

CITY OF SYDNEY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
VISUAL ARTS

Interviewee: Martin Sharp

Date: 25 July 2013

Place: Bellevue Hill

Interviewer: Deborah Beck

TRANSCRIPT

0.00 **DB:** This is an interview with artist, Martin Sharp. My name is Deborah Beck and the interview is taking place in Martin's house, Wirian, in Bellevue Hill. It's the 25th of July 2013. The interview is part of the Art & Artists in Sydney Oral History Project which is being conducted on behalf of the City of Sydney's History Programme.

So I know you've had a huge, long and eventful life so it'd be impossible to cover it all in one interview.

MS: Yes.

DB: I'd like to focus on a few key areas, so one is possibly, I suppose, your first interest in art which we just talked about a little bit then. So was it at high school that you first got interested?

MS: No, it was as a child.

DB: As a child?

MS: Yes, and I was an only child and I did a lot of drawing and my mother encouraged me very much. She loved art and her whole family loved cartoons, so this old wonderful 'Hop' [Livingstone Hopkins, cartoon on wall] there, that came through the family, so there's always been a terrific love of cartooning and amusement and jokes and art.

DB: So were you brought up in this house?

MS: Yes. Well, I mean some of it I was. So I was born in 1942, on January the 21st, so that was just before Singapore fell, and it was right in the middle of the war.

DB: And then you went to school next door and that was where you started painting, I suppose, more, was it?

2.05 MS: I went to school at Cranbrook there but I was a rather shy kid and I never asked if – I went to some art classes, of course, with Andy Mason who was a wonderful teacher and Nan Coulson. She was a very lovely teacher there when I was small.

DB: Really? Because she was later at the Art School, wasn't she?

MS: Was she?

DB: Or she was a student at the National Art School, so she would have been there before you.

MS: You know of her?

DB: I know her now – she's still alive.

MS: Nan?

DB: Yes.

MS: She must be very - - -

DB: She's very old.

MS: Well, gosh, I'd love to send her my love.

DB: I'll tell her, yes.

MS: And I've got her report cards because my mother was a very fastidious collector or preserver of things. We have an engineering background on that side of her family and I think she was fastidious in keeping notes and things like that although she was no Shakespeare but she kept a good daily record.

DB: And then Justin O'Brien [Australian artist], what sort of year did he -?

MS: Well, I enrolled for special art and I must say that even before that that the first exhibition I ever was taken to by my mother was the Blake Prize in 1951 which was the inaugural Blake Prize and Justin won it that year with that beautiful 'Virgin Enthroned' which we've seen recently, fortunately, at the Retrospective of Justin's and it's just a blaze of colour and it still is.

4.11 **DB: So that would have been quite something to see in '51.**

MS: Yes. So he was very special in my involvement there with art. And I still have to write a bit more about him but he was a great exhibitor of the boys' work at school and even though he was only there for a couple of days a week he had formidable energy. And he was at Merioola [a group of Sydney artists, 1940s and 50s], of course. He'd been a prisoner of war and painted his first exhibition as a prisoner and a wonderful story; his story's a very great story and I can track off into him for hours if you like because we remained great friends throughout his life and I feel he's my art father; that's how I regard him, and my actual father I didn't sort of take to. I went to university under his advice but I'd already been to art school for a year at the National Art School - East Sydney Tech at the time - and I went there under Justin's advice because I didn't know what to do when I left school and I didn't have the brains; I just scraped through the Leaving Certificate. But I did sit for the first time ever art was used as a valid subject for the Leaving Certificate.

DB: So that would have been, what, '59 or something when you finished there?

MS: Yes, yes.

DB: And then you went to the National Art School just for one year, was it?

6.01 MS: For one year, then I went to university for two terms and then I came back to the Art School.

DB: And why was that? What made you come back?

MS: Well, architecture, I was already an artist and even though we did have Lloyd Rees [artist] as a teacher but he was already – look, frankly I took one look at the building which was designed by the dean of the architecture faculty and I realised that I wasn't going to get taught any architecture there and it was boring. Actually, I found it boring, doing bricks and things but I did start doing cartoons for *Honi Soit* [Sydney University student magazine] so that was very important.

DB: So it was more that sort of work. Did you know Grahame Bond [Australian performer] and that group then?

MS: No.

DB: No? Because they were in the architecture [faculty].

MS: Well I knew Bob Ellis.

DB: Yes.

MS: Grahame I might have, but I also went to St Paul's College at that stage which after already having spent sort of six years at boarding school at Cranbrook I didn't, ironically or whatever – I was sent there to make a man of me in case I became a mother's boy but every boy's a mother's boy, whether they like it or not, and every daughter is too – so I found myself at college where they had that same sort of prefect sort of system. But I tell you who was marvellous to me there, the only, if you like, apart from my contemporaries, was my only friend among the seniors was the son of Dattilo Rubbo [Italian born Australian artist], Michael Rubbo.

8.12 **DB: Was he an artist too?**

MS: He is; he is. He's a wonderful artist as well as a filmmaker but he became a filmmaker more so, but he also is a very good artist. And he was wonderful, yes, so I was very lucky to have him. But the college life, even though it was interesting, I really didn't mesh with the subjects I was doing, so I stopped going, sleep in for breakfast, and then I started sleeping in for lunch and not getting to my lectures and they asked me to leave, quite frankly.

DB: So you moved out, did you? Where did you live when you were at the National Art School?

MS: I think I was expelled from the university, come to think of it because they asked for my gown back and things like that but that didn't worry me because I was seeing Peter Powditch [artist] and an artist called Brian Thompson and Jeff Doring and Charlie Brown, Peter Brown.

They were living over in Neutral Bay and I would go and visit them, you see, and that's where I met Richard Neville [co-founder of *Oz* magazine 1960s] yes, at that house.

DB: So you met Richard then and then you went back and enrolled back at the National Art School?

MS: Yes. And then I'd met Garry [Shead, artist] at *The Bulletin* office first, I believe, because we were doing cartoons. Les Tanner [cartoonist] was the art director there and he was a wonderful man. Oh, what a twinkle in his eye and so encouraging, and he loved Garry, giving him full pages. I was getting little cartoons like this.

10.13 **DB: So this is Garry Shead?**

MS: Yes. He was getting full pages. Well, he was right; he was absolutely wonderful, Garry.

DB: So was he at NAS then too?

MS: He was at North Sydney Art School [Technical College]. So they came one day a week to - - -

DB: East Sydney [Technical College, precursor to National Art School] ...

