department, which tends to be more male. I'm not sure that's true anymore because things have changed quite a bit since the early '80s. But I didn't get that sense at UCSC.

I'm trying to think. There were some language faculty at Crown. Of course, in '78 there was reorganization and then I was at Porter. I don't know. There were women faculty around. But I can imagine in the mid '60s. And also, with the English cast of the campus, and that English male tradition—I have a very good English academic friend who's always railing against how her work is never cited. Other male work is cited on the same topic. It's like she's wiped off the face of the planet. And that's now. That's happening now.

Reti: What about in the larger campus environment, like say when you went to an Academic Senate meeting, or something like that?

Jansen: There were enough women around, I think.

Reti: There were enough women that you didn't feel—

Jansen: Yes. I think it's radically different in traditionally male-dominated areas, like the sciences. I don't know how it is in the social sciences, but the arts and literature always have had a lot of women. I knew Mary-Kay Gamel, for example, in literature. She would come in regularly and give a lecture on Rome in my introductory survey class. And Audrey Stanley[18] and Ruth Solomon.[19] And in music, Linda Burman-Hall and Leta Miller, and Kathy Foley in Theater Arts. So there were women around in the arts. I've heard other people still rail about it.

I did feel a bit of discrimination occasionally, as when I did a career review, which I really regret doing, because it got me nothing. They denied my request. I said I spent so much time in building up the department. David Cope maybe, was dean when we were hiring, and he knew how much work I had done. He was always 100 percent behind me. Also, I think female faculty tended to spend more time advising students, although I do know of some male faculty who also put in the hours. It might be partly, but not solely, because in art history, the greater number of students are female. But I remember when I sat on the Design Advisory Board, Cathy Simon, the architect for College Eight and Baskin, particularly Baskin, she came in to present something, maybe an addition to Baskin. She said to me afterwards, "Here you're in a room; you're the only woman with all these guys."

---

[18] See Cameron Vanderscoff, Interviewer and Editor, "*Chatting with Cameron" An Oral History with Professor Audrey Stanley, Co-Founder of Shakespeare Santa Cruz* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2016). Available in full text at https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9fj6b2qj.

[19] See Tandy Beal, Interviewer, and Irene Reti, Editor, *"Everything was a Stage: An Oral History with Ruth Solomon, Founding UCSC Professor of Theater and Dance* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2014). Available in full text at https://escholarship.org/uc/item/33s2k55x

Because the Design Advisory Board was David Rinehart, Tito Patri, Richard Fernau. David and Tito were older and Richard was younger. And Frank Zwart, who was younger. I don't know who else was in there. It depends who the project manager was, but that was often male. She said, I don't know, something about, "Don't you feel overrun?" I had never thought of it. I felt I could voice my opinion and it was part of the conversation.

Reti: Interesting.

Jansen: Yes. But I grew up playing with boys, so I never really thought much about it. In my high school, I didn't feel discrimination at all. In college, I went to a woman's school. And then in graduate school, there were more women than men, and we were usually the better students. That was said, not often, but it was occasionally said. So I just never gave it much thought, I'm afraid.

When women's studies started, there was some kind of reading group. I remember Helene Moglen was there. I can't remember who all was there. It was maybe ten of us. I was definitely the least learned because art history was a bit late to the theoretical field. Perhaps also because it dealt with physical objects. Anyway, I went, and it was quite eye-opening to me. The experiences that some people had were mostly not a problem for me personally.

I did have a little trouble occasionally in England. I needed to get up in the building that was the subject of my dissertation, Chester Cathedral, in northwest England. And the dean, he was a bachelor and a good scholar and his work was very useful to me. So we had very cordial conversations. I had to get his permission to get up in the building and he

said, "Well, we'll see." You had this sense of what would a proper woman do going up so high in the clerestory, the top story of the building?

I was friends with the verger, the caretaker for the building, and I said, "I don't know what I'm going to do, because I can't do my dissertation unless I can see this building thoroughly." And you know, they have stairways. It's really easy. It's not dangerous.

Reti: You weren't on ropes or anything like that.

Jansen: No. Of course, I was in pants. I had all my tripod and camera equipment and everything. That was a lot to carry, but I was strong in those days. So he said, "I'm going off to my lunch now. I'll let you in. You can't get out for an hour till I get back, but you can have the run of the place." I think he first took me inside the building and showed me where things were, i.e., the layout and how to get around with all the various doorways and such.

So then I did my work just with the verger. One day the dean came in. I was up in the clerestory and he saw me. (laughter) And he thought it was fine. But you know, that was one problem.

And then at Berkeley, too. I got married after my master's degree, actually, before I was finished with the thesis, but finished with all the class work. My husband got a job transfer to Canada, so we went there. After a year, he didn't really have that much to do and he wanted to get back to school and so did I. So we came back. And when I went to file something at the registrar's office—I think it might have been the change my maiden name—they said, "You have to pay out-of-state tuition." I had previously been a resident and not paying nonresident tuition. And they said, "Well, you're not a resident now

because you're married." In other words, my residency was as a wife, not as a person, and my husband wasn't American. This was 1969.

I said, "What?! This is 1969. This is not 1949." (Reti laughs)

And the woman who told me this said, "I know it's crazy." I couldn't blame her. She totally agreed with me but she had to enforce the rules.

I said, "This is absurd!" But I had a full scholarship, so it didn't matter. It didn't make any difference. It was an annoying issue, but it didn't harm me because then the scholarship fund had to pay the tuition. So they robbed Peter to pay Paul in other words, in my case. I called NOW, you know, the National Organization for Women. I said, "This is outrageous. You should sue about this."

They said, "We agree it's outrageous but it's not hurting you and you don't win cases very well if you don't have the sympathy card. The judge would never agree to overturn the rule." I was annoyed. I've never supported them since, because I was so annoyed. (laughs)

At the career review, they said that even though I had done all this work, and I had advanced properly, I didn't have a book. I still don't have a book, but I had a lot of articles. About one article I said to Marsh Leicester, "Oh my God, this has taken two years to do."

He said, "How long is it?" I said seventy pages or something. He said, "Oh, that's as long as a lot of books are." (laughter)

Reti: Right.

Jansen: Not quite. But you know.

Reti: Substantial, though.

Jansen: Yes. Definitely substantial.

Reti: Well, it certainly points to that pattern that I've heard about at UCSC of young faculty not being rewarded for the institutional service they might do at a young institution. And then suddenly you don't get advanced.

Jansen: Well, that was part of it in art history. It was Nan and me, right? So I had to do a lot as a junior faculty—like setting up rooms.

Reti: Yes. Or hiring people who are much your senior. Things like that.

Jansen: But that was after I had tenure.

Reti: That was after. But still, in terms of advancement.

Research Interests

Jansen: Oh, yes. My associate professor career was just blitzed. I still think that's why I haven't finished the book. Because the art history field totally changed from before tenure to the period when I couldn't do research till after my five-year stint as chair. That's when, in the mid '80s, art history changed as a discipline.

Reti: How so?

Jansen: I was doing the kind of book that one would do in the late '70s in my field and then all of a sudden, it wasn't going to be enough, in my opinion. It would have been a very nitty-gritty archeological kind of study. I could tell you what every pier base looks like in Westminster Abbey. But nobody wants to read that kind of stuff nowadays, even

though that sort of study is still common in medieval architectural history. (laughs) I agree, but that's the kind of research I did.

Reti: So briefly, how would you characterize that shift?

Jansen: Well, first of all, it also depends, are you doing contemporary painting? Are you doing medieval architecture, or ancient? In medieval architectural history—a lot of it still is very old-fashioned—you look at a building intensely and you see exactly how it was built, if you can. That long article I referred to was on Exeter Cathedral, the choir of Exeter Cathedral. I did that in the late 80s. That's where I realized that my visual analysis of the building was different from the art historical traditional analysis of form, where you would look at this kind of capital and say, that's probably ten years later than the other capital, or that window tracery is a pattern of the 1280s rather than the 1290s. You can do that kind of pinpointing at that time. You can't always do it with other buildings. But the stylistic appearance is, on the whole, a pretty remarkable, reliable revelation of dating. And then you can start talking about who may have built it. Unless you have some documents, which often you don't.

So I wrote the article. I had three systems of thought—the art historical stylistic analysis, the visual archeological analysis and the documentary information. Exeter has building accounts, which is amazing. Day-by-day, you can see what was done. It's not quite that good, but it's good. Unfortunately, the important years are missing. (laughter) But you do have good information. And I couldn't make these systems of information jibe. That's one reason it took me so long, because each system was telling me a different answer to the story.

So I used that as the crux of the article, saying that which way you believe this was done, and how and why it was done, and who did what when, depends on which system of thought you prized the most. That's how I wrote the article. So that was sort of my goodbye to traditional art history.

Reti: So now, how would things be different in terms of post that period?

Jansen: Well, there are people still doing the archeological analysis. And the art historical analysis still is useful. But something that happens in the West Midlands of England or anywhere—this could be Germany or France or, you know, further east—something that happens in, let's say Poland in 1320, may have happened in Paris in 1260. So you have to realize that the people who are leading the changes in the field, their work may be taken up at a much later date in other places. So there are people who are pure archeologists and they just say what was found when and what it looks like. And then there's this art historical tradition.

But now there's a lot else. My particular work thereafter focuses more on the social and economic tied into the material, the physical, because I'm not a social or economic historian; I'm an architectural historian. So it all goes back to architecture. For example, the book that was just going to be a kind of chronological analysis of buildings in the reign of King Henry III—he reigned from 1216 to 1272, a very long reign—is now: why did things change drastically because Salisbury Cathedral, which is the first large building in my study, was very plain in comparison to the building that made the great change in architecture in England in the thirteenth century, and that's Westminster Abbey. Radical change is coming from France. So now I want to know <u>why</u> it changed. Was it simply, oh,

this is the new fad, we've got to do it this way, or what else did it show? So, (laughs) fortunately there are about seventy volumes of documents on the reign of King Henry III. We have his prose, not his direct prose, but his recorded prose. You usually don't have a ruler saying things that you can read. So, a lot of work, but interesting.

And other people do theoretical work, what it means to do this kind of building and so on and so forth.

Reti: At what point does the field of art history merge into the emerging field of the history of art and visual culture?

