CHERI GAULKE: AN ORAL HISTORY

Interviewed by Jane Collings

Completed under the auspices
of the
Center for Oral History Research
University of California
Los Angeles

CONTENTS

CHERI GAULKE

CURRICULUM VITAE

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND COMMISSIONS

2004 Public Art Commission, City of Lakewood, California (50th anniversary Legends of Lakewood project)

2003 Public Art Commission, Bridge Improvement Program, City of Los Angeles (design 3 bridges over L.A. River)
Induction into the UCLA Oral History Program, interviewed by Dr. Jane Collings
Award from Veteran Feminists of America, National Art Club, New York

2001 Public Art Commission, Lake View Terrace Branch Library, City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Dept.
Keynote Address, Making a Difference, art educators conference, Kutztown University, Pennsylvania

1998 Bronze Apple, from National Educational Media Network Apple Awards Film and Video Competition, Oakland,California, for "'tweens"
Runner-Up, Non-Fiction category, Sony's Visions of U.S. national video competition at American Film Institute, for "'tweens"

1997 Commission, from Exploris Museum, Raleigh, North Carolina, to create a 12-monitor video installation about the Cape Fear River, opening 1999

1996 Grant, from the City of Pasadena Cultural Planning Division, to partially fund a video about coming-of-age
Second Place, University of Oregon Queer Film Festival, for "Out Loud"

1995 Certificate of Appreciation, from the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles, awarded at About Production's Interdisciplinary Arts Caucus at UCLA
Runner-Up, Non-Fiction category, Sony Visions of U.S. contest, for "Sea of Time"

1994 Grant, from the Brody Arts Fund, California Community Foundation, to partially fund "Out Loud"
Grant, from the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, to partially fund "Out Loud"

1993 Public Art Commission, Metro-Rail Station Design for Avenue 26 on the Pasadena Blue Line, Metropolitan Transit Authority, Los Angeles

1992 Media Artist Residency, Burbank High School, Burbank, California, funded by Warner Brothers

1991 Artist Residency, Women's Studio Workshop, Rosendale, New York, for the production of an artist's book
Grant, from the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department to create an artist's book about the LA River

1990 Project Commission, from the Los Angeles Festival for "Busz Words," a series of posters for city buses
Project Commission, from Women's Studio Workshop, NY for a newspaper insert into the *Woodstock Times*

1989 Second Prize, Daniel Wadsworth Memorial Video Festival, Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut for "Medusa's Beauty Secrets" (collaboration with Kathleen Forrest/Sue Maberry)
Video Commission, from the Woman's Building for "Diane Gamboa, Artist," with funding from the National/State/County Partnership for the Arts and the Cultural Affairs Dept. of the City of Los Angeles (collaboration with Sue Maberry)
Media Artist Residency, Wilson High School, Los Angeles, California, funded by the California Arts Council, Rockefeller and Andy Warhol Foundations (1989-1992)

1988 Interdisciplinary Grant, from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation administered through LACE, partial funding of "Circus Moon" performance (collaboration with Ruth Ann Anderson, Anna Homler, Deborah Oliver)

Artist's Access Award, Long Beach Museum of Art, partial funding of "Medusa's Beauty Secrets" video

1987 Artist Residency, at Yellow Springs Institute, Chester, Pennsylvania, to develop "Circus Moon" performance
Video Commission, for "Our Lady of L.A.," from the Woman's Building with funding from the City of Los Angeles, Telecommunications Dept. (collaboration with Kathleen Forrest/Sue Maberry)

1986 VESTA Award, from the Woman's Building, in recognition of significant contributions to performance in southern California

1985 Artist-in-Residence Grant, from California Arts Council to direct "The Postcard Project: Celebrating Our Heroines" at the Woman's Building (1985-1983)

1984 L.A. Top 40 in the *L.A. Reader*, recognizing "people who make a difference in L.A. culture, politics, and entertainment"
Artists' Book Commission, to Sisters Of Survival for "Memento Mori," from the Woman's Building with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts
Artist's Book Commission, for "Paradise," from the Woman's Building with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts

1983 Individual Artists Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts

SOLO AND TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

1999 "You Can Hear It Singing: A Journey Down the Cape Fear River," permanent video installation, Exploris, Raleigh, North Carolina

1994 "VideoLACE presents Cheri Gaulke," Ruth Bloom Gallery, Santa Monica, California

1991 "Busz Words - Public Art from Los Angeles," CEPA gallery exhibition and on a public bus, Buffalo, New York

1990 "Busz Words," RTD buses citywide as part of the Los Angeles Festival, Los Angeles, California; Highways, Santa Monica, California; William Grant Still Arts Center, Los Angeles, California; The Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California
"ImPRESSive Women," Westlake School for Girls, Los Angeles, California
"El Sereno Serenade," video and mixed media installation, El Sereno Senior Center, Los Angeles, Calfornia (collaboration with Wilson High School students)

1989 "Bound to Please," video and mixed media installation, Beyond Baroque, Venice, California
"L.A. River Project," video and mixed media installation, California State University, L.A. (collaboration with Wilson High School students)

1985 "Anatomy of Worship," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California (with Deborah Kruger)

1984 "End of the Rainbow," Franklin Furnace, New York, New York (with Sisters Of Survival); University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts

1983 "End of the Rainbow," Social and Public Arts Resource Center, Venice, California
"Sisters of Survival," Galerie Polit Art, Nijmegen, Holland

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2003 "High Performance: The First Five Years, 1978-1982," curated by Jenni Sorkin, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, California
Veteran Feminists of America, National Art Club, New York, New York

2002 "High Performance: The First Five Years, 1978-1982," curated by Jenni Sorkin, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

2001 “Environmental Interactions,” Kutztown University, Pennsylvania
“The World from Here: Treasures of the Great Libraries of Los Angeles,” UCLA Hammer Museum, LA

2000 “Downtown,” curated by Joy Silverman and Karen Atkinson, Side Street Projects, Los Angeles, California
“Watermarks: Art Inspired by the L.A. River,” Eagle Rock Community Cultural Association, California

1999 “Pros and Protégé’s: Los Angeles Artists and the Youth They Mentor,” Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California

1998 “Keeping Track of the Joneses,” The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York

1997 “Home Is Where the Heart Is: Our Family Values,” curated by Cassandra Langer, White Columns, New York
“Propaganda,” Side Street Projects, Santa Monica, California
“Los Angeles: At the Center and On the Edge-Thirty Years of Protest Posters,” Track 16 Gallery, Bergamot Station, Santa Monica, CA; Laband Art Gallery, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles

1996 “Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago’s Dinner Party in Feminist Art History,” Armand Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
“Women in Action: Artistic Evidence,” University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach
“Gender, fucked,” curated by Catherine Lord and Harmony Hammond, Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle, Washington
“Open Book,” W. Keith and Janet Kellogg University Art Gallery, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, California
“Alt.Youth.Media,” The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, New York
“Discovering the River: Perspectives on the L.A. River Watershed,” Los Angeles Public Library

1995 “Sense of Loss: Feathers and Footprints,” California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, California
“Community Properties,” curated by Dan Talley, Huntington Beach Art Center, Huntington Beach, California (catalog)
“A Family Affair: Gay and Lesbian Issues of Domestic Life,” Atlanta College of Art Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia (catalog)
“Taking Root in Water,” California State University, Los Angeles, California
“50 Years Hiroshima,” Side Street Projects, Santa Monica, California
“Women’s Studio Workshop XX Years: Hand Printed Artists’ Books from New York,” Esvelt Gallery, Columbia Basin College, Pasco, Washington

1994 “In Terms of Time,” curated by Ruth Weisberg and Rabbi Laura Geller, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara, California; Fresno Art Museum, Fresno, California (catalog)
“Fragile Ecologies: Artists’ Interpretations and Solutions,” De Cordova Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts; Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida; Laguna Museum of Art, Laguna Beach, California; Arvada Center for the Arts, Arvada, Colorado
"Family Album," curated by Betty Ann Brown, California State University, Fullerton, California
“Family Values,” El Camino College Art Gallery, El Segundo, California
“Multiple World,” curated by Peter Frank and Judith Hoffberg, Atlanta College of Art Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia
“Nasty,” curated by Dorrit Fitzgerald Rawlins, Stuart Katz’ Loft, Laguna Beach, California (catalog)
“Obsession and the Artist’s Book,” curated by Susan Sayre Batton, Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies, Los Angeles, California
“WSW XX Years - A Retrospective,” State University College Art Gallery, New Paltz, New York

1993 “Fragile Ecologies: Artists’ Interpretations and Solutions,” Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, Washington; San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, California; San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, California; Salt Lake Art Center, Salt Lake City, Utah; Madison Art Center, Madison, Wisconsin
"Natural Dialogue," curated by Baile Oakes, California Crafts Museum, San Francisco, California
"Cross Currents: Bookworks from the Edge of the Pacific," The Hoffman Gallery, Oregon School of Arts and Crafts, Portland, Oregon
"Artists' Writing Reading Room," Side Street Projects, 18th Street Arts Complex, Santa Monica, California

"Shaped Structures: Bookworks in Form," curated by Judith Hoffberg, Palos Verdes Art Center, Rancho Palos Verdes, California
"Artists' Books 1979-1993: A Selection from Women's Studio Workshop," Harper Collins Publishers, New York, New York
"Fifty-First Western Books Exhibition 1992," organized by the Rounce and Coffin Club, catalog, La Sierra University, Riverside Campus, Library, California; Honnold/Mudd Library, The Libraries of the Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, Irvine; University of Houston Libraries, Texas; Boise State University Library, Idaho; California State University , Long Beach, Library; University of Texas at Austin, General Libraries; University of Arizona Library, Tucson; Tarlton Law Library, University of Texas at Austin; Santa Rosa Junior College Library, Santa Rosa, California; University of California, Riverside; University of Washington Library; University of Texas, El Paso; University of California, Santa Barbara
“Forms of Attention,” the M.Y.T.H. series at the Brewery, Los Angeles, California
“Book Arts from the Southland,” Okeanos Press, Berkeley, California
“Artists Consider the Environment,” The Forum Gallery, Jamestown, New York

1992 "Fragile Ecologies: Artists' Interpretations and Solutions," curated by Barbara Matilsky, The Queens Museum of Art, Flushing, New York and subsequently circulated nationally by SITES-Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, catalog by Rizzoli
"Smog: A Matter of Life and Breath," curated by Kim Abeles, California Museum of Photography, Riverside
"Communitas: The Feminist Art of Community Building," curated by Betty Ann Brown and Elizabeth Say, California State University, Northridge, California (installation with Sue Maberry), catalog
"Completing the Circle: Artists' Books on the Environment," curated by Betty Bright, Minnesota Center for the Book Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota, catalog
"A Look at the Los Angeles River," Artspace Gallery, Woodland Hills, California
"L.A. Art Fair," Los Angeles, California
"Cross Currents: Bookworks from the Edge of the Pacific," Selby Gallery, Ringling School of Art and Design, Sarasota, Florida
"Fifty-First Western Books Exhibition 1992," organized by the Rounce and Coffin Club, catalog, Occidental College Library, Glendale, California; Pasadena Public Library, Pasadena, California; Rio Hondo College Library, Rio Hondo, California; Library, California State University, Northridge, California; Book Club of California, Los Angeles, California; University of Tulsa, Oklahoma; Sutro Library, San Francisco, California; Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon; California Polytechnic State University Library, Pomona, California
"Fiftieth Western Books Exhibition 1991," organized by the Rounce and Coffin Club, catalog, Loma Linda University Library, Riverside, California (catalog); University of Arizona Library, Arizona ; Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont Colleges, California ; University of Tulsa Library, Oklahoma ; Library, University of California, Los Angeles, California ; General Library, University of California, Irvine, California; Library, University of California, Riverside, California ; Boise State University Library, Idaho; University of Washington Library, Washington; Library, California State University, Long Beach, California; General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin, Texas; Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, California

1991 "Environmental Legacies: Countdown to the Millennium," curated by Nancy Ann Jones, The Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California
"ACTS: Artists Contributing to the Solution," curated by Suvan Geer, The Woman's Building, L.A., California
"Artists Celebrate Lesbian Visibility Week II," Double K Gallery, West Hollywood, California
"Fiftieth Western Books Exhibition 1991," organized by the Rounce and Coffin Club, catalog, Occidental College Library, Los Angeles, California (catalog); Rio Hondo College Library, California ; California State University Library, Northridge, California ; The Book Club of California ; Santa Rosa Junior College Library, Santa Rosa, California; Sutro Library, San Francisco, California; Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon; California Polytechnic State Univ. Library, Pomona, California ; Whittier College Library, California
"Boundless Vision: Contemporary Bookworks," curated by Judith Hoffberg, The San Antonio Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas
"Cross Currents: Bookworks from the Edge of the Pacific," curated by Judith Hoffberg, California State University, Hayward, California
"Burning in Hell," curated by Nancy Spero, Franklin Furnace, New York, New York
"California Artists' Books," curated by Jay Belloli, The Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California

1990 "Sanctified," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
"Apples and Oranges," University Art Gallery, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California
"Cross Currents: Bookworks from the Edge of the Pacific," curated by Judith Hoffberg, College of Creative Studies Gallery, University of California, Santa Barbara
"Taking Liberties," curated by Deborah F. Lawrence, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
"Blessed Oblivion," Museum of Neon Art, Los Angeles, California
"Committed to Print," New York State Museum, Albany, New York; Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California
"A Southern California Decade: An Exhibition of Contemporary Books, 1980—1989," University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles, California (catalog)
"A Southern California Decade: An Exhibition of Contemporary Books, 1980—1989," Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Kennedy Library, Department of Special Collections, San Luis Obispo, California (catalog)
"A Southern California Decade: An Exhibition of Contemporary Books, 1980—1989," University of San Francisco, Gleeson Library, Department of Secial Collections, San Francisco, and Mills College Library, Department of Special Collections, Oakland, California (catalog)
"Artists and the Environment," curated by Jay Belloli, The Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California
"Artists Celebrate Lesbian Visibility Week," Double K Gallery, West Hollywood, California

1989 "The Postcard Project: Celebrating Our Heroines," Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio; Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut; California State University, Bakersfield, California
"Committed to Print," Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta, Canada; Peace Museum, Chicago, Illinois
"A Book in Hand," curated by Judith Hoffberg, Arvada Center for the Arts, Arvada, Colorado
"Women Fine Press Publishers in Los Angeles," Oviatt Library, California State University, Northridge
"The 48th Exhibition, Western Books 1989," Occidental College Library, Los Angeles, California (catalog)
(traveled throughout the Western States)

1988 "Committed to Print," Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York (catalog); University Art Galleries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio
"The Postcard Project: Celebrating Our Heroines," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California; Bumpershoot Festival, Seattle, Washington
"Members Salon," juried by Tressa Miller, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
"Having Our Cake," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

1987 "The Annuale," LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), Los Angeles, California
"The Postcard Project: Celebrating Our Heroines," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California; Bronx River Art Center, Bronx, New York
"Books Without Bounds," curated by Judith Hoffberg, Irvine Fine Arts Center, Irvine, California
"Bookworks: Art from the Page," curated by Judith Hoffberg, Salem Art Association, Salem, Oregon
"Lively Arts: Video and Performance," curated by Christine Tamblyn, part of "Passages: A Survey of California Women Artists, 1945 to Present," Fresno Arts Center and Museum, Fresno, California

1986 "Small Liberties," Soho 20 Gallery, New York, New York

1985 "Secular Attitudes," Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
"Experimental Bookworks," Brand Library, Glendale, California
"Eighth Annual Downtown Artists Show," juried by William Olander, LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), Los Angeles, California

1984 "Exchange of Sources: Expanding Powers," Art & Architecture Gallery, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut
"Women's Caucus for Art Juried Show," juried by Melinda Wortz, L.A. Harbor College
"L.A. '84," Brand Library, Glendale, California (S.O.S. photo won first place)
"From History to Action," juried by Lucy Lippard, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles
"Women Speak Out on the Nuclear Issue," Vida Gallery, San Francisco, California
"1984: Big Brother is Watching," Women's Studio Workshop, Rosendale, New York; The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

"Southern California Women Writers and Artists," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
"Correspondence Art," Artemis Gallery, Denver, Colorado

1983 "Exchange of Sources: Expanding Powers," Exploratorium, California State University, Los Angeles; California State College/Stanislaus, Turlock, California
"Fallout Fashion," The Exploratorium, California State University, Los Angeles
"All's Fair: Love and War in New Feminist Art," (S.O.S.) curated by Lucy Lippard, Hoyt L. Sherman Gallery, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
"At Home: Artists' Books," Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California

1982 "Post Romance: Artists' Valentines," Windows on White, New York, New York
"Bookworks by Artists," (S.O.S.) Masters Gallery, San Diego State University, San Diego, California
"A Decade of Women's Performance Art," Mandeville Center, University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California
"The Nancy Reagan Fashion Show," Printed Matter, New York, New York
"Los Angeles/New York: Urban Activist Art," Social and Public Art Resource Center, Venice, California
"Movable Type and Hand Held Lives (artists' books in the performance mode)," Beyond Baroque, Venice, California

1981 "L.A./London Lab," Franklin Furnace, New York, New York
"The Sum of the Parts," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
"California Performance Now," Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois
"Liberty and Justice For All," (F.A.W.) Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, Santa Ana, California
"Towards an Oppositional Culture," (F.A.W.) New American Movement Convention, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
"Art and Society: Bookworks by Women," Beyond Baroque, Venice, California
"Death Walk," Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, California

1980 "A Decade of Women's Performance Art," Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, Louisiana
"The Art of the Woman's Building," Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois; The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

V I D E O — S I N G L E C H A N N E L S C R E E N I N G S

1999 “Leaps of Faith,” screened as part of “L.A. Woman,” The Brewery, Los Angeles
“Sea of Time,” Vancouver Queer Film and Video Festival, Vancouver, Canada

1998 “Out Loud,” Inaugural Exhibition, The Village at Ed Gould Plaza, Los Angeles, California; numerous screenings booked nationally by Frameline Distributions

“'tweens,” National Educational Media Network Festival, Oakland, California; Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, California

1997 “‘tweens,” Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California
“Out Loud” excerpt in seventh annual Women in the Director’s Chair Festival Tour, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

1996 “Out Loud,” University of Oregon Queer Film Festival. Eugene, Oregon
San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, San Francisco, California
Society for Photographic Education National Conference, Los Angeles, California
Memories of Overdevelopment: Philippine Diaspora in Contemporary Art, UC Irvine, California
Women in Action: Artistic Evidence, University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach
Without Alarm: Public and Private Security, Lincoln Heights Jail, curated by the Arroyo Arts Collective, Los Angeles, California (excerpt)
Out Fest ‘96: The Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
San Francisco International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
Adam Baran Honolulu Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, Honolulu, Hawaii
ARS DIGITALis Hochschule der Kuenste Berlin (HDK) (excerpt)
electra 96...videofestival, Henie-Onstad Kunstsenter (excerpt)

ROOTS Festival, Hull, U.K. (excerpt)
New Visions Festival, Glasgow, Scotland (excerpt)

1995 “Out Loud,” Mix ‘95, 9th New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film/Video Festival (excerpt), Sao Paolo Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, Brazil (excerpt), Johannesburg Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, South Africa (excerpt)

“Sea of Time,” 9th London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, London, England; NO-TV & Movies #14: Alternative Views on Film and Video, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, NY; Dallas Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, Dallas, Texas; Fifth Annual Inside/OUT Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festival of Toronto, Canada; "Personal Best: The Work of Mark Niblock-Smith,” Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, California

1994 “Eyes on the World Video Series,” Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, California
“Sea of Time,” AFI National Video Festival, Los Angeles, California; San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, San Francisco, California; Big Muddy Film Festival, Carbondale, Illinois; Charlotte Film and Video Festival, Charlotte, North Carolina; Personal Portraits: Mothers and Daughters, ATA, San Francisco, California; Light Pools ‘94, MCAD Gallery at Calhoun Square, Minneapolis, Minnesota; 12th International Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film and Video Festival, Los Angeles, California; Queer Articulations: 4th Princeton Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Film Festival, Princeton, New Jersey; Re:Solution Video Arts Annual, curated by Carole Ann Klonarides, Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies; European Media Art Festival, Osnabruck, Germany; Ruth Bloom Gallery, Santa Monica, California; LACE Annuale, curated by Bill Horrigan, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions; Summer Nights in Silverlake Video Festival, Los Angeles; Reel Affirmations 4: DC’s 4th Annual Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Films, Washington, DC; 14th Chicago Lesbian & Gay International Film Festival, Chicago, IL; The 5th Hong Kong Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Hong Kong; Day Without Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California; In Memory Of...,Power in America series, Santa Monica, California

1992 "Pillar of Smoke," L.A.X., LACE, Los Angeles, California

1991 "Medusa's Beauty Secrets," Seventh Annual International Women's Day Video Festival, Boston, Massachusetts (excerpt); Forbidden Language: Beauty and Culture, Southern California Women's Caucus for Art Annual Conference, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California

1990 "Medusa's Beauty Secrets," Lesbian Video Festival, EZTV, West Hollywood, California

1989 "Diane Gamboa: Artist," (collaboration with Sue Maberry) exhibited as part of "Eyes on Art" at the Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California; AFI National Video Festival, Los Angeles, California; Pasadena Community Access Corporation, and citywide during L.A. Freewaves video festival
"Medusa's Beauty Secrets," exhibited at the Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California; EZTV, Los Angeles, California; The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California; LACE Annuale, curated by Miriam Kaiser, Los Angeles, California; ATA in San Francisco, California; Frameline Presents, San Francisco Cable TV (collaboration with Kathleen Forrest and Sue Maberry)
"Leaps of Faith," exhibited on 4 cable stations throughout Los Angeles as part of "The Woman's Building presents..."