MS: - - - and that's where we met up and got to know each other. And really it was his initiative to start the *Arty Wild Oat* [student magazine] which led then to meeting on another level there Richard Neville and Richard Walsh [co-founder *Oz* magazine]. And we only did two issues but that was enough for them because Richard Walsh was the editor on *Honi Soit* and Richard Neville was the editor of *Tharunka* [University of New South Wales student newspaper]. And they decided after meeting at a student editors' conference down in Adelaide to bring out like a Foundation Day issue of the spoof once a year, a public edition of their various magazines, which they brought out to entertain the public, and instead of doing it once a year they got together and decided to go independent and do it once a month and they asked us to become involved.

DB: So the Arty Wild Oat was really an art school newspaper put together by you and Garry and was it John Firth Smith [Australian artist]?

MS: John Firth Smith and Ian Van Weiringen and a few others there.

DB: And that was 1962 and I think you interviewed Robert Hughes [art critic] for one of the editions.

12.03 MS: Yes. Robert Hughes and Norman Lindsay [Australian artist], I went up and interviewed Norman Lindsay and Colin Lanceley [Australian artist]. Reading back – I was just reading it again recently – it's some good stuff there, even though it's a small paper.

DB: Although it had a huge print run by the look of it. Well, I don't know if that was a lie. Seven thousand five hundred it's got written on it.

MS: Has it really? Well, you'd have to ask Garry about that.

DB: All right, some big numbers there.

MS: Yes.

DB: But where was it printed? It wasn't printed at the Art School then?

MS: No, no. You see, that seemed to me an obvious thing that should be happening at the East Sydney Tech there, that we should be being fed by the cooks, and the printers should be printing, but it wasn't combined, you see; it was all sort of working in their separate packages. Douglas Dundas was the head of the art school there.

DB: Who were your teachers then, do you remember?

MS: Well, Bill Salmon who was the first one, I think, and then John Coburn was wonderful, John Passmore.

DB: You had Passmore?

MS: Yes, yes. He was good.

DB: Was Godfrey Miller there when you were there?

MS: No.

DB: You missed him?

MS: Yes, I missed him but Peter Powditch didn't. I think he was involved with the sculpture school but he was a legend. I mean, Godfrey Miller and the Kennal [sculpture studio named for Bertram McKennal] run by [Lynton Dadswell] was the heart of the art school at that time, it really was.

DB: So did you do sculpture in there?

MS: No, no. I hadn't enrolled. Garry Shead walks in the room [literally], looking for a screwdriver? Are you right?

13.59 GS: You'd think it was the Mona Lisa the way they've packed it. Unbelievable.

DB: So Garry Shead's just come in and we're going to interview both of you at the same time now. So we were just talking about the *Arty Wild Oat* and I noticed that it's got a print run of seven thousand five hundred written on it. Did that ever happen – was that true?

GS: Yes. I think Martin, you organised all those students to kind of give it out. They were giving it out all over the place at university and everywhere.

MS: Well, we got it to Sydney Uni once. You were doing the distribution, weren't you? Anyway, we couldn't have done that many, I don't think, did we?

GS: We would have published that many, printed.

DB: And you got it printed commercially, though, obviously?

MS: We paid for that, though.

GS: We did.

MS: You must have, yes.

GS: We all put in fifty pounds or fifty dollars or whatever it was in those days. There was about six of us.

MS: Yes.

GS: One, Robert Mayne [?], was working at the *[Sydney Morning] Herald*. He was the one who brought it together. We just supplied the material.

DB: So you would have done the drawings in your own time at the art school?

GS: Oh, yes.

DB: Yes, that sort of thing any time.

GS: Any time, yes.

MS: Well, they had a letterpress [printing] then, you see, so we'd get old blocks and use them.

GS: Yes, that's right.

MS: We didn't have many. I did that [Sidney] Nolan one of the Leda and the Swan.

GS: It was all metal, wasn't it, done in those days?

MS: Yes.

DB: And then you got some commercial printer to do it, obviously.

MS: In the [*Sydney Morning Herald*], was it?

GS: Somewhere in Hornsby, some printer in Hornsby.

MS: See, he does know more about it than me.

DB: And when I spoke to Richard Neville he said something about some of the ideas from that [*The Arty Wild Oat*] were the generation of Oz or had some link to it. Do you feel that it had that?

MS: Well, the first edition went to the university, I think, or the second one, and that was enough for them to invite us to a meeting – which I have a record of here, the date of it and things – to join in with them to publish.

16.14 GS: Is that how you met Richard?

MS: Yes. The first time I met him - remember Peter Powditch and Jeff Doring and Charlie Brown and Brian Thompson – not Jim Sharman's designer, another Brian Thompson from the art school - - they all had a place in Wycombe Road, Neutral Bay, and so I used to go over there a lot, you see. And Richard called in because Brian Thompson was doing something for him. He was working at Farmers [department store], I think, or DJs [David Jones department store] in the advertising department and he was doing some artwork for Richard and that's when I first – I remember he had a tie on and he was a very fast talker. That's when I sort of first met him but the next time, the years passed and he was to do with Oz and your films – you were making films.

GS: I think probably because we actually did it without any backing they could see that you could actually do those ... do something.

DB: Could do it, yes. And so the first issues were then done through Sydney University of Oz then?

MS: No, no, they were independent.

DB: It was independent.

GS: In the same way, yes.

MS: Just raised a bit of capital and off it went and sold by friends.

DB: Yes, just passed around, yes. So I was going to ask a little bit about your films at the school. So Garry made the films and Martin was actually acting in them, weren't you?

MS: Well, I wouldn't call it acting but I was certainly mucking up in them. Well, Garry was like the new wave. I mean he was before all these people, the [Phil] Noyces [film director] and [Bruce] Beresford [film director]. Well, Beresford was doing it at the same time at Sydney University.

18.11 GS: Yes, he was. There was John Lancer too.

MS: Because I met Bruce Beresford when I did go to Sydney University.

GS: There was a guy called John Lancer who was at the university and they produced a newsreel every couple of weeks of the university doings and I went up and asked some help from him because I knew nothing about filmmaking in those days. So he was a help and I did ask Bruce Beresford if I could help him and he brushed me aside but then I got a job at the ABC.

DB: You were working?

GS: Assistant film editor. I knew nothing but I got in there.

DB: Well, you learnt that way, yes.

GS: Well, actually I was working as a scenic artist and then I edged my way into the film part, yes.

MS: He's back to being a scenic artist.

DB: Doing the big work.

MS: He's making films as well now, which is wonderful.