Jansen: Well, partly in this time that we're talking about. Because also, a lot of it came from non-Western art. If you're talking about art of the Pacific Islands, for example, or African art, the works are within cultures. All art, of course, works within cultures, but some of it is much more closely related to the cultural existence of that particular society. They were asking different questions and this was at the same time that traditional art history was opening up and beginning to ask different questions, which included discussions on the users and viewers, and on social and economic contexts. That was good for me, because in the Middle Ages, we don't really have decorative arts, which art historians tended to regard as a craft instead of an art, but I've always liked the stuff. So then I could consider a whole picture of art work. I could include objects for the liturgy—water basins and candlesticks and so on. Probably to the people of the time, they were more important than the buildings. We don't know what the people of the time, except for the clergy who did the writing, thought about the big churches. And I started thinking

of buildings in the Middle Ages that were not churches, castles, or expensive houses, such as town halls, granaries, warehouses, synagogues, and such things.

Reti: Right. We don't have oral histories from that period.

Jansen: We have a few, but not very many. So we mine those few. We have very good accounts of Canterbury because there was a cleric, a monk, who wrote everything down. We have also some records in the thirteenth century; a bishop said, "Oh, build me a really big building like the one down the road." So there was this competitive edge and stuff like that. And at this time we now have masons traveling; we have records of a Paris mason going to Sweden and things like that.

Reti: Oh, that would be great.

Jansen: And a member of the German Parler family went to Milan and said, "Oh, you Milanese, you don't have a clue about the theory of building. Your building will never stand up." And the Milanese who were very good builders, but they weren't up to date with the latest in Gothic fashion, said, "What is vertical cannot fall." (Reti laughs) I love that. I used to teach that all the time. But they're right. If it's vertical, it's not falling.

Reti: (laughs) Not yet.

Jansen: Yes, not yet. Not this moment.

Changing Directions in the Department

Reti: So what I'm thinking about is that at UCSC, eventually we end up with a department of History of Art and Visual Culture.[20]

Jansen: Yes. I was on leave when they voted that name in. I'm not sure I would have voted for the acronym HAVC. I think I was on leave in 2002-'03. There was a sea shift in students, in their attitudes toward education and in their preparation. The students radically changed in one year. I would go in to collect my mail at Cowell and people would say, "Oh, the students." I'd say, "What's wrong with the students? How are they different?" I can't remember when grades came in, but it was around that time.[21]

Reti: It was around that time, yes.

Jansen: Yes. But there was a real sea shift of students who just wanted to get their degrees. They were less interested in the material of the course.

Our department had started to expand beyond European. John Hay was the first one, who taught Chinese art. And then I think Carolyn Dean came next with Latin American, particularly Andean work and Inka work. Then I think maybe Raoul Birnbaum was hired. He had a master's in art history, but not a PhD. His PhD was in religious studies. So we were sort of breaking out of the people interested in art objects, or art. But when it comes to the non-West, you don't really call it art. It's a Western concept. The change fit much better with the Middle Ages, in fact. Because the Middle Ages is kind of different; it's not

[20] https://admissions.sa.ucsc.edu/majors/historyofart.

[21] In 2000, UCSC's Academic Senate voted to replace the letter-grade option with mandatory letter grades to be given in addition to the existing narrative evaluation system. For more on the complex history of grades and narrative evaluations at UCSC see *Seeds of Something Different: An Oral History of the University of California, Santa Cruz.*

interested in realistic representation. It aligns well with modern art, of course, because of that.

And so all of a sudden, art history didn't fit what we were wanting to do and were doing. Then we hired, I think Elizabeth Cameron came next. And then I think Stacy Kamehiro. I may be wrong, because I can't quite remember all this. And we wanted something that did encompass what we were doing. There were arguments, first of all, that we'd be the department of visual culture But I think it was Keith Muscutt and Ed Houghton who didn't want to lose the name "art history." They said, "Students will be looking for art history and they won't know where to find you." They came up with a combo.

I know I had to write up what I would do for a contemplated graduate program in visual culture. I think I did something, but I can't remember. But I knew I was going to be retiring soon and there'd be no point for a student to come study with me if I would be gone in a year or two.

Reti: Oh, for a PhD.

So there have been many dramatic changes structurally since you left here.

Jansen: Yes, that's true. It's different now. And also, if you want to study the Middle Ages, we don't really have the resources in our library. You'd have to go to Berkeley or Stanford all the time. And if you have to go there, I'm not sure why you'd come to Santa Cruz, if all the resources are someplace else.

Reti: Mm-hmm. You mean like medieval manuscripts, that kind of thing?

Jansen: Yes, manuscripts or sculpture or, you know, especially books and periodicals. A lot of stuff is in periodicals. For example, in my field of English Gothic architecture, the historical periodical *Gentleman's Quarterly*, can be quite useful. The Gothic revival of the nineteenth century produced wonderful articles on buildings. Stanford has them in the stacks. I think the early nineteenth-century volumes were library-use only at Berkeley, so to get an illustration once, I just went into the stacks at Stanford, much closer, and opened the book on the floor and shot my photograph that was published. And once in the Bancroft Library, they wanted a fee for me to photograph something I needed to study from a nineteenth-century periodical which wasn't at all rare. And they wouldn't let me publish my own photograph if I needed to . They had to take it professionally—at my cost. So, I told them to forget it, because I knew I could take a photo in London, at the Society of Antiquaries, of which I am a Fellow, without permission or charge. So that summer when I was in London on research, I did just that. It was easier to go to London (which I was already doing so no additional costs involved) and take my own photo than to work with Berkeley. I found that so odd.

Reti: (laughs) Uh-huh. Was there anything else about this part of your career that we should be talking about?

Teaching Architectural Studies at UCSC

Jansen: Did you want to talk about the majors in architectural studies?

Reti: Yes, yes.

Jansen: Okay. So we had John Hay and Carolyn Dean, who would do their intro classes, each in one quarter. But in Western, we had the traditional year-long survey. For the three

quarters we had the first one of ancient and medieval in the first quarter. As the only faculty member in our department with expertise in these areas, I did about three thousand years (actually thirty thousand because I taught cave painting and Stonehenge). And then the second quarter contained Renaissance through eighteenth century with three hundred years. And then nineteenth and twentieth centuries—two hundred years—in the last quarter. That was our year-long sequence on the quarter system.

Now [UC] Santa Barbara, what they did, which I thought was a smart thing, is to keep the Western survey but then have three quarters of the non-Western. So at least it was balanced, except those areas, you know, well, there had shorter histories, except for Asian, of course, which is just as long. So you could argue, why shouldn't Asian be three, and then you'd have in addition African and Pacific Island and the non-Western American.

But our department did not want to have more than a year of an intro-survey. So the Western was reduced to a quarter, which I thought was bonkers myself. I still think it's bonkers. I've heard from faculty at other universities, "Oh, your students are very bright when they come to get our PhD, but they don't know anything." If they go to a community college, they do, because they still have the Western survey, but of course this is from the Western point of view. But still, we are living in the West and if you say the Parthenon, you don't want to draw a blank from students. But nowadays, I think you do. I don't know who's teaching the Western intro and what is in it, but I do know that one of the faculty that taught the Western survey, the only medieval monument she showed—and some people would not consider this medieval—is Ravenna. And most people consider that late antique, and not medieval at all. No Chartres. (laughs) No medieval manuscripts. No Beauvais, no Cologne, no Westminster, Salisbury, whatever. I hardly taught those, either,

because there's a limit to what you can teach from three thousand years in ten weeks. So that made a major shift in our schedule, and particularly in my curriculum.

And at that time, I said I would team-teach the quarter Western intro. But I could not really at the University of California teach modern. So I wanted to team-teach it. Somebody would do the modern part and I could do the rest, and we could decide how to split it up. But no one wanted to team-teach the course. Yes, it's a bit harder to team-teach but it would have worked.

Donna Hunter also taught the western course in one quarter. She did everything thematically, though. But then they didn't have a sense of history, that is the problem with that, which is the shortcoming with students anyway these days.

So I thought, well, what can I do now that the course I've taught for twenty-five years or whatever has been ripped out from under me? I thought, well, I'll do an intro to architecture. So I did that. You can't do architectural history of the world in ten weeks. Not happening.

Reti: (laughs) No.

Jansen: And I wanted to do it worldwide. I had taken trips with the Society of Architecturtal Historians to China, Tunisia, and Turkey, so my non-Western interests had greatly expanded. So I decided I wanted to do it thematically. And there was a book, an old book, but quite interesting book by Steen Eiler Rasmussen *Experiencing Architecture*. It has chapters such as line, color, space, rhythm, things like that. I said to Frank Zwart, "Would you like to teach this with me?" He had taught modern architecture a couple of times after Reyner Banham left and he loved teaching it. But he had other duties, such as

being campus architect, and running a big department. So he said no, he couldn't, but he had somebody who would be excellent. And that was Jean Nilsson, who is now back at the university again. She was away for about fifteen years, but she's back and working in the chancellor's office, in Capital Planning and Space Management. She's very thoughtful and brilliant. It took us a year to plan this course, but she was the perfect person to do it with.

We opened the course and we thought we'd get sixty students. So we got this room in Merrill [College] that held like sixty-five. People were spilling out in the hall. There were about 130 students who wanted to take it, and we had no T.A. We had planned four assignments. Each one had a writing component and a drawing component. We had them draw a ground plan of—and we picked the buildings, there were like a choice of five, including the McHenry [Library] lobby, and those piers are fascinating. I don't know if you've looked at the piers in McHenry. They are very complicated. They are Gothic, actually.

Reti: Really?

Jansen: Modern Gothic. You go draw the pier diagram, the plan of the pier. You'll see what I mean. We had them use their bodies to take measurements, so they could make a measured ground plan. It was hard, but we allowed them to do it as a group project because that's how architecture works. A lot of the students wanted to be architects, so that's why they took it. And other students said, "This is an art history class, but there's no history in this." We said, "That's right." But it was a T course. Do you remember topical courses?

Reti: Yes, yes, I do.

Jansen: I liked those. I thought they were stimulating. I'm sorry they got rid of them. But anyway, we said "It's an introduction to the ideas of architecture." So I taught it with Jean for three years. Then she and her husband moved to, I think, Grass Valley or someplace like that, so I had to do it on my own. But she had trained me well enough that I could carry on and I had TAs. So I taught that until Sheila Crane came in modern architecture and she took it up. She made it much more theoretical. It was a good course. She's an excellent teacher, an excellent scholar, but I liked the way we had done it. I thought it was very interesting.

And remember the 1-2-3 courses?

Reti: Oh, vaguely.