1988 "Medusa's Beauty Secrets," 1708 East Main in Richmond, Virginia ; Second Prize, Daniel Wadsworth Memorial Video Festival, Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut; and with "Our Lady of L.A.," Goddesses on TV, EZTV, West Hollywood, California
"Celebrate...," video installation exhibited at the Woman's Building (collaboration with Sue Maberry)

1987 "Our Lady of L.A.," LACE Annuale, Los Angeles, California (collaboration with Kathleen Forrest and Sue Maberry); The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California; EZTV, Los Angeles, California; San Francisco International Gay and Lesbian Video Festival
"Invocation," work-in-progress. The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

1985 "Leaps of Faith," Cal State Northridge

1979 "Eclipse in the Western Palace," exhibited throughout Australia and New Zealand with tapes from the Los Angeles Women's Video Center

P E R F O R M A N C E

1992 "Burning the Bush," Highways, Santa Monica, California

1991 "Fire is Not Sated with Wood," Projects U.K., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England

1990 "Hey, Jesse! You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet," The Church in Ocean Park, Santa Monica, California
"Who's Burning America?," media performance, LA County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California (collaboration with Charles Sherman)
"Eve's Fall," Veteran's Auditorium, Los Angeles, California

1988 "Circus Moon," Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, California
(collaboration with Ruth Ann Anderson, Anna Homler, Deborah Oliver)
"Circus Moon," reading from a work-in-progress, Hot and Sticky, Wallenboyd Theatre, Los Angeles, California

1987 "Virgin," (with Christine Papalexis) Contemporary Arts Center, Kansas City, Missouri (premiere); Franklin Furnace, New York, New York; Church in Ocean Park, Santa Monica, California

1985 "Revelations of the Flesh," commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art, performed at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Los Angeles, California
excerpt from "Revelations of the Flesh," UCLA, Los Angeles, California

1984 "Leaps of Faith," University of California, Los Angeles, California
"Ascension," Five-Minute Performance Olympics, Orwell Memorial Performance Space, Los Angeles, California

1983 "This is My Body," Franklin Furnace, New York, New York; Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois; WARM Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota ; Church in Ocean Park, Santa Monica , California

1982 "This is My Body," Espace DBD, Los Angeles, California (premiere)
"The Human Canvas," International Festival of Masks Parade, Los Angeles, California
(with performance students from California State University, Long Beach)

1981 "Broken Shoes," Franklin Furnace, New York, New York

1980 "Broken Shoes," Public Spirit Performance Series, DTLA, Los Angeles, California (premiere); Downtown Center for the Arts, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, California; Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois; Berkeley Moving Arts, Berkeley, California (as work-in-progress)
"The Passion," A Month of Women's Performance Art, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California (collaboration with Nancy Angelo)

1979 "Ghostdances of Rosebud Hall," Raymond Rose Hall, Pasadena, California
(with performance students from The Woman's Building, Los Angeles)
"An Oral Herstory of Lesbianism," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
(collaboration with Jerri Allyn, Nancy Angelo, Leslie Belt, Chutney Gunderson, Brook Hallock, Sue Maberry, Louise Moore, Arlene Raven, Catherine Stifter, Cheryl Swannnack, Christine Wong, and directed by Terry Wolverton)
"Easter," L.A. Women's Video Center, Los Angeles, California (collaboration with Nancy Angelo)

1978 "Wu is Me," for Great American Foot Show, Junior Arts Center, Municipal Arts Gallery, Los Angeles, California
"She is Risen Indeed," four-day performance for Connecting Myths series, artist's studio, Pasadena, California
"Birthday Dance," Raymond Rose Hall, Pasadena, California

1977 "The Shoes Fit," College Art Association Conference, Hilton Hotel and The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
"The Red Shoes, The Big Feet of the Empress Tu Chin, and Mud," WARM Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota

"Talk-Story," La Mamelle, San Francisco, California
"The Red Shoes," audio performance for CLOSE Radio, KPFK, Los Angeles, California
"Die Liebestod," for Three Weeks in May, artists' studio, Pasadena, California
(collaboration with Barbara Smith)
"Four Gone Conclusions," artists' studio, Pasadena, California
(collaboration with Nancy Angelo, Barbara Smith)

1976 "For Patty Hearst (and Other Snake Goddesses Trying to Reclaim Their Power)," artist's studio, Pasadena, California
"Cinderella Walk," Pasadena City College, Pasadena, California (collaboration with Barbara Bouska)
"The Mattress on the Pea," American Theatre Association Conference, Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, California (collaboration with Tyaga)
"The Mattress on the Pea," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

1975 "The Other Side Show," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
(collaboration with Barbara Bouska, Katja Biesanz, Peggy Loewenberg, Sue Thorman)
"The Last Feat," Gallery Indiscreet, Minneapolis, Minnesota (collaboration with Barbara Bouska)
"Gift Event: Winnebago," Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota
"A Three Part Performance Rite for the Festival of Lupercalia," Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota (collaboration with Barbara Bouska)
"BFA: A Greek Tragedy," Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota
(collaboration with Barbara Bouska)

1974 "Limited Dance Company," Edinburgh International Festival of the Arts, The Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland (collaboration with Ltd. Dance Co.)
"Spoons," Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota
(collaboration with Barbara Bouska)

PERFORMANCES WITH SISTERS OF SURVIVAL

Founded in 1981. Collaborative performance art group focusing on anti-nuclear issues. S.O.S. initiated "End of the Rainbow," a three-part project including a European tour in Spring 1983. Other members are Jerri Allyn, Nancy Angelo, Anne Gauldin and Sue Maberry.

1985 "At Home in the Nuclear Age?" Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California; California State University at Bakersfield, California

1984 "At Home in the Nuclear Age?" University of California, Los Angeles, California

1983 "At Home in the Nuclear Age?" (premiere) Haunted Womanhouse, Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California
"Public Action," Women's Peace Camp, Greenham Common USAF Base, Newbury, England; The Dom, Amsterdam, Holland; Plein 44, Nijmegen, Holland; Kunstler fur den Frieden, West Berlin, Germany; Centru Hin Hieles, Tigne, Malta; Junior Lyceum for Boys, Malta; Covent Garden Piazza, London, England
"Toronagashi," Social and Public Arts Resource Center and the Venice Canals, Venice, Calif.
(in collaboration with L.A. Artists for Survival)

1982 "Twist for Life Habit," for U.N. Second Special Session on Disarmament, New York City street march
"Work in Progress," The February 26th Movement: An Inaugural Event, New York Political Art Documentation/Distribution, New York, New York
"Shovel Defense," City Hall, Los Angeles, California; Federal Building, Westwood, California; Social and Public Art Resource Center, Venice, California; El Camino College, Torrance, California; Santa Monica College, Santa Monica, California (in collaboration with Marguerite Elliot)
"One Thousand Cranes," Target LA: The Art of Survival, Los Angeles, California
(in collaboration with Asian Americans for Nuclear Disarmament)

PERFORMANCES WITH FEMINIST ART WORKERS

Founded in 1976. Collaborative performance art group incorporating techniques of feminist education into participatory performance structures. Other members are Nancy Angelo, Candace Compton, Vanalyne Green, Laurel Klick.

1981 "Heartbeats," for LA/London Lab, Franklin Furnace, New York, New York
"Heaven or Hell?" for Thanks But No Thanks, Church in Ocean Park, Ocean Park, California

1980 "Bills of Rights," College Art Association/Women's Caucus for Art Conferences, New Orleans, Louisiana; Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

1979 "Winging Victoriously," plane tour/performance from Los Angeles to San Francisco, California
"Heaven or Hell?" National Women's Studies Association Conference, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

1978 "This Ain't No Heavy Breathing," telephone performance, Connecting Myths, Pasadena, California
"Draw Your Own Conclusions: Know on 13," Music Center, Los Angeles, California
"Pieta Afloat," for Alternative Artspaces Conference,
Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
"Bastet, Nekhbet, Wadjet," Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California
"To Love, Honor, Cherish...," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
"Traffic in Women: A Feminist Vehicle," bus tour/performance from Los Angeles to Las Vegas

1977 "Nothing To Say," Chicago Art Institute, Chicago, Illinois
"Heaven or Hell?" Mama Peaches, Chicago, Illinois
"On The Road," Midwest Women Artists Conference, Saugatuk, Michigan

A R T I C L E S , B O O K S , A N D R E V I E W S (about the artist)

2003 BROWN, Betty. "Re(con)figured Tableaux: Postmodern Images of the Sacred," ArtScene, February

2002 SCHUBERT, Mary. "Sculptures Add Form to Light Rail's Function," Pasadena Star-News, Dec. 13

2000 HAMMOND, Harmony. *Lesbian Art in America: A Contemporary History*, Rizzoli, ill.
MONTANO, Linda. *Performance Artists Talking in the Eighties*, University of California Press, ill.

1998 MAVOR, Anne. "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Mom," Hip Mama, #16, p. 16-19, ill.
MESKELL, Lynn. "Oh My Goddess: Archeology, Sexuality and Ecofeminism," *Archeological Dialogues*, England, ill.

1997 BINGHAM, Larry. "Students Chronicle Life on the Cape Fear River," *Fayetteville Observer-Times*, North Carolina, July 31, ill.
BLEVINS, Ken. "River Explorers," *Morning Star*, Wilmington, North Carolina, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "River of Images," *The Independent*, Raleigh, North Carolina, August 20-26, ill.
COTTER, Holland. "Home is Where the Heart Is: Our Family Values," *The New York Times*, June 27
GRAHAM, Lanier. *Goddesses*, Abbbeville Press, p. 267, ill.
SCUDAMORE, Alisa. "Feminism and the Book Arts at the Woman's Building, Los Angeles," *JAB*7
SOLOMON, Alisa. "Heather Has No Mommies: Gay Parenting," *Out*, Dec/Jan 1997, p. 110, ill.

1996 Anonymous. "Gender...," Art Review, What's Happening, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, July 5
BROWN, Betty Ann. "Cheri Gaulke in Conversation with Betty Ann Brown," *Expanding Circles: Women, Art & Community*, Midmarch Arts Press, New York, p. 263-275
JONES, Amelia. *Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Feminist Art History*, UCLA at the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center in association with University of California Press, ill.
LORD, Catherine. "Unsolved Crimes: Sex, Gender and Dykes," *Gender, fucked*, exhibtion catalogue, Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle, Washington, ill.
MAVOR, Anne. *Strong Hearts, Inspired Minds: 21 Artists Who Are Mothers Tell Their Stories*, Rowanberry Books, Portland, Oregon, p. 183-195, ill.
MESKIMMON, Marsha. *The Art of Refelection: Women Artist's Self-Portraiture in the Twentieth Century,* Scarlet Press, England, ill.
MUTEN, Burleigh. *Return of the Goddess 1997*, Stewart, Tabori, & Chang, New York, ill.

SAY, Elizabeth. “Cheri Gaulke and Sue Maberry’s ‘Thicker Than Blood: Portrait of Our Lesbian Family’,”*Expanding Circles: Women, Art & Community*, Midmarch Arts Press, New York, p. 276-278
ROMANO, Tricia. “Gender Fucked?,” The Daily of the University of Washington, July 10
VERDUGO, Kenneth John. “Identifying the Zeitgeist, Shades of Black and Community Response,” *NoMoPoMo*, Spring, p.22, ill.

1995 TALLEY, Dan R. “Community Properties and Personal Perspectives,” *Community Properties*, exhibition catalog, Huntington Beach Art Center, Huntington Beach, California, p. 16-17

1994 BROUDE, Norma and Mary D. Garrard. *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact*, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., ill.
COYNE, Eric. “Times of Your Life,” *The Fresno Bee,* April 4
DARLING, Michael. “Coming to Terms with ‘Time’,” *Santa Barbara News-Press*, January 21
FRANK, Peter. “Video Pick of the Week,” *L.A. Weekly,* March 18-24
LACY, Suzanne. *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art,* Bay Press, Inc. , ill.
SKIOLD, Ann. “Ars Longa, Vita Brevis,” *The Independent*, February 3
SMITH, Lynn. “A Sharper Reception,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, ill.
WALSH, Daniella B. “Family Potrait is Found in Art,” *The Orange County Register*, Sept. 30, p. 79
WILSON, William. “‘Fragiles Ecologies’: Working to Keep the Green Green,” *L.A.Times,* August 5, p. F21

1993 ALFARO, Luis. "Cheri Gaulke Speaks in Rituals," *Square Peg*, March/April, ill.
FARR, Sheila. "Good Medicine: Fragile Ecologies at the Whatcom Museum of History and Art," *Artweek*, March 18, ill.
JONES, Nancy Ann. "Documents of Community: Extended Associations in Los Angeles," *Visions*, Spring, ill.
LUMPKIN, Libby. "The Bridal Sublime: A History of the Wedding Gown," *Art Issues*, May/June, ill. only
STEINMAN, Louise. "Cheri Gaulke at Highways," *Visions,* Spring, ill.

1992 BRESLAUER, Jan. "Woman's Building Lost to a Hitch in 'Herstory'," *Los Angeles Times*, January 7
BRIGHT, Betty. *Completing the Circle: Artists' Books on the Environment*, Minnesota Center for Book Arts
BROWN, Betty Ann and Elizabeth Say. *Communitas: The Feminist Art of Community Building*, Art Galleries, California State University, Northridge, California
HESS, Elizabeth. "Gallery of Trash," *The Village Voice*, October 6, ill.
KAPITANOFF, Nancy. "Women and Oneness," *Los Angeles Times*, August 28, ill.
KING, Susan E. "California Artists' Books: A Re-View," *Calligraph,* Vol. 15, No. 1, ill.
LOYND, Ray. "Another Solo Odyssey in 'Burning the Bush,'" *Los Angeles Times*, May 22
MATILSKY, Barbara C. *Fragile Ecologies: Contemporary Artists' Interpretations and Solutions*, Rizzoli, ill.

1991 Anonymous. "Burning the Flag," *The Face*, October, ill.
Anonymous. *Artemisia at Fifteen Years, 1978-1988*, Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
FOSTER, R. Daniel. "A Playbook for Performers," *Los Angeles Times*, August 4
FRANK, Peter. "Environmental Legacies: Countdown to the Millenium," Art Pick of the Week, *L.A. Weekly*, May 31 - June 6
GODDARD, Dan. "San Antonio Exhibits Are Two for the Books," *San Antonio Express*, September 15
HENKELS, Margaret. "Inserts," *The Binnewater Tides*, Winter, ill.
HOFFBERG, Judith. "The Art of the Artist's Book," *Artweek*, June 6, illustration
LYNCH, Sheila. "The Future is Here," *Artweek*, May 9
O'BRIEN, John. "Into Site, Into Mind: Place and Message in Los Angeles Installations," *Visions*, Fall, ill.
OSBORN, Barbara. "All But the Obvious," *In These Times*, January 16-22
SADOWNICK, Doug. "Bewitched, Bothered, But Not Bewildered," *The Advocate*, November 5, ill.
SNOW, Shauna. "Artists' Varied Visions of Our Legacy to Earth," *Los Angeles Times*, April 22
THOMAS, Kevin. "Academy to Mark Film Centennial," *Los Angeles Times*, October 21 (LA River Project)

1990 Anonymous. "Artists Protest Helms," *Los Angeles Times*, November 5

Anonymous. "Armory Center Shows 'Artists and the Environment,'" *L.A. Times*, San Gabriel Edition, April 21
ANDREOLI-WOODS, Lynn. "Fresh Water for the Los Angeles River," *The Reader*, April 20
APPLE, Jacki. *Doing It Right in L.A.: Self-Producing for the Performing Artist*, Astro Artz and Fringe Festival/Los Angeles
APPLEFORD, Steven. "L.A. Festival Project Displays Artwork and Spreads Social Commentary on RTD Buses," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 2, ill.
BERNSTEIN, Richard. "Is It Censorship to Deny a Grant?" *New York Times*, July 18
BRESLAUER, Jan. "'Women's Work': New Role Models," *Los Angeles Times*, May 24
CARR, C. "This Witch-Hunt's for You," *The Village Voice*, Febbruary 2
CHIARMONTE, Paula. *Women Artists in the United States: A Selective Bibliography and Resource Guide on the Fine and Decorative Arts*, 1750-1986, G. K. Hall & Co., Boston, Massachusetts
COHEN, Belissa. "Look Don't Touch," LA Dee Da, *L.A. Weekly*, November 9-15, ill.
CRAIN, Mary Beth. "Lady Be Bad," *L.A. Weekly*, November 2-8
CURTIS, Cathy. "Medium Explored as Political-Awareness Tool," *Los Angeles Times,* Sept. 24
DAIGLE, Katie. "Art Teacher Explores Relationship with Nature through Religion," *Westlake PI*, Nov. 14, ill.
DART, John. "Offbeat United Methodist Church Caters to Avant-Garde," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 3
FRANK, Peter. Art Pick of the Week, "The L.A. River Project," *L.A. Weekly*, May 10
HONG, Grace. "J. Helms' Nightmares Shown in 'Muff 'n Stuff'," *Daily Bruin*, Nov. 8
KARYS, April. "Fruits of Their Labor," *San Luis Obispo (Calif.) Telegram-Tribune*, Nov. 17
KNODE, Helen. "The Witches Next Door," *L.A. Weekly*, Jan. 19-25, ill.
LAZZARI, Margaret. "Rooms with a View: Recent Installation Art around Southern California," *Visions,* Fall
MUCHNIC, Suzanne. "A Plea and Visual Punch in 'Artists and the Environment," *Los Angeles Times*, April 13
MURDOCK, Maureen. *The Heroine's Journey: Woman's Quest for Wholeness*, Shambala Press, Boston
ORENSTEIN, Gloria. *The Reflowering of the Goddess*, Pergamon Press
O'TOOLE, Lawrence. "Where Neon Comes of Age," *New York Times*, Feb. 4, ill.
PARACHINI, Allan. "Conflict of Interest Issue in NEA Grants?" *Los Angeles Times*, July 27
SANDERS, Leah. "Performance Artist Expresses Political, Social Convictions through Multimedia Form," *The Westlake PI*, March 21, ill.
SKOLD, Walter. "NEA Paints Veil of Secrecy on Art Works Felt to be Obscene," *New York City Tribune*,
Feb. 5, ill.
SNOW, Shauna. "Mayor Blasts NEA, Awards $3 Million in City Funds," *Los Angeles Times*, July 12
SNOW, Shauna. "Preliminary Open Festival List Shows a Happy Hodgepodge," *Los Angeles Times*, July 25
SNOW, Shauna. "A Show on Behalf of Artists' 'Liberties'," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 10
ZINDER, Jac. "The Naked Truth," *L.A. Weekly*, Nov. 16-22

1989

APPLE, Jacki. "Circus Moon" *High Performance*, Spring #45, ill.
BROWN, Betty Ann and RAVEN, Arlene. *Exposures: Women and Their Art*, photos by Kenna Love, New Sage Press, ill.
BROWN, Betty. " Autobiographical Imagery in the Art of Los Angeles Women," *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, Midmarch Arts Press, New York
CLEGG, Nancy. "Book'em," *Westword*, Nov. 15-21
GADON, Elinor. *The Once and Future Goddess*, Harper and Row, ill.
HEREDIA, Rick. "Two Feminists Express Opinions Through Art," *Bakersfield Californian*, Jan. 22, ill.
ISOLDE, Ann. "The Inner View," Southern California Women's Caucus for Art *Journal,* January-February, ill.
LOEFFLER, Carl E. and TONG, Darlene Tong. *Performance Anthology: Source Book of California Performance Art*, Updated Edition, Last Gasp Press and Contemporary Arts Press, ill.
PAYNE, Robert. "Shoe Fetish," *Artweek*, Dec. 21, ill.
RAVEN, Arlene. "A Remarkable Conjunction: Feminism and Performance Art," *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, Midmarch Arts Press, New York, ill.
TAMBLYN, Christine. "Spectacular Visions: Video Art," *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, Midmarch Arts Press, New York (citation)
WILDING, Faith. "The Feminist Art Movement Southern California Style, 1970-1980," *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, Midmarch Arts Press, New York (citation)

1988 Anonymous. "Circus Moon Rises Over Laguna Art Museum," *Arts*, Sept. 2, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "Circus Moon," program essay, Laguna Art Museum, ill.
BUTLER, Kateri. "Lunar Tunes, Event Pick of the Week," *L.A. Weekly*, Sept. 23-29, ill.
BUTLER, Kateri. "The Woman's Building Celebrates Sweet 15," *L.A. Weekly*, Nov. 4-10, ill.
CURTIS, Cathy. "Three Phases of This Moon," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 26, ill.
FRANK, Peter. "Art Pick of the Week," *L.A. Weekly*, Sept., ill.
GEER, Suvan. "Changes of the Moon," *Artweek*, Oct. 29, ill.
HYNDMAN, Robert. "LAM Premieres Circus Moon," *Daily Pilot Date Book*, Sept. 23, ill.
KNODE, Helen. "Video Pick of the Week" (Medusa's Beauty Secrets), *L.A. Weekly*
LIEFF, Linda. "The Postcard Project," *Heresies,* ill.
MARGOLIS, Judith. "The Book as Concept," *Artweek,* January 9
MILLER, Daryl H. "The Postcard Project Wishes You Were Here," *Daily News*, Aug. 26, ill.
RAVEN, Arlene. *Crossing Over: Feminism and Art of Social Concern*, UMI Research Press
RAVEN, Arlene, (et al). *Feminist Art Criticism*, UMI Research Press
SADOWNICK, Doug. "Honest to Goddess," *L.A. Weekly*, ill.
SCHMALTZ, Jim. "A Church Reaching Further," *Los Angeles Times*, December 4
TUCHMAN, Laura. "Celebrating the Moon's Mystery," *Orange County Register*, Sept. 18, ill.
VENTURA, Jan. "Resurrecting the Goddess," *L.A. Weekly*, March 11-17
WYE, Deborah. *Committed to Print: Social and Political Themes in Recent American Printed Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (Sisters Of Survival)

1987 Anonymous. "Awards," *Artweek*, Sept. 5
Anonymous. "Like a Virgin," *L.A. Weekly*, July 17-23, ill.
ARKATOV, Janice. "Celebratory Projects Go in Search of 'A Woman's Place'," *L.A. Times*, Sept. 24, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "Beyond the Studio," *L.A. Weekly*, May 1-7
BURNHAM, Linda. "Our Lady of L.A.," *High Performance*, Issue 39, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "The Postcard Project," *L.A. Weekly*, September 4-10
CRAIN, Mary Beth. "Video Pick of the Week—Our Lady of L.A.," *L.A. Weekly*, July 24-30
CRANE, Robert. "Facing the Facts," *L.A. Style,* December, ill.
DEWEY, Lucia. "Dance Spectrum," *Dramalogue*, June 4-10
GEER, Suvan. "Stamping on Fertile Ground," *Artweek*, September 26, ill.
LEADER, Jody. "Visions Inter-Arts Program Had Difficulty with Site Lines," *Daily News*, May 10, ill.
MILLER, Darryl H. "Women Artists Seek the Whole Picture," *Daily News*, January 14, ill.
MUCHNIC, Suzanne. "'Annuale': Recognition, Not Coherence, is Point," *Los Angeles Times,* September 26
RAVEN, Arlene. "Cheri Gaulke with Christine Papalexis," *New Art Examiner*, June
RAVEN, Arlene. "Cheri Gaulke," *ArtScene*, July/August, ill.
RAVEN, Arlene. "Rare Book Collection," *The Women's Review of Books*, April, ill.
REVEAUX, Tony. "A Merging of Mediums," *Artweek,* April 18
SANDFORD, Mariellen R. "Cheri Gaulke and Christine Papalexis," *High Performance*, # 38, ill.
SEGAL, Lewis. "An Un-Sitely Beginning to 'Park Plaza' Series," *L.A. Times*, May 9

1985 APPLE, Jacki. "Performance," *L.A. Weekly*, May 30
BAKER, Jill. "Religion Oppresses Women," *Downtown News* (L.A.), January 21, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "Body Double," *High Performance*, Issue 30
FITZGERALD, Dorit Kirk. "The Magic of Altars," *Artweek*, February 16, ill.
FRENCH, David Stevens. "An Eclectic Selection," *Artweek*, May 11
GREENE, Jennifer E. "Councils of the Goddess and the Feminine Fire," *Reader*, Nov. 1
HOFFBERG, Judith. "From Saints to Sinners," *High Performance*, Issue 1985, ill.
JAMES, David. "A Case of Blaspheminism," *Artweek*, June 1, ill.
KAPLAN, Margaret Hall. "Buchanan, Gaulke Round out Eclectic Spring Explorations," *The Contemporary*, Winter/Spring, ill.
LASAROW, Bill. "Cheri Gaulke, Deborah Kruger," *ArtScene*, January, ill.
MUCHNIC, Suzanne. "Attitudes: Art Shading into Politic," *L.A. Times*, March 14, ill.
RICO, Diana. "Controversial Show Looks at Sexuality and Religion," *Daily News*, January 8, ill.
WELCHMAN, John. "Secular Attitudes," *ARTnews*, May

1984 Anonymous. "Sisters Of Survival," *We Will Not Be Disappeared: Directory of Arts Activism*, Cultural Correspondence, ill.
BAKER, Jill. "Report from California: Olympic Art," *Women Artists News,* Summer , ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "Ten Top Performances of 1983," *High Performance*, Issue 24

BURNHAM, Linda. "Haunted Womanhouse," *High Performance*, Issue 24
CARROLL, Charles Francis. "A Sister Speaks Out," Univ. of Massachusetts/Amherst *Collegian*, Feb. 23
KIM, Jennifer. "A 'Leap of Faith' for Feminism with Gaulke," *UCLA Bruin*, March 7, ill.
MABERRY, Sue. Cover Photo, *High Performance*, Issue 22
VENTURA, Michael. "Nature in Ourselves," *High Performance*, Issue 26, ill.
WOLVERTON, Terry. "Taking the Leap," *Artweek*, ill.