DB: Are you making films again?

MS: Yes.

DB: That's great.

MS: He is.

DB: But these early ones, what was it called, the film you made at the art school?

GS: Ding-a-Ding Day [1961-66].

DB: Ding-a-Ding Day.

GS: Yes; took about five years to make.

DB: Did it? And Richard was in that too, wasn't he?

GS: Yes. Well, I had all the friends and we'd just go out.

MS: Willing performers.

DB: Did you show it anywhere at that time?

GS: Actually, yes. I think David Strachan saw it and he suggested I show it at the Cell Block.

DB: At the Cell Block [Theatre, National Art School], yes.

GS: And, yes, I think it was shown there but I'm not sure.

20.06 **DB: You were there the same years as Martin, so the early '60s?**

GS: I was at North Sydney and we just went to East Sydney once a week.

DB: But did you end up there full time?

GS: No, no.

DB: Still only during the day?

GS: Yes. And David was the one who introduced us. He told me I should be there.

DB: David Strachan?

GS: Yes.

MS: Did he really? Wow.

GS: Yes. He didn't think you would get on.

MS: I thought it was Les Tanner.

GS: No, no.

MS: We met him at *The Bulletin*.

GS: I think it was art school. I'm not sure but it was all 'round the same time, wasn't it?

MS: Yes, yes.

DB: So the other thing I was going to ask about too, were the posters that you started producing. I think you said your first poster was the one from the art school ball, was it?

MS: Yes. Well, round about that time, yes. I did a few for *Tharunka*, rather bad ones, one at St Paul's College not too bad. Ben Shahn [American Artist] was a big influence then.

DB: So that was the one you did for - - -

MS: And it was a good one, this one, I like it.

DB: It's a great one, isn't it? So that's the Moulin Rouge in '62.

MS: And that was a full page ad in *Arty Wild Oat*, you see, but the figure was about this big. So we must have sold the art school a page.

GS: Yes, that's right, for some money.

DB: Is this based on Lautrec, was that what you're looking at?

MS: Yes, yes. Well, what do you think?

GS:

DB: And what about this – did you do this one?

MS: No. Someone else did that one.

DB: Because it's similar writing. So that's 'Splunge'(?), which is 1961.

MS: Yes.

DB: I didn't think it looked like you but I just wanted to check.

MS: Splunge. That was very good, that one. I did get involved with a bit of publicity for that.

DB: You did?

MS: Yes.

DB: So did you attend the balls?

MS: Oh, yes. The balls were the greatest thing, you know.

22.02 **DB: Did you get dressed up?**

MS: Yes, yes.

DB: What sort of things did you wear?

MS: We were sea monsters for Splunge and we loved dressing up, didn't we, for everything.

DB: How about you, Garry? Did you go to the balls?

GS: I did, yes.

DB: And they were all at the Trocadero? You didn't go to any at the Paddington Town Hall then?

MS: No.

DB: No, it was all the Troc at that time.

MS: Maybe later on but the Trocadero was an amazing place, just amazing.

DB: And good bands and music and so on there?

MS: Yes, wonderful. Remember they had that beautiful shell there, art deco sort of glass – probably plastic - but the shell used to revolve on the stage so you'd get a band set up behind it and they'd press a button, it'd turn around and a new band'd come on.

DB: How fantastic.

MS: Mightn't have been for all of them. And the drag queens used to come in in huge trucks.

DB: With their clothes because they were so big, yes.

MS: Yes. And I remember we did ruin some of the dresses as they were coming in.

DB: You ruined them? Why?

MS: From the Splunge, a bit of pudding.

DB: A bit of stuff on it.

MS: Our makeup.

DB: Did you get any photos of yourself dressed up for the balls?

MS: There would be some, yes.

DB: I'd love to see those at some stage.

MS: Well that one, I've certainly got the Splunge one, yes.

DB: That's great.

MS: Maybe I only went to two or three but they were just wonderful.

DB: Yes, usually you did, the few years you were at art school. And I wanted to ask about this one, this painting we have of yours in the

collection [of the National Art School]. So that was one that you did when you were a student at the school?

MS: Yes.

GS: It's a beauty.

DB: Yes. I think it is; I really like it.

MS: Well, that's of Port Hacking.

DB: So the painting was at Port Hacking?

23.58 MS: Yes. There used to be these wonderful men like the equivalent of trout fishers but they used to come out every weekend and get a beautiful skiff from Bofinger's Boatshed and they'd come out and moor around Port Hacking, fishing for luderick or blackfish or niggers as they were called in parlance and had beautiful cane rods and burly, a big bag of sand, green weed they used to

DB: What are these ladies drinking there?

MS: Well, that's when I went to ask because I added that, I imagine. That's a boy, I think. See, that wouldn't have been there.

DB: So you added that little bit in when you were at art school.

MS: Yes, that's right. That was the influence of coming into this world of drinkers and bohemians.

GS: It makes it, though.

MS: Does it? Yes.

DB: Yes.

MS: But it jumps out too much. But it was wonderful to find this painting again, though, because I didn't - - -

DB: You didn't know that it was there?

MS: No.

DB: So that would have been '61, '62, those years, the second time you came back?

MS: Yes.

DB: Well, that's the only one we have of yours in the collection so that's an interesting one.

MS: Yes, I know. It was interesting.

DB: Interesting to see. I don't think we've got any of yours, Garry, at all. I've looked for your name but I couldn't - - -

MS: Well, we'd better encourage him to.

DB: Have you got any student work at all?

GS: I probably have something.

MS: I had a lovely one of yours called Envy which I lost, unfortunately, I think when we were moving house. You always lose so much when you move house.

26.01 **DB: You won't be doing that again.**

MS: I remember, I can see it. You can too, can't you?

GS: Yes.

MS: He wanted it for his book but I was very embarrassed not to have it. Well, you are, because they're so important.

DB: They are; those student works are really, really important, I think, and the fact you've got so many from your school days is quite incredible.

MS: Well, that's because of Justin, you see. We were talking about him, that he kept every boy's work because it was part of the daily class. He did two days' teaching there, I think, and all the kids went through and had an art class there which was pretty much under the War Memorial Hall there at the moment although the original time I went to special art was just the first building up the hill and then we left there.

DB: Yes, that one.

MS: It was a wonderful old building and John Montefiore [artist] was there.

DB: Was he there too?