Jansen: I had done the UCSC campus seminar twice, I think, and then the 1-2-3 courses came. So I did a Cowell course for three units on American campus planning because I realized after teaching the UCSC campus plan that the students and I both needed a wider reference for understanding our campus plan. And by this time, in 1984, a book had come out by Paul Turner, who was architectural professor at Stanford. I knew him pretty well. It's called *Campus: An American Planning Tradition,* and it's on American campus planning and architecture. With that book, I could teach such a course. It was just a matter of getting slides. So I wrote to everybody at the colleges that I wanted to teach and said, "Hey, buddy, can you shoot me a roll or two of slides? I'll pay you." I got Swarthmore, Harvard, Princeton—I had some from Princeton already because I had been at a NEH

seminar; I had some from Yale. I got people at all those places to send me a roll or two of slides and they're in the slide library, I'm pretty sure. We have a good collection.

Then I decided I would do this three-unit course on American campus planning. I got a nice group of students, but they knew absolutely nothing about architecture. They just thought it was buildings to house people. Obviously, I'm exaggerating because some knew this and some knew that. But some said, "Oh, I didn't know buildings had any meaning." Why would you design Gothic Revival, as opposed to brutalism or International Style? Or nowadays, postmodern and everything else. So that made them really think about form and meaning and issues. I felt that was very interesting. So this course *American Campus Planning* became the third iteration of my UCSC campus plan course. The reason I took the UCSC campus plan as my subject is, as I said before, I believe architectural study should start in your own backyard.

And I realized, too, how medieval it is, because the university is a medieval concept. You can't think of the modern world without the Middle Ages. Oxbridge is a product of the 12th and 13th centuries, as is the university in Paris. So it tied in with my interest in the Middle Ages, too.

I always wanted to do a course on monasticism, but I never got to do it. There just wasn't enough time and room in the curriculum. I was always expanding my curriculum. The last year I taught, I taught two new courses.

That was the other thing. When I came up for tenure, I had taught something like nineteen different courses. A lot of them overlapped, but still, you sort of rethink everything. No, I never got to monasticism. I had many of the Brother Cadfael mysteries on CD's and I was

going to show them and ask them how that worked with medieval monasticism. I had this course all drafted in my head. It would have been fun.

But back to teaching about architecture: when I was teaching the intro to architecture and everything, there were a lot of students saying, "Well, I want to be an architect. I'd like to do an individual major because there's nothing here I can do." So I started overseeing those because I wanted to encourage them. Also, I did have a quarter off. I was still a faculty member. I had course relief to draft an architectural studies program, not a B. Arch., because we wouldn't have professional training, but it would be a BA. I wouldn't even call it architecture, because we don't have studio courses in architecture. But it would be a BA focusing on the study of architecture in its broadest senses.

I interviewed a lot of people and I really worked hard at it. I did a, probably a hundred-page draft. I presented it to Keith [Muscutt], who was associate dean, and to Ed Houghton. Keith really liked it. I had people lined up like Frank Galuszka in Art because studio art was important; students would have to take some drawing courses, because that's about observation and eye/hand coordination. Norvid and Elaine Roos in Theater Arts were quite interested. Norvid did set design and Elaine costume design. That's the closest we have to architectural studies on campus. I was always trying to get Environmental Studies involved, which I thought was extremely important, but they were always too busy even to reply. I never got to talk to them much. I said, "If we did get this program, we would probably have a very limited number of students, but would we be able to use these basic environmental studies courses for the major, which means you would have to allow students priority in getting into the courses?" They were already

impacted so they said, "No, the students could enroll like anybody else, but they wouldn't get any priority." That was a downer. And physics was also going to be a part of it.

I was thinking about what you needed when graduating as a liberal arts major to go to architecture school. I talked to people all over the place. I know a lot of architects from my membership in the Society of Architectural Historians. Keith liked it and Ed said, "Yes, now write it up." The university requires all this documentation. You know, I was the only one doing it. I didn't have a secretary or anything. I said, "Fine, give me another quarter of course relief." And Ed said, "No. You're a senior professor and you're expected to do extra work."

Well, I was always being nicked for not producing quantity of publication. Nobody's complained about the quality, but the quantity. I always thought that was backwards. [Chancellor Karl] Pister was one of my favorite chancellors for his views on this, plus he's a really interesting guy. And he was the one responsible for Meyer Drive not being extended right across the meadow, so he's a big favorite of mine. And he appointed me to the Design Advisory Board.

Anyway, at that point, Norvid said, "I think I'm taking retirement." And I decided I wasn't that far from retirement. I could have gone on for many years more, but why? I wasn't going to get promoted anymore because in order to write a book, I had to have the time. In order to have the time, I didn't need a job. My pension was big enough. So then I retired, probably at least two years early, in order to concentrate on my research which I never could do while teaching. And I'm glad I did; I got a lot of work done, going to conferences, giving papers, and publishing articles until my husband developed a serious

illness, which requires a level of care. Since then, I've had to put my research on hold. Moral of story: It's good not to wait too long to do things you really want to do.

But back to the B.A. in Architectural Studies. So basically, I would have had to proceed without much support. And maybe Ed inadvertently made the right decision. Frank Galuszka continued for quite a while before retirement, but I don't know how much energy I would have had. And also, we were hiring a new person in modern architecture. So that would have been helpful, too. That person could have run it. It was Albert Narath. But juniors aren't supposed to run programs.

So, it never happened. But I made it happen for those who wanted to take individual majors and that was stimulating. It was extra work, but not too much. And it was enjoyable. At one point, I did a group individual study. I had six students and we would meet once a week and they would present their ideas and do projects and everything. That worked pretty well. A number of them have gone on to become architects. So, that worked out for them. I occasionally hear from them; that's always very nice.

Reti: Well, that's so great. I'm really glad we talked about this.

Jansen: Oh, yeah. I was very happy about that.

Reti: Well, we should stop for today, Virginia.

A Few Loose Threads

Reti: So today is November 16, Monday, 2020 and this is Irene Reti with the Regional History Project here again with Professor Virginia Jansen to do the third session of our oral history together. We're going to start by doubling back to some of the threads that we

didn't finish with the last interview. The first one of those is that, Virginia, you wanted to tell me about the Miamisburg mound as one of the architectural structures that left a big impression on you as a younger person interested in architecture.

Jansen: Yes, not knowing *yet* I was interested in architecture. But anyway, it's a very large prehistoric mound not very far south of Dayton, Ohio, the city that I grew up in. I can remember how impressive it was. It was very large and they had a series of steps so you could climb to the top. It was big and it wasn't a building, so that made it more interesting in many ways. It was very old, of course, made by prehistoric Indians of Ohio. There were a lot of Indians in Ohio, so that was a strong element of my education. As a child, when we played cowboys and Indians, we would only play Indians, because nobody wanted to play the cowboys. We thought cowboys were too brutish and that Indians were much cooler, which, of course, they were. We even built a tipi, a full-size tipi, out of sheets and we used to play inside that. We had all these poles. My brother researched it and we did it in the right way with some other kids that we played with in the neighborhood.

UCSC Campus Planning

Reti: Okay, great. And then jumping forward, last time we had already dipped into talking about UCSC quite a bit, but one person that we didn't really talk about was President Clark Kerr and his integral relationship with the UCSC campus.

Jansen: Okay. Well, when as part of the state Master Plan for Higher Education, there was planning for three new campuses. Clark Kerr was very much interested in what became the UCSC project. He was perhaps even more central to it than Dean McHenry, because he was the president of the university and McHenry was a professor of political science at UCLA. Everyone knows that they had been roommates at Stanford together.

but I'm not sure how much they had kept in touch in the meantime. But Kerr at some point hired McHenry to come up and work in his office. A lot of people at Berkeley as well—Stephen Pepper, I know, is one that is mentioned—they were all talking about the form that the campuses should take. They felt they should each be different, not just Santa Cruz, what became Santa Cruz, of course, but the other campuses, too.[22]

Of course San Diego was planned as a collegiate university as well, but nobody talks about that. It's so weird to me. Why are we "unique"? What's the matter with San Diego? I've talked to Michael Cowan about that, and other people have mentioned that the San Diego colleges are so much bigger that they lose the idea of the inward-looking, small community, which is in the oral histories, in the documents, that Santa Cruz was meant to have colleges of 250 to a thousand people, whereas I think there may be about two thousand at San Diego. Some people feel that that's too big for what we consider to be the college experience at Santa Cruz. I don't know if that's true or not, because San Diego evidently awards their BA through the college. You don't get a UC San Diego degree, I've heard, I don't know how accurate this is. We don't get a Cowell College degree; we get a UCSC degree, but they get a degree from Revelle College, or whatever college it is. It probably says both because most people would say, "What's Revelle College?"

Reti: Right. That's interesting.

[22] For more of Kerr's involvement in the Master Plan and the planning of UC Santa Cruz see Clark Kerr, *The Gold and the Blue, A Personal Memoir of the University of California* (two volumes).

Jansen: But anyway, I don't quite understand why the legacy or the reputation is so different. It seems like the San Diego colleges do more for their students than our colleges do since Sinsheimer's reorganization.

Anyway, Kerr was fundamental in all of this. He had gone to Swarthmore, so he had had a small college experience. And Swarthmore students do not—well, it's a small campus anyway—but they don't live in colleges; they live in houses. So they do have a kind of community experience in a smaller unit.

In the late '50s, as public universities grew bigger and bigger and bigger, the idea that you needed smaller units was in the air. It wasn't just at the University of California. Rice University in Houston, Texas had been planned for colleges when it was first planned in the early twentieth century, but they were never built. But in the '50s, they built at least one college. I don't know whether there were more or not. I know there was one.

And when I was in college in the early '60s, Morse & Ezra Stiles Colleges at Yale opened. They were designed by [Eero] Saarinen, so of course that made a big hit because Saarinen was a very well-known architect working in the United States at that point. He was born in Finland. Anyway, they were all the rage in architectural circles and that was building in the tradition of the earlier colleges at Yale.

There were two waves of collegiate planning in the United States, or I should say, in a way, North America. The first example that I know of is the University of Toronto and that was a clear borrowing from the English, or even British, we could say, because Saint Andrew's in Scotland uses the collegiate tradition. I don't know if the Toronto collegiate plan came directly from there. I don't know where the threads are. But the next one was the Graduate

College at Princeton and there were also other colleges developed at Princeton. This is all laid out in the exhibition we did.

Reti: In 2015. *An Uncommon Place*?