1983 Anonymous. "Hot Shorts," *High Performance,* Issue 24, (3 citations)
BANES, Sally. "Body Talk," *Village Voice*, April 19
BURNHAM, Linda. "Ten Top Performances of 1983," *High Performance,* Issue 24
BURNHAM, Linda. "A Haunting Night," *High Performance,* Issue 24, p. 71, ill.
COCKCROFT, Eva. "Addressing the Nuclear Threat," *Artweek*, September 17, ill.
CRAIN, Mary Beth. "My Body, Myself," *L.A. Weekly*, March 18-24, ill.
DIAMOND, Darcy. "Art in the Combat Zone," *Theatre L.A.,* June/July, ill.
KORT, Michele. "Critic's Choice," *The Reader*, March 4, ill.
MCGEE, Lynn. "Survival Habits," *The Reader*, March 25, ill.
NORKLUN, Kathi. "The Body Politic," *Artweek*, May 14, ill.
RAVEN, Arlene. "Passion/Passage," *High Performance*, Issue 21, ill.
WOLVERTON, Terry. "At Home at the Woman's Building," *High Performance,* Issue 24 (p. 67, citation as performance series curator)

1982 Anonymous. "Artists Protest Civil Defense," *The NOW Times*, June, ill.
ADAMS, Don and GOLDBARD, Arlene. Report from SPARC's Activist Artist Advance, *Cultural Democracy*, July-August
BALLATORE, Sandy. "Why Bother?" *Images & Issues*, September/October, ill.
HICKS, Emily. "Target L.A.: L.A. Artists for Survival," *ArtCom*, No. 18, ill.
LACY, Suzanne. "Organizing: The Art of Protest," *Ms*., October, ill.
LIPPARD, Lucy. "How Cool is the Freeze?" *Village Voice*, June 15, ill.
LUMBARD, Paula. "Cheri Gaulke at Espace DBD," *Images & Issues*, September/October, ill.
RODRIGUEZ, Fidel. "Grupo de Artistas Critican Planes de Defensa Civil," *La Opinon*, May 11, ill.
WALCZAK, Larry. "Artists' Valentines," *Soho News*, Feb. 10-16, ill.
WOLVERTON, Terry. "Art, Politics and Intention," *Artweek*, July 3

1981 CHAPLINE, Claudia. "A Month of Women's Performance Art," *Artist News*, April-May, ill.
COLLINS, Da. "Generating Experience," *Artweek*, Dec. 19, ill.
HAYE, Bethany. "Broken Shoes," *The Soho News*, March 25, ill.
LIEBMAN, Lisa. "Performance Notes," *FUSE*, November/December, ill.
ROTH, Moira. "We'll Think of a Title When We Meet: L.A./London Lab," *Artforum*, Summer
SCHULDT. "Soho Women's Performance," *The Drama Review*, Summer, ill.
WELLES, Elenore. "Liberty and Justice for All," *Artist News*, Winter
WELLES, Eleanore. "Searching for Justice," *Artweek*, Oct. 3

1980 Anonymous. "Experimental Performance Month at the AUA Downtown Center, Albuquerque," *Artspace*, December, ill.
BONESTEEL, Michael. "The Art of the Woman's Building," *The New Art Examiner*, May
BUCHANAN, Nancy. "Sure Footed Balancing," *Artweek*, July 5, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "Performance Art in Southern California," *Performance Anthology*, Contemporary Arts Press, ill.
FRUEH, Joanna. "The Women's Room," *The Reader* (Chicago), April (red shoes installation by Gaulke incorrectly attributed to Arlene Raven)
ISKIN, Ruth. "Politics and Performance in New Orleans," *Artweek*, March 22
LACY, Suzanne. "Battle of New Orleans," *High Performance*, Summer, ill.
ROTH, Moira. "A Star is Born," *Performing Arts Journal*, No. 12
ROTH, Moira. "Autobiography, Theatre, Mysticism, and Politics: Women's Performance Art in Southern California," *Performance Anthology*, Contemporary Arts Press, ill.
SKILES, Jacqueline. "Feminist Art: Protest and Politics in the 70's," *Women Artists News*, March
WILDING, Faith. "How the West Was Won: Feminist Art in California," *Women Artists News*, March

1979 ASKEY, Ruth. *Women Artists News*, April, cover ill.
BONDI, Federico/Mariarcher, Giovanni. *La Calzatura Della Riviera del Cavallini*, Italy, ill.
BURNHAM, Linda. "Performance Art in Southern California," *High Performance*, Oct., ill.

BURNHAM, Linda. "An Oral Herstory of Lesbianism," *High Performance*, Winter 1979-80, ill.
GREEN, Vanalyne. "L.A.'s Feminist Art Workers," *Sister*, April/May, ill.
MINNS, KMC. "Moving Out Part Two: The Artists Speak," *Spinning Off*, May, ill.
MUCHNIC, Suzanne. "The Artist as Activist for Feminist Events," *L..A. Times*, Sept. 3, ill.
VALENTINE, James. "Punk Meets Cunt," *Slash*, Summer

1978 BANES, Sally. "Performance Art in California...," *The Soho News*
MARGOLIES, Barbara. "Art Meets Life in Las Vegas," *Feminist Communications*, June, ill.
MOISAN, Jim. "McKee's Setting, Gaulke's Performance" *Artweek*, March 25
ROTH, Moira. "Toward a History of California Performance Art: Part Two," *Arts*, June
STRASSBERG, Evelyn. "American Artists Honour Ancient Temples," *The Sunday Times of Malta*, Aug. 6, ill.

1977 Anonymous. "More Art," *Runes*, August
ROSS, Janice. "Cheri Gaulke's Talk-Story," *Artweek*, November 5, ill.
TONELLA, Karla. "Feminist Artists Sharing and Support," *The Arts Biweekly*, August 1

1976 WILDING, Faith. *By Our Own Hands*, Double X, ill.

P U B L I C A T I O N S (by the artist)

1998 quoted in *High Performance*, The Last Issue, #76, p. 4

1996 “Thicker Than Blood: Portrait of Our Lesbian Family,” page art in *Expanding Circles: Women, Art & Community*, edited by Betty Ann Brown, Midmarch Arts Press, New York, p. 279-280, ill.

1995 *Sea of Time*, text from the videotape, FRAME-WORK, Volume 7, Number 2, published by Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies
“Families Next Door,” artists’ statement in the *Community Properties* exhibition cataolg, Huntington Beach Art Center, Huntington Beach, California, p. 38-39, ill.

1992 *Moved by Desire,* page art, Southern California Women's Caucus for Art *Journal*, Winter issue

1991 *Impediment*, letterpress and silkscreen artist’s book produced during a residency at Women’s Studio Workshop, Rosendale, New York, edition of 200

The Los Angeles: River Inside a River, letterpress and offset artist’s book, published with a grant from the City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Dept., edition of 400

1990 *Sanctified*, letterpress artists' book commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art
(in collaboration with Bonnie Thompson Norman, Ellen Sebastian, Betye Saar) edition of 500
Face It!, bus poster commissioned by the Los Angeles Festival, edition of 400
Face It!, newspaper insert into the Woodstock Times, commissioned by Women's Studio Workshop, Rosendale, New York
"Muff 'n Stuff: A Lesbian Performance Series," catalog essay, All But the Obvious, LACE
(Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), Los Angeles, California

1989 *Inside My Closet*, letterpress artists' book (with girls from Plaza de la Raza), edition of 150

1988 *Astounding Alphabet Stories*, artists' book (with the outstanding kids from Plaza de la Raza), edition of 150
The 1989 Great Women Calendar, letterpress calendar (with kids from Plaza de la Raza), edition of 500
Nancy Spero, letterpress artist's book/catalog for Museum of Contemporary Art
(with Bonnie Thompson Norman, Nancy Spero) edition of 1000
"The Function of the Arts in Culture Today," *High Performance,* Issue 40

1987 "Viva la Vida," letterpress postcard (with Nancy Jones), edition of 500
"Celebrating Our Heroines," letterpress postcard, edition of 200
"Apsara," letterpress postcard, edition of 500
"End of the Rainbow," 4-color offset postcard (with S.O.S.), edition of 1,000

1985 "Secular Attitudes," (S.O.S.) exhibition catalog page, L.A. Institute of Contemporary Art
"Something is Clouding Your Future," billboard, edition of 5 (with S.O.S.)
"At Home in Women's Performance Art," essay in *The House of Women: Art and Culture in the Eighties*, conference proceedings edited by Sondra Hale, California State University, Long Beach

1984 *Sisters Of Survival's Memento Mori*, artists' book, letterpress with color photographs, edition of 50
"Memento Mori," postcard, gold-foil stamp and letterpress, edition of 400 (with S.O.S.)
Paradise, artist's book, letterpress on wood veneer, edition of 44

1983 "Fallout Fashion," silkscreen poster, edition of 100
"Art/Protest/L.A.: Target L.A.," article in *High Performance,* Issue 21, ill. (with Osah Harmon)
"End of the Rainbow," Sisters Of Survival exhibition catalog
"Covent Garden," offset postcard, edition of 300 (with S.O.S.)
"At Home in Women's Performance," essay in *At Home* exhibition catalog, Long Beach Museum of Art,
Long Beach, California

1982 "Bills of Right, diazo poster (with Feminist Art Workers)
"Broken Shoes," page art, Franklin Furnace *The Flue*, Summer, ill.
"End of the Rainbow," brochure for Sisters Of Survival, ill.
"One Thousand Cranes," offset postcard, edition of 500 (with S.O.S.)
Shovel Defense, artists' book, color xerox, edition of 100 (with S.O.S.)
"S.O.S.," offset postcard, edition of 500 (with Sisters Of Survival)
"This is My Body," offset postcard, edition of 500
"Heartbeats," page art, Franklin Furnace *The Flue*, Summer, ill.
" Heaven or Hell?" artist statement, *High Performance*, Winter 1981-82, ill.
"This is My Body," artist statement, *High Performance*, Spring/Summer 1982, ill.
"I Will Survive," silkscreen poster, edition of 36

1981 "Equal Time in Equal Space," review, *Women Artists News*, February-March
"Heartbeats," artist statement, *High Performance*, Summer, ill. (with Feminist Art Workers)
"Heaven or Hell?" offset postcard, edition of 1,000 (with Feminist Art Workers)
"The Passion," artist statement, *High Performance*, Summer
"Sheela-na-gigs," series of three letterpress postcards (with Sue Maberry)

1980 "Bills of Rights," artist statement, *High Performance*, Fall/Winter, ill. (with Feminist Art Workers)
"Broken Shoes," artist statement, *High Performance*, Fall/Winter, ill.
"Performance Art of the Woman's Building," article, *High Performance*, Fall/Winter, ill.

1979 "Ghostdances of Rosebud Hall," artist statement, *High Performance*, June, ill.
"To Love, Honor, cherish...," artist statement, *High Performance*, March, ill. (with Feminist Art Workers)

1978 Connecting Myths," artist statement, *High Performance*, June, ill.
"Draw Your Own Conclusions: Know on 13," artist statement, *High Performance*, Sept., ill. (with Feminist Art Workers)
Once Upon A Time...A True Story About Female Sexuality, self-published book, edition of 5, ill.
"Pieta Afloat," artist statement, *High Performance*, September, ill. (with Feminist Art Workers)
"Talk-Story," artist statement, *High Performance*, June, ill.

1977 *Golden Lotus*, artist book, offset with cloth accordian binding, edition of 100

P R O F E S S I O N A L E X P E R I E N C E

1998 Peer Panelist, Visual Arts Organizations Grants, Brody Arts Fund, Los Angeles

1997 Peer Panelist, Visual Arts Organizations Grants, Getty Trust Fund for the Visual Arts, Los Angeles

1996 Juror, Artist Selection Panel, Bookmark Project, Metropolitan Transit Authority, Los Angeles, California

1994 Juror, Artist Selection Panel, Public Arts Program, Cultural Affairs Dept., City of Los Angeles, California

1993 Juror, Young People's category, Sony Visions of U.S. Video Competition, American Film Institute, Los Angeles, California

1992 Juror, Young People's category, Sony Visions of U.S. Video Competition, American Film Institute, Los Angeles, California

1991 Treasurer, Executive Committee, Board of Directors, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
Radio Show Co-Host, “Multicultural Theatre in Los Angeles,” with co-host Ed Pearl and guests C. Bernard Jackson and Daniel Kwong, KPFK, Los Angeles, California

1990 Organizer, "Busz Words" bus poster project for the Los Angeles Festival. I selected and organized 12 artists to create posters for the interior of public buses.
Co-Curator (with Phranc), "Muff 'n Stuff," national performance series in conjunction with "All But the Obvious: A Program of Lesbian Art," LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), Los Angeles, California
Co-Curator (with Anita Holguin), "El Dia de los Muertos/The Day of the Dead," exhibition, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
Building Manager, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles. Responsibilities include maintaining artist's studio rental program, bookkeeping, physical plant management, unofficial historian. Position held 1981-1990.
Member, Media Arts Committee, The Woman's Building. Responsible for curating all media arts presented by organization.
Honorary Advisory Committee, "Finding a Common Ground," Annual Conference of the Southern California Women's Caucus for Art, UCLA, Los Angeles, California

1988 Grant Panel Chair, Interdisciplinary, National/State/County Partnership for the Arts, Los Angeles
Grant Panelist, Visual Arts Program, Ohio Arts Council
Director, "Heroines Go Public: The Bus Poster Project," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles.
From 1988-89, I art directed the design and printing of six posters by 15 artists for the city buses which raise public awareness about the contributions of women to history and culture.

1987 Grant Panel Chair, Interdisciplinary, National/State/County Partnership for the Arts, Los Angeles, California
Co-Coordinator,"WAVE: Women Artists Visibility Event," sponsored by the Women's Caucus for Art to raise public awareness about discrimination against women in the arts. Included a fact-finding survey, letterwriting campaign, media performance at Los Angeles City Hall, extensive print media coverage, television and radio interviews. Results included meetings with directors and curators at LACMA and MOCA and stepped up efforts at both museums to include more work by women artists.

1986 Curator, "Earth Echoes," performance evening for a national conference on Eco-Feminism, University of Southern California
Grant Panelist, Multi-Disciplinary, National/State/County Partnership for the Arts, Los Angeles, California

1985 Curator, "Between the Worlds: The Art of Women's Altars," Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, catalog

Director, **"**The Postcard Project: Celebrating Our Heroines," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles.
From 1985-88, I facilitated 300 participants in the creation of a postcard tribute to a personal heroine including writing, designing and printing a limited edition of postcards on a letterpress. The Project culminated in an exhibition which is travelling nationally.

1983 Curator, "At Home," performance art series in conjunction with exhibition of the same name curated by Arlene Raven, Long Beach Museum of Art, catalog
Curator, "Haunted Womanhouse," an environmental performance event with 30 artists at Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California

1982 Co-Director, "Target L.A.: The Art of Survival," (1982-1983), anti-nuclear music and arts festival produced by Los Angeles Artists for Survival. Responsibilities included fundraising and administering

$30,000 annual budget, coordinating 12 curators and 300 artists, producing and publicizing the event. Target L.A. encompassed visual art, installations, "games of nuclear chance," film and video, performance art, theatre, poetry, music, and children's activities.

1981 Curator, "Performance Art of the Woman's Building," historical survey exhibition co-curated with Arlene Raven for Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois. I authored an accompanying article of the same name in High Performance.
Membership Coordinator and Publications Editor, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California. Responsibilities included maintenance of donor records, new and renewal solicitations, copywriting and art directing of all publications. Position held 1978-1981.

1980 Curator, "A Month of Women's Performance Art," performance series including New York and Los Angeles artists, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art
Director, Performance Art Program at the Woman's Building (1980-82) which included curating, administering, and publicizing the following:
—"Performance Art of the Woman's Building," survey exhibition co-curated with Arlene Raven at Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois and the Woman's Building, Los Angeles.
—"A Month of Women's Performance Art," performance series co-sponsored by Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art with performances by Disband, The Waitresses, and Vanalyne Green.
—"Post-Performance Presentation," NEA-funded Artists-in-Residency program with Helen Harrison. I authored and administered grant.
—Organized classes in performance art taught by Rachel Rosenthal and Linda Montano.

1978 Curator, "Connecting Myths: Investigations into the Sources of Violence and Sexuality," performance series co-curated with John Duncan in various locations around Pasadena, California

1976 Curator, "Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village," exhibition and gallery re-creation of two bottle structures by this important California visionary artist, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
Curator, "Feminist Performance Art," performance series for the American Theatre Association's national conference, Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, California

T E A C H I N G E X P E R I E N C E

2004 Faculty, Art Dept., Harvard-Westlake School, Los Angeles, California (Video, Photography, Drawing and Painting), 1991-present

1993 Instructor, "Public Art," Otis School of Art and Design, Los Angeles, California

1992 Instructor, "Professional Practices," Otis/Parsons, Los Angeles, California

1991 Faculty, Art Dept., Westlake School for Girls, Los Angeles, California (Drawing/Painting, 7th Grade Art), 1988-1991

1990 Instructor, "Professional Practices," Otis/Parsons, Los Angeles, California, 1990-1992

1989 Media Artist-in-Residence, HUMANITAS Program, Wilson High School, Los Angeles, California , 1989-1992
Teacher, Pasadena Art Workshops/Armory Center for the Arts (Teen Video)
Teacher, Westlake Summer School (Art)

1987 Teacher, Plaza de la Raza, East Los Angeles, California (Making Books), 1987-1989
Faculty, California State Summer School for the Arts, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California

1986 Teacher, Crossroads Summer School (Basic Video), 1986-1988

1985 Instructor, Art Dept., Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, California

1983 Faculty, Art Dept., Crossroads, Santa Monica, California (Graphic Design, Yearbook), 1983-1989

1982 Instructor, Art Dept., California State University, Long Beach, California (New Media)

1981 Director, International Summer Art Program, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

1977 Faculty, Feminist Studio Workshop, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California, 1977-1981

1976 Faculty, Summer Art Program, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California

LECTURES, WORKSHOPS, AND PANELS

2001 Keynote Address, Making a Difference, art educators conference, Kutztown University, Pennsylvania

1999 Panelist, “Collapsing Boundaries: Feminist Art Education for the New Millenium,” National Women’s Caucus for Art conference, Los Angeles

1998 Panelist. “The F Word: Contemporary Feminisms and the Legacy of the Los Angeles Feminist Art Movement,” a conference at California Institute of the Arts, Valencia

1997 Panelist, “Propaganda,” Side Street Projects, Santa Monica, California
Lecturer, “Testimony and Inspiration on the L.A. River Bank,” sponsored by California Council for the Humanities in partnership with El Pueblo De Los Angeles Historical Monument Gallery and the Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, Los Angeles

1996 Lecturer, “Dialogues on Art,” Armand Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California
Panelist, “Beyond the Backlash: Feminisms for the 1990s,” Southern California Women’s Caucus for Art conference, Armand Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California
Lecture/Workshop, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee
Panel Moderator, “Building Bridges: Forming a Gay/Straight Alliance on Campus,” Gay, Lesbian, Straight Teachers Network of Los Angeles, West Coast conference, Center for Early Education, LA

1995 Lecturer, Community Arts Partners Program, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California

1993 Lecturer, "ART: Art, Realities, Transformation," California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California
Panelist, “Dialogue of the Decades: Performance Art Then and Now,” 18th Street Arts Complex, Santa Monica, California

1992 Lecturer, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California

1991 Panelist, "Art That Makes a Difference," The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
Lecturer, "The Goddess in Art," UCLA Extension, Los Angeles, California

1990 Lecturer/Panelist, "Committed to Print" Open Forum, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California
Lecturer, "Excavating the Goddess: A Cross-Cultural Investigation," Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Panelist, "ImPRESSive Women," College Art Association Conference, New York
Lecturer, "The Goddess in Art," UCLA Extension, Los Angeles, California

1989 Panelist, "The Political Artist," College Art Association Conference, San Francisco, California
Panelist, "Politics Into Art: Ideas into Practice," Women's Caucus for Art Conference, San Francisco
Workshop, "Feminine Fragments: Limited Edition Artist's Books," California State University, Bakersfield
Workshop, "Making Books with Children," California Association of Independent Schools conference, L.A.
Workshop, "Making Books", 25 Alive! The Ford Music Center Festival, Los Angeles, California

1988 Panelist, "Religion and Art," Artists Equity Association, Los Angeles, California
Lecturer, California Institute for Women, Chino, California

1987 Lecturer, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California

1986 Panelist, "The Return and Rediscovery of the Goddess," Women's Caucus for Art Conference, N.Y.

1985 Panelist, "Secular Attitudes," College Art Association Conference, Los Angeles, California
Panelist, "Survival Issues for Women Artists," Women's Caucus for Art Conference, Los Angeles, California
Lecturer, "Women's Imagery in Art," California State University, Bakersfield, California
Lecturer, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California

1984 Lecturer, Sisters Of Survival, Eco-Feminism Conference, University of Southern California, Los Angeles
Workshop, "The Artist as Peacemaker," The Fate of the Earth Conference, Loyola Marymount University, L.A.
Panelist, "How Do Artists' Groups Serve Artists?" Barnsdall Theatre, Los Angeles, California

1983 Lecturer, "At Home in Women's Performance Art," The House of Women: A Conference of Feminist Art and Culture in the Eighties, California State University, Long Beach
Lecturer, "North American Anti-Nuclear Art," Institute of Contemporary Art, London, England; Ministry of Culture, Malta; O42 and De Feeks coffeehouses, Nijmegen, Holland; Studio Amazone, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Kunstler fur den Frieden (Artists for Peace Festival), West Berlin, Germany; University of California, Los Angeles, California

1982 Lecturer, "Artists React to Nuclear Issues," El Camino College, Torrance, California; Survival Training Institute, Los Angeles, California; Ground Zero Week, Los Angeles, California

1981 Lecturer, "Artists React to Nuclear Issues," Franklin Furnace, New York, New York; California State University, Northridge, California; University of California at Irvine, California

1980 Artist-in-Residence (worskhop, lecture, performance), Fiberworks Center for Textile Arts, Berkeley, California
Artist Talk, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California
Artist Talk, Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, California

1979 Panelist, "Eros in Art," Artists Equity Association, Los Angeles, California

1978 Artist Talk, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
Artist Talk, California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, California
Artist Talk, San Diego State University, San Diego, California
Artist Talk, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada
Artist Talk, Women Against Violence in Pornography in Media Conference, San Francisco, California
Artist Talk, California State University, Los Angeles, California

1977 Artist Talk, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Artist Talk, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana
Artist Talk, The Space, Lafayette, Indiana
Artist Talk, A Women's Coffeehouse, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Artist Talk, Lilith Bookstore, Boulder, Colorado
Artist Talk, Sonoma State College, Sonoma, California
Artist Talk, Lavendar U, San Francisco, California
Artist Talk, Berkeley Women's Health Center, Berkeley, California
Artist Talk, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, California

1976 Artist Talk, Women's Art Center, San Francisco, California
Artist Talk, University of California, Los Angeles, California
Artist Talk, California State University, Los Angeles, California
Artist Talk, Johnston College, Redlands, California

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

1978 M.A. Degree, Feminist Art/Education, Goddard College, Los Angeles, California
Artist Participant, "Edinburgh Arts," tour of British Isles and the Mediterranean, Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland

1976 Member, Instant Theatre, an avant-garde theatre company created by Rachel Rosenthal, Los Angeles, California, 1976-1977

1975 Graduate work in Performance Art and Feminist Education, Feminist Studio Workshop, The Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California
Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, Intermedia, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, Minnesota

1974 Artist Participant, "Edinburgh Arts," tour of British Isles, Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland

1973 Associate of Arts degree, Fine Arts Dept., Florissant Valley Community College, Florissant, Missouri

INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER: Jane Collings, B.A., Communications, Antioch College; M.A., Communications, University of Iowa; Ph.D. Critical Studies in Film and Television, UCLA..

TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

Place: Gaulke's office, Harvard-Westlake School, Los Angeles.

Dates of sessions: August 20 and August 21, 2003.

Total number of recorded hours: 3 hrs., 40 min.

Persons present during interview: Gaulke and Collings.

TRANSCRIPT PRODUCTION:

TechniType Transcripts transcribed the tapes.

Gaulke reviewed the transcript. She verified proper names and made minor corrections and additions.

Collings prepared the table of contents, interview history and names list. Gaulke assembled the biographical summary. The names list was assembled using an automatic marking program, and instances where persons are referred to by pronoun or inference are not included.

This interview is one of a series of interviews dealing with feminist media and art of the seventies in Los Angeles.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

The original tape recordings of the interview are in the university archives and are available under the regulations governing the use of permanent noncurrent records of the university. Records relating to the interview are located in the office of the UCLA Oral History Program.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE ONE

August 20, 2003

COLLINGS: Good morning, Cheri. Let's just get on the record when and where you were born.

GAULKE: I was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on February 28, 1954.

COLLINGS: And let's talk a little bit about your family. Do you have siblings?

GAULKE: I am the first born and I have a younger brother, four years younger, named Steven [Earl Gaulke].

COLLINGS: And what is he doing now?

GAULKE: He is a minister.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's interesting.

GAULKE: So that's kind of a significant character-shaping aspect of my family. My father [Dr. Earl Herman Oscar Gaulke] was a minister, as were my grandfather, my great-grandfather and my brother. So I come from a family of four generations Lutheran clergy, all passed through the female line. In other words, it was through my mother's [Margaret Elaine Preuss Gaulke] side that the ministers were. And so I always feel like I'm the first female in my family who broke away from that tradition.

COLLINGS: And the women, when they are like a pastor's wife, do they have sort of a de facto position in the church?

GAULKE: I think that they have an unpaid— It's always kind of baffling to me, but it's sort of like the pastor's wife seems to work quite hard, but not have a paid

position. So I think there's certain expectations. I see that now of my brother's wife [Ellen Gaulke]. She works very hard, but she doesn't earn a salary.

COLLINGS: So the wife would also need to share these values quite strongly.

GAULKE: Yes, absolutely, yes.

COLLINGS: It's understood that she wouldn't sort of go off and be a lawyer or something like that on her own time.

GAULKE: Yes, I think so. I mean, I'm sure that's changed somewhat, just as changing roles of men and women have changed in society. But, I mean, I see it with my brother's wife, doesn't have a career of her own. She actually— They met in college, and she wanted to be a minister, but she's in a denomination that doesn't ordain women. And I remember her telling me at one point that she thought when she went into college that things would be maybe different by the time she got out, but they're not.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: And my mother, I really saw how my mother supported my father. But the truth is, my father actually did not have a congregation. Very early in his career he was a teacher and a principal at Lutheran schools. Then he went through the Seminary but decided to stay in education by going into the administration of the church. He became a writer and an editor, so he, before his retirement, recent retirement, he was the vice president of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in charge of all Christian education materials— Sunday School, adult education, the whole bit.

COLLINGS: Wow. Now, is there any sort of performative aspect to the Lutheran service?

GAULKE: Lutherans are a lot drier than— I mean, I know growing up, I used to kind of envy my Catholic friends for a couple of reasons. It seemed like there was a lot more ritual. There was a lot more gold and incense in their religion. And I loved the ritualistic aspects. And also I thought it was interesting, too, just in terms of feminism, that we always had kind of a disdain for Catholics because they worshipped a woman. "How dumb can you be" kind of thing, you know, really where they worshipped Mary.

COLLINGS: Really? Oh, my goodness.

GAULKE: Mary was a mere mortal. But I think there was a part of me that really saw that there was a devaluation of the female in my particular brand of Christianity that I was raised in, and I just hate that.

COLLINGS: Did you have a lot of Catholic friends?

GAULKE: My next-door neighbor, my best friend was Catholic, so, yes.

COLLINGS: Yes, that's interesting. And you went to church all the time, I presume.

GAULKE: All the time, all the time. You know, we went to church regularly, and even though my dad was in the administration, growing up, he used to be a volunteer minister for churches that were between ministers. And it was really a fun aspect of my childhood. We would drive sometimes an hour, two hours, to some little country church in a small town in Missouri where he would preach. And one time he preached in a pulpit in a town that was very important in the Civil War, and the church had been

used as the general's headquarters during the Civil War, and the old key that my dad used to unlock the door was the same key the general in the Civil War had used. So, you know, we had a lot of interesting adventures.

COLLINGS: Did you find his sermons interesting?

GAULKE: The only one I really remember is a sermon in which he told an anecdote about me, and it was about me being a little girl and seeing a squirrel that was dead on the grounds of the seminary and asking him to put a battery in it; could he make it like run around again. You know, he would tell the story about how only God can give life, you know. Humans can't give life. But I remember being kind of embarrassed, and, you know, everybody thought I was cute.

On the other hand, I loved visiting him. I felt really special, you know. Before the service, I would go up to the little room where he was putting on his garments. There's a photograph of me when I was about four standing next to him. He's in his full garb and standing up there by the altar, and you can see how proud I am and how I really admired him.

The other thing about him preaching is that he got very emotional when he preached. I feel like I'm a lot like my dad in that way. I'm easily brought to tears, you know. I can talk about something that is emotional for me. And I used to see him kind of struggle with that, because you can't, you know, burst into tears when you're in the pulpit. You need to kind of keep that under wraps, and yet I could empathize with his feelings.

COLLINGS: Yes. And what did the robes look like?

GAULKE: They were white. Well, he wore the clergy collar. He was all in black with the white clergy collar on his way to church, and then they would put on, I believe there was a long black robe and then on top of that a white robe and then usually a kind of a— I forget what you call it, not a sash, but a thing you wear around your neck. That was usually red, but it changed for whatever season, religious season you were in.

COLLINGS: And was he sort of an emotional person in that way at home as well?

GAULKE: You know, not really, in a way. No, really, he's a very intelligent, articulate man. He wasn't really emotional. I guess there's always that sense of the emotions just under the surface.

And, you know, growing up, I felt like we were a very liberal family. We always ate our meals together. We discussed— I always felt like as a child I was treated like an adult and my opinions mattered. My father also, both my parents, taught PET, Parent Effectiveness Training. And now as a parent, having taken Parent Effectiveness Training, I kind of get it now what was going on back then, you know, and I actually like a lot of the values of it. I think the values of PET are really good, where everybody does have a voice in the family. My father was actually chosen by the man who invented PET to write a book, which was the Christian perspectives on PET that's been translated into thirteen languages. And my father did not pick this title, but the publisher picked the title for the book, which is *You Can Have a Family Where Everybody Wins*.

And in some ways, I feel like, growing up, you know, we did have a family where everybody wins, but it was only when I started kind of maybe really questioning some of the values and that I sort of broke away, that it's sort of like kind of a great irony to me now, and it's probably a bit of an irony to him, too.

COLLINGS: Yes, I think that experience is not so uncommon. It's like, you know, everything is equal when you're doing what I want you to. [mutual laughter]

Was your brother sort of steered toward the church?

GAULKE: You know, I was always the kind of more outgoing one. My brother was sort of a silent kind of more quiet force. I always thought in another family my brother could have become a Buddhist monk. He has a kind of inner peace and inner strength.

COLLINGS: How nice.

GAULKE: Although I just returned from vacation, and I saw him preach for the first time, and he has a little storefront church outside of Atlanta. He's trying to start a new congregation there. It's not going real well.

COLLINGS: There isn't a large Lutheran population there?

GAULKE: There's not. It's all Baptist country.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: And it's very difficult, and there's, I guess, some other Lutheran churches who are sponsoring his being there for five years to try to get a church started, but it's very slow going. But I got to see him preach, and it was interesting to see him in that more extroverted mode of being the one who's greeting and welcoming. In some

ways, my mother was better at that, growing up. We would always joke, you know. My dad would preach, and then the three of us would be sitting in the car, and mom would be the one out. And Dad would always say, "Mom's still shaking hands and kissing babies."

So, you know, and, again, for me as a female, I observed those things and thought, "So why isn't Mom the one being the minister?" You know, it just never quite seemed right to me, never added up.

COLLINGS: Yes. But your mom went to college, right?

GAULKE: Yes, both of my parents have— Well, my dad has a Ph.D. in educational psychology, and my mother has the equivalent of a Ph.D. She never got the degree. She did all the coursework, so she could get the raises at her job and didn't actually need to get the degree. She was a counselor at an elementary school.

COLLINGS: So this was something that, you know, your dad had no trouble with, in terms of her working outside, not supporting him totally in his church activities or something?

GAULKE: Oh, no, not at all. Yes, not at all.

COLLINGS: Okay. And what about your education as an artist? I mean, is this something that they thought was a good— Early on?

GAULKE: Yes, definitely, oh, yes. I feel like I probably showed some affinity for the arts as a very young child, and I really feel like my mother really supported me, and my mother is the one who taught me about women artists, Georgia O'Keeffe, Kathe Kollwitz, Frida Kahlo— Actually, I'm not sure she taught me about Frida

Kahlo, but the first two. And she just was so supportive of me. She would have me make posters for her at school, and I would wrap all the Christmas presents, because I did them in a creative way.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's wonderful.

GAULKE: And I would be in the 4-H Club and do art classes, and she would sign me up for classes at the Saint Louis Art Museum on Saturdays and stuff. So there was really a lot of support.

And my dad, I think, was supportive, too, maybe not as demonstratively supportive as my mother, but I feel like my dad was a role model because I knew that he had followed his passion, that he wanted to work for the church, and that was what he believed in, and so his career was a representation of his values. And he would often say, you know, he wasn't making a lot of money doing that. I definitely got the impression that we were, you know, middle class, but he may have made more money in another field.

And so, to me, the message I got was, follow your heart, you know. It's okay to have a career that is something that you believe in. It's not about the money.

COLLINGS: Yes. However, do you think that the fact that— I mean, did they feel that you were going to be able to support yourself as an artist?

GAULKE: You know, so many parents, and even me now as a parent, one of my daughters thinks she wants to be an artist, and I'm just, "Oh." [laughs] But, you know, I think that there was probably a notion that I would be a teacher, you know, that you can't really make money as an artist, but you can make money as an art

teacher, since education was such a big deal. And I know that they really wanted me to go to one of the Lutheran teachers colleges, and I feel that I sabotaged my own going to those colleges by applying late. And what happened is, I didn't get in because they'd filled their female enrollment. I guess the female enrollment filled before the male enrollment, and so there wasn't room for any more females. And a part of me always felt like I kind of didn't want to do that; I wanted to break away.

So I ended up going— I went to Lutheran schools all the way through. Well, I should say that I went to kindergarten to a public school, and I lasted about two weeks.

COLLINGS: Why was that?

GAULKE: I just wasn't happy there, and apparently I would fight. Apparently, I would lock the boys out of the playhouse, and I remember having kind of terrified memories of running, being chased by boys. And I remember there was this big beautiful tree across the play yard, and I would think, if I could only make it to the tree, I would be safe. I have a very strong memory of that.

And at the time, my mother was teaching first grade at a Lutheran elementary school, and so she asked permission of her principal for me to skip kindergarten and come into the first grade. So she was my teacher in the first grade, and then from then on I was in Lutheran schools all the way through high school in St. Louis.

And then when I sort of sabotaged my college, going to a Lutheran college, I ended up going to a community college for the first two years, Florrissant Valley Community College in St. Louis [St. Louis Community College at Florrissant Valley],

which had an excellent art department, and I really learned a lot there. And then from there, I went to Minneapolis College of Art and Design, where I got my BFA. I was there for two years.

COLLINGS: Now, did you have a specific idea that you might not want to go to a Lutheran college? Was there any special reason why you thought you might not want to do it?

GAULKE: I don't know if it was just me starting to maybe break away a little bit. I mean, I did continue to go to church into graduate school years, even after I moved to L.A.

I was very involved in the feminist art movement. I kept trying to make church work for me, and aspects of it I really liked, but what I didn't like about it was I didn't like the inequity of women, the sexism of it. I didn't like, you know, from the point of view that women couldn't be ministers, but also that somehow Eve was responsible for the fall of humankind. I mean, it just felt it was so embedded with sexism.

I didn't like the sort of bigoted aspect of it spiritually. It bothered me from a very early age. I remember asking my confirmation teacher, was it true that African tribes people who didn't believe in Jesus because they'd never heard of Jesus were going to go to hell. "Yes, they're going to hell." I couldn't accept that. That just seemed wrong to me, that a person's own belief system that came out of their life experience wasn't valid. And it bothers me today, I mean, just having spent time with

my family— They're just very— I mean, they think they've got it right, and that really bothers me.

COLLINGS: Now, do you think that this sort of perspective from outside your own culture would have had anything to do with like the Civil Rights Movement? Were you at all aware of what was going on?

GAULKE: A little bit, a little bit. One of your questions on here was about social justice. I remember in elementary school being fairly young, and our church did Vacation Bible School in a really, really, poor, the poorest neighborhood of St. Louis, which was an all-black community. And I remember just being kind of shocked at how poor people were and stuff.

So there was that, but I think probably the biggest motivating force in my life, in fact, like the bottom line for me as an artist and as a human being, is a sense of outrage about injustice of any sort, and so there's some of the civil rights there. But I think for me it's based in being a woman. And I always say that I had my first feminist thought when I was four years old. Previously I talked about that image of me with my dad as the minister and how I admired him, and I wanted to be like him when I grew up. I wanted to grow up to be just like him, which meant I wanted to be a minister. I found out when I was four that I could not be a minister, for the sole reason that I was female.

And the second thing I found out when I was four was that someday I was going to get married and I'd have to change my name, so I would not be a Gaulke anymore. And I was a proud Gaulke. Somehow I'd just take this new guy's name. I

didn't yet have the consciousness that Gaulke was my father's name, and it really wasn't a female name, either, and I was very angry and upset about those things, and so I think that's the sense, the early sense, of injustice in society and the world.

COLLINGS: Yes. Yes, I had a sort of an early experience like that. Just briefly, we were visiting Mesa Verde in kind of an Indian— I forget what tribe in Colorado, and they had a sort of a sacred hole where they did ceremonies, and only the men could go in there, you know. And I was only like five years old, and I said, "Well, I would just climb right in."

And the guide said, "Then they would kill you." [mutual laughter] Scales fall from your eyes, you know. "Oh. I see how things are set up."

GAULKE: Well, that's interesting, too, because as a child we traveled a lot through the Southwest because we— My parents actually met in California. My brother was born in California. So I was born in St. Louis and then we went to— We lived in Detroit and Los Angeles, and then we moved back to St. Louis by the time I was four. So we would, every summer, go back to California to visit friends. And I was always very influenced by Native American spirituality and stuff as a child, and I think that there was a connection with people who derived their spirituality from the earth, at an early age.

COLLINGS: I see. Because I was going to ask you about perhaps the landscape around where you grew up, because it seems like such an important part of your work.

GAULKE: Yes, yes. Oh, I love the landscape. I mean, I love the landscape in Missouri, you know, the lushness of it and the rivers and it's just such a— And you

know, going on foot. And these trips that we would make when my dad would preach in these obscure little towns, you know, we would always find whatever natural resource there was near there, you know, a stream, a river, a quarry hole, beautiful rock formations, and we would picnic. So I loved that, growing up.

And at the same time, you know, we would make these drives across the country, and I loved the flatness of Kansas and the big skies, you know. I thought people would say, "Oh, Kansas is such an ugly state."

And I'd say, "Oh, but it's so beautiful. There's something just so kind of serene about that flatness." And then I loved the desert and the stone and the colors and, you know, just all of it. You know, the earth and the landscapes are important to me.

COLLINGS: Yes, and these trips would be very important in sort of sparking an artist's sensibilities as well. That's wonderful.

Okay. So you started into community college with the idea that you were going to be an artist.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: And then graduated from there, and where did—

GAULKE: And then I went to Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and then I finally moved away from home and lived away from home then.

COLLINGS: And at that point, you were doing lithography, is that right?

GAULKE: I was, that's right. Yes, I was doing lithography, and I loved that. And actually, the lithography was all about being in love with the stone. I had a teacher

that said you had to love the stone, otherwise it wouldn't work for you. And actually the teacher [George Bartko] that taught me that was in community college, so I carried that with me to Minneapolis. And how, you know, sometimes, you know, it just didn't work, that was because you didn't have that special relationship with the stone. So he kind of had this very spiritual take on it, and I loved that. And these stones were very old, and they'd been used by other artists, and you would grind the top surface away and add your image to it.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's wonderful.

GAULKE: So I loved all that. But then what happened is, you know, in Minneapolis there's the Walker Art Center. It's really wonderful because you get this flow of artists coming from New York, and those artists would then visit our school, or we would go to the Walker and hear their free presentations or whatever.

And I remember that Frank Gillette came, and I was introduced to video for the first time, and it just blew my mind, and I just thought it was so cool. And I think that probably one of the things that attracted me to it, sort of the same thing that maybe attracted me to performance art later, was that it was a new medium that didn't have traditions that were male-dominated. Although the media, it was male-dominated, but this was not the media.

COLLINGS: Yes, especially the equipment and all that, yes.

GAULKE: Yes, this handheld equipment, which seemed— The cam— Not camcorder, this is pre-camcorder. This is—

COLLINGS: Yes, PortaPaks.

GAULKE: Good old PortaPaks. And actually Frank Gillette's work, I don't actually know a lot about his work to this day, but I remember he was doing this work where he would take these sweeping landscape videos. There was this camera that was like pivoting back and forth, and there were these landscape views. So there was this idea that you could take this portable equipment, this electronic equipment, out into nature and then record it. Now, that really attracted me.

The other artist that had an influence at that time was Peter Campus, and he came. And he was doing something different, whereas he was getting access to high-end broadcast studios, and I remember he did this piece where he would— It was a blue-screen piece or a Chromakey piece, where he was standing in front of a Chromakey screen, and he would fill the background with snow, video snow. And then he proceeded to paint himself out with the blue paint, and so he became snow. And I just loved that. I just loved that he— Again, it was spiritual. You know, it was like he became the little electrons.

And then he— I'm thinking it was Peter Campus, he did an artwork for the Walker, and they recruited a lot of students from my school to be in it. And he positioned us all over the city, and we had appointed times. It was a radio piece; it was a live radio piece. And we had appointed times that we would call in, and we would— It was like a newscast of quotes, and we would report what was going on at our corner.

COLLINGS: Oh, how wonderful.

GAULKE: And I remember that I was standing in the phone booth, and I said that it smelled like urine, like someone had just urinated in the phone booth. And so then after the whole show was over, we all met back at the Walker, and I remember he raved about me, what I had said, because he said how by evoking the— You know, it was a radio show, but by evoking a sense, how that was like such a good way to do it. So I think that really kind of introduced to me the idea of conceptual work, too, that work could exist in the mind and that you could create a framework for something that would happen. And I loved this— I guess the other thing with video is this notion of a live event, that there could be a sort of feedback or a live circuitry, kind of something going on simultaneous to the audience viewing it, sort of being created in the moment. That really attracted me.

COLLINGS: That's like the church events as well.

GAULKE: Yes, yes.

COLLINGS: Now, was this typical for you that you would say something on the radio that is like, you know, sort of, you know, like if a kid said it, you'd say, "Oh, shh"?

GAULKE: No, I wasn't particularly vulgar, but I—

COLLINGS: No, not vulgar, but just to sort of, oh, you know, to— You didn't sort of even consider sort of suppressing that and perhaps saying something about—

GAULKE: I think it was a good artistic instinct. I think that I had a sense of the drama, and what was I going to do to kind of make— I mean, because really what was

happening near the phone booth wasn't very interesting. And somehow I think it was just good art instinct.

I mean, the other thing I did live, you know, as a child, I said my mother took me to art classes at the Saint Louis Art Museum. This was, I guess, would have been the sixties, and I remember I found the classes to be boring, because what we had to do was copy the artwork, where they'd sit us down in front of the painting and we'd paint the painting, which seemed dumb to me. So what I did is I went into the central main hall of the art museum where the people come in, and I wore hot pants. Those were the days of hot pants. And I began to use the grease crayons, and I began to paint on my legs, and the flowers, and, you know, kind of like *Laugh-In*, you know those days when they used to do the body painting.

COLLINGS: Is that where you got the idea?

GAULKE: You know, I don't remember, because I almost— I don't remember if it was simultaneous. It might have been. It might have been. But the fact that I did it, and then all these people started to gather, and when my mother comes to pick me up, here I am with a crowd around me.

COLLINGS: How did she react?

GAULKE: You know, I don't recall being reprimanded or anything about that. So I think I had a bit of a flair for a performative, a bit of a performative sensibility when I was a child.

COLLINGS: Yes, it certainly sounds like it. Just one little last question about the radio thing, if you don't mind. Were you at all sort of wondering what the reaction would be to your particular report?

GAULKE: Well, I think, you know, I think I was nervous doing it. I think, you know how you get that kind of like heart palpitations and this sort clammy feeling, like I'm taking a risk here, and it may or may not work.

COLLINGS: But it did, and it worked really well, yes.

GAULKE: But it did work, yes.

COLLINGS: So that must have been really gratifying.