MS: Yes, yes. He was a big star, you know, because Justin would pick his favourite works from that fortnight or week – I think it was a fortnight – and he'd hang them up in the middle of the stairway in the main building on three sides of the stairway. So you'd come up, across and then upstairs again and on the three sides he'd hang the best works that the boys had done, mounted and everything. And then he'd put up exhibitions in every classroom of the boys relevant to that classroom

and to get one in the middle was “it”. There’s a wonderful interview with him and he says, “Well, that was like going for the Archibald Prize”.

28.11 **DB: So did he give them to you at the end of your schooling?**

MS: Yes, and he kept every boy’s picture. Honestly, it didn’t matter how good they were in artistic quality. I just kept mine; a lot of people didn’t keep theirs, you see. There was some wonderful art being done there, wonderful and it was very much part of the school life because everyone experienced these pictures and he’d save them up over the years. His filing was amazing and then he’d have a big exhibition at the end of the year.

DB: So did you, just to go back to teaching at the National Art School, did you keep any other work that you did there other than the one that we have in the collection?

MS: Very little.

DB: Because I was thinking you kept all these.

MS: Because I lost my ability to paint. You see, I had a style.

DB: How about then the teaching, say with John Passmore? Did he teach you? Do you remember did he teach you anything much? You said you lost your style when you went to the art school, did you?

MS: I did, yes, I lost it completely because it was like a river hitting the delta sort of thing. And I did a cartoon about it – I’ll let you have that later on – about how they shifted us all the time around from one place to another to another to another.

DB: Yes, all the different subjects so you couldn’t concentrate on what you wanted to do.

MS: Well, people who were smart settled on doing painting or sculpture or whatever but generally the first year was general, very general and we didn’t start life drawing, for example, till the second year and we had to draw rubber sort of plaster casts much like this. I’m sure that head comes from the art school for

30.34 **DB: And did you like life drawing, did you enjoy that?**

MS: I did, yes, of course. Barbara Wiggins[?] I think, was the first model. She sort of greeted us very nonchalantly, lying there. She was a brilliant model, Barbara Wiggins and there were others, of course.

DB: Was Dundas teaching you life drawing?

MS: Mrs Dundas, yes.

DB: Dorothy Thornhill, yes.

MS: Yes, yes, Dorothy was one and she was wonderful. Oh, there were some terrific teachers there.

GS: Jeffrey, you had Jeffrey?

DB: No, he didn't.

MS: No, but I met Jeffrey through Justin and I thought he was sort of the fabulously rudest man on earth at that stage.

DB: Who are we talking about?

MS: Jeffrey Smart [artist].

DB: Did he teach you at all, Garry?

GS: M'mm.

MS: He did, did he really?

GS: I was actually.

DB: Because he was only there for a short time, yes.

MS: That's interesting. So that's how you formed that sort of friendship with him then.

GS: Yes.

MS: Yes. Well, he would have been your art father.

GS: Because when he walked in I heard this voice. I said, "You sound like Phidias on the Argonauts" [ABC children's radio program]. He said, "I am Phidias".

DB: He was Phidias?

32.03 MS: My first television appearance was – there was a lovely girl who I later met at art school and I've forgotten her name at the moment but she did turn up recently. Richard Neville met her. Lynn someone, I think, and I'd like to meet her again. Gosh, she was gorgeous, but there was a number of students from different schools. Phidias got a television program right at the very beginning and we all had to go in and paint the subject of the drought.

DB: On the television.

MS: I haven't got that picture back. It was a good one, I can remember, a very gaunt looking portrait. But she won it at competition.

GS: I was meant to go on that too.

MS: Were you really? Wow.

GS: But I had a bad case of acne so I was too embarrassed to go.

MS: TV, you see, that's right.

DB: And then you decided to leave, you didn't finish the course, is that right?

MS: You mean at the National Art, the tech?

DB: Yes.

MS: Well, Oz happened and then I was spending a lot of time with Oz and we got prosecuted for obscenity so things swept us really away.

DB: So that was at the end of your time at the art school. Were you exhibiting at all then your own work?

MS: Well, I started to exhibit. My first exhibition was at that little theatre in North Sydney there.

DB: The Independent Theatre?

MS: Not the Independent, the one on the water [possibly Ensemble Theatre].

GS: Hayes Gordon.

34.00 MS: Yes, Hayes Gordon.

GS: What was that called?

MS: Anyway, it's still there – it's a wonderful theatre. And I did abstracts really inspired by Jeff Doring's work because he was doing a lot of wonderful abstracts at the time at Wycombe Road, you see. And one turned up recently - how amazing – but I threw most of them out because I thought they were failures. And I remember at the opening there there was a Catholic priest and a couple of his mates and they were laughing at the pictures and I fainted.

DB: You fainted?

MS: I fainted. I never faint; and I fainted.

GS: Because you were so upset?

MS: I might have been so nervous or something, I don't know. It was my very first exhibition.

DB: First show, yes.

MS: It was the, *Buffalo Skinner* was the name of the play. It was a very interesting play. And so that was while – as I say, I lost my style, but I found it again through cartooning, you see. And John Olsen [artist] and used to attend those art schools with Passmore and Lanceley and Olsen which was a little school in at The Rocks. First of all it was Mary White's so I attended that.

DB: So John set it up, did he, that little one [the Bakery Art School 1968]. ?

MS: Yes.

DB: Yes, John Olsen. That's right, I remember it.

MS: I've got to give him great credit but I knew nothing about abstract art and I didn't have a clue about it; didn't understand it, and it still doesn't interest me that much.

36.02 **DB: But your first show was abstractions – that's interesting.**

MS: Yes.

DB: And then did you show at Terry Clune's [gallery] after that?

MS: Yes, that was the next one, 1965. That was my first gallery exhibition and I only got that through because McDonald who was running the Clune Galleries was away at the time and I went around selling advertising for Oz. And White - Christian name I forget at the moment immediately, but it's there - she was very nice, lovely somehow arranged to have a show there, and Frank McDonald, he was horrified when he returned from his trip to Europe or something that I had a show, that I had arranged to have a show there.

GS: Was Terry Clune involved with that?

MS: Yes.

DB: He owned it, didn't he?

GS: He still owns it.

MS: Yes. And Thelma was very much involved later on.

DB: So what sort of work was that that you showed there?

MS: Oh, gosh. It was a mixture of cartoons and big paintings. I've got some here; I've still got a couple.

DB: Still got a couple, that's good, from that early show.

MS: Well, I try to keep something from every – I have a couple of drawings from art school but that's it.

DB: That's fantastic, though, that you've done that.

MS: Yes.

DB: Was this before you went to London with Richard Neville?