Jansen: Yes, I did a slideshow of the college tradition, so all of this is in the text of the slideshow.[23] So there was that wave. And then after the '30s there was World War II. And as part of the boom development of higher education after World War II—the Veterans Bill, of course, helped, and so on came the issue of how big can a public university be?

So that's where this idea of smaller units came from. I myself haven't quite figured out where the borders are between a residential college as we have, and other forms of community housing, like houses, which I participated in in my undergraduate education. It was definitely a community unit. It was not an academic unit. It was a residential unit and sometimes there were sports events, one house versus another, and so forth. But there was definitely that community bond through residential houses where I went to college. But that's not a college. There are various ways one can define what a college is. Santa Cruz defines it with an academic component, as well as advising and residential.

Reti: How do some others define it, besides that, or how else could it be defined?

Jansen: Well, the houses at Harvard, for example, do have an academic component, but they're called houses, not colleges. That's a good question. I think it's arbitrary, you know.

---

[23] An Uncommon Place was a multimedia exhibition mounted at the Porter Sesnon Gallery in honor of UCSC's 50th anniversary in the fall of 2015 that "traced decisive moments in the creation of UC Santa Cruz, from the 1950s to the late 1970s." It was curated by emeriti professors James Clifford, Michael Cowan, Virginia Jansen and emeritus campus architect Frank Zwart. Later a digital companion to the exhibition was created and is available at: https://exhibits.library.ucsc.edu/exhibits/show/an-uncommon-place.

You decide how to define it. I like the Santa Cruz definition. Since reorganization, it's changed, but it still does have a lot of the original meaning because there is a provost; there is a structure; and there are academic components even now. I think it's important. But I've gotten off the topic of Clark Kerr. (laughs)

Reti: Well, we were talking just before we started this interview about what would have happened if Clark Kerr had not been fired by Governor Reagan in 1967 and the impact of that historic event on the UCSC campus.[24]

Jansen: I think it is huge, because he was, in my view, the main UC proponent behind UCSC. This was his baby and he would have supported it. And when McHenry asked for things, he probably would have gotten yes more than no. But at the time, the university decided our UCSC system was too expensive, so they weren't supporting it properly. Plus, I really don't know the history of this, I've never researched it, but the idea that you would teach for the college and teach for the board (at the time) and have committee work in the college as well as your board of studies was difficult for a lot of faculty. Personally, I didn't find it so difficult, but I think that's because the way I like to work—and at Santa Cruz I worked this way as well—it responded to the way I was taught at Berkeley, to move toward an interdisciplinary view of my discipline, art history. As graduate students we worked with history professors as well as art history professors. Other people worked with anthropology and religious studies and Asian studies, depending on what particular area of art history you were working in, medieval studies, for my case.

[24] President Clark Kerr was fired by Governor Ronald Reagan on January 20, 1967.

The colleges allowed me to think more broadly, both in my teaching and my research. I feel that my research inflected my teaching; my teaching inflected my research. I can remember the first quarter, I taught Greek art, which I didn't know a whole lot about, but I was interested in it, so I taught it. Nobody had taught it before, I don't think, on campus. I'm sure Jasper often mentioned Greek sculpture, and probably Mary Holmes did, too. And Nan Rosenthal would have as well, upon occasion. But it hadn't been taught as a separate course.

So I was rattling off from what I had taught and what I had read and we were talking about the standing youth male statues. The famous *kouroi*. And one of the students raised his hand and said, "Gee, what would the graveyard have looked like with all these statues standing around?" That just totally blew me away because *nobody* had ever mentioned anything like where these were—I mean, they mentioned these statues were funerary, but that's all, you know? I hadn't really pictured the actual situation they might have been used in because in the '50s and early '60s, art history wasn't really taught that way. It was only later that context became so important. So that almost was an epiphany for me and I started thinking outside the box.

I know when I went to the conferences at Kalamazoo, which is a huge medieval conference every May at Western Michigan University—it was started by a historian who wanted to bring colleagues interested in the Middle Ages to his campus. I don't know how big it is now, but when I stopped going about—oh, I don't know how long ago it was now, at least twenty years, it was like five, six thousand people. Huge. The airplanes were always full. If you didn't get your reservation, you didn't get a seat, you had to drive from Chicago or wherever. But you could go to all these sessions. You could go to history sessions, or music

sessions or whatever, art history sessions. So that also encouraged me. A colleague from England once when he read one of my articles, he said, "Oh, that's the Kalamazoo approach."

And I wrote back and I said, "No, it is also the Kalamazoo approach, but for me it's the UCSC approach."

Reti: (laughs) I like that.

Jansen: And that's true. But I'm getting off again onto another issue. But it's one that we did want to talk about: how the colleges worked and what they meant. I can see for a research scientist that it's a different issue from a humanist. But then, research sciences now are very interdisciplinary. I'm not sure in the '60s they were, either, you know.

Reti: Well, less so. I think there's been more and more of that, more acceptable interdisciplinary fields like environmental studies and marine sciences.

Jansen: And biology. They're quite broad. People are realizing that they need to get out of their narrow boxes because so many things influence everything else.

More on the College System

So I was placed at Crown. They were putting medievalists at Crown. There was the person in French literature, who at that time was Kristine Brightenback**.** Well, then there was Linda Lomperis and eventually Sharon Kinoshita was hired. There was also Marsh Leicester at Crown in literature. Anyway, four of us, Kristine, Marsh, me, and Mark Traugott filled in for history, even though strictly speaking, he's not a historian, is he? I can't remember now what his field is.

Reti: Mark? He was history and sociology, I think.[25]

Jansen: Yeah, that's right. But anyway, with a strong historical background. So, as I previously discussed, we team-taught, the four of us, a course, at Crown and that was really illuminating because I didn't know that much medieval literature and even some of the history texts that Mark brought forth. So that was very important to my teaching and I continued to use some of the material that had come out in the course. It probably was something like the medieval world. I don't know what we called it.

And if you were in a department, you would have to go through all this, "Oh, we can't let you go. We need this, because we need the numbers, and we need," blah, blah, blah. Gary Miles in history and literature (I don't think he was ever in literature, though, but he was a literature historian) and I decided to teach Roman because I knew Roman art. But Roman art, almost more than any other art, depends upon the history. I mean, you just can't talk about Roman art without the history. It changes the form. Every regime changes the form according to its politics, so history and its context are really crucial. I just didn't have a strong background in Roman history. We submitted the course to the Committee on Educational Policy and they said, "Well, how do we count this course? Is it history? Is it art history?" It was all bean counting. You don't want the students to learn more? You want them to get Roman history from *me*? And Gary wanted to know more about the art history. He was using art history in his classes, but he was doing it the way I was doing history. So we both needed each other.

[25] Mark Traugott was a professor of history but was also affiliated with the sociology department. See: https://history.ucsc.edu/faculty/profiles/emeriti.php?uid=traugott

Gary and I talked to each other and we said okay, let the students decide. They can enroll as history or they can enroll as art history. And that's how the numbers will work. It turned out a lot of them were history students who enrolled in the course as art history, because then they could count it as their outside course (laughter). We did it three times and then Gary felt he didn't have enough time for the history in ten weeks that he wanted to teach because I was taking half the lectures, of course. That was sad for me, but I had that background at that point.

After reorganization, if you wanted to team-teach with someone outside your department it was difficult. So I'm totally opposed to disciplines. (laughs) I mean, it's probably totally impractical, but if I ran the campus—well, you couldn't get it through, of course—but I would say each student should make up their own major and take the courses that fit the pattern they see that would make sense for their lives. Of course that's asking a lot of a student. One could still have the regular patterns for the students who don't want to do that. I know we have independent studies, but it's hard and cumbersome for the students to do an independent study. Not all faculty want or have the time to do them either.

Reti: So, when reorganization happened n 1978-'79, what was your feeling about that change?

Jansen: Doom and gloom. (laughter) I thought it was horrible. First of all, I was forced to move from Crown, which I very much liked. I liked all the people at Crown. As I previously mentioned, Jake Michaelson's office was across from mine, and I enjoyed talking to someone who came from completely different field of study from me, and the various other people. When we'd have college events, the scientists would, some of them,

would appear. It was wonderful getting to know Ed Landesman, for example.[26] There were inaugural lectures that faculty used to give. Ed gave a lecture. It could have been the inaugural lecture when you became full professor. They cut those out the year before I became full professor, so I never gave one. But anyway, he said, "Why'd you come to this?"

I said, "Well, I thought it might be interesting." It was something about how you can't prove zero, but you can't not prove zero. I said, "I even used the point in an article I wrote." And I did. He was flabbergasted. Again, it showed me a different way of attacking the problem, that I probably wouldn't have thought about. And the pre-publication reader said this was an exemplary article because I had shown that you couldn't prove what I was trying to argue wasn't true. You couldn't really prove it was true, but you couldn't prove it wasn't true, either. Things like that I thought were really exciting.

And in my case, I didn't feel that the workload was that much extra. It was a little extra. I mean, as I mentioned, I was on the provost search committee for Sig Puknat, so that was extra work.

Reti: Right.

Jansen: After art history became separate, there was lot more work. I might have felt, too, that the college/board workload wasn't too onerous because I was part of the Art Board rather than a separate art history unit, so there was less work the board. I don't know. I was always busy. What can I say?

---

[26] See Irene Reti, Interviewer and Editor, *In the Beginning… and Beyond: Edward M. Landesman: Professor of Mathematics, UC Santa Cruz.* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2016). Available in full text at: https://library.ucsc.edu/landesman.

Reti: So, this is a big question, but do you think there would have been a sustainable path forward for UCSC if it would have kept the college system as it existed before reorganization intact? In other words, could we have done without reorganization and survived?

Jansen: If Clark Kerr had been there, yes. Without Clark Kerr, I don't know. That would have been difficult. I asked [Dean] McHenry. I said, "You know, obviously the colleges are going to be more expensive than a traditional single structure, if you have all these extra structures." He said he never meant for UC to pay for them. The colleges were to be funded by endowments.