GAULKE: Yes, it was. Oh, back just on one more flair for the dramatic. When I was confirmed, you know it's traditional for girls in the Lutheran church to get confirmed in the eighth grade. It's traditional for girls to wear white dresses and white shoes. I wore a turquoise suit and turquoise shoes, which my mother totally supported. I said, "I don't want white shoes. I'm never going to wear them again. It's stupid, you know," I said. I was very into my Sassoon haircut and, you know, various things like that. [mutual laughter]

COLLINGS: What about fashion? Did you dress fashionably?

GAULKE: Oh yes.

COLLINGS: All throughout your growing-up?

GAULKE: Well, I loved the way my mother dressed, and she wore black a lot, and she wore very big dramatic hats. And she's still— She has impeccable taste. She's very— A snappy dresser.

And in high school, I was the first girl to stop wearing a bra.

COLLINGS: What year was that?

GAULKE: Well, I graduated from high school in ’71, so that would have been about, probably, maybe my senior year.

COLLINGS: That was very early on.

GAULKE: Yes. I actually changed the dress code in my high school.

COLLINGS: Oh, did you?

GAULKE: Girls were not allowed to wear pants, which I thought was so stupid.

COLLINGS: Yes, especially in the freezing cold.

GAULKE: I mean, give me a break, yes. And so my best friend and I, we plotted on the phone one night. And those were the days when the style was bellbottoms, but you would wear like these sort of dress-length, you know, tops, kind of tunic-y tops over them.

COLLINGS: Oh, yes, I remember those. Smocks.

GAULKE: Yes. I had this one, it was all shades of reds and hot pinks and purples, flowers.

COLLINGS: Yes. Oh, I loved those.

GAULKE: And I had these plum purple bellbottoms that I wore under it. And so my best friend, Jane, and I plotted. “We’re going to wear pants tomorrow, but we’re going to do it in a tasteful manner and show that it can be handled responsibly.” And so we just did it. And again, my mother didn’t say, “You can’t do that,” or anything. I mean, she must have known. I can’t really remember discussing it with her.

But we showed up the next day and it led to the school changing the rules and girls could wear pants.

COLLINGS: Wow, that's wonderful.

GAULKE: And so, I mean, I would get in trouble because my miniskirts would be too short, so it seemed so silly to me, you know. You're wearing a short skirt when you could have— If you're trying to be chaste or something, it was not working.

COLLINGS: So they didn't have a uniform?

GAULKE: No uniform, no, no.

And then I stopped wearing a bra probably in my senior year. And I remember my brother telling me once, and he was four years behind me, that he told somebody once, "Oh, yeah, Cheri's my big sister."

And somebody said, "Oh, the one that didn't wear a bra?" [mutual laughter] So I guess I had a reputation that continued after I left.

COLLINGS: Now was this for a feminist—

GAULKE: These were feminists. You know, I was small breasted, I didn't need a bra, you know. It was just kind of stupid. Why wear a bra, you know? And I liked the look of not wearing a bra. And I would wear these sort of, you know, fitted turtlenecks and jeans and basketball, you know, like Converse sneakers.

COLLINGS: Yes. Well, it sounds like you were a lot cooler at your high school than we were at ours. But you were a little ahead of me.

GAULKE: You know, I was very self-conscious about my body in the early high school, because I was always skinny, and I was skinny before skinny was fashionable. And I was so glad when Twiggy appeared because—

COLLINGS: Twiggy. Oh, I hated Twiggy.

GAULKE: But she had— It was like, finally, my body type was okay, you know.

COLLINGS: Yes, right. That's right.

GAULKE: I remember, you know, being mortified having a boy slap me in the chest in elementary school to make a point about how flat my chest was.

COLLINGS: Oh, how terrible.

GAULKE: And there was that song, "Who'll Take the Girl with the Skinny Legs?" I remember the captain of the basketball team, they would hang out next to my locker, and I'd go to my locker as a freshman, and they'd go, "Who'll take the girl with the skinny legs?" And I was just so humiliated.

COLLINGS: God, you know what, I just hate that. Just the thought of high school just makes me cringe.

GAULKE: Yes. So by the time I was a senior, I think I had really— I'd become more of a hippie, and it was also kind of hippie thing not wearing a bra, and just felt stronger in who I was and kind of wanted to change the world.

COLLINGS: Did you have a group of friends that shared this?

GAULKE: I did, yes. Yes. And I was— I guess I was popular. I never think of myself as a popular girl, because I wasn't like— I wanted to be a cheerleader, but I didn't have the athletic abilities. But I did campaign and became the junior class

president in high school, and I organized the junior-senior prom, which was my fantasy ever since I was a little girl. And I'm going on and on about my childhood, but—

COLLINGS: No, no. This is all really fascinating.

GAULKE: Ever since I was a little girl, I loved— My favorite building in St. Louis is the train station, Union Station. It was a beautiful—

COLLINGS: Oh, I believe I've seen it, because I've traveled into St. Louis by train.

GAULKE: Yes, well, now it's a mall. Now it's a big destination, you know, kind of tourist destination. But when I was little, we would pick my grandfather there because he refused to fly. And I loved the building, and I said, "Someday I'm going to do my prom in that building." So by the time I was in high school, it was in disrepair. It was not being used. It was like a big kind of, you know, trash, and there was one little funky restaurant that you could rent the space. And I did my junior-senior prom in that, in that train station.

COLLINGS: Wow. That's wonderful.

GAULKE: So I actually did. And I always figured I became the junior class president because I made the best posters, because I was artistic. But kids that I run into or people I run into who were classmates of mine tell me I was popular, so I guess, I don't know.

COLLINGS: So you were forging your own way, but you were by no means disaffected.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: Okay. So let's see. There you are at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: One last question about early life. Were you at all interested in movies or television?

GAULKE: I wasn't that interested in movies, so much, probably. I mean, I think I probably watched TV as much as any— I mean, I love TV. And I remember— Well, I remember seeing— What do I remember? I mean, when I was older, a teenager, I remember seeing *Woodstock* and being really interested in the split-screen stuff that they did. I loved, you know, Rock Hudson-Doris Day movies, that kind of thing.

COLLINGS: Oh, yes, yes, they're just so well made.

GAULKE: *Sound of Music*, yes, and those kinds of thing. I loved that Cary Grant, Sophia Loren *Houseboat*. I actually rented it recently and showed it to my kids. I loved that movie. So maybe movies for fantasy, but, you know.

COLLINGS: Because I was struck by when you talked about your discovery of video, it was very much a kind of fine arts, conceptual arts sort of focus.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: It didn't seem to have much to do with, you know, being a cinephile or something like that.

GAULKE: Exactly.

COLLINGS: So what about your interest in feminism? How were you sort of weaving that into your artwork in Minneapolis?

GAULKE: Oh, sure. Well, of course, there was the first feminist thoughts at age four, so it was early on something with me, and I think it started coming out more. Well, I remember in junior college— That was when Shirley Chisholm was— I was for Shirley Chisholm for president.

COLLINGS: Oh, yes.

GAULKE: And very into that. And then when I was at Minneapolis, I remember my girlfriends and I used to have the Boys Are Dumb Club, where we would wear big floppy hats with flowers on them, because we would get irritated with men and how they were.

But I was very kind of boy-crazy, man-crazy then. It was the sexual revolution and everything. But then on a political front, I was always trying to organize other female art students, and that was very difficult to do because at that time the other female art students did not want to differentiate themselves from other students, from male art students, because they saw that as a career liability. If you say, "I am woman," then you draw attention to something that's not going to help your career.

So there was great resistance, and so that was always frustrating. I actually started a student group called Community of Women Artists. I think that's what it was called now. And actually, I was involved in the early days of a group which became an established group with a gallery in Minneapolis called WARM, Women's Art Registry of Minnesota. I was involved in the early years of that.

Actually, you know what, I was involved with— I'm remembering now there was some women artists organizing in St. Louis during my Florrissant Valley days, and then I moved away. Yes, I actually was involved in some organizing there, too.

COLLINGS: Was the idea of this to bring out feminist themes in one's work, or was it more of a sort of a support group for how to deal with this male-dominated art world?

GAULKE: I think it was kind of a support group, but I think that there was also some notion that there was some different stuff going on in our work, that our work was maybe about different things, but that wasn't real developed in my thinking at that time.

And a real critical turning point was this program that was going on at St. Catherine's College in St. Paul [College of St. Catherine], where three women from Los Angeles, Arlene Raven, Ruth Iskin, both art historians, and Judy Chicago, had come, and they were doing this like intensive one-month program over there. I heard about that they were there, and there was this one particular evening when there was going to be a lecture. Arlene and Ruth were going to do a lecture on women artists in history, and I remember thinking, "Oh, that's going to be a short lecture," because as far as I knew, there were two women artists in history, the ones my mother had introduced me to, Georgia O'Keeffe and Kathe Kollwitz.

So I kind of went along with some of my friends to see that, and was completely blown away by the fact that they gave this, throughout history, all these different women artists, you know, Artemesia Gentileschi and her rape and making a

painting about her rape, and just— I was just so blown away, and I remember going up to them afterwards and saying, "Oh, you know, I've been so frustrated. I've been trying to organize women at my school, and there's great resistance and stuff."

And they said, "Well, you should come to Los Angeles. Write to Suzanne Lacy."

COLLINGS: I see. So that's how you—

GAULKE: And I said okay, and then I wrote to Suzanne Lacy, who was— At that time I was starting to do performance art, which was something I had been exposed to in the summer of '74. I had gone to Scotland. I don't know what order to tell this.

COLLINGS: That's okay. You went to Scotland before you heard about Judy Chicago and—

GAULKE: I think I must have. I think I must have, because they told me to write to Suzanne, and I wouldn't have wanted to write to Suzanne if I hadn't been doing performance art.

COLLINGS: Which you started in Scotland?

GAULKE: In Scotland, yes. But anyway, well, let me just complete that thing. I wrote to Suzanne Lacy, and I said, you know, "I'm a feminist performance artist, and I'm interested in your program."

And she wrote me back and said, "I'm too busy to write to you because I'm organizing a feminist performance conference. Just come." And I was so impressed. She was too busy to write to me? I mean, here I was trying to get things happening, and so much was happening that she was too busy to write to me. That was the best

thing she could have said. It wasn't like— I wasn't insulted or anything. Oh, my god, so much is happening, she's too busy to write to me.

COLLINGS: Right. "I've got to get over there." [mutual laughter]

GAULKE: She's organizing a feminist performance conference. You know, I was like, "Sign me up."

COLLINGS: Yes. "Where's my toothbrush?" [mutual laughter]

GAULKE: So, okay, to back up. At Minneapolis College of Art and Design, I started doing video art, and at the school, it was very kind of more broadcast oriented. You know, it was like the guy they brought in to teach it, Dave Miller, I think, was a TV director. He directed the news. I remember going down and watching him direct the news, which was actually very interesting. But he didn't know a lot about video art.

Anyway, but I was, like I said, much more interested in it conceptually, and I was collaborating with another artist student, Barbara Bouska. She and I had met each other at Florrissant Valley, and we moved to Minneapolis together, and we weren't lovers or anything. I wasn't a lesbian at this time yet. And we would do these artworks. Like we did this one called *Isolated Spaces* where we would set up a live camera somewhere in the building of Minneapolis College of Art and Design and aim it at some kind of corner or something that looked like an interesting abstract, kind of a Mondrian sort of shape, you know, lines and shapes coming together, but purely abstracted, so you wouldn't know where it was.

And then we would have a live monitor somewhere else, and on the monitor it would say, "This is a collaborative artwork, a live interactive collaborative artwork.

Find a partner, and find the place where the camera is, and then arrange yourself in the scene. But it will only be seen by your friend who is watching the monitor," because they're not near each other. They're in two different locations. So that was what interested me.

COLLINGS: This was such a fun period in American art.

GAULKE: It was. Yes, it was.

COLLINGS: I mean, really, it was.

GAULKE: It was. You could just invent it.

So then what happened is this very charismatic man came to speak at my school. His name was Richard DeMarco

COLLINGS: Oh, I'm going to flip this over.

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GAULKE: So this very charismatic man named Richard DeMarco from Scotland came to speak at my school, and he was organizing this thing called Edinburgh Arts—He would go to all the art schools and get art school students and teachers to go on this journey, what he called "the journey," and you would visit these prehistoric sites and contemporary art spaces, and it would all culminate in an exhibition at the Edinburgh Arts Festival.

COLLINGS: Is that what it's called?

GAULKE: It's called the Fringe Festival, kind of an offshoot of the more traditional Edinburgh Arts Festival. Anyway. And this was very powerful to me because he showed these photographs of standing stone circles, and I'd never seen anything like it. I mean, everybody's heard of Stonehenge, but he showed me that there were all these other ones and how— And he would sort of make this case for the power of these monoliths coming out of the earth and how they have this incredibly powerful presence, and did contemporary art have the same power in its presence, and so that really intrigued me. And it was almost a spiritual mission kind of thing.

So my partner, Barb Bouska, and I went there, and our intention was to do video, to essentially do the same kind of conceptual work there. Well, what happened is the boys, the male teachers and male students, on that trip hogged the equipment and would never let us touch it.

COLLINGS: Oh, my god.

GAULKE: It was a classic case of, you know, the boys hogging the equipment and not having the women touch it.

COLLINGS: How many women were on the trip?

GAULKE: There were like— I want to say there were fifty people on this trip, and everybody there was doing a different thing. There were painters. There were sculptors. There were photographers. You know, you came kind of to explore your own media while you journeyed.

But meanwhile, there were these two very charismatic women from London named Jackie Lansley and Sally Potter, and they called themselves Limited Dance Company. Sally Potter went on to do *Orlando,* and I can't remember now the earlier film, and then she did that *Tango* movie. Anyway, at that time, she was coming out of a dance background.

COLLINGS: *The Goldiggers* was one of hers?

GAULKE: Oh, I didn't see— That was with Julie Christie and shot in Iceland, I believe.

COLLINGS: She did sort of the remake [*Thriller*] of— What's the name of that opera where Mimi dies?

GAULKE: *La Bohème*?

COLLINGS: Yes. Oh, that's great.

GAULKE: Well, I mean, these women were amazing, and they were doing performance art. Now, this is a time, this is the summer of '74, you know, performance art is not part of any of our vocabulary yet. We don't really even know

about it as an art form. And plus, they were women, they were feminists, their work was imbued with feminism, and I just was like— I was so impressed by them.

So there were thirteen women. We all worked with them. So I couldn't play with the video equipment, so I started to do this new thing called performance art, and I loved it and performed, did a performance in a small town. I can't remember the name of it now. Then we also did a performance at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

So that I came back then for my last year at school at Minneapolis College of Art and Design. I only actually had to do one semester because I got a bunch of credit for what I did in Scotland. And we came back, and there were no teachers that did performance art. And I'm trying to remember if we— I think we actually stopped doing video at that point. We were in a class called Intermedia, which was where they put all the kids that didn't fit anywhere, and it was a great class. And we essentially just critiqued. We did work for each other, and then we critiqued each other's work.

COLLINGS: It sounds wonderful.

GAULKE: It was really great.

COLLINGS: Now, this was your first trip abroad, too, right?

GAULKE: No, it wasn't. I had gone between my senior high school year and college— I had saved, earned my own money, and saved money, and gone to Italy, a month-long tour of Italy, with a group of students from Los Angeles. And plus my family had gone for two months. My dad was on a sabbatical once, and we went over there and we bought a camper van and picked it up at VW [Volkswagen] at Westphalia and drove around for two months. So I had been to Europe and I had been

to Mexico a lot. And traveling was a big part of our family, and we drove everywhere we went. So even when we went to Europe, we drove. [mutual laughter]

COLLINGS: That's funny.

GAULKE: But again, it's maybe getting back to that thing of seeing the land and seeing cultures, and I'm just such a culture junkie. And I think for me, you know, that profundity of kind of for the first time understanding what it is to be an American, you don't really get what it is to be an American until you go away from your country and you look back, and you start to realize like what your values are and all these things that you grew up with that you just thought were normal are American.

COLLINGS: Right. Exactly. Did you have any women professors? You mentioned a few of your professors here and there. Were there any women who really inspired you?

GAULKE: Yes, it's funny because in L.A. there was Suzanne Lacy, but at Florrissant Valley Community College, there was a photographer named Jean Locey I'm pretty sure that was her name. And she was a feminist, and she had a big influence on me, largely, I just guess, just because of her feminism.

COLLINGS: Because so far, really, your mother has been the only sort of strong female figure that you've mentioned.

GAULKE: My mother, yes. And I did have a female art teacher in high school that was kind of— I don't think I was personally close to her, but she was kind of inspiring, you know. She was kind of wacky. She was real kind of a sixties kind of, you know, big, big orange earrings and orange shoes to match, you know, and paisleys

and bellbottoms, and, you know, she was this kind of like a really neat character. So I liked her. And she let me do whatever I wanted, which was great, so I explored a lot of different things with her.

Jean Locey in Florrissant Valley. In Minneapolis there was Carole Fisher who ended up being one of the founders of Women's Art Registry of Minnesota. She still teaches there. I remember she did an installation at the time.

You were asking me was it about support groups or was it about content

COLLINGS: That's okay.

GAULKE: But I remember Carole Fisher did these installation works with plates of glass and Kotex napkins, and, you know, and that was really out there— To use that as a media, you know.

So that summer where I went to Scotland in some ways, well, in every way, took me away from media, because I think I also came to the realization I was about to graduate from college. At college, I'd had access to all this equipment.

COLLINGS: That's true.

GAULKE: And when I graduated, I was not going to have any money, any access to equipment.

COLLINGS: That's absolutely true, yes.

GAULKE: And here I'd just been taught performance art and that my body could be my medium, and that was so liberating. And I actually wrote an article in *High Performance* magazine that's been republished, called "Performance Art and the Woman's Building." But I started out that article with this quote which talks about

how as women, like performance art really fit, because as a woman you learn the skills of performance. You learn makeup, you learn persona, you learn costumes.

COLLINGS: Was it the beginning that starts with making the bed?

GAULKE: Yes, making the bed, yes. So the— It goes: Growing up I'd make my bed, imagining the boy I wanted to marry was watching my performance and judging it.

COLLINGS: God, that's chilling.

GAULKE: It's creepy, isn't it? [mutual laughter]

So anyway, so performance art really fit. And then the other aspect being a medium that did not have the history of male domination that sculpture and painting did. So I think with video I started to get a glimpse that this could be this new medium that maybe I could do something different with. Because video had this sort of broadcast, you know, aspect to it, which is male-dominated.

COLLINGS: Yes. So you came back from Scotland, and did you go directly to Los Angeles at that point?

GAULKE: So then I was, you know, in my Intermedia class. I went to hear Raven and Iskin speak. They said, "Write to Los Angeles." I wrote to Los Angeles, and then I told my parents, "I want to go. I want to move to Los Angeles."

COLLINGS: How did they react?

GAULKE: They were supportive, and their only condition was that I couldn't just do it; I had to get a degree. Well, actually they actually supported me to do it the first year.

COLLINGS: It was not accredited at this time.

GAULKE: It was not accredited. And so I moved in the summer. In the fall of ’75 I started at the Woman’s Building.

COLLINGS: And how old were you at that time?

GAULKE: And the program was the Feminist Studio Workshop. So, the fall of ’75, and I was born in ’54, I was twenty-one. I was twenty-one. And I loved it. It was very challenging. It was hard.

COLLINGS: What were you expecting?

GAULKE: I guess I was expecting an angst-free totally loving, supportive community of women artists who were like, “You go, girl,” kind of thing, even though we didn’t say, “You go, girl,” back then. And what I found was, it was a lot of work. It’s a lot of work to build a community, that, you know, there were damaged people there. I mean, I think I was fairly emotionally intact, but a little naïve about things. There were lesbian women and straight women. There were lesbian women who were suspicious of straight women and accused us of not being real feminists and not really being for women, because, you know, we’re still giving our energies to men. That was one of the things said back then. And I still identified as a straight woman, although I’d had some lesbian feelings, you know, in high school even, I hadn’t really— It wasn’t anything I’d really explored until I moved to L.A.

COLLINGS: And had dating and all of that been a big part of your high school life?

GAULKE: Oh yes. I always had boyfriends.

And so I expected that, and I think I probably expected a facility that was functioning. And in fact, we had to build our buildings. I mean, we had a shell of a building, but we had to put up the walls and sand the floors and paint, and that was a really hard— And so it was very stressful and like trying and having to do things I didn't know how to do. I didn't know how to build things.

And, of course, you know, and this has been written about a lot, but just for this record, that was that lesson of, you know, Virginia Woolf saying every woman needs her room of one's own, but that we as women had to make our room of one's own, that no one was going to make it for us. And we were really empowered and taught how to do that. And we didn't like it, you know.

COLLINGS: You didn't like it?

GAULKE: We didn't like it. We were pissed off, and there was, you know, mutiny and, you know, unhappiness and stuff. I mean, I think a lot of tears were shed.

COLLINGS: Was it mainly about the fact that you had to do this renovation work?

GAULKE: Yes, yes. And I don't think I was one of the most angry of the bunch, probably because my parents were paying for it. [laughs]

COLLINGS: How much did it cost?

GAULKE: You know, I think for some women who were maybe really, you know, were older than me and, you know, had come from— I mean, I started to learn about class then, too, actually.

COLLINGS: Who may be paying for childcare while they were there sanding the floors?

GAULKE: Oh, that was a big issue too, yes. So many of us, I mean, I'm young, I'm middle class, my parents are supporting me, and what do I care, you know, ultimately? But, yes, some women had kids. Some women had come from working-class families where their parents never paid for their education, and they'd had to work all the way through it. I mean, my eyes were being so opened at that time period.

And how much did it cost? I'm thinking it cost a thousand dollars, maybe fifteen hundred dollars, at the most, for a year of tuition.

COLLINGS: Yes, I mean, that's a lot at that time.

GAULKE: I guess.

COLLINGS: Wasn't it? Don't you think?

GAULKE: Well, it was probably less than Minneapolis College of Art and Design. I don't know. I don't even really remember that much, but I'm thinking it was about 750 dollars per semester. And there may have been some women on financial aid, I don't know.

So we all had to work three hours a week for the building.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's it?

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: Oh.

GAULKE: We thought that was— Well, oh, no, no, in addition to all the building and stuff we did, we all had a job, too. And my job was to do PR, so I assisted the woman who did PR for the Woman's Building, which was really great, because then I learned how to write a press release. I developed press contacts and who was at the different

papers, and I mean, so everything that we had to do was actually invaluable, because we learned how to essentially later manage our careers.

COLLINGS: But there was a period in the beginning where you were doing the renovation work all day every day?

GAULKE: Yes, the first three months. We started in September, so September, October, November, and I believe it was December 15th. I believe it was December 15th was the grand opening of the Woman's Building. So the building opened with an exhibition that included three professional women artists, Ree Morton being one of them. I think Joyce Kozloff was another. And I can't remember who the third was. Plus an exhibition of student work.

So we not only had to build the walls, sand the place, paint it, you know, get this place ready for this grand opening; we also had to be making art. And so, you know, making art in this new environment where we're doing consciousness-raising and we're learning about issues and we're kind of delving into personal histories, this was all very emotional and, you know, intense, extremely intense, and building a community and developing friendships and learning to trust each other, and, oh, it was just incredible.