38.02 MS: Yes, yes, just before and it actually was my most successful exhibition.

DB: Really?

MS: Did sell some pictures.

DB: That's great. That's good for the first gallery show.

MS: Yes. You see, one already had a following through the cartoons in Oz, you see, so that was very interesting. So instead of having to find a public one had one already through Oz. So I never graduated from art school, I never graduated; I barely got out of school, you know. But recent years they gave me an honorary doctorate from Sydney University, which is wonderful.

DB: I read that.

MS: I was surprised, as was the fellowship from you [National Art School], a surprise, but a wonderful surprise.

DB: I like that the member of the Order of Australia was for your contributions to the pop art movement and your support for young artists – that's what you're cited as.

MS: Yes. See, that came through Luke as it turned out, Luke Sciberras [artist].

DB: Did it?

MS: Now, I couldn't stand all those people with Orders of Australia. You'd go to an opening of an exhibition or something and everyone had it.

DB: They've got the thing on.

MS: Yes, and every artist and every sort of patron of the arts seemed to have one and I thought "I hope I don't get offered one of those".

DB: Do you think of yourself as a pop artist, is that how you'd describe your work?

MS: No, but that's - - -

DB: That's what they said.

MS: Yes. Well, I am within that genre. It certainly started to gain some – it was a good category, I think.

DB: Yes, I think so. It's a great category to be in.

MS: And that was amazing to get those sort of things but I didn't realise that Luke had had anything to do with it.

40.17 **DB: So he nominated you, is that right?**

MS: And not only that; he had to do a lot of work to get it through.

DB: I'm glad he did.

MS: Because he'd stayed here at the studio, here for a while, and done quite a lot of work. He's a remarkable fellow, I must say. Of course, he married Garry's wonderful daughter and they have a beautiful child called Stella.

DB: Yes, I know, great.

MS: So it's amazing.

DB: It comes around. It's amazing, isn't it?

MS: It sure does. But the postie delivering the invitation, "Do you want to accept this or not?", he knew what it was. And he's an amazing man, like a rabbi and an ex-Vietnam vet and an extraordinary man and we've become friends and he said "Martin, you've got to accept that for your grandfather, for the boys who died at Luna Park" - - -

GS: How can you say no after that?

MS: - - - "for Tiny Tim". He made me face up to the responsibility of accepting it because I wasn't going to because I was so pressed with doing things I didn't want to have to fill out another form in my life. Anyway, I did and here we are but we're not being interviewed because of that.

DB: No. Still, after not passing all those other courses you got the honorary one and the fellowship from the art school too.

MS: Yes, that's right. It was wonderful. And Garry was there that night and Peter Powditch and you and all the students at the art school that were graduating.

42.11 **DB: Well, the students were just so excited to have you there, I've got to say. Nearly all of them were crying they were so excited and they loved the fact that you'd studied in the same place as they had and they'd just finished.**

MS: Truly? Wow.

DB: And it was just such a great thing for you to be there and they all kept saying "Martin Sharp was there" afterwards, so that was really lovely. I thought it was such a good night, it felt fantastic.

MS: Well, I felt when I'd gone to Sydney University to have my honorary doctorate there I think that's wonderful that that happened, I really did, but I didn't feel it emotionally and it did surprise me at the art school there I suddenly felt I was at home. I did a drawing. That's a print of it when I was in the hospital. That's just a print of it. It's a little bit smaller, the original drawing but it was looking out the hospital window.

DB: You were in the hospital right next to it.

MS: And I did another drawing last time I was in hospital too from another ward though - this was the cardiac ward.

DB: So could you see this?

MS: Yes. No, that's right.

DB: You could actually see the chapel [at the National Art School].

MS: Directly there like that.

DB: Isn't that wonderful. Fantastic, that's great.

MS: And I'm very thrilled with that.

DB: Yes, that's wonderful. Good one.

MS: You can't forget about the city.

DB: No. You can't see it anyway.

MS: But I sort of thought it looked like Tuscany or something like that.

DB: Yes, it does look like that.

MS: Doesn't it look old there?

DB: It does. That's wonderful.

MS: And it brought me back to life, doing this drawing.

DB: Great, good. So that was after the graduation, was it?

44.00 MS: Yes, this was just on my recent visit there.

DB: That was the time you got really sick, yes.

MS: And art saved me. It was just doing this.

GS: Beautiful.

DB: No, that's great, that's beautiful.

MS: Create or die, I believe.

GS: See it's like his blue eyes.

DB: Yes, it's the same colour and his jacket. Blue's the colour.

MS: I love blue, yes.

DB: Yes, it's beautiful.

MS: I love blue.

DB: Are you right to keep going a bit?

MS: Yes, sure. If you're right I'm right. I've just got to shift. My bottom's very thin these days.

DB: So then you went off to London and set up the London Oz and that was the huge obscenity trial and all that sort of thing.

MS: I wasn't involved with the obscenity trial there.

DB: You weren't?

MS: No.

DB: O.K. You were the art director on the magazine in Australia, wasn't it?

MS: In the early stage here. Well, art director; I don't know that I was an art director but unconsciously I suppose I was but I didn't know the term then.

DB: Well, that's what they said in the blurb about the Oz.

MS: Yes and also in London.

GS: He didn't need the title.

MS: In the earlier years in London.

DB: So I'll go back. I'll just leave that bit because we're talking about Australia. And then you came back to Australia about '69/70. And was that when you found the Clune Galleries were empty and decided to start up the Yellow House?

MS: Well, I'd done a lot of paintings in London and collages and I sometimes exhibited with Clytie Jessop [gallery] there in London but I was looking for an exhibition and I couldn't get one.

GS: Gosh, that's amazing you couldn't get one.

DB: I just thought you would have, yes.

MS: Oh, no. So I had done a lot of paintings with the help of also some Australian girls who were there. They were partners and they helped me fill in and things like that so I have to give them credit and their names I don't have immediately.

46.23

I loved working on Perspex and on plastic and things like that and I was going to do an animated film. I had a lot of gels I'd bought to do some animations, which I had done some animation with Garry, actually, but I found I needed to move faster because sixteen frames a second at that stage; you had to do an awful lot of work.

DB: Huge amount of work, yes.

MS: And I remember I used those gels though too to start making collage pictures. The first one I did was Van Gogh's head on his chair and put those two together, you see, and I did that just by tracing it out of the books with a pen, with an ink which took to plastic and then I painted them from the back. And you got this lovely effect which I'd certainly been inspired by the paintings on pubs in Sydney.

DB: They're done on glass, yes.