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: And he was in the process of, he said, of getting endowments for all the colleges. I don't really know the full background of the period when he resigned, the causes and so on. Probably was some fight with the UC administration. I don't know.[27]

When he went, and Kerr was gone, UC was raising their hegemonic whip against Santa Cruz because people saw us as an undergraduate campus, which we never were. We always had graduate programs. Given it's UC, I think you have to have research programs, but, probably with adjustments. The planners said of the collegiate plan, "It is recognized that the plan has to be flexible, so that possible changes in educational concept and other presently unforeseeable factors can be accommodated, if need be."[28] Anything that is

[27] See the three-volume oral history, *Dean E. McHenry 1910-1988*, at: https://library.ucsc.edu/reg-hist/mchenry.
[28] The 1963 Long Range Development Plan can be found at McHenry Library:

alive, of course, has to change and develop. To me, reorganization was too strong. But you talk to some of the scientists who were breathing a breath of fresh air when Sinsheimer came in, which I wasn't. Plus, I didn't want to go to Porter. I'm a history person more than I'm an art person. So it didn't work for me. I've already discussed the value of the colleges for my multi-disciplinary teaching which affected my research outlook as well, but I was untenured, so I sort of had to go where I was supposed to.

Reti: In the oral history I did with her a number of years ago, Helene Moglen referred to the colleges as UCSC's architectural destiny, that in a sense the architecture of the colleges would always embody that original ideal of the UCSC campus. It would continue to leave that ideal of the colleges alive. And now we're skipping ahead, of course, to much more recent times. But what do you think? Do you think that that holds?

Jansen: I really don't know what's happening now. I'm not that much in touch. But it seems to me that at least some of the colleges are still strong. They give student grants. They have programs. I have been talking a little bit with one of my former students, Matt Waxman, who's a very strong proponent of colleges. And he's much more articulate about the role of our colleges than I am. But so far we haven't been able to push forward on our idea of trying to do something to explain and give support to the collegiate system. One thing that I thought the two of us would do, and anybody else who wanted to join us, is to go talk to the chancellor and convince her of the viability of the colleges. Because I don't think she sees the colleges as important. She's made a couple of statements in meetings

---

Long Range Development Plan [for the] University of California, Santa Cruz, John Carl Warnecke and Associates and UCSC Campus Planning Committee, 1963 (LD781.S4 W32) (p. 11) The 1963 Long Range Development Plan can be found at McHenry Library. It is also available online at: https://lrdp.ucsc.edu/2021/files/1963lrdp_lowres.pdf.

I've been in that suggest that, or even say that. And I think it would be a great shame—a huge lost opportunity—to lose this fascinating ideal for education. I think that breaking up a large campus into much more personal units is brilliant for better education. People who haven't tried it just don't understand all its ramifications. When I ate lunch in a coffee shop I had conversation with students with some frequency; I can't recall that ever happened in a dining hall but once. I do think that with some adjustments the collegiate plan would work, even now, and that's what Matt Waxman and I want to do one day. I hope we find the time to try.

I'm also extremely opposed to the idea that each campus at UC has to be similar. Karl Pister was an excellent chancellor for us. He is a magnificent person, and intelligent. I wish he could have been chancellor longer because he would be willing to stand up to the UC administration. I don't know if anyone can get through to it, you know? Just look what happened in regard to the new proposed housing development. Opposing voices have been stifled.[29] I know there are people at Santa Cruz who don't want the UC system to change on our campus, either. They like the UC system. But I think there needs to be flexibility. And I was reading about—

Reti: I'm sorry, I'm not following you. The UC system. What do you mean by that?

Jansen: Well, the research institution, publish or perish, you know, and your service doesn't count much, your teaching really doesn't count much, either. They claim it's equal to research, but it's not. All the time I spent extra with students who were flunking to try

[29] This is also true of the 2020-21 LRDP in process.—comment added by Virginia Jansen during the editing phase of this project. The draft 2021 LRDP plan was released for comment in January 2021. See: https://lrdp.ucsc.edu/2021/info.html

to get them through my courses, tutoring them in my office hours—of course I didn't get any credit for that. And of course it took away from my getting home earlier and maybe getting to research or something like that. I never could do research, while I was teaching. It just didn't happen. There was just too much to do and think about. I need large blocks of time to manage the huge amount of information and to think through what the evidence really means. Historical research differs from other types. I found it easy to write once I had all the information I could get my hands on, but getting the information, whether published, archival, or physical, demanded sizeable blocks of time (and often travel to the examined sites and archives, much was not online in my day and still isn't and how do you put a building online anyway: a few general photos isn't enough), which I never had during periods of teaching, especially since grading and writing narrative evaluations lasted substantially into the "vacation" period. The last added three to four weeks to most quarters, even with T.A.'s since I read every evaluation and asked them to make changes to improve the text, often condensing it.

I talked to somebody that was running for city council here in Monte Sereno once and he asked me what I did. And he said, "Oh, I hear it's such an easy lot, teaching."

I said, "What?!" With a shriek.

Reti: (laughs) Who have you been talking to?

Jansen: And he said, "Well, all my friends in computer sciences said you hardly have to spend any time at all." Well, if you're teaching basic computer science, I suppose you don't have to think much about it. But if you're teaching basic history—art history or history—the interpretation of the older periods is always changing. And there's so much published

nowadays, you can't keep up to date, no matter what you do. But you try to do as much as you can. I had a slide list when I taught. I generally didn't have notes. I didn't ever write much down from what I had read, except maybe a quotation. But I had my slide list, which is an outline for a course. I once, when I was in a hurry, tried to reuse it and put the slides in the same order. God, that was the dullest, deadest lecture I ever gave. I realized that every time that I gave a class, it was a live performance and it had to find its own flow and it always had a different order. It just didn't work to do it the same way. My ideas came up differently.

And I suppose, too, as we ended up in art history when we had enough people to make a department, that we had essentially a two-year curriculum. So most of the courses, except for the lower-division courses which generally were taught every year, I would teach on a two-year or, in my case, mainly a three-year cycle. If you did a course every year, you would remember it better. But when you do it once every two, three years, then it's different.

We could talk more about the collegiate organization. I think there would be a way to make it happen, but the UC system strangles you. And I think it's wrong. I gave a lecture at Berkeley for the group that George Blumenthal is now heading up, as I found out recently.

Reti: The Center for Studies in Higher Education.[30]

Jansen: Yes.

[30] After his retirement as chancellor of UC Santa Cruz, George Blumenthal became director of the Center for Studies in Higher Education. See: https://cshe.berkeley.edu.

Jansen: They asked me to come speak on the UCSC collegiate idea. So I did, right? I said, "I don't understand why a campus that was founded with different thinking, why that can't survive in the UC system."

And one of the faculty—I mean, faculty are supposed to be intelligent—said, "Well why should *you* be different?" I couldn't even answer the question, I was so dumbfounded. After I had just given this whole lecture on the value of the collegiate system and so on.

Reti: Wow.

Jansen: Yes. And I'm thinking, this is Berkeley. Berkeley has all the publicity. Berkeley has all the resources, practically. And they're jealous of Santa Cruz being different? I mean, really!

Reti: Interesting.

Jansen: I know. So, that made me realize what a—I was going to say a brick wall. Let me refer instead to an Inka masonry wall that UCSC is up against.

Reti: (laughs) Uh-huh.

Jansen: I mean, to me, it's just dumb. But I'm not in charge. And of course I'm an idealist. It goes without saying, right?

"Concrete is very ecological": The Architecture of the UCSC Campus

Reti: Some people have said that the architecture of UCSC is rather like a democratized country club. Or George Von der Muhll, who I interviewed many years ago, said he thought of it as an impoverished country club, which I thought was a better description.[31]

Jansen: Yeah, I agree with George. He was smart.

Reti: Yes, a really smart man. I was reading through the notes you sent me from the 2015 slideshow that you did for *An Uncommon Place*. You talk about the ways in which the architecture is partially based on Sea Ranch.

Jansen: Yes. Well, the Northern California woodsy tradition.

Reti: Right. Some people might say that it's a rather sort of elite country club in the woods, or a retreat from the world. And there are people who see that as anti-democratic in terms of public higher education. How would you respond to that?

Jansen: The idea of retreating from the world was important in earlier college design, according to the research in Paul Turner's book. I'm sure it was still somewhat current in the 50s when the new campuses were planned. To enjoy nature is somewhat of a retreat from an urbanized world, but I don't consider that a bad thing. And I think if you admit qualified people to a university, it doesn't have to be elite. But you would have to admit people that may not have had a full education because their high schools are deficient. Elitism as we know begins really even before birth. And that's why there is affirmative

[31] See *UC Santa Cruz in the Mid-1970s: A Time of Transition, Volume II, Professor George Von der Muhll* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2015). Available in full text at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6dj7r50d.

action. I'm not sure, however, that we give enough support once students are here. That was one reason I would work with students who flunked so they could take an oral exam with me the following quarter and then pass the course. Those that did this did pass, because they learned the material, given a second chance. Often they had to work extra hours in order to support themselves, or something, and just couldn't fit all the learning required into the quarter, which is too short, in my opinion; a few more weeks are needed.

But the people you mentioned above are really talking about the people and programs of our campus, which doesn't have to do with colleges. In terms of the architecture, there are a lot of woodsy, inexpensive, (or there used to be) homes in the Santa Cruz Mountains, that unfortunately burn easily.[32] And they're certainly not elite. They're cabins. But of course the colleges cannot be built like the Redwood Building, the original bookstore, or even the original Whole Earth restaurant, which exemplify the woodsy tradition. Some *are* like the architecture of Pasatiempo because the same architects were involved. And UCSC's original architecture is perhaps a kind of country club in appearance, well, with the white walls and the red tile roofs, it is a kind of simplified, modern interpretation of the Mission style—well, I'm not sure if it's more simplified than missions. But the white walls and the red tile roofs are of the period that UCSC was designed in. But of course the architecture of the campus now isn't built that way.

Reti: Right. And I think a lot of people don't really understand. I remember asking Frank Zwart this when I interviewed him: Why do we have to have these massive brutalism

[32] Here Jansen was making a reference to the CZU Lightning Complex fire, which destroyed many homes in the Santa Cruz Mountains just a couple of months before this interview was recorded.—Editor

concrete structures? Why can't we just have lots of little woodsy redwood buildings? Is that because you just can't make a giant library out of redwood?

Jansen: Well, first of all, it's the fire danger. You've got to go to the building codes and I don't think you can build large buildings for large numbers of students with wood. And wood these days is unecological, to some extent, on a big scale. Concrete, of course, is very ecological. It is of the earth. You can do anything, practically, with concrete. I don't mind concrete. I rather like it, myself. You could color concrete. It doesn't have to be dismal gray all the time. Applied Sciences is actually quite an attractive building.

Reti: I like that one.