I mean, I am so— I always say I'm so grateful that I was born when I was, that I had the opportunity to go through that experience, because it just— And the friends that I have to this day from that time period, I mean, I just— They're my sisters, you know. They're like— And I get emotional just saying that.

You know, talking to my friend on the phone yesterday, Nancy Angelo, who lives in the Bay Area now, I mean, she is like closer to me than a blood relative, because we just went through so much at that time together.

COLLINGS: So in terms of remaking yourselves and the real work of consciousness-raising.

GAULKE: Yes, yes, remaking ourselves was definitely going on, yes.

COLLINGS: And what were the consciousness-raising sessions like, or what's your recollection of that?

GAULKE: Well, we, in the process of conscious-raising, CR, comes from—this is what we learned—from speak bitterness groups after the Chinese revolution. And we were all assigned into groups. You didn't pick who you wanted to be with. You were assigned with a group of, I'm thinking, five or six women. I think there were about five women in a group. So those were women that I met with every week, and each week we had a topic. And I think that— What were the main topics? Sex, money, power, love, work. I can't remember. The body, maybe. Those were the sort of topics we would have.

And with CR, essentially it's a structured sharing, where each person speaks for five minutes, without interruption, and you go around and you learn to listen to each other. And then you do a second round where you get to say things maybe you thought of from what other people said. But it's not about commenting on the other person.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: And what the consciousness is, is where the personal becomes political, where you get to see that your experience as a woman has similarities with other women's experience, and so that's where it takes a political dimension. Because women in society, you know, up until that point mostly are isolated from each other, we don't really get to see that there are those similarities, so we don't get to, you know— So that was also a very powerful process. You know, people throw around that word *consciousness-raising*, and don't really understand what it is. They think, "Oh, it means like getting—."

COLLINGS: A rap session or something.

GAULKE: Yes, or getting your shit together, or getting smart or something. And it's not that. It's hearing other people's experience, seeing where it's similar to your own, and then out of that, you know, the work that needs to be done can develop.

COLLINGS: Right. Right. So this went on for the entire year once a week?

GAULKE: Yes, yes, and I'm trying to remember if we even did it the second year. So I ended up going for two years. So my parents, after the first year, their deal was— I said, "I want to do it another year."

COLLINGS: You said you did?

GAULKE: I did. And originally my intention was that I was going to go to Los Angeles and get the skills to organize women artists back in the Midwest. That's why I was so frustrated about it, I thought, "Well, I'm going to learn to L.A. and learn how to do it, and then I'm going to go back to the Midwest and do it there." I didn't want to leave. I mean, I loved, I loved that environment, and I had more to learn.

So my parents said, “Okay, well, we’ll support you for another year if you get a degree, because we feel the degree is important,” which cost them more money.

COLLINGS: But could the Woman’s Building give a degree?

GAULKE: Yes. So we were affiliated with three institutions: International College, Antioch College, and Goddard College. So I affiliated with Goddard College, which is in Vermont, and I’ve never been there.

COLLINGS: Oh, you didn’t go for that eight-day intensive?

GAULKE: Never. Maybe now you have to do that. At those times, they have an L.A. office. They had two faculty. My faculty person was Kouji Nakata.

And that was interesting, too, to have a man as my faculty person, because they had an all-female faculty at the Woman’s Building, and to have a man of color, too. So I think, as a man of color, he could relate to what I was going through, because I was dealing with, you know, societal oppressions, that sort of thing.

So we had our faculty from— Core faculty is what he was, and then we had our field faculty, which was our person at the Woman’s Building, Feminist Studio Workshop. And my field faculty person was Suzanne Lacy.

Now, you’re interviewing me for a media thing, but in fact I was doing performance art.

COLLINGS: Yes, that’s fine.

GAULKE: And I had been doing performance then before I came to the Woman’s Building. Barb Bouska, who was my partner in Minneapolis, I had met her in St.

Louis, and we'd gone to Minneapolis together, and now we'd actually both moved to L.A. together.

COLLINGS: And gone to Scotland, right?

GAULKE: And gone to Scotland together, and we were continuing to collaborate. And we came having done performance. We were the only ones in that position.

Then we started to work with Suzanne, and Suzanne, of course, was a great influence. And I actually also had a job being Suzanne's personal assistant, so that was an education in and of itself, because I helped, you know, organize her slides and answer correspondence, fill orders, duplicate her reviews, learn how to paste up a review in a nice way. So I was sort of learning the business of being an artist by being her assistant, too, which was great.

COLLINGS: Yes, right, because all of this publicity, you have to be able to do that.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: And you did some administrative— Somewhere in one of your materials, I think it says that you were doing administrative work for the Woman's Building. Was that when you were working with Suzanne?

GAULKE: Right. So when we were students, we had a three-hour job. I did publicity, and then I think I started doing— I can't remember what. Oh, I started being the corresponder, the recruitment officer. That's what I was. I was a recruitment officer, and I would answer the letters from those people that were writing for information like I had written for information. I remember once I found my letter

in the file, and I have it somewhere. I pulled it. I'm pretty sure I pulled it and saved it.

But, you know, I had a sixteen-year history with the Woman's Building. I'm actually the person with the longest of many amount of years of anyone with the Woman's Building.

COLLINGS: Oh, my gosh.

GAULKE: And in that sixteen years, I started as a student, and then I took the Feminist Education Teacher Training and became a teacher in the Summer Art Program, which was this wonderful program where students in the Feminist Studio Workshop got to create our own classes, and we created our whole program. We did the publicity; we did all the recruitment; we figured out the design of the program; we taught our classes. So that was really empowering.

And then I went on. All my teachers in the Feminist Studio Workshop wanted to retire, wanted to go back to their careers and kind of let this go. So then I stepped into that role with some of my classmates of being a teacher of the Feminist Studio Workshop, which was, you know, kind of scary, because, I mean, we were like young. You know, we weren't that experienced. I mean, I think we did a pretty decent job.

And for some years I was the manager of the Woman's Building. I was the California Arts Council-funded artist-in-residence for three years, and I did *The Postcard Project: Celebrating Our Heroines*, where I taught three hundred people how to make a postcard on an antique Etterpress that celebrated a woman important in their life.

So I wore a lot of different hats at the building, and I always say I did everything from scrubbing the toilets to being a board member and a fundraiser. And that's sort of the way it was at the building; you kind of did a little bit of everything. But the building kind of— It became difficult as we moved into the eighties and government funding started drying up and the whole kind of economy started changing under [Ronald W.] Reagan, and there was kind of women artists starting to not wanting to be identified with a women's art space anymore.

We had to figure out ways to survive, and so we came up with the idea that one of the things we had was a lot of space. We had this gigantic three-story building. And what we started to do—

COLLINGS: Which you owned?

GAULKE: No, we were renters, but we had pretty decent rent. When I was originally there as a student, the top floor was a giant performance space with a little café. The second floor was all galleries with a classroom. The first floor was a printing studio and offices.

COLLINGS: That's wonderful.

GAULKE: And we even had a little bookstore and a little gallery on the first floor. By the time I left that place, and it felt like literally cutting off pieces of our body and selling it, we started to divide up the third floor into studios, artist studios, and we rented it. And so I was the manager of that program. As the building manager, that was my job. I got people to rent the space, and I managed the whole space rental

thing. And by the time we closed in ’91, the whole third and second floors were all artist studios, and funky, I mean—

COLLINGS: Now, did you only rent to women artists?

GAULKE: No.

COLLINGS: That wouldn’t have been legal, would it?

GAULKE: Yes, and that was sad, too. I mean, we rented to all kinds of people that just had no connection to what our values were or anything. I mean, it felt awful. It really felt awful.

COLLINGS: Yes, I can imagine.

GAULKE: And then we had to consolidate all our programs on the first floor, so we had a very small gallery, and we had the printing studio, and then we also started a typesetting business. And that was right on the verge of self-publishing, too, so we had the old, you know, photo typesetting machines. That ended up being a bit of a disaster, too.

COLLINGS: Now, is it fair to say that the Woman’s Building became a victim of its own success in the sense that the values and the educational methods became picked up by others?

GAULKE: Well, I think that would be a very nice thing to say about the Woman’s Building.

COLLINGS: But not entirely— That’s not what happened?

GAULKE: You know, the further I get away from it, the more I think that is true, actually. You know, at the time when we closed, I certainly didn’t feel that our

purpose was outlived. I felt that it was a conservative mood setting over the country that was causing us to not be useful anymore.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: I didn't think our usefulness was outlived— I thought it was misogyny. It was women's own fear of identifying with being female, which was, to me, a bad thing. It wasn't a free choice that they were making; it was a choice out of survival and diminishing resources.

COLLINGS: Because when you look at the rise of women's studies programs in universities in the late seventies and eighties, I was wondering if you would think that the message of the Woman's Building had traveled outward into the larger society. But you didn't really—

GAULKE: Well, I do think that the further I get away. I mean, I think it was very sad for me to see that era coming to an end, and it had done so much for me, but I think that with more and more distance on it, I do think that that's true. I think that there is more equality in society now. I see that.

I mean, I teach now at a coed school that started out to be two— I started out at a girls' school that merged with a boys' school, and I was not real happy about that, because I felt that the girls' schools were a really great place that supported women to become strong. And I saw that, and I was very worried we would lose that in the merger. But what I see now is I see very strong young female students, and I see my own ability as a teacher to be a feminist in all aspects of my job with my students,

with my colleagues. If there's something unequal that I see, I will speak up, and I will not be pushed, shushed, for doing that. I will be listened to.

So I think it has changed. I mean, I also think it's not over, you know. I certainly don't think there's complete equality in financial matters or any matters, really, ultimately, but I think it's better. So I think, you know, I like to think the Woman's Building had something to do that.

COLLINGS: This question is kind of maybe not the right time for this question, but because it has something to do with you coming to the Woman's Building, I'll just ask it now. But you know, you have and continue to have a successful career as a recognized, established artist. I mean, the train station and the UCLA special collection has your artist's books and, you know, many, many examples of this kind of thing.

And I'm just wondering, when you came to the Woman's Building, when you left Minneapolis, coming out to Los Angeles, coming to the Woman's Building, did you see that as being part of your training on your career trajectory to be an established artist, or was that sort of more of—

GAULKE: Okay. And then I was realizing when I was telling you about the Woman's Building earlier that I didn't make this point, and so this is a good time to make it. Probably one of the most important things I learned at the Woman's Building, and I think Arlene Raven came up with it, is the definition of feminist art. Actually, it's the function of feminist art is to, one, raise consciousness; two, invite dialogue; and three, transform culture.

So I think that I knew I wanted to be an artist my whole life, but that I think my motivation was not— I knew art was something I could do, that I had like an ability to make art. Why? I don't— I think I am ego invested, and I want to be known and be successful and all those things. But I think ultimately it's about transforming culture. It's really about social change, that I really see art as a vehicle, not as an end in and of itself.

And I think it's fine. I think art for art's sake and art for beauty and all those things are important and wonderful, but, for me, it's a vehicle. It's a vehicle for social change. And it doesn't mean that my work is always political. I mean, I see social change happening in subtle ways, you know, and that thing that motivates me, the, what, anger or about injustice, you know, takes many forms. You know, it's not just about sexism and inequality between the sexes; it's about the way we feel about the environment and the way we treat it. Our relationship with animals, our relationship with different cultures and different countries, you know, it's just all.— It's very— It's a lot of things, and so I touch on it in different ways in different levels of intensity in all my artwork.

COLLINGS: Yes.

TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE ONE

August 21, 2003

COLLINGS: Good morning, Cheri. I just wanted to ask you one little question taking us back to yesterday. You said that you had stepped in as a faculty member at the Feminist Studio Workshop because you had been trained in feminist educational methods.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: And I was wondering how you define that and whether you practice these methods in your teaching today, in twenty-five words or less. [mutual laughter]

GAULKE: Yes. I had to do a keynote address at an art educators' conference in Pennsylvania, was that last year or the year before, where I had to actually like grapple with that question.

Yes, I think I try to use some of those things, but it's more subtle. Perhaps it's more just in my values as a teacher, but some of the values of feminist art education are putting personal content in your work, you know, not— And that's just good storytelling. You know, I mean, you learn that actually in any screenwriting class. You know, start with what you know.

For example, in my video art class that I do now, I'm very committed to a particular assignment, which is the personal anecdote, and students start out writing a story from their own life and preferably of a time when they had some major kind of new insight, some event in their life that caused them to see the world differently. And that's really hard for fifteen-year-old boys especially, you know, to get personal,

to kind of soul-search like that. It's easier for the girls. But I'm really committed to that, and I think that comes out of the feminist education days.

Collaboration, working together, and looking at the issues that come up in working together, and how to kind of share the load and be supportive and, you know, all those sorts of things. And, again, that's just working as a film crew. I mean, it really relates to other things. It's not unique, perhaps.

What else? Doing work that is critical of mainstream culture, so my curriculum now has a very important component, media literacy, developing critical thinking skills, and being able to see the relationship between advertising and major corporations and values that are American values, capitalist values, you know, all those things. And again, that's tough for the age group developmentally.

COLLINGS: Yes, and it's super important.

GAULKE: And when I do that, I actually start in my teaching by saying, "We're going to do critical thinking, and this is what critical thinking is. And guess what? You're not supposed to be able to do it till college. Developmentally, you're really not there yet, so what I'm asking you to do is hard. It's going to feel tough. You're going to hate it at times." Whatever. And I think that that's a good approach because the kids here, they like to feel that maybe they're smarter than other kids.

COLLINGS: Or that they're a jump ahead.

GAULKE: Or they're special. And so I think it's a good way to kind of start them out with that.

And what else? You know, a lot in feminist education, we sat in a circle and we went around and we heard from everyone. And again, that's just good teaching, you know, to make sure that everyone is heard. So I guess those are some good examples.

COLLINGS: Yes. So you actually make it so that each person needs to contribute.

GAULKE: Yes. And we do lots of solo assignments and collaborative assignments, and then also just a general sensitivity about gender stuff, and that's really tough for me, because I have so many boys sign up for my classes compared to girls.

COLLINGS: Oh, really?

GAULKE: The last year I had two girls for every eight boys. Every classroom had only two girls.

COLLINGS: Why?

GAULKE: It's just so upsetting to me, because in some ways girls almost take to it easier than the boys, but I think it's perceived as a technical course, that girls tend not to be techies. You know, the boys tend to feel comfortable with computers, and girls feel more comfortable with painting and drawing materials.

A number of years ago, out of sensitivity for that, we rewrote the course description. We took out words like *technical*, *computer*, you know, any of that kind of stuff. We called it a storytelling class and a personal expression class and that sort of thing. We tried to make it a girl-friendly course description, but it's still a real problem. And when they do the scheduling, I ask them to make sure that I have an equal number of girls in every class. So, you know, like last year, I had two girls in

every class, instead of like one class with a bunch of girls and then one class with a bunch of, you know, fifteen-year-old boys, which is, you know, it's just—

COLLINGS: Crazy?

GAULKE: It's crazy. And what happens is the girls— I'll have mostly tenth graders in my class, but I'll have an occasional eleventh grader, twelfth grader, so I try to balance that so that it just makes for a better vibe in the classroom.

COLLINGS: Yes, for sure. Okay, let's see. Let's talk a little bit about— What about when you first met Judy Chicago? You had first met her in Minnesota, right?

GAULKE: Right.

COLLINGS: And then you came out here. And did you work with her?

GAULKE: You know, Judy was never one of my teachers, because at the time that I came, she had already moved on to do *The Dinner Party*. And people, you know, associate her with the Woman's Building. She was one of the original founders: Judy Chicago, Arlene Raven, and Sheila de Bretteville. But Judy was really only at the building really, I think, for a year, and then she went on to do her own work.

COLLINGS: Okay, so you hadn't come out yet.

GAULKE: But I would visit. I mean, I would visit her *Dinner Party* studio, and Judy is definitely a role model in that she's this tough, you know, woman artist. You know, she doesn't take any shit. And she's been criticized a lot for, you know, many things, like running this sort of kind of studio where a lot of other women are helping her do her work, but she's getting all the credit kind of thing. And I'm always a staunch, what, supporter of what she does, because I feel that the criticism of her is very sexist,

because she doesn't do anything that male artists don't do. Robert Longo, you know, Michelangelo, for that matter, you know, I mean, there are great traditions of male artists have people working for them. And even now, as a public artist, I mean, I don't make my own work. Fabricators make it for me. I come up with the ideas, and people carry it out and I oversee and make sure it's to my liking, but that's just a method of working when you're doing large-scale work. And so anyway, so she is a role model for me in that sense, but I never really worked intimately with her.

COLLINGS: That's actually very interesting, because, as you say, so much of your work is about organizing these components, and the fact that you feel that you brought that from watching Judy Chicago is very interesting.

What would you like to talk about in terms of your participation in projects at the Woman's Building? I mean, would you like to sort of concretize it into things that you did with the Feminist Art Workers and things that you did with Sisters of Survival? Or are there other things, you know, that don't have to do with that particular groups that are important in terms of your time there?

GAULKE: Well, let's see. I think, well, maybe we could just touch a little bit on that, those and other things, because for me, I always work— I always do solo projects, and then I would do collaborative projects. And that's still somewhat true of me, and I think that they're both equally important.

And just the other point I wanted to make about media is I had been doing video and working with media before, and then that summer of '74 going to Scotland and not being able to get my hands on the equipment and learning performance art and

that being so liberating where I learned that my body could be my media, from that point on, performance art was really my primary medium. And I continued to do some video, some artist's books, some installation work, but those derived kind of out of the performances. They were sort of offshoots of the performances.

And I always like to think of myself as an artist who will work in any media. I'm not really aligned with a particular media, but that I will do what's best suited to the need or the project at hand.

COLLINGS: Yes. I read a review of your performance *Revelations of the Flesh*, which sounded like exactly as you say, an instance which combines performance and video.

GAULKE: Right. Yes.

COLLINGS: These are just sort of materials that you—

GAULKE: Right, yes, and that was a performance sponsored by MOCA [Museum of Contemporary Art]. It was probably, in terms of my performance arts career, it was a great honor that MOCA was producing me, and I always loved to do performances that were site-specific, because I don't have theater background and I don't have a film background. I really come out of the visual arts.

So for me, when I did performance, I needed the audience to not be putting me on a stage. They were the audience, and I'm on a stage doing a little performance for them. I needed them. I needed the whole setting of the site to be part of it. So when MOCA asked me to do that performance and all the other artists did theirs at Japan American Theater, I knew I couldn't do that. I mean, the only way I could do that is

maybe I was in the audience and put the audience on the stage or something. I would have had to completely mess with it.

But I wanted to do mine in a church, because it was about— Well, a lot of my work at that time had been about the body and the body in Christianity. One of the pieces I'm known for is a performance called *This is My Body*. And so this is after that. And at that time, that was the eighties, and there was the whole kind of nuclear threat and the buildup and the cold war. And I was interested in these fundamentalist ministers who cast nuclear annihilation as the fulfillment of—

COLLINGS: Armageddon.

GAULKE: Yes, Armageddon, the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. And I thought that is such a dangerous proposition and that our culture had come to such a hatred of the body that we had invented, had created a weapon that vaporized the body.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's very interesting.

GAULKE: That didn't, you know, maim, cut, you know. It actually made the body just disappear. And those haunting shadows of people at Hiroshima. So that's what that piece was about. It was about, you know, the hatred of the flesh being taken to such an extreme. And so I wanted to do it in a church, and it was so difficult to find a church in L.A. that would let me do that. We went to the gay church, the Metropolitan Community Church. They didn't want anything to do with it.

COLLINGS: Oh, why is that?

GAULKE: Well, they're actually fairly conservative theologically, and I found that the Methodists are very liberal— Because some of the— Well, now I've gone on to

become a Unitarian Universalist, so that's where I probably should have started, but the Methodists had crosses in their churches, which was better for my purposes.

COLLINGS: You mean you're saying that you had a hard time finding a place to do the *This is My Body* piece?

GAULKE: No, to do *Revelations of the Flesh*.

COLLINGS: Oh, yes, okay.

GAULKE: But I had the backing of MOCA and I had the support of a person from MOCA literally like going to ecumenical councils, calling churches all over the city, saying, "We have this artist that wants to do this piece." And you know, it's really great to have that kind of support, but in the end, the church we did it in was Wilshire United Methodist Church, where there was a really progressive minister that could handle something that might be critical of the church, you know.

COLLINGS: Right. Right.

GAULKE: So anyway, but just in terms of video, what I used in that performance was a twelve-foot-by-twelve-foot projection above the altar, and it was on a scrim. And the imagery was the Venus of Willendorf, essentially, the Venus of Willendorf, which I saw this summer.

COLLINGS: Oh, how wonderful.

GAULKE: In Vienna.

COLLINGS: That must have been fun.

GAULKE: It was. It was sort of anticlimactic in a way because I have on my dresser a cast of the cast of the original, so it's like she's actually in my bedroom. So then

there she was behind glass, and I was like I couldn't actually pick her up or anything, but it was the real thing.

And anyway, my partner, my partner of twenty-five years now, Sue Maberry, is a large woman, and what we did is we covered her body in mud. She's naked, covered in mud, and a friend made a mask that fit over her head, and she looks exactly like the Venus of Willendorf. And what we did is we took her all over the city and shot her in different landscapes. So we shot her up in Malibu in the mountains in this beautiful, dreamy setting. And then as the piece progressed, she became in more degenerated environments, so that the final shot of her, she's in a pile of rubble.

So the idea was that humans are so arrogant. You know, when people use that expression, "Oh, we're going to destroy the planet," well, we're not going to destroy the planet; we're going to destroy the planet's ability to sustain us, because we're humans and we're very vulnerable and fragile. But the planet will probably live way beyond our existence and will heal itself, herself. So she was this constant that existed through creation, life, destruction, and continued beyond time. So the final image of her after the rubble image was her suckling a skeleton. And so these were projections that took place throughout the piece at different times in this huge format above the altar.

And one of the climactic scenes in the performance was when I descended above the altar, and I was at this point "the flesh." I was in a leotard kind of, you know, with muscles and stuff and naked, because I think I wanted to be completely naked in the performance, which, you know, I had been in previous performances, but

the church preferred that I wasn't really naked. And I ascended above the altar where these projections had been. And a nuclear— An atomic symbol neon sign went off, which had been behind the scrim the whole time, so you didn't know it was there. It was very magical that suddenly this thing appeared that you had never known was there, and there was this, you know, great tableau of all these characters that I had spawned throughout the performance. I had dueling pulpits, and then there were angels, angels in gas masks and radiation suits, playing harps and one playing a saxophone.

COLLINGS: Yes. So the tone of the piece sort of changes at this point. [mutual laughter]

GAULKE: So anyway, it was a lot of fun.

COLLINGS: Yes, it sounds like a fabulous piece.

GAULKE: Yes, but it's an example of using—

COLLINGS: It's an excellent example, yes.

GAULKE: —media within a performance.