MS: Yes, and they had that wonderful quality to it. And also swimming pool toys or the floating rings and things like that. They had all these wonderful patterns on them from the inside through the plastic.

48.09

But I liked that quality very much and so I did do a lot of work with Perspex - with celluloid, I'd call it, but I think it's called Mylar - and that

had a terrific effect. I remember the Jimi Hendrix one I did was very - -
-

DB: Was that done that way?

MS: Yes. And I'm still working on another version of that now because it's very popular.

DB: A very popular piece, yes.

MS: And the big one I did, which is in the National Gallery at the present which Jim Sharman donated there, that was in my first exhibition in Sydney.

DB: In Sydney?

MS: Because I couldn't get a show and Peter Brown, or Charlie Brown as we know him, was running the Gisella Scheinberg Gallery at the time. He'd become the manager for the first appointment of that so I'd arranged to have a show in Sydney in a commercial gallery, you see. But by the time I got there – I shipped them all out to Sydney, all these pictures - - -

DB: So you sent them from London?

MS: Yes, and it was a big shipment of stuff and also I think I was missing Sydney and I was very happy to come back and to have an exhibition.

50.00

I think we'd been raided by the police sometime earlier. That sort of Chelsea scene was coming to an end, and my studio, I was having to relinquish there. So all these pictures came back and then Peter Brown had the relationship with Mrs Scheinberg, they'd gone their separate ways, so I was in a dilemma, do I exhibit with Mrs Scheinberg? Well, I didn't even think about it, I just went with Peter Brown to exhibit with him and he knew Thelma Clune very well and apparently the gallery had just been shut down and it was on the market and she says "Well, you can use that" through the influence of Peter Brown. So that's how it happened. My first exhibition was called 'Martin Sharp at 59 Macleay Street', where I'd had my first gallery exhibition before in 1965. And so one building at that time was available, the original gallery building which was the ground floor and a few rooms off there. There was another floor above that which had been Dickie Keep's [?] travel agency and so the thing was to make it back into a gallery again which with the aid of friends managed to occur. And I remember people would just come and join in, say "Oh, yeah, yeah, we'll paint the walls here".

52.35 **DB: So they just decided where they were going to paint things?**

MS: No, no, no. This at this particular stage was under my direction to an extent there. And I have photographs from that period and Greg photographed it, Greg Weight. I had a long friendship. He framed my first exhibition at the Clune Galleries.

DB: Did he?

MS: Yes. And so we've had an enormously long friendship there and I worked with his brother, Dickie, Richard, aka Dickie Weight, who I met at art school when I first went there and he helped paint it and convert it and we had to put in lights and turn it into a gallery. Well, in the process I remember Terry Clark [?] who was my maths teacher at school, he was still there and he brought my cousin and a whole lot of his friends in, Andrew, to see what was going on.

54.00 And they all joined in and whistled and were very friendly and enjoyed being there, just helping and I thought "Wow, this is really something if you could organise this with a concept behind it" - because really I was just adlibbing a place to exhibit my pictures - to organise a concept behind it which then became the Yellow House, you see. Because there were places like the Arts Lab, to quote one in London, and a few music clubs like UFO and things like that which were good but there was nothing that had the degree of artistic setting which these exhibitions, 59 Macleay Street followed by 'The Incredible Shrinking Exhibition', followed by one about Livingston Hopkins ['Hop'], followed by the Yellow House. So it was very much an evolving situation for my first exhibition there to the one which I had to adlib, '59 Macleay Street' which was also a big success then onto the other, 'The Incredible Shrinking Exhibition' and the Hop one, about the cartoonist Hop - this was exhibited there - and then onto the Yellow House which I had discussed with Albie [Thoms] when I was in London. So you'll find it in his book, I'm sure, and he was very instrumental, of course, in bringing the theatre and film side of it together.

DB: Did you name it the Yellow House?

56.00 MS: Yes, yes.

DB: Of course after the Van Gogh?

MS: Well, it was in a time when you did name things. My favourite group was really the Pink Floyd. The Beatles got me over there, but then I failed to get in touch with them. I didn't work with the Pink Floyd but my experiences with them were pretty amazing; I learnt a lot from the UFO Club there. As people say "Oh, you'll look back on these as the best

days of your life” but these are still the best days of my life. Like it’s a good one today.

DB: Absolutely, yes, that’s right.

MS: And I wasn’t totally satisfied there in every way as I was running a bit all over the place but now I’m sort of restrained pretty much to this room I can simplify my life.

DB: Simplified it a bit, yes.

MS: Yes, illness has simplified my life and as long as I’ve got enough energy to move around I’m happy and get on and keep continuing my work which I love doing, you see.

DB: So did you have a studio set up – did you actually work in the Yellow House at all yourself?

MS: Oh, of course, yes.

DB: You had a studio there?

MS: Yes, yes. It was on the corner of Challis Avenue and Macleay Street and on that corner I had a little apartment above there on the first floor where I think the Drysdales lived so it had a terrific provenance, that building.

DB: [Russell] Drysdale lived there, did you say?

MS: Yes, and [John] Coburn, ‘Muffled Drums’ exhibition.

DB: Yes, ‘Muffled Drums’.

MS: I mean, it was really a hot spot artistically and it’s still kicking along a little bit now. But I didn’t think that that would be remembered as it is, the Yellow House. It took quite a while, but it’s been tremendously acknowledged now

58.20 **DB: It sure has.**

MS: And a lot of the people who I worked there with they’re having a party there, I think on Sunday.

DB: Are they?

MS: Yes, or a lunch.

DB: On the site?

MS: Yes. I’m sure you’re welcome too.

DB: Thanks. So the other people, a lot of them aren't around any more, unfortunately.

MS: Which ones are gone?

DB: Well, Brett Whiteley and Albie Thoms and Aggy Read. There's a few people unfortunately aren't.

MS: That's true, yes.

DB: But some are. So there was Ellis D Fogg.

MS: And George.

DB: George Gittoes.

MS: Yes.

DB: Phil Noyce, was he working there?

MS: Jim Sharman showed his film there. Peter Wright's gone. I remember him abusing Jim Sharman apparently. It was very hurtful for Jim.

DB: Was it about his work?

MS: Yes, film, which is a wonderful film, 'Shirley Thompson versus the Aliens' and it was shot at Luna Park. So it was a very productive place and my statement that it was the greatest conceptual work of art was rather ironic but that was made in response to - that's Garry.

DB: That's all right, a bit of bashing going on in the background. That's not a problem. But other people exhibited there? It was different rooms? I didn't see it, of course, in the '70s but each room was painted by different people?