Jansen: You were asking me about which are my favorite and least favorite buildings. And of course one of my favorites is Cowell, naturally. But that's partly the siting. Well, it's the way the spaces flow. Stevenson is the same. But Stevenson's stucco and Cowell is concrete. And with the wood grain of the formwork showing through the white paint, that makes it much more beautiful. I like the texture of the walls a lot.

Reti: In Cowell?

Jansen: Yes. But in terms of buildings I don't like, I was going through all these buildings. Every one has attractive character. Like, I taught in Applied Sciences, Appl Sci, as we used to call it, for a long time. The balconies are great, and the way you go down the stairwell outside and you're in the trees. The stain, the sort of black stain on the gray concrete I agree is not so attractive. It's not attractive. And Science Hill, of course, the outdoor spaces of the center flow of the plaza and the stairs are magnificent. It's just

wonderful to wander around there. So actually, I couldn't think of any building that didn't have redeeming features. It's true I am not a fan of Sinsheimer Labs, though.

There was a discussion about College Eight on the Campus Physical Planning Committee in the 1980s. It was a big committee. That was one of the problems. It was about twenty-five people. It's hard to have a meeting with twenty-five people around the table. (laughter) That's one reason it went out of existence and the Design Advisory Board came into existence. But there were several people on that committee that thought it would have been better *not* to move the road to make extra space for College Eight, now Rachel Carson College, and that allowed it to be too spread out, I think. If it were tighter, I think it would have been more successful. But, again, walking through the spaces is very nice. Also, Cathy Simon, the lead architect, had done Baskin Studios and her firm was extremely highly regarded as having designed wonderful spaces for artists. It was in a good site, too. Siting, of course, helps. Cathy told me about all the budget cuts which denuded the architecture at College Eight. If would have looked different if all the planned trellises had been there. Probably some re-designing could have helped, but that would have cost more. I always said, there's a hidden architect on every project: Mr. Budget. In the end, however, the architecture is rather trendy, too much like Seaside, Florida, as has been pointed out. That's not the best look for here.

People criticize College Nine and Ten as a mining camp, or industrial-looking. That's because it uses metal as an exterior facing. But I think the buildings are nicely designed, and I enjoy them a lot. I like metal.

Again, the architects that worked here, by and large, paid attention to the views, whether it be a view of a redwood tree smack in front of your window, or a distant view of going down the hill and looking out at the bay.

It's true, Porter could have done more with views. But then the architect understood that the colleges were supposed to be inward-looking to create a community. Maybe it wasn't the best decision not to emphasize views that looked outwards, but the architecture reflected the ideas that the architect was trying to establish within the UCSC stipulation of what a college was. And the spaces at Porter, the flow, again, is very nice.

The spaces at Stevenson are among my favorite. I think if it had been in concrete, it would look better. I really want to give kudos to Joe Esherick, whose firm did Stevenson.[33] He told me that when Stevenson was plotted out with stakes and string on the ground, he realized how many trees would be cut down because they had used a grid plan. Of course, our campus lands don't respond very well to grid plans, which is one reason our campus is so different—so unique and so beautiful; it's because it's not a grid plan. When Esherick saw that, he started moving the stakes around and he saved probably hundreds of trees. So that's a good story, I think, too.

Reti: What about Oakes?

Jansen: I like Oakes. I like those architects. They're from Berkeley. I knew them when I was at Berkeley, not personally, but I knew of their work. I like Oakes. I don't know it as well, though. But I like the shingle style and the relationship of buildings to terrain.

[33] Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis [EHDD]. See: https://www.ehdd.com.

Reti: And you like Crown?

Jansen: Yeah, pretty well. It's not my favorite. But it's okay. Again, the way that one moves through the spaces is good. I find this so also at Stevenson and Merrill.

Reti: Well, that's interesting. It does lead us into what you mentioned just briefly before, the two committees that you served on, the first being the Campus Physical Planning Committee that had twenty-five people on it; from 1986 to 1993, you served on that. And then you served on the Design Advisory Board from 1993 to—

Jansen: Till I retired in 2006.

Reti: So tell me about that.

Jansen: Yes, I shouldn't have given that up. But I felt when I was retired, I should retire from the committee and that the campus should appoint someone who was still working on campus. That committee was amusing and very interesting.

Reti: So tell me about that. How did you end up being on the first committee?

Jansen: Well, both Reyner Banham and I were because we had architectural expertise. And a graduate student that worked with both Banham and me, but principally with Banham, Steve Rugare, was on it, too, as the graduate student rep. He was studying architectural history. So we were the three with architectural expertise from the campus. Joe Esherick also was on it, as the professional. I can't remember who all was on it. I think

Michael Cowan was on it.[34] Anyway, a lot of people were on it. Vice Chancellor Wendell Brase was the head of the committee, the staff head. It was just so big. Everybody wanted to talk, so it was hard to have a good discussion, because there were too many voices.

Teaching California Architecture

As I've always said, architecture begins in your backyard, or your neighborhood, I should say. So one of the first courses I taught when I came was *California Architecture*. And I loved teaching it. That was quite a course. I think I mentioned this, when Reyner Banham came, he had written books on the subject, so I agreed to his teaching the course. I didn't want to give it up, but he obviously could teach it better than I could.

Reti: Did you study the campus as part of that?

Jansen: Yes. One of my students called it the home tour course, because every other Thursday we had an all-day field trip. It was quite something. Why study something from books and slides when you can go there and look at, experience, it, see its context? In those days, we could rent a bus from the campus. I had five field trips. One to Santa Cruz, where we went to see Bill Turnbull's McElrath House. [Professor of Sociology] Dennis McElrath and his wife were very involved with UCSC. We went to some Victorians and a bungalow court. One tour went to Berkeley, which was quite successful. I spent a lot of time in arranging access to buildings. And we did a peninsula tour. Dennis McElrath knew an architect who worked on the peninsula, so he met us and showed us a couple of his

[34] See Irene Reti, Interviewer and Editor, *"It Became My Case Study": Professor Michael Cowan's Four Decades at UC Santa Cruz* (Regional History Project, UC Santa Cruz Library, 2013). Available in full text at https://library.ucsc.edu/reg-hist/it-became-my-case-study-professor-michael-cowans-four-decades-at-uc-santa-cruz.

houses. They were fabulous. If they had used some of his ideas, there wouldn't be so many homes burned down. He had a sprinkler system on the roof, which was more for cooling, but you put that thing on when a fire is raging, and your whole house is going to be sopping wet. So you stand a chance. It is terrible on the windows, because water would stream down the windows and the glass. (laughter)

But anyway, it was really interesting. We went to Stanford on that tour. And then one to San Francisco. That was the only one where I couldn't find anybody who would let us in their house. But there are a lot of buildings to see in San Francisco. We were having lunch on the top of Russian Hill, which is one of my favorite spots in San Francisco, with the oldest remaining houses in San Francisco. There are three of them together in the shingle style. And this man came up and said in a friendly way, "Oh, who are you? What are you doing?" I explained what we were doing. And he said, "Well, I live in the Willis Polk house right there from 1892. Would you like to see it?"

Reti: Oh, fantastic.

Jansen: I said, "Oh, yeah, yeah. I think we would. Wouldn't we, class?" (laughter) So we got inside this wonderful Willis Polk house, this fabulous shingle style late nineteenth century. So it all worked out.

Yeah, that was a really enjoyable class. I would have liked to repeat it, but it was a lot of work. I had something like fifty-five students sign up, which was huge in those days. And when they found out they had to give every other Thursday to the class, a lot of them couldn't do it. So it ended up being about twenty-six students, which was a really nice number.

Reti: For the bus, right?

I also sponsored a public lecture series on Monday evenings. I don't know how I or the students managed! The speakers were rather a who's who of California architecture: Sally Woodbidge, Sara Boutelle, Dan Gregory, Esther McCoy, and William Turnbull.

I often engaged speakers for a public lecture in my classes. I thought hearing a different voice made the material more interesting. And in the early years, I offered a field trip in relevant classes, including Grace Cathedral and other Gothic Revival churches in San Francisco as well as manuscript visits to the Bancroft Library (mainly facsimiles but also a few real medieval manuscripts as well) until we built up our own facsimile collection here. In the end, students ended up not having enough time to devote a whole day to field trips so I stopped them.

The Campus Physical Planning Committee and the Design Advisory Board

Reti: So, this committee, who was it reporting to? Was it advisory to the chancellor?

Jansen: The physical planning, the first one?

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: Well, Wendell Brase was the vice-chancellor, so it reported to him, and he reported to the chancellor.

Reti: So this would have been the era of Sinsheimer into Pister, I believe? So it was right as the campus was starting to grow again.

Jansen: I think it broke up when Pister came or something because I remember a meeting with Pister when Design Advisory Board was formed.

Reti: Okay. Okay.

Jansen: Because I remember—I know, it *was* still in existence because we were meeting with it, and Pister was saying it was unworkable and so on, or somebody was saying that. The idea of the Design Advisory Board had already been suggested. I don't know by whom or what, maybe Frank Zwart, maybe other people on the committee because I was pretty junior at that point. I had just been tenured.

Reti: 1986 to 1993 is what your CV said.

Jansen: Oh, okay.

Reti: And then DAB started in 1992.

Jansen: So, Pister must have come like in '92, '93.[35]

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: Because he was new when the DAB started.

Reti: It would have started under Sinsheimer and then gone in through Stevens and then in Pister's area. So that was the period when—

Jansen: There wasn't much building.

[35] Chancellor Karl Pister arrived in 1991. See Randall Jarrell, Interviewer and Editor, *Karl S. Pister: UCSC Chancellorship, 1991-1996* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2000) Available in full text at: https://library.ucsc.edu/reg-hist/pister.

Reti: Well, the building famine was over and we were getting more enrollment starting in '86. The campus was starting to grow again. There had been that long period when almost nothing was built.

Jansen: That's right.

Reti: That would have been the period where Sinsheimer Labs was built.

Jansen: Yes. I think so.

Reti: What I'm interested in, and it doesn't have to be for the committee, it could be the Design Advisory Board, but how would you review and give input on these campus planning architectural projects over the years. How did that work?