What else? So, Feminist Art Workers, just with that. I founded two collaborative art groups. Feminist Art Workers was myself and three other women from the Feminist Studio Workshop, Nancy Angelo, Candace Compton and Laurel Klick (Vanalyne Green joined later), who wanted to take feminist art education on the road. Essentially, we did two tours where we did workshops and performances in different parts of the country and did things like that, *Know on* [*Prop.*] *13* rally, and

we did a piece called *This Ain't No Heavy Breathing*, about obscene phone calls, and various different performances.

And then in the eighties, I co-founded a group called Sisters of Survival, SOS, and that group was actually a coming together of two groups— Around the time of the Feminist Art Workers, there was another group that came out of the Feminist Studio Workshop called The Waitresses. And some members of The Waitresses and members of Feminist Art Workers said, "You know, we've taken our work on the road in the United States. Let's go to Europe. But maybe we should start a new group with a new focus."

And at the time there were a lot of demonstrations in western Europe saying, "We don't want to be the battlefield between nuclear war between the U.S. and Soviet Union." So we said, "As American activists, we need to respond to that." So we created Sisters of Survival to address the nuclear threat.

And also at that time, you know, I was always doing kind of community organizing, too, so at that time also as part of a group of artists who created— We were called L.A. Artists for Survival, LAAFS, and we created *Target L.A.*, an anti-nuclear music and arts festival. I was the co-director of that with Ed Pearl, and we ran that out of the Woman's Building.

So that was a very interesting time in terms of feminism, because what was happening is we had been dealing with women's issues, you know, rape, child abuse, those sorts of things, and now we were dealing with a more generic issue, in terms of gender, of a nuclear threat. And so all of a sudden, as a result of that— And that

wasn't really a Woman's Building decision; that was really something that I kind of was interested in, and other peers of mine. And because I happened to be the manager of the Woman's Building and had that office, I just sort of brought that project into the Woman's Building, and so with it a lot of men. And I think that was a good thing. I thought it brought—

COLLINGS: This is with the LAAFS group?

GAULKE: Yes, LAAFS, yes, and the Woman's Building just kind of became our base, like we— There was a muralist, Jan Cook, who painted a huge backdrop, mural backdrop, for the stage at the festival, and she needed a big space, and so we used the third floor of the Woman's Building. That was before we had broken it into studios and we still had a lot of space.

So a lot of people were coming in, in and out of the building, working on those projects. And that was something that took place down on the anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, August 6-9, in the summer of 1982. And that was at a parking structure down near Little Tokyo, and like five thousand people came over two days, and there were hundreds of artists.

COLLINGS: Was this the Toronagashi—

GAULKE: Actually, Toronagashi took place the second year of Target L.A., in 1983.

COLLINGS: Toronagashi ceremony.

GAULKE: So I was working as a community organizer, arts organizer, organizing this festival, but then I was also making art with Sisters of Survival. So the first year, we did a *Fold a Crane for Peace* project, where we collaborated with some Japanese

American activist groups and we taught people how to fold the origami cranes and how that was a symbol of peace in Japan.

And then we did this Toronagashi, which is in Japan on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days, I guess it's a tradition in Japan to light these little lanterns that they put in the rivers. So like in our country, we would go on the anniversary of a person's death, we would go put flowers on their grave. Well, what they do is they light these lanterns and float them down the river. Well, on those particular anniversaries, so many thousands of people were killed, that the rivers are just flooded with these floating lanterns, and it's supposed to be quite dramatic.

So what we did is Sisters of Survival had organized an exhibition where we had collected three hundred artworks from artists. Well, at the end of it there were three hundred artworks, artists from North America and western Europe, and these were all eight-and-a-half-by-eleven was the format, because we wanted it to be a really kind of— You know, laminate everything and just send the show around, because we wanted to show that there was this great outpouring of concern from artists and that what happens a lot is the media doesn't necessarily cover the grassroots.

COLLINGS: Right. Oh, for sure.

GAULKE: So what we saw ourselves as being is ambassadors. Just like Feminist Art Workers had been ambassadors for the Woman's Building and feminist art education and taking it around the country, we wanted to be ambassadors for a movement, a peace movement in the U.S. amongst activists and artists, and so we collected these

artworks from artists, and we took them in slide form to Europe and did these slide lectures.

And then while we were in Europe, we said, "Please, you give us your work now," and then all of that work together became that exhibition that was at SPARC, the Social and Public Art Resource Center, and at the closing, we did a performance called Toronagashi, and we went to the Venice canals. We led a long procession to the Venice canals, and everyone made luminaria, so, paper bags with sand and a candle. And then if we add little squares of plywood, because plywood will float, and then we set them on that, and everyone put them in the canals.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's lovely.

GAULKE: The Sisters, we had two barges. The Venice canals have two barges, and one we made a gigantic origami crane, and then the other one had thirteen Sisters, I think about thirteen Sisters on it, and we were singing peace songs and kind of rowing around. I don't think I have hardly any documentation of that, and I don't know why.

COLLINGS: Nobody videotaped it or anything like that?

GAULKE: I don't think anyone videotaped it. Someone must have photographed it. It's weird.

COLLINGS: Oh, it would be wonderful to collect some of that documentation.

GAULKE: It would be, yes. And actually, that was something I wanted to say, too, for this record, because we're talking kind of about media, is that I made a decision early on not to document any of my performance art pieces in video.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: I only documented them in slides, and the reason is that the sense of time. You know, when you see half-and-hour television show, it's very, you know, kind of jam-packed and, you know, fast paced. And when you see a performance art piece, performance art tends to be— Well, it has certain ritualistic aspects. It has certain time elements. Especially in the early days, a lot of times it was about sustaining some activity. Like I did a radio piece once where I read the *Red Shoes* fairytale while dancing in red spike heels the entire time, so by that by the time the story was over, I was so—

COLLINGS: Was this the *Frog Princess* piece? Was it a birthday celebration for you?

GAULKE: No, that was different.

COLLINGS: Okay. Well, see, that's the hard thing about interviewing you, because there's like thousands of events and activities, and it's not like, okay, there are ten films that we're going to talk about. Okay.

GAULKE: Right. So anyway, but there was that kind of time frame that in real life, when you were alive, when you were there experiencing it, could be very intense. The video couldn't capture that. And so what I felt is that the work would look bad on video, you know.

COLLINGS: Yes, yes, I think you're right.

GAULKE: It would be failed as a video document, so I didn't want that document to exist.

COLLINGS: Yes, and videos are judged as videos.

GAULKE: Exactly, yes. And so then years later I regretted that, because then, you know, people come along and they want to make documentaries about the history of feminist performance art, and I have nothing to contribute. And of course, those documentaries are going to edit and use little bits and use voiceover, and, you know, I mean, it would have been fine, you know. But that was my thinking at the time.

So I think the only performance art piece, the only two did I actually document in video, I documented the very last piece, which was in 1992, *Burning the Bush*. My intention was to edit it, and it just— I couldn't deal with it. I tried. I did a little time inversion, and it just— I didn't like it, and I had moved on at that point. And actually, at that point I had gone back to working in video.

The only other one I did was *Leaps of Faith*, which was the piece on my birthday, actually, February 28th in 1984, and I hired a friend, who actually was a graduate of the film program at UCLA, Kathleen Forrest, to shoot it in film, and then we transferred it to video and edited it. So it was kind of like a happening. That was more of a sort of— It worked as a video.

COLLINGS: Yes, that was more of a happening.

What about the Woman's Building's image bank? Do you think that there are any pictures of some of these performances that you—

GAULKE: Oh yes. Yes. You can just look me up and there are tons of images.

COLLINGS: All right. I'm kind of interested in this progression that you described from, you know, the Woman's Building, well, pre-Woman's Building exhibitions like Womanhouse, and then the Woman's Building where people come to the Woman's

Building and are creating this space, working daily to create this space within the Woman's Building. And then the Feminist Art Workers kind of changed that where they say, "Well, let's take these things out into the community, and let's sort of take it on the road."

And I'm kind of fascinated by the notion of The Waitresses as being part of that, because I've always seen the waitress as a particularly cusp-like figure who is working and yet is working in this like surrogate home environment. And then it all sort of morphs into Sisters of Survival, which is very much about concerns even farther outside the domestic sphere and, in fact, into the world at large. And then at this point you say that you've got all these people coming into the Woman's Building.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: So it's just it seems like a very interesting evolution of concerns and foci.. Were you a part of The Waitresses?

GAULKE: No. No. They were my— Actually, to this day, the two founders of The Waitresses, Jerri Allyn and Anne Gauldin, are two of my very best friends, and we were classmates.

COLLINGS: There's a wonderful picture that I have of The Waitresses.

GAULKE: But I performed with The Waitresses.

COLLINGS: Yes, I see.

GAULKE: The All-City Waitress Marching Band?

COLLINGS: Yes, exactly. That is a lovely photograph.

GAULKE: That's in the early days of the Doo-Dah Parade, yes.

COLLINGS: Yes, there's the exuberance of that that's just—

GAULKE: Yes, that was great fun. And Arlene Raven's in that picture. I mean, it was just all of us.

COLLINGS: Yes, that seems like this is sort of like the class picture at this Doo-Dah Parade.

GAULKE: Yes, that was great fun.

COLLINGS: Yes, that's wonderful.

Well, one of the things I'm really struck by is how much your career seems to have been facilitated by your wonderful skills as an organizer.

GAULKE: Yes, and my skills as an organizer that I really kind of learned, I think, at the Woman's Building, because, I mean, remember talking about the frustration I had, you know, in the early years in St. Louis and Minneapolis, that I was trying to organize and felt not very successful at that. So I had a lot to learn about organizing.

COLLINGS: Yes, but it seems like you learned the lessons really well.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: Just sort of going back to the *Know on 13*, the Feminist Art Workers performance. As I understand it, a project called *Mother Art* was singled out as an example of wasteful state spending. You know, I mean, it's interesting that this would be considered to be an egregious waste of state money.

GAULKE: Yes, it's sickening.

COLLINGS: Yes. I guess what I'm trying to say is that particularly in the seventies, that would have been the point where you would have found uses of the public money for, kind of, countercultural things.

GAULKE: Yes. Oh, sure.

COLLINGS: You know, feminist sorts of things, and perhaps it was precisely those kinds of uses of state money that would have provided such a wonderful target for people who did want to go after that.

GAULKE: Yes. *Mother Art* did that wonderful performance in a Laundromat where they just went into a Laundromat and did the whole performance. It was great.

COLLINGS: Yes. So when you went on your tour of Europe with SOS, the Sisters of Survival, did you stay at the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp?

GAULKE: We did not spend the night there, but we went and visited it, yes. And on our way there, we stopped at Stonehenge, and— Well, we saw the Stonehenge, which was a little disappointing, you know, because there's a big fence around it. But when you get into that area where all the prehistoric stone circles are, that's also the same area where the— What do they call them? Were they cruise missiles?

COLLINGS: ICBMs [intercontinental ballistic missiles]?

GAULKE: Yes, where the American and British were sort of teamed up and doing all these sort of missiles that were for that possible war.

COLLINGS: You mean the ones that will meet another missile and explode it in midair?

GAULKE: I think they're just missiles that held nuclear warheads, and I think they were cruise missiles. I can't remember now. But that really struck us, and we stopped at Avebury, which is one of the most beautiful standing stone circles, and we took a really beautiful photograph. Did you see that photograph of us at Avebury? The Sisters are standing amongst the stones, and we created a poster, a print, that had some information about where our ancestors planted stones in the earth and charted the cycles of the heavens, today American-British military plant missiles intended to destroy the planet.

COLLINGS: Everything.

GAULKE: And so, yes.

COLLINGS: I saw a very nice book done by Sisters of Survival at Special Collections, called *Memento Mori*. Did Sisters of Survival produce other artists' books of this sort?

GAULKE: No. I've produced other artists' books, but that was our only book. Thank you.

COLLINGS: One of the lines of text reads the second step— Talking about steps on the way to understanding this, "The second step is to permit ourselves to feel, to drop the defenses, and let grief surface brings relief." And I wondered if this was an example of how the performance art that you were involved in was influenced by your consciousness-raising background.

GAULKE: Well, those quotes, on the right side the quotes were from Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth.* The text in that was all used by permission from the

authors. And then Joanna Macy— What was it called? Nuclear Despair Empowerment Workshops, I believe is what she did, and she developed this whole thing that— Because in order to do the anti-nuclear work, it was so devastating just kind of emotionally, and a lot of us were having nuclear nightmares.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: There was an artist at the time that actually did a whole series of pieces, which were on pillowcases because of the whole nuclear nightmare phenomenon, which I really liked. But it was almost like you had to go through the stages of despair and death before you could even cope with it, because to contemplate death is one thing, but to contemplate the death of everything was just overwhelming.

COLLINGS: Right. Annihilation, literally.

GAULKE: It was hard. In some ways, it's hard to connect with those emotions, because they were very strong at that time. It's very different now politically, but at that time, I mean, we were really terrified.

COLLINGS: So this was a three-year project. It was funded for three years.

GAULKE: Right. Well, it had no funding, but it was a three-year, yes.

COLLINGS: Oh, I see. *End of the Rainbow* was not a funded project?

GAULKE: No, no, it was just conceptualized. And just back to, you know, who had an influence on me at the Feminist Studio Workshop, that was one of the areas where I think Suzanne Lacy was so important, and is important as an artist, is that she kind of developed this notion that performance art didn't necessarily have to be a performance in the moment, but that it could be a conceptual framework, a conceptual structure for

events to take place. So when she did *Three Weeks In May* about rape in Los Angeles, it included, you know, a map under city hall where you'd stamp where the rapes had happened the day before, and it included self-defense workshops, and it included performance pieces and installations and exhibitions, and that all of that was considered a performance called *Three Weeks In May* by Suzanne Lacy.

So what we did with Sisters of Survival is we created a conceptual framework called *End of the Rainbow*, which had three parts, and it was all considered part of a performance.

COLLINGS: Yes, it's very interesting the ways these kinds of tactics have even infiltrated themselves into mainstream education. I mean, they call it differentiating the curriculum, where they teach the same concept, but in many different kinds of structures and ways.

GAULKE: That's interesting.

COLLINGS: Yes. So I guess one thing that I'd like to ask you about, you were very involved with the *End of the Rainbow* for three years, and it was an intensively very intense experience that had to do with fears about the nuclear situation. How does one step away from something like that? I mean, at the end of the articulated three-year project do you sort of say, "Well, we've completed our project. We need to move on"? I mean, what was the—

GAULKE: You know, I can't quite remember. I think the times must have changed, politically, and I'm not a great scholar of actually what happened and when politically, but I'm thinking that it may have changed.

You know, also, at that time, I was doing my own work. *This is My Body*, I believe was first done in ’82, so also around that same time I was exploring kind of my personal demons, perhaps, around Christianity. I mean, there was a lot about being a woman, being a body, being the flesh, in the context of Christianity. So that was going on, too. So, Sisters of Survival was not my sole focus in that three-year period.

COLLINGS: Right. And also sort of mid-eighties, at that point you decided you wanted to have a baby, is that right?

GAULKE: Is that when we first decided?

COLLINGS: In that article, it said. I don’t know. You know, obviously I don’t. Obviously you’d know better than I do. [laughs]

GAULKE: Well, I know there were two phases of that decision.

COLLINGS: Because that can really change your focus.

GAULKE: Yes, yes. You know, also I’m trying to think. Now, when did I do *L.A. River Project*? That was ’89, I think, that was first exhibited?

COLLINGS: Yes.

GAULKE: And I think what was happening, too, with the anti-nuclear work and then these other people coming into the Woman’s Building and that time where feminism started to kind of network with other social causes, social issues, and I started to work in other communities, too. So I started to teach.

The Woman’s Building created a kind of a partnership with Plaza de la Raza, and we would go and get the kids from over there and bring them over to our studio,

our graphic studio, and teach them how to use the presses. So for a few years there, I was working with little kids, which, you know, I had never really worked with before, and facilitating them to create their own, you know, printed works, which was really a lot of fun. And then that work actually went on to be in exhibitions and in collections and stuff. So I was actually using that feminist art education stuff on younger kids, which was really interesting.

And then that led me into somehow working— I got a job working in the Media Arts Mobilization Project and became media artist-in-residence at Wilson High School. And that's when I started working with the kids with Susan Boyle, the teacher there, and the kids that led to the *L.A. River Project.*

Actually, there was an artist John Arvanites who was working with them, and he decided to leave the program. So they needed to replace, so I kind of stepped into something that he had started. And the *L.A. River Project*, which was that twelve-monitor installation of videos, monitors on their backs in serpentine shape, looking like a river—

COLLINGS: Yes, that's lovely.

GAULKE: —was actually the high school students' concept.

COLLINGS: Oh, really?

GAULKE: Yes. They said, "Wouldn't it be cool to do this?" And, you know, it's sort of like, you know, in some ways—

COLLINGS: It's like, "Where do you get these ideas?"

GAULKE: Yes. In some ways, you know, when you're young and innocent, you don't know how expensive something like that is, but probably already at that point in my life I would have censored an idea like that real quickly. Yes, how are you going to do that?

But we managed to find a company, Hoffman Video Company Well, Susan Boyle knew, I think, the owner of the company, and he said he would donate the equipment. And then his guy who was in charge of like sort of setting equipment around town, happened to be a graduate of that high school. So it was this perfect match, and they donated the equipment for the installation.

And in addition to the twelve monitors that formed the river, we had monitors all throughout the space. Like there was one monitor that was devoted to portraits of trash in the river, another monitor that was devoted to images of the river in popular movies, in movies, so that like that film that was— Was it *Them* or *It*, the one about the giant ants coming out of the pipes in the L.A. area? It was that kind of a fifties type of movie. And, you know, *Grease* with the car chases in the riverbed and all that kind of stuff. And then there was another monitor that was devoted to interviews with kind of futurist thinkers, people like Lewis MacAdams, who have a vision for the future of the river; Richard Katz, the assemblyman at the time who wanted to turn the river into an express lane for the freeway.

COLLINGS: Oh, right. Yes.

GAULKE: And then another woman, Dilara El-Assaad, who was Armenian, who had just done her doctorate with a new vision for the river

So that was really an opportunity to sort of work with these young people and turn their ideas into a professional-looking exhibition.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's wonderful.

GAULKE: And then that was very successful, because that was then— It was shown at Cal State L.A. [California State University, Los Angeles], and then it was curated into an environmental show at the Armory Center for the Arts. We were the only youth project, and we got— You know, people were very excited about what we had done.

And then a curator from the Queens Museum of Art, Barbara Matilsky, was visiting, and she saw that show at the Armory, and she was putting together the show called Fragile Ecologies: Artists' Interpretations and Solutions at the Queens Museum. So then we got to take our show— And, again, we were the only youth project in the show of professional artists.

And then that show got picked up by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and so then it ended up touring museums nationally. And Rizzoli published a big catalog, and it got national visibility.

COLLINGS: So was this sort of the launching of your interest in environmental themes?

GAULKE: Let's see. *Leaps of Faith*, which was '84, would have been environmental. No, I think that it was always there in different ways. I mean, the years in the late seventies, I did a lot of artwork about women's feet and shoes and the juxtaposition of Chinese foot binding in high heels, spike heeled shoes, red shoes, and

the *Red Shoes* fairytale and all those kind of violent erotic things. And even like the *Little Mermaid,* where, when she gets her legs, every step she takes feels like knives stabbing her feet. But "that's okay, she gets to be with her man," you know, and all those values that can pass along to little girls.

I did an artist's book, my first artist's book, which I believe was 1977, is called *Golden Lotus*, and it's a strip of— A bandage, kind of, and it's a little accordion book of little cards that are glued on the binding strip and juxtaposed images of binding a foot, with creating a Bonsai tree. And so at the end you have a little, you know, four-inch foot, and then you have a little four-inch tree, and it's this sort of perversity of wanting to change nature. And that book is accordioned up and wrapped and then sewn shut and it sits on a little Bonsai stand. And so to actually get into the book, you have to cut; you have to violate it. You have to cut the threads to open it, and that referred to the sort of eroticization of the foot being like the—

COLLINGS: Yes, the lotus foot.

GAULKE: Yes. They claimed that it was so erotic to men because it was even more mysterious than a woman's genitals, the privacy of a woman's bound foot. So I think that that work, I mean, for me, you know, the body and nature were very connected at that time.

And then also at that time in the seventies, starting to learn about, you know, having come out of this Christian background and believing that the world began at *Genesis* and God created the world and stuff, that I started to learn that there was actually a time prehistoric when there had not been a written tradition, but an oral

tradition, and that there were thousands of objects unearthed around the world that gave testament to this existence. And they were female figures and obviously sacred, obviously respected. That just was so mind-blowing to me, you know, feeling like within Christianity the female was, you know, not only not valued, but blamed for the demise of humankind, to then find that the female body had once been a sacred image.

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GAULKE: And that somehow that female body as a sacred image was connected with nature, because there was a belief that these were agricultural societies and the hunting, gathering, and all these things.

COLLINGS: So was there an actual point where you had to say, "I no longer believe in Christianity. I'm no longer a Christian"?

GAULKE: Yes. I'm not sure I could tell you the date, but, yes. And you know, it's something— Boy, I just had a dream last night that I was yelling at my Christian relatives and saying, "What I really don't like about it is that bigotry of yours, that you guys think you have it right. I just don't go for that."

So you know, spirituality is such a deep, deep thing, that I feel like I'm still— It's something that's constantly unfolding for me. It's why I really love now being a Unitarian Universalist, which is something Sue [Maberry] and I became interested as a place for our children to develop, because Sue and I both grew up as Christians, and that was a big part of our childhood, going to church and going to Sunday School. We realize our children— You know, now we're very active as pagans. We celebrate all the pagan holidays with a group of women that we've been with for twenty years. But there was nothing for our kids to develop their sense of values, ethics, spirituality, and so we were attracted to Unitarian Universalism. And I love that it's sort of this— It was like coming home for me. It was church. It was like everything I loved about

church and nothing I hated about church. And it's a place where everybody's respected for their own kind of spiritual development.

And I love that, because that's to me— You know, if we could have mutual respect on this planet for people's spiritual paths, we would not have most of the problems we have. I mean, look at the World Trade Center. Look at what's happening, you know. It's like why does somebody have to be right? Why can't I say what you believe is fine, you know, as long as your beliefs don't involve killing me or hurting me, you know.

COLLINGS: They don't. [laughs]

GAULKE: You know, and Islam isn't about killing and hurting people. Christianity isn't about killing and hurting people, you know. It's just— It's very upsetting.

COLLINGS: Yes.

GAULKE: I don't know. We just went on this weird like circuitous path about the environment.

COLLINGS: Yes, well, I just— Yes, I'm sorry. You were going to say something.

GAULKE: Actually, I'm going to tie this into a media piece, too.

COLLINGS: Okay.

GAULKE: So in the early years, there was this connection between the female body is sacred and God is worshipped, and then associating the Earth itself as a mother goddess, you know. And although in some ways I still probably subscribe to that from my own spirituality, as it evolved in my art, that began to change, and one thing that I realized that I was doing in my art is I don't think it's helpful to demonize the

masculine and sacrilize, or whatever the word would be, the feminine. I don't think that's really—

COLLINGS: It might be helpful at a certain point in time.

GAULKE: Exactly, yes. But ultimately, in the long term I don't think it's helpful. And, yes, I would say, you know, I don't need gods, because I've had my fill of gods, you know, or God, in my life, you know. I need to balance it for me.