60.02 MS: Pretty much, yes. The thing was though I hadn't been to a Magritte Exhibition because he was on the tape that I had but I got his catalogues and books and I was so amazed by his work. I call it sort of democratic surrealism, meaning that anyone could enjoy his work. They didn't have to be educated in any way because he used simple, straightforward representations of a bird or a rose or a room or a tuber on fire or whatever. I mean he just used images that you could see them for what they were and that gave you the mental signal but suddenly they were in a strange context which flipped the whole – that's why Dali's been very popular too as well but Magritte even more deadpan if you get the expression. There's not a flicker of emotion but they're full of emotion, his work. And, of course, Vincent's idea of the Yellow House and I'd read his letters, some of his letters, earlier and I'd

always been inspired by Vincent. You see this one here up in the top there. That was in my father's surgery in Macquarie Street. He was a dermatologist and my mother had bought that from the Notanda Galleries run by Carl Plate in Rowe Street. That's the original frame.

DB: So it's an old print from then?

MS: Yes, the print's faded a bit.

DB: What's that one called again?

MS: 'The Artist on the road on his way to work' is one of the titles or 'On the road to Tarascon' is another one and that was lost, allegedly anyway, lost in Second World War when they bombed the gallery it was in. And it might turn up. Maybe a Russian picked it up, I don't know.

62.21 **DB: But you've lived with that all that time.**

MS: Yes. And then when I went to school, to Cranbrook, Justin he'd never kept those paintings but he'd been very influenced by Van Gogh.

DB: So that came through.

MS: He didn't keep his pictures. Well, everyone was even. Though Dame Edna Everage [comic persona] was rather insulting about the popularity of Van Gogh in suburbia, he actually achieved everything that he set out to do.

DB: So Garry's just come back in and we were just talking about the Yellow House. Were you involved with that at all, Garry?

GS: A little bit.

MS: He was, in the second chapter in a way, weren't you?

GS: Yes.

MS: You painted over George Gittoes' room which probably caused a great deal of controversy. And I never saw what you made in there, really. Did you take photos of it?

GS: No, I didn't. Did I ruin his room?

MS: No, not ruin it, I'm sure, but it was a magnificent room that George had done, magnificent.

GS: That's probably why he's had it in for me ever since.

MS: Yes. Well, I'd say so.

GS: That's right. I thought it was a bit overpowering.

MS: Yes. Well, see, when I came to the end of working at the Yellow House it was just an exhaustion and George; he encouraged me to close it down in fact.

64.06 GS: Did he?

MS: Yes. And I didn't mind, actually, because I was exhausted and I flew off to London with nothing in my pocket to see Little Nell [Nell Campbell, night club owner], which was a mistake because I didn't have a studio there any longer, so really my sort of season in London had ended at that stage.

DB: So you stayed there for a while and came back?

MS: Yes.

DB: And was it about that time that you were commissioned to do Luna Park, to do the face?

MS: Well, that's why I came back in fact. Well, I'd come back once or twice because I kept moving so I got to the point where I was only happy in the aeroplane. You know the feeling, I'm sure. Because you've got obligations at this end and this end; and you get a nice, quiet meal and can look out the window.

GS: All your troubles are left down there.

MS: Yes. And, yes, then I got an invitation via Margaret Fink [film producer], really - well, from Leon Fink [businessman] - to paint the entrance to Luna Park and then we did a lot of work there together, of course.

DB: Together, yes.

MS: Yes.

DB: Had you been involved with Luna Park before that?

MS: Not really, no, not much. Garry told me that Arthur Barton [fairground artist] was Australia's greatest expressionist. He did a lot of the artwork, but he had his tongue in his cheek, but I didn't and I took him seriously, you see.

GS: No, I didn't. I was serious.

MS: You were serious? Yes.

GS: Oh, kind of serious.

MS: No, he was right.

DB: I love his work.

MS: He was exceptional. For a fairground artist he's the way, and I got a lot from him how to do posters and everything but that was before when he was working at the Easter Show.

66.08

Him and Fred Schweickle, I think, who was the bandleader at Luna Park; they had a stand there. It was a scaffolding high off the ground and they had huge sheets of paper pinned up and they'd paint advertisements, in seconds, and they'd tear them down and then do another one; they were creating right in front of your eyes. And I learnt how you do lettering through that.

GS: Really.

MS: They'd do it, the shape that the letters were held, and then they'd break it up into the number of letters and then they'd fill in the edges of the squares or rectangles to make out which letter they were. So that always stayed with me.

DB: And they were used for advertising posters, were they, those posters?

MS: Yes. One I remember, of course, the clearest of all, was Tarzans Grip which was a popular glue, and still is, and that's from school days, Tarzans Grip. You see, that's pop art for you immediately, you know.

DB: It's there. Yes, that's right, that's absolutely right.

MS: Yes. I did a painting based on that too.

GS: Was that Tarzan pulling the jaws up?

MS: Yes.

GS: That's a painting, some Victorian painting, or late Victorian.

DB: So you designed the face [Luna Park]? Is that the same face that's there now?

MS: I didn't design it. I repainted the face that was there.

DB: You physically repainted it?

MS: Yes.

DB: And did you change it at all?

MS: Yes, yes. I made it into a clown with makeup. Before, it had been pink.

DB: Had been pink?

MS: I did eye shadow on it which was a bit dark, I felt; I wasn't happy with that. Well, the idea was initially to just do it as it was, but they wanted something different so we certainly did something different.

68.13 GS: It was horrible before; it was kind of sinister.

DB: There was a very ugly one in Melbourne, wasn't there, or still is?

MS: Still is, yes.

GS: This one changed a lot. During the war it had a Japanese look.

MS: That had a horrible face. Then Arthur Barton gave it a wonderful happy face.

GS: Yes, but you gave it a beautiful face.

MS: And by then it was sagging a bit so I did this sort of - - -

GS: Joyous face, it was.

MS: I've got pictures of that anyway, somewhere. But it always worried me. If I look across the harbour I'd think, "Mm, that looks a bit sinister. It looks like it's got horns". Then I began to see it for what it really was.

DB: So that's not the one that's there now or is it?

MS: No, no, no.

DB: They've changed it again since?

MS: Several times.

DB: I saw it going across the harbour at one stage. I knew they'd changed it.

MS: There's one at the Powerhouse. It's not mine at all.

DB: Not yours?

MS: No. Just the colour scheme was mine. They had a surfboard manufacturer who thought he could do it with fibreglass, but no one matched Arthur Barton's sculpture.