Jansen: I don't think that Physical Planning Committee did any of that. I remember we discussed the siting of the Student Center. That was a big one. But I don't think we did anything with the plans. We did siting issues and we had a big discussion on where the Student Center should be. Some thought it should be over in the plaza area. But they wanted to have more weight in the west side. So that's why the Student Center ended up where it did. Actually, the Committee voted against the west site for the student center but for the plaza site by the Bookstore. Then Wendell Brase said that he would recommend against building the Student Center. Many were horrified because a student center had been voted on in a student vote and Brase said that there wasn't enough money to make a site switch. So a re-vote was taken. Some of us protested such strong-arm tactics, but Wendell got his way. So you can see how such a committee might work, or not work. You can also see how the wonderful Student Center building no longer serves as the

Student Center, showing how the original vote was the correct one. But at least we got this nice clubhouse-style building by Fernau + Hartman for a significant site on the campus.

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: But the Design Advisory Board was something altogether different because it was composed of three appointed architects, professional architects and a campus representative, with the ex-officio head, the Campus Architect Frank Zwart. The other committee was composed mainly of campus members, and it didn't have any design professionalism, really, except for Joe Esherick. He definitely had the chancellor's ear. I don't remember exactly how I know that, but I know that. There was no doubt about that. And the chancellor wanted to know what Joe Esherick thought and it was good for him or her to hear what the campus people said. But the discussion was more about campus ideas than professional architectural and planning ideas.

When the Design Advisory Board was started, it was a professional review committee, but advisory, because they couldn't say this is how it should be. They could only advise, which is why a few not-so-good decisions were made. But never mind. (laughter) That's my opinion. Probably Frank's, too. But Frank has broader views than I do, I think.

All alterations to the physical environment had to go through DAB, discussions about siting and the value. And whoever was in charge, like the building committee and the project manager from the planning office, Frank Zwart's office, would be there, or often, Student Housing, then I think Sue Matthews often came. They would present the project and they'd say why it's needed and why this idea is important, or here are alternative ideas, here are the pros and cons. Then they would leave the room and the committee, the

board, would discuss it. And then whoever's chair for the day would render the opinion when the people came back with—fix this, fix that, this is good, keep this, and so on. Then they'd have to come back for another review, and sometimes for a third review, depending.

I remember the parking garage. I think we have the best parking garage in the world, perhaps. But the project came in as a kind of typical urban planning garage with tearing out a lot of trees.

Reti: Oh, really?

Jansen: Yes. The architect, Watry Design, was a specialist in parking garages, if you can believe such a thing. (laughter) He was a really good person; he listened and thought. He was a nice person. DAB was quite harsh on him. He said, "You know I understand this is in a very different situation from what I'm used to working." He worked with Chuck Davis and I think probably David Rinehart, to modify his plan. He came up with a completely revamped idea and it worked out really well. That's one of the times where DAB played a really important role and created something quite spectacular for a parking garage.[36]

Reti: Yes, it's quite beautiful. I was just in there a few days ago, actually.

Jansen: Yeah, it's satisfying.

Reti: It was raining and it was so beautiful being up in those trees and looking at everything. Gosh.

[36] For more on the design of the Core West Parking Structure see Frank Zwart's oral history at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3nf9m5pr.

Jansen: And you hardly notice it's there. That's why it's fantastic. Who would have thought that we'd have such a discussion about a parking garage. This is why the design is amazing. When one thinks through a problem in tandem with the context, one can come up with stellar work. That's the triumph of architecture.

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: But it would have been just a parking garage block on that corner without DAB. And also, DAB was less enthusiastic about Ranch View Terrace. We thought of alternative names. Richard Fernau always called it Academic Bluff.

Reti: (laughs) That's really good.

Jansen: Oh, I know. Well, we had a lot of fun on that committee, because everyone had a good sense of humor. And the three of them worked so well together. It was David Rinehart from down south, he had worked under the famous architect Louis Kahn, who had done Salk Institute. He had been very involved with the Salk. And Richard Fernau, who is a UCSC alum and did our Student Center and also restored the Hay Barn.[37] And Tito Patri, who is a San Francisco landscape architect, imbued with northern Californian Bay Area values. It was very important to have a landscape architect as well as the building architects, especially since a landscape architect on the original campus planning committee, Tommy Church, was probably responsible for the decision to move the campus buildings to the tree line in order to retain the open meadow and the view of

[37] Richard Fernau graduated from UCSC in philosophy in 1969. He redesigned the 150-year-old Hay Barn at UCSC in 2017. See: https://www.fernauhartman.com. Fernau is also one of the students interviewed by the Regional History Project for the Student Interviews 1969 oral history. See: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3h0818t2.

Monterey Bay. Tito knew the campus, or got to know the campus. He was superb. They were all superb, just incredible people. And it was such a pleasure working with them. I learned so much about architecture just listening. I was the odd person out because I wasn't a professional in architecture. I'm a historian. Plus, I'm not even in modern, you know. It would have helped if I had been in modern, though I'd always paid attention to modern architecture, so I had pretty good knowledge. But I certainly didn't know anything about structure and planning and stuff like that. So I learned a lot.

Reti: How do you feel that you contributed to the committee?

Jansen: Well, I was sort of the campus rep. I wasn't ideal, but there was nobody else who knew more than I did. And I knew the history, because I had already been teaching about the campus—first of all I started out teaching the UCSC campus plan. It was a seminar and students would pick a topic and write a report, and use the documents in Special Collections, sometimes use the archives down at Physical Planning & Construction, and use the library resources as well as their own eyes and interviews and so on. Those reports were all filed in Special Collections.[38] Some of the grammar and the English isn't very good, but I thought it was important to let them know that these reports were going to live on after the course.

Then the course got really tiny. Once I only had four people interested. Originally, it had started out with about twenty people. And at that point, it was my turn to do a 1-2-3 course, a college course and I did a three-unit on campus architecture in general. I used Paul Turner's wonderful book on American campuses that I mentioned earlier. Without

[38] See Student Papers about the University of California, Santa Cruz campus at Special Collections: LD781.S53 S7 1992).

that book, I could never have taught a campus course beyond UCSC, but he had it all out in the book, so it wasn't hard. In the three-unit course, we read a chapter every week and discussed it. I think maybe two out of the twenty students had studied any architecture. I mentioned this, I think, last time, that they had no idea that form had meaning.

Reti: Right. So you were starting with students who had no background at all.

Jansen: Right. And so that's when I decided I needed to teach an introduction to architecture. That was a T course when we had a revision of the GE requirements. A T course was a topical course and it was supposed to encompass more than one disciplinary area. And with architecture, you can't avoid it, so it was easy to make it a T course.

Reti: Was the DAB involved with the 2005 plan?

Jansen: Probably, but I don't remember anything about it. In the last years before I retired, there wasn't much building action on the campus, so we didn't meet too often. Certainly it would have had to come in front of DAB. But I don't remember, to tell you the truth. I have never read the 2005 Long Range Development Plan. I don't know why I haven't. Probably because I knew I was retiring and I wanted to focus on my medieval research.

Reti: Okay. What about earlier versions of the plans?

Jansen: Oh, yes. I remember being involved in those, but it seems to me that was a separate committee. Maybe not. Yes, I definitely remember being involved in those. But I can't remember if it was through DAB or what.

Reti: That's okay. Were there other projects that were particularly controversial or exciting that you remember from the DAB period?

Jansen: I remember the 1993 study by Richard Bender, Professor of Architecture from Berkeley. It was an excellent study and presented useful, intelligent ideas for the campus. Unfortunately not enough attention was paid to it. A shame. It would help the campus, particularly now.

I also recall that Science Hill and the Science Library were exciting.

Reti: The "new" Science Library? It's not new anymore, right? (laughs)

Jansen: No. It's not exactly a science library anymore, either.

Reti: No. It's a Science and Engineering library technically, yes.

Jansen: I meant it's been denuded of many of its collections and I think turned into more of a study hall. I often get books on geographical topics there, so I hope those books haven't gone to the furnace. I think Sinsheimer 3 came up, too, I know we had a lot of discussion with Sinsheimer 1, 2 and 3, and how 3 worked in terms of site planning and context with the older buildings and so on. Nothing particularly stands out, per se. Of the new [McHenry] Library, we had very much discussion on the addition to the library.

Reti: What was the nature of that discussion?

Jansen: Well, how it was going to fit the old building, how it was sited, how the placement worked with the location.

And the Black Box Theater. We talked a lot about that, and where it would go and so on, and the relationship to the theater arts building and Baskin Studios. That was a big one. I lost the thread you asked me, and I went off on a tangent.

Reti: Well, you started talking about the McHenry Library renovation.

Jansen: Thank you. The first plan did not make use of the south façade. It was rather closed. And the architect said, "This is a good view; the upper floors will see the bay," and so completely changed that.[39]

Reti: That's fantastic. All those porches out there and everything.

Jansen: Yes. I know there was a lot of discussion on those and the plaza area that was developed, and so on.

Reti: So as time went on, of course we have increasing tensions about growth.

Jansen: Yes.

Reti: How do you think that the original ideals of UCSC's campus planning and architecture began to interact with those tensions around growth?

Jansen: Well, if the campus had been built out as originally planned, frankly, I think it would have been a disaster.

Reti: Really?

[39] See https://bora.co/project/mchenry-library-expansion-and-renovation/.

Jansen: (laughs) Yeah, I don't think it would have looked so good. A 27,500-student campus that would have filled up almost the entire site.

Reti: And how many colleges? It was going to be something like twenty colleges.

Jansen: Yes, and research institutes and professional buildings and so on and so forth. Yeah. And there was originally even a stadium in the lower quarry.

Reti: Really? I had no idea.

Jansen: Well, you know, a UC campus, a football team, right? But that went out quickly. I think McHenry put his big foot on that one.

Reti: (laughs) I have never heard that. That's fascinating.

Jansen: Oh, well look at the '63 plan.[40] You'll see it down there. So I think it came out better, see? (laughs) Because there'd be building in the meadow, too, not *the* Great Meadow, but there would have been some building. I think it's better the way it is now. I think it's wonderful that we have these open spaces. It's what makes the campus the campus.

Reti: Did you feel that the Design Advisory Board was having to hold the line, or be the guardians of that preservation of the meadow and things like that?

Jansen: Yes. I think they would do that and they did do that. They don't start, however, from a certain position but they did know the campus history and they look at the site,

[40] For extensive resources on the planning of UCSC see the *Seeds of Something Different* website at: https://exhibits.library.ucsc.edu/exhibits/show/seeds/home/seeds-explore/chapter-three.

planning, and building with their keen and sensitive as well as sensible architect's eye. They work from what they thought made the best sense of the problem. They are highly intelligent and skilled and have the best results for the campus at heart. The decision not to extend Meyer Drive, however, was pre-DAB.

Reti: Yes.

Jansen: Because that's one of the first things Pister did. I remember going to him with a couple other faculty and begging him not to extend it. A lot of people had talked to him. I was reading in *Seeds* things that he had said, that once he walked the campus, no way was he going to allow that. So I guess he didn't need a lot of persuading, but maybe just banked it as paying attention to opinion.

Reti: Right, right.

Jansen: David Rinehart is no longer on the Design Advisory Board. He retired. But Tito Patri and Richard Fernau still are on it. I don't know the new person. But they understand that this is an amazing campus and its values are important to be upheld. Because otherwise, you don't have an amazing campus. You have a partly amazing campus or something like that. I think they think from the point of view of good architecture, which means these days, context and the built environment. It doesn't mean just a building, though technically the responsibility of DAB extends to something like ten feet beyond the wall of the building and other than that, it belongs to the landscape resources of the Physical Planning & Construction department, which has a different name at this point.

I do think it's not good that Frank Zwart's department, and it was also John Barnes's after Frank, does not have the power that it used to have. It's been demoted to a kind of

handmaiden of vice chancellors who do not have a strong background in the built environment, especially as it exists in Northern California. This is not a Southern California landscape and this is not an urban landscape. That needs to be understood and it isn't anymore. That's one of my worries about the chancellor. And it has been our worries about past chancellors, too, like M.R.C. Greenwood, when Ranch View Terrace was built. Nobody can be conversant with everything in the world, but you need people who can advise the chancellor who are knowledgeable in the areas, and at this time, no one in power understands architectural value in the context of our completely amazing landscape. This site is so extraordinary that it needs strong and sensitive stewardship.

This is a very special campus. I have traveled around the world looking at campuses. I've been in Australia. I've been to Canberra. I've been to Melbourne. I've been in Germany. I've been to the University of Constance. I know England very well, because my research centers on Germany and England. There's nothing like it, and there cannot be anything like it, because the original site is so different. Anybody who comes here, their breath is taken away. I have escorted lots and lots of visiting friends of mine around the campus, and everyone is incredibly impressed, just an air of unbelievability. It's a *magical* place and it can't be treated as an ordinary place. (laughs) I can get off the soapbox now.

Reti: No, that's wonderful. More, more. (laughs) It's really important.

Jansen: But that's why the college system is important, too, because the building sites are not easy. They're horribly difficult often enough. In some ways, maybe it wasn't a good decision to build the main campus where they did, but in those days, one didn't understand the geology.

Reti: You're talking about the Karst topography?

Jansen: Yes. I don't know, maybe expanding more north would have been better. But anyway, it is what it is, right? I agree with Helene Moglen about the architecture is our destiny—the collegiate system—and we have to work with it in some way. And I think it's a good system. I really liked my houses at Smith College. We had three houses, actually, as a complex. I think that worked very well. And I think that kind of experience works well here. And if students don't appreciate it, it's just they've never experienced anything like that.

Reti: Mm-hmm. Do you want to say anything about the Student Housing West project[41] in the Great Meadow? (laughs)

Jansen: I've said quite a bit in writing. (laughs)

Reti: I want to give you an opportunity to go on the record here, if you'd like.

Jansen: Well, I understand why the P3 [public-private partnership] process had to be used, but I don't think it's a good one. You want architects who are beholden to the campus. They're trying to make something work. I mean, every architect that I've heard about on campus and know something about—I've been on several architect selection committees and they all have the values of the campus at heart. Of course, if they're being interviewed, they've read up so they know what to say. But the ones that get chosen are

[41] For more on the Student Housing West project see: https://ucscstudenthousingwest.org. Also see Chancellor George Blumenthal's oral history on the Regional History website. For a different perspective see the East Meadow Action Committee's website at: https://www.eastmeadowaction.org. On that website there is a letter from Virginia Jansen to the Regents: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5aa8064bb98a7807c929fbed/t/604ebe0d80ef7747c01178f4/1615773197384/Virginia+Jansen%2C+Letter+to+the+Regents.pdf.

the ones that are principally imbued with the values and feel them. And when one said, "Oh, yeah, we like tree huggers," that group did not get hired. (laughter) Because that was just too blatant—

Reti: Caricature.

Jansen: —to the committee. But they all want to make something that works. Now the buildings planned at the site for Student Housing West where Family Student Housing is today are too big and they're not porous enough—that's the problem. There's a way that you can change it but I don't know how much that raises the cost. The engineering building, Engineering 2, was similar. The original design was much more interesting than the final design. That's because the cost of building something that's less standardized costs a lot more.

Reti: What do you mean by porous, Virginia?

Jansen: Well, that you can see through it and your eye can flow through it. It breathes, instead of putting up a solid façade that's humongous. And right now, we don't know how high the buildings would be. The tree line is supposed to be seen and I don't know it if will be. That part of the campus is obviously less sensitive than the East Meadow part. However, the part of the view, which is where the sun sets from Porter, is going to be blocked, as far as I can tell. And that's a real shame because a lot of students often congregate out there.

I brought two visitors, one a Japanese person who lives here in Los Gatos, and somebody else, and we saw the sunset from the Flying IUD or whatever it's called officially.

Reti: The Wave. (laughs)

Jansen: The Wave. Thank you. They just couldn't believe their eyes. And the students were all congregated there. They just thought it was a fabulous experience to see all those students loving this. And if those buildings totally interfere—I mean, that was a bit of the problem with College Eight, too.

Reti: True.

Jansen: But it costs money to redesign and to do it. And who knows what the campus is going to be like after COVID-19?

Reti: Well, that is the one-billion-dollar elephant in the room right now.

Jansen: Forget 64 million. That's a paltry sum now.

Reti: (laughter) Yeah, right, that won't buy us much anymore. But the question of what are the needs for a residential campus, and how will the campus be reformatted? We're recording this at this great moment of uncertainty.

Jansen: Yes. I don't know what's going to happen because I don't know what kind of contract was signed. The very idea you would have a public institution where people criticizing the design can't get the cost information, that's anathema! If that's part of the P3 process, it's not appropriate for a public institution spending taxpayers' money.

Reti: Mm-hmm. Right. Yes.

Jansen: And the design isn't the greatest. But originally those architects looked like they were really good. They have a good record. But it's mostly on flat land in an urban setting. So, I don't know.

But I heard, this is like third-hand, so I don't know how accurate it is, that the architects said, "We don't understand why the campus is so opposed to buildings." (Reti laughs) And that's not true. It's opposed to some buildings. Why would anyone who wants to enjoy our fabulous view of the bay suddenly say, "It'd look great with some prefab buildings blocking part of the view when other sites are reasonably possible"? Nobody in her or his right mind would say that, would they?

Reti: Right.

Jansen: I don't know. I think there's a way of doing it, but I'm sure it would raise the cost. (Although if the planning on the part of the campus administration had been done more intelligently from the start with mitigation of the frog habitat, the cost would have been much less because there would not have been the EMAC lawsuit. Evidence has come to light that mitigation would have been fairly fast—about six months delay only, and so far delay has been already about two years and the lawsuit is not yet over.) And right now, housing is not needed. So I don't know what's going to happen. I suppose we might have to break the contract. I don't know if COVID-19 is an excuse to get out of it in some way gracefully or something. But I'm not in charge.

I don't envy the chancellor, and I'm glad we have someone of her skill and intelligence and practicality to deal with the issue. But you know, she isn't from Northern California, either. And to what extent she can feel these emotions—it's almost something that has to

be in you, rather than just simply learned. And whether she—with all the disasters she's had to cope with—I mean, poor woman.

Reti: (laughs) Yeah.

Jansen: A lesser person would have just keeled over by now.

Reti: That's right. Headed for the hills.

Jansen: But no, they're all burned out. No, that's awful. She hadn't really had time, probably, to think about something that must seem peripheral in terms of what she has to deal with immediately. It's not peripheral, but in comparison to what's happening tomorrow and next month and next quarter.

Reti: We talked briefly about the exhibition, "An Uncommon Place." We talked briefly about *Seeds of Something Different*. I don't know if you have anything else you wanted to say about that.

Jansen: Oh, I think it's just a marvelous compilation. Wonderful to have it. And my only criticism, which isn't one, is why wasn't it longer? (laughs)

Reti: Because you wouldn't be talking to me today. I'd be dead. No. (laughs)[42]

Jansen: Yeah, that's right.

Reti: Why would you want it to be longer?

[42] *Seeds of Something Different* is 925 pages and two volumes total. Reti is referring here to the challenging and sometimes exhausting amount of work involved in editing and publishing a book of that scope.

Jansen: Oh, to get more, more!

Reti: (laughs) That's great. I like that.

Jansen: You can never get enough.

Reti: No. I mean, there was always more.

Jansen: I want to put in a shout-out for Merrill College. Nobody ever mentions it in terms of planning. And it's really lovely to walk around there. I think the architects did a great job of siting it.

Reti: Yes. I like Merrill very much.

Jansen: You asked about waning support for public higher education. I don't know what to do about that issue. You know, people don't trust expertise anymore. That's a bad mistake. Tell that to your bridge when it falls down underneath you. (Reti laughs) What was it the governor of New Jersey said the other day, like two days ago, he said, "Well, excuse me if your mask is uncomfortable and annoying. But I can think of one more thing that's uncomfortable and annoying. And that's when you die." I thought that was brilliant.[43]

UCSC was an unusual idea and it's too bad that UC wants a monolithic system. It would have been far more interesting and healthy to have different ideas developed. To me, it's a huge loss. And you know, I'm in favor of research. I love my research. I didn't teach after I retired because I wanted to do my research. So I believe in it. I agree with things that

[43] Jansen is referring here to the need for mask-wearing during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.

Pister said about periods of research and periods where other activities take precedent and that professors shouldn't be punished in their salaries for those other periods taking time. I think he has an excellent understanding of things.

Reti: Well, I think we're at a good stopping place. I want to thank you for doing this interview with me.

Jansen: Well, I want to thank you. It's fun. I wish we could do several more sessions. (laughter) It's exciting talking with people about UCSC.

Poster for California architecture series, 1978. Jansen recalled: “I commissioned this poster from a work-study student who had drafting skills and creative talent. His design that showed the space extending beyond the border was brilliant and perfect for the ideals of California modernism.”

Interviewer and Editor: Irene Reti directs the Regional History Project at the UC Santa Cruz Library, where she has worked as an editor and oral historian since 1989. She holds a BA in Environmental Studies and a Master's in History from UCSC and is also a small press publisher, writer, and photographer.