But what I found to be counterproductive in my own work was to create these binary opposites, that female was good, male was bad, that nature and culture were separate. Well, they are separate, but— And particularly that nature was female and culture was male, and that was what became particularly problematic. So then I created this piece in 1991.

I created an installation for another environmental show. I wanted to use video, and it was called *Once Upon a Time*. And what happens in the installation is there's a doorway with these gigantic cutout frog legs, and on either side of the door are two fairytales, fairytales in quotes. One's the fairytale about the frog princess, frog prince, frog princess, depending on which culture, it's Russian or, you know, German, it's different versions of it. But essentially, it's about a ruler who shoots out an arrow and where the arrow lands, he must marry. The czar's son must marry the woman where he finds the arrow. Well, he goes to retrieve his arrow, and it's in the mouth of a frog. And so he must marry the frog, and it's humiliating. You know, he needs to marry a frog?

But the first day he takes her to a ball, he finds that she can slip out of her frog skin and become this beautiful woman. And so what he does while she's at the ball, he sneaks home and he burns her frog skin. Well, she cannot—

COLLINGS: Oh, is this where that comes from, from *Frogskin*? I was going to ask you.

GAULKE: Yes. So she then has to leave him forever, and he spends the rest of his life trying to find her. So that's this great tragedy, that we can't accept the frog and love the frog for what it is on its own terms. That, to me, is a metaphor for humans and nature, that we always try to change nature and control it, whatever.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the doorway is another fairytale from science, and it's about scientists who go to, I believe it's Australia to the gastric brooding frogs. And these frogs are in great proliferation, they're wonderful, and they have this great thing that they do. They swallow the eggs, and they actually develop into little baby frogs in the stomach of the male, who's able to suppress his gastric juices. And then when it's time for them to be born, then he spits them out staccato fashion and they're born. And it's this wonderful thing. Scientists go down and study it every summer. One summer the scientists go down, and the gastric brooding frog is gone, never to be heard from again. So then this fragility of the frog and all that.

So then after you read those two stories, you squeeze through these frog legs.

COLLINGS: Oh, so you squeeze through them?

GAULKE: Yes, they're a little bit tight, so you have to kind of go sideways. So it's kind of birth canal-ish, and you go down this long hallway that's very dark, and at the

end of the hallway is a throne room. This beautiful velvet green curtain is parted, and there's this gorgeous throne that's all carved and covered with jewels and frogs. And there's a little stool in front of it, and you can sit on the stool. And embedded in the upholstery is a video monitor.

COLLINGS: Oh, my goodness.

GAULKE: And so the throne becomes— And it's interesting, because I went to Bali, and in Bali, you know, they have these chairs on the altars, and they represent where the deity will sit, the gods and goddesses. But they never do representations of those deities. They just have these chairs. So this is in my installation, and this is— I found that out later. But in my installation the throne becomes the disappeared frog speaking. So it's a story of— It's not just the disappeared frog, but it's the betrayed lover who's had to go away because they've been betrayed. But essentially it's the frog. It's nature speaking to culture.

And how this ties back to gender is years earlier I would have cast that voice as a female voice.

COLLINGS: I see.

GAULKE: The voice of nature as female.

COLLINGS: Yes, in truth, though, you've got the male and the female voices speaking together.

GAULKE: Yes. So what I did is I made a— And then plus there is the issue of sexual orientation, because if you do that as a female voice and then, what, do you assume that that's a male listener, so that makes culture male. It also makes it a

heterosexual relationship. At this point I'm a lesbian. I want to be inclusive. So what I did is I wove the voices together of a male and a female so that the viewer can be male, female, gay, straight, whatever, and it's inclusive. So that's why I did that.

COLLINGS: It's a fabulous video piece just on its own.

GAULKE: Thank you. So originally in the video, as a single freestanding video, it has those two stories, kind of. I just had to kind of throw those in, but originally those wouldn't have been part of the installation, because they were outside those physical panels.

COLLINGS: Right. Right. It's a really mesmerizing piece.

GAULKE: Actually, the project I've been trying to complete the last few years is an artist's book using that text, because I really love that text that I wrote.

COLLINGS: Yes. Well, that's one thing I was going to comment on. I mean, in *Frogskin* and in the *Sea of Time* and in the artist's book that I saw of yours, *Impediment,* you do have a real interest in writing, it seems, and in the literary.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: You've got these very evocative voiceovers in those two films that I've seen.

GAULKE: Yes, and that was really hard for me. You know, I think I was very, what, unconfident of my writing, and so a lot of my early work is sort of a collage of other people's stories, published text, you know, kind of thing. And I think that over the years I've felt more confident in my own writing, but it doesn't come easy to me, but I do love it.

COLLINGS: Yes, it's something that really carries. *Sea of Time*, in particular. There's something in *Sea of Time* that has to do with the voiceover and the image, which is sort of one of my favorite things that can happen sometimes with that, which is the way that the image of Mark [Niblock Smith] on the boat. Initially, you're narrating that as, "Well, we were in Bali and we were on a trip." And it's at that point that image is a documentary travelogue sort of image. And then later on, when this image is interspersed throughout the film, later on, after this person has died, you use the narrative to suggest that this is him—

GAULKE: In the spirit world.

COLLINGS: —traveling in the spirit world.

GAULKE: Yes, shopping for our baby.

COLLINGS: Yes, and it's just this wonderful way that this same image can just change into an image of another world or other spirit world, and it works beautifully.

GAULKE: Thank you.

COLLINGS: Yes, that's a really a lovely film.

GAULKE: Yes. It's a journey and it's a literal journey to Bali, but then it becomes a metaphoric journey between the worlds of birth and death.

COLLINGS: And it seems to be just another one of those pieces which has like such a very strong spiritual component.

GAULKE: Yes. Now, I show that piece to my students. I show that to fifteen-year-old boys. [mutual laughter]

COLLINGS: That's interesting.

GAULKE: And every year I think, “Okay, should I like stop showing this piece?”

COLLINGS: Do you give them like smelling salts afterwards? [mutual laughter]

GAULKE: And I always say, “Way more than you really wanted to know about your teacher, huh?” Charting my cycle and this kind of stuff. But, you know, I show it prior to doing— And I used to show it at the beginning of the year on National Coming Out Day as a way of kind of like kind of coming out to them, which was like not right. I mean, that was like too much. But now I show it in the second semester when they know me more and it’s as preparation for the anecdote, personal anecdote projects.

And what I want them to get from it is how images can be metaphors and how you can use symbols. So you have the symbol of the chalice that contains blood in the beginning and contains little babies and contains drugs for AIDS, and petals, rose petals, in the end. So I want them to see how they don’t have to illustrate their story literally, that they can have visual metaphors. So it’s a good example, but it’s intense.

COLLINGS: What do they say about it?

GAULKE: They’re cute. I mean, sometimes they just never bring it up again, you know. They don’t say anything. But you know, they actually— They discuss it. I mean, I have like a series of questions I ask, and I make them talk about it, and I think it’s good, you know, and I like to— I mean, that’s another thing, I think, from feminist art education is my classroom is not just about video, you know. It’s about life, you know, and I want to be visible as a strong woman. I want to be out as a lesbian in my classroom. I want to, you know, be there for teenagers who are grappling with those

issues and feeling suicidal. And I have had kids who have actually attempted suicide over that issue.

COLLINGS: Oh, my god.

GAULKE: And so, you know, I want to be a safe place that they can be going through things that they're going through, so I feel that exposing my own vulnerabilities is part of that, you know, without being— You know, it's not like I'm being a therapist. It's not my therapy to do that with them, you know, and so—

COLLINGS: So how did you come to the *Out Loud* project? Was that through your work in the classroom?

GAULKE: Yes, that's again one of those kind of merging of activist concern with my art. I heard that statistic that one in three teen suicides is because of sexual-orientation issues.

COLLINGS: Wow.

GAULKE: It was very scary for me to actually come out at my job, you know, because when you're a public school teacher, you have certain protections. But when you're a private school teacher—

COLLINGS: You don't?

GAULKE: You really don't. I mean—

COLLINGS: You don't have tenure?

GAULKE: No. We're hired— Our contract is at will, and every year we have a new contract. Our contract is one year at a time, and we could be dismissed at any time.

COLLINGS: Oh, my gosh.

GAULKE: And, you know, one of the things I like about that is it keeps everybody on their toes, you know. You feel like everybody really needs to be kind of a good teacher to stick around here.

COLLINGS: And do they tend to dismiss people?

GAULKE: No, well, not terribly. I mean, there's a lot more turnover at the middle school where the teachers tend to be younger and more because they're moving on in their lives or going back to graduate school or whatever. We don't have a great turnover at this campus. But I mean, I feel like I love my colleagues and everybody's really good at what they do, and I love my headmaster, and I love working here. So I feel like it's really a home for me, and I plan to be here till I retire.

But, you know, I made a decision at one point that I had to come out, I had to be visible as a lesbian here, and it was very scary for me. But once I was through it, it's like no big deal, and it becomes something that's very light for me, and fun, you know. And I can play with it. I can be light about it in my classroom, and I think that's good, too, for the kids, you know, because instead of it being this like secret—

COLLINGS: "By the way, have you heard?"

GAULKE: Yes, yes. It's something we can joke about. So it came out of feeling like I wanted there to be resources out there, videos that other teachers could use, could show. So I wrote a grant, and I got a grant from Cultural Affairs to do the project. Actually, I got two grants for that project, from the Brody Arts Fund and Cultural Affairs? I can't quite remember now.

So then I found ten young people, the youngest being fifteen, the oldest being twenty-one or something, and had them— Essentially did the personal anecdote assignment with them where I had them— You know, we brainstormed stories from their life that they could tell about being gay, and they wrote the story and recorded it as a voiceover, and then I worked with them on the imagery. So I got to control the final edit and the aesthetics of the piece. But, yes, that's how that came about.

COLLINGS: It's a nice piece.

GAULKE: Thank you.

COLLINGS: I wanted to just ask you a little bit about your artist's book work. I've only seen *Memento Mori*, and I also saw *Impediment*, which was at the Special Collections at UCLA. I have to say that I really, really enjoyed— It's not so much reading as kind of like, you know, handling it.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: And I was really struck by the way that all of the different quotations come across as a kind of a— It almost struck me as reminding me of what you were saying about the consciousness-raising sessions where everybody shares an experience, and then you come away with a whole impression.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: And the thing that I liked, I enjoyed most about it, was the way that you— That there's a central envelope, that you open it. You know, you're just compelled to open this thing. You want to know what's inside. And you take out this card, and the card is a direct address to the viewer, "Have you ever diminished

yourself to satisfy the will of another?" And it's so stunning, because at that point it brings the viewer, who's been sort of a voyeuristic participant of this conversation, directly in. And I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed that.

GAULKE: Yes, it's a performance. I mean, it's a performance, instructions for a performance that the viewer can do, which is a ritual, a healing ritual of sorts.

And the evolution of that book, I got a grant to do a month-long residency at Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, New York. Over the years of doing all this artwork about women's feet and shoes, I'd done sculptures where I'd cut apart high heels and bound them, and I did performance pieces like *Broken Shoes,* and I'd done *Golden Lotus*, the book, and I did a performance once where I had video monitors on tree stumps as an outdoor piece where I did *Wu Is Me*, where I danced with a Chinese child version of myself that had— Her feet were made out of cow's hooves that were bound and looked exactly like bound feet.

After all this work, I still wasn't done with the material, and I had over the years collected, you know, just clippings, torn pictures, you know, little objects and things. And so I packed up two boxes to the brim and just took all this stuff with me to New York, and I had a month to turn it into something. And it started out as the little envelope, the seed packet, because the seed packet was inspired by that kind of fetishistic thing that the men who eroticized bound feet. There had been a book, an erotic book in China called *The Guide to Gathering Radishes,* and it was all about bound feet and how when you unveiled them they were these gnarled, white, beautiful, you know—

COLLINGS: Oh, god, so gross.

GAULKE: And it was twisted. So what I did was I created this image of the bound foot, which looks sort of like a turnip with little roots and stuff, and I made the seed packet. And I had the little ritual inside.

But that didn't seem like enough. So then I created this wrapper to put it in, this sort of thing that when you opened, it was supposed to sort of push it out, and then I covered that with all those quotes and things. And then that didn't seem like enough. So then I sewed into it a book that included foot-binding stories, stories from friends about breaking their feet or from wearing platform shoes and that sort of thing.

And that wasn't enough. So then I— And meanwhile, you know, I didn't know how to silkscreen, so I'm silk-screening for the first time. And then I made paper, a handmade paper with toenails and toenails and hair, pubic hair. And so then all the women that were doing residencies, every day I was like, "Give me some hair. Give me some nails." You know, and I was throwing all this in the pulper.

So that was the book. It was the project that wouldn't end, you know. And I actually, in a month, completed an edition of— What did I do an edition of?

COLLINGS: I think it was two hundred.

GAULKE: Two hundred.

COLLINGS: Yes.

GAULKE: So it's kind of amazing. I love those opportunities when you get to just be intense and do nothing but make art with support around you.

COLLINGS: So are you interested in making books?

GAULKE: I love making books. You know, books are very much like performances and videos in that they are a time-based material so that the reader experiences it in time, not sort of a painting or a sculpture, where it's like a one-time thing. So you can unveil the information, you know.

And so, like I said before, the *Frogskin* text, I'd been working— I'd got it designed into a book in my computer that's for actually— Actually, one thing that was hung up is I wanted it to be my first digitally produced book, and when I first designed it, you couldn't get archival paper and archival inks. I actually designed it about a good three, four years ago. And what's happened is now the media has come a long way— Because you don't want to produce a book that you sell to somebody and ten years later it's going to look like crap.

COLLINGS: No, no, no. The one that I saw was in Special Collections. You have to page it. You have to see it in their reading room, so it's well cared for.

GAULKE: Yes, well, it's good it's well cared for, but also the materials need to be something that aren't going to degenerate over time. So anyway, one of these days I'll get that done, right after I do my website.

COLLINGS: Yes. Which also brings me— You know, in looking at the work of yours that I was able to see, I'm noticing three repeated themes or objects or images: shoes and feet, frogs, and rivers.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: I mean, rivers are just everywhere, and that's why I was sort of interested to ask you about the landscape where you grew up. But I'm just kind of

interested, do you have a sense of how it is that you have come to have gravitated around this particular pantheon of images?

GAULKE: Well, let's see. There's some snakes in there, too, although there haven't been many snakes lately. I guess I'm interested in a lot of nature symbols that do represent the body and have kind of spiritual— You know, like, for example, the snake. And when I did *This is My Body*, I was the snake. I portrayed the snake in the thing, the snake in the Garden of Eden. And, you know, snakes were something as a girl I was supposed to be scared of, and believe me, I was scared of them, and I used to have nightmares about snakes in trees and chasing me, you know. And you're almost embarrassed to say you had those nightmares, because people say, "Oh, those are phallic symbols."

Well, as I came into feminism and began looking at these prehistoric goddess images and stuff, I began to learn, and there's this wonderful Indian goddess, she was a female, but her body's a snake. And I began to learn that the snake was actually associated with the mother, because snakes live within the womb of the mother. They lived within the earth, so they were intimate with the mother. And priestesses who were oracles would listen to the hissing of snakes and interpret their words. And then plus the snake is associated with kind of eternity because they shed their skin. So ancient people believe that snakes never died, that they just shed their skin.

So, you know, the things I liked in Christianity growing up, the symbolism is very rich, you know, this notion of eternal life, and all those things, when I started to learn that those things predated Christianity and I started to learn that Christianity just

sort of adopted those concepts and kind of basically ripped them off, which pissed me off, you know, and then took all the credit for it, I started to just go back to those symbols themselves.

And the frogs, too. In ancient Egypt, the frogs would be kind of, you know— The Nile would solidify and there would be all these— I don't know if they were the eggs or the frogs themselves kind of time-suspended, and then in the spring when the floods would come and the waters would loosen up the mud and all of these frogs would emerge. The frogs themselves looked like sheelanagigs, you know, the female symbols, where their arms are out raised and their legs are spread and their genitals are exposed. That symbol, to me, is very kind of associated with female sexuality.

And just, you know, the idea that female sexuality is just slimy and wet and dark and mysterious. You know, all those things are very much like frogs and snakes, you know. So it's all kind of— And rivers are like that, too. I mean, they emerge from holes in the earth and they flow freely and they flow to the sea and then they evaporate and then they go into the earth, and then they emerge from the earth again. And it's all a part of the same thing, you know.

It's really what the metaphor of Jesus Christ is, except you don't have to have that damned bloody body on a cross, you know. You don't have to have the suffering in the sense of inherent guilt and that you are guilty. I mean, that's really problematic for me. I'd much rather see the inherent purity and good in all things, and that, yes, there is death and destruction, but it's a part of the natural order of the cycle of life.

You know, that's like with *Sea of Time,* you know, that on some cosmic level Mark had to die in order for our babies to be born. I mean, I don't mean that literally, but that's what has to happen. I mean, we can't all be here forever, and that our lives are finite.

Now, my parents would— It would break their hearts to hear me say that, because to my parents, there is life after death. You know, there is this notion that there is a heaven that we will all be at together, and I, unfortunately, I won't be there, because I don't believe it exists. To me, that's not productive. That doesn't lead to a human being on the planet who cares about this Earth. If you're always focused on what's going to happen after you die, that's not productive to me. And, yes, maybe there is that thing, but I'm not going to spend my time dealing with it. I've got to deal with this life on this planet now, and I have to make this be my heaven or my hell.

COLLINGS: Right. Yes. And what about feet and shoes? [mutual laughter]

GAULKE: Okay. Okay. I can do that one. [mutual laughter]

COLLINGS: Do you like shoes?

GAULKE: I loved shoes. Remember, I told you when I was confirmed—

COLLINGS: The turquoise shoes.

GAULKE: —I wore turquoise shoes. And I used to have these great pointy red shoes, too, as a young girl. The shoes are also female sexuality for me, particularly red shoes. I did this sculpture in my first year of the Feminist Studio Workshop where I took a red high heel and I bound it in this beautiful white mohair, so it looked like this cocoon, but I left the pointy toe exposed. And that was because I read this thing

about these particular gorillas or monkeys that when the females were in heat, that essentially their clitoris, their genitals, became sort of bright red and kind of bulged out. And it's kind of clitoral, is what it is.

What I think has happened is in the culture, female sexuality is very much about our feet. I went to Malta in the summer of '78, and I did a performance in the prehistoric temple there. And the reason I wanted to go to Malta is I was doing all this work about high-heeled shoes and foot binding, and I saw this picture of this big stone goddess standing there, and she'd been standing for thirty thousand years. And I thought, those people knew something about longevity, about power, women, sexuality. That woman is standing on the earth. She's been standing there for thirty thousand years. She's not wearing high heels. If she's wearing high heels, she would have toppled a long time ago.

COLLINGS: She'd have fallen over by now.

GAULKE: So that connection of women and the earth that happens through the balance in our feet, I think it's very important to our sense of ourselves and our sexuality and our power. And so I began seeing that the high heels and the bound feet were all about kind of stealing our sexuality from us in the guise of giving us our sexuality, which is so creepy.

COLLINGS: Literally putting them off balance.

GAULKE: Yes. So you know, it's like, yes, and that with foot binding, it was a status symbol. For a man, it showed class. For a man to be able to afford to have a wife who could not walk, in other words, she needed servants to help her walk or a

cane, she couldn't work, certainly, showed his status. And it's so perverse to me that high heels— And, you know, I have to admit, I look at a high heel, and I think they're sexy, you know, but I don't want to wear them, and I can't wear them anymore.

But to be teetering off balance, why is that sexy? There's something— It's definitely S and M [sadism and masochism]. I mean, it's ultimately perverse. And I'm all for free choice, so if people want to go there, that's fine. I don't want to go there. But I also would rather people kind of have some consciousness about those images. And I find that our culture is so clueless, I mean, that so many women sign on to wearing shoes that are physically dangerous.

COLLINGS: I know, I know. I know someone—

GAULKE: Without thinking about it, and they put—

COLLINGS: —who broke her hip that way.

GAULKE: And they put their little girls in it. And you see all these older women who, you know, as their bones get brittle, they lose their balance. You know, it's just it's weird.

COLLINGS: Yes. I've often thought that when the foot is tilted forward in a high heel like that, that it looks sort of like a hoof.

GAULKE: Yes. Well, that's like when I did *Wu is Me*. I bought these cow's hooves and I sliced them, had the butcher slice them in half, and I wrapped them, and they look identical to a bound foot, identical. And they were really creepy, because they were real flesh and bone and muscle, and so they moved.

And this little girl, you know, it was this doll that was like a child, it was actually cast in my own face but made with more Asian features, and I danced with her to all these popular songs about feet and then I had these— It was actually for a show at Barnsdall [Art Park] called the Great American Foot Show, which was all about the history of footwear. And they had a display about Chinese foot binding, with no context or explanation of what it did to women and how really brutal it was. And so that's why I wanted to do a piece about that.

But they had these great— These like old olive trees that they had cut the trees down, and the stumps looked like gnarled feet. And I put monitors on all the stumps and had these videos playing all around me while I danced. The whole thing took place outside in an outside setting.

COLLINGS: Now, do you have a dance background?

GAULKE: I don't. I don't. I have a visual arts background.

COLLINGS: But I mean, you never took dance growing up or anything like that?

GAULKE: No, I never did the ballet or any of that stuff.

COLLINGS: Okay. I just have one sort of very general question. You know, going back to that article that you wrote where you talk about, "When I was growing up, I would make the bed," and the article goes on to talk about the way that women are raised. An important function of women's art of the seventies, it seems, was to make comparisons between images that are thrust upon women since youth, and to sort of make strange, make these strange, like making the high heels strange, sort of

distanciation techniques. Do you think that this kind of comparison-type work is important for you today, that sort of distanciation kind of work?

GAULKE: I like that word. That's not in my vocabulary, but I'll put it in my vocabulary.

COLLINGS: Okay.

GAULKE: Distanciation?

COLLINGS: Yes. It comes from Brecht, Bertolt Brecht, his theatrical techniques. So I didn't make it up. You can use it because it's not like I just made it up.

So does that continue to be? It seems to me, just from the sort of the things that I've seen, that you've kind of moved into other kinds of expressions, that you're not doing those kinds of making strange of things that were— That you've moved into other things that—I was just wondering what you would have to do say about that.

GAULKE: Well, you know, context is everything. It depends on what the work is for. And I think I'm definitely still very interested in that, and I feel like in my idea notebook, because you know as I'm driving around I—

COLLINGS: Oh, you have an idea notebook?

GAULKE: Yes, well, there are always just notebooks all over the place, and I don't know where they are when I need them. But, you know, I'll hear some story on NPR [National Public Radio]. I heard this wonderful story the other day about— It was a horrible story about female slavery, and I'd love to do a work about female slavery in India, and these women who get sold into slavery before they're born, by their parents

who need ten dollars or something, and they spend their whole lives, you know, breaking apart stones in a quarry, you know, and it's just horrific.

And so I'll have these little— And I'll write down ideas, but those things will probably come out in more personal work, which is why, you know, to do the more collaborative or political activist work, sometimes I don't get to kind of do those quirky like personal passions of my own, you know