DB: No. It's a shame. Did you stay involved with Luna Park for very long?

MS: I'm still involved indirectly, you know what I mean. I mean, I'm studying it and we had a big campaign about that for 'Save Luna Park'; got very involved with the legal side, aspects of truth about that matter which Kate McClymont [journalist] actually mercifully wrote a good article in the *[Sydney Morning Herald]* when one of Abe Saffron's [organised crime figure] nieces said that that fire [1979], no one was meant to get hurt, which linked – I knew about the involvement there and that had always been involved.

70.21 **DB: It was such a tragedy, wasn't it?**

MS: But it was so symbolic, that tragedy. That's what's the outstanding thing about it. That's a whole other interview.

DB: Yes, it is, I know. I won't go into that. But how do you feel about Luna Park now, though, when you see it now?

MS: No, I don't like it now.

DB: No. It's changed so much, hasn't it?

MS: But the great part of it is where there is some Arthur Barton there, and Coney Island, that place at the end - - -

DB: It's still there.

MS: - - - was a great place and a great nuisance because the developers always wanted to get over that and they did use that Big Dipper to jump over the top of it, you see, to get to the land behind it which has always been the ambition.

DB: That's right, yes.

MS: But Kingo's there; he's been fighting like a trouper.

DB: He's still doing it, Peter Kingston [artist]?

MS: Incredible.

DB: And just to finish off, have you got projects? The work that I can see here, the Magritte-based one, that's going in a show?

MS: This one. Well, yes. This is a show called 'Graceland'.

DB: Damien Minton, is it?

MS: Yes, it's Damien's gallery but it's a painting I exhibited in an art exhibition I had in 1973, I think. So I've exhibited it a number of times and I always thought it was an outstanding picture. You can ask me to

explain. I couldn't explain what it means because I think that's why it is a great picture.

72.05

But I've analysed it very well. Like you know how people set up their easels in front of famous paintings and do their versions of it? This is one of those that I've done except I have seen the original in New York – it's quite small – but I call it 'Graceland' because even when I was doing it at the time I thought "Boy, there's a hint of Elvis there".

DB: Yes, that's true, that's true. It's got those features, hasn't it?

MS: Yes, and it's called the 'Song of Love' [de Chirico], the picture itself, which is very suitable, and it was the painting that inspired Magritte in fact and I think it's the mother of pop art and of surrealism, that picture. It is big, though.

GS: It's too big. I didn't realise it's so big when I took it out.

MS: God, it's bigger than – wow.

DB: Garry's just come in with his portrait of Martin. [exhibited in the Archibald Prize 2012]

MS: Yes. Fantastic. Characters, you know.

DB: So this is a huge portrait, actually, Garry. It's enormous.

GS: Isn't it?

DB: And it's got Luna Park behind and all the figures in the front.

MS: Yes. There's Tiny Tim, Mickey Mouse, Jiminy Cricket, Moe, Popeye, Ginger Meggs and then the figures from [Eadweard] Muybridge's from the Magic Theatre Oz.

DB: Of course.

MS: Muybridge's figures there.

DB: It looks amazing. Have you seen it?

MS: I've never seen it physically before. I've seen photos of it.

GS: I didn't realise it was so big.

DB: You'd forgotten how big it was, Garry. It looked smaller in the gallery, I've got to say.

MS: It's enormous.

DB: It is wonderful.

MS: It's great. It's the most like me too of the ones you've done, yes.

74.03 GS: Yes.

MS: But he did one which is down in the pub in Double Bay now when he was here.

DB: Really? I haven't seen that.

GS: That's right. That's that one.

MS: Yes, that's a beauty.

GS: And the other one's in the National Portrait Gallery Canberra].

DB: It's beaut, looks fantastic. So where are you going to put it?

MS: No. I almost shipped it back to Stuart [Purves, director of Australian Galleries] and I thought "Oh, he won't take it".

GS: No, he won't want it. I wonder if we can give it to some regional gallery or portrait gallery, see if they're interested.

MS: Yes.

DB: I'll leave you alone now.

MS: See, it's a big story. Once you start to open it up it just goes on and on and on.

DB: In fact, I could talk to you for hours and hours and hours but I won't overdo it with you but I just want to say thanks so much for it and it's great to see you're still working and everything. How do you feel about your overall sort of body of work that you've done in your life – are you happy with it?

MS: Well, it ebbs and flows. I've still got a lot to do. Art or being an artist has led me into a whole lot of different areas where I've had to apply the same principles that one learns from drawing and painting and having exhibitions and I've still got a lot to do and people come to say to me "What are you doing? Are you having an exhibition?" I say, "Well, you're sitting in it". So I'm studying my own work all the time, I'm studying other people's work. I'm trying to solve like with that Henry Lawson [writer] picture which has come to me as a very important thing and that's led me into studying Henry, learning a lot about Henry Lawson or learning more than I ever knew about Henry Lawson.

76.16 **DB: So this is the photograph we think is '30s?**

MS: Yes. We're having it exhibited.

DB: Yes, at the National Art School. But it's a photograph of Henry Lawson in the Gardens - - -

MS: Yes, Botanical Gardens.

DB: - - - talking in front of a group of people.

MS: Yes. The person he's talking to is out of frame, in fact, but he's having a discussion there and you can see the audience is looking this way and that. But I'm still very interested in the symbolism of Luna Park, of everything that's happening, I'm very curious and very interested. And Tiny Tim [performer], of course, all the work I did; I did an enormous amount of work with Tiny which has got to be preserved with tapes and things like that. You've got to keep adjusting to the modern technologies and it's taken a long time. Well, I think one of the reasons why I was sick, I did too much and I exhausted myself.

DB: Did too much at once, yes.

MS: Have you found somewhere for it?

GS: Back outside.

MS: No.

DB: Well, just to finish off I want to say thank you very much, Martin. That was fantastic. We're just going to leave it there.

MS: Thanks, Deborah.

DB: It's been really, really good.

MS: It's been wonderful through your book, 'Hope in Hell', really connected me back to the art school in a big way, and I'd like to start off just by giving you my first print of this drawing of looking out the window from St Vincent's [Hospital] across to my alma mater there, the National Art School. Incredible to be trapped behind those windows and looking out yearningly to the life of the living people outside, the well people, and then actually getting back to join them again it's a bit of a miracle.

DB: It is a miracle, it's absolutely wonderful. Well, thank you so much, Martin.

MS: Thanks so much, Deborah.

Interview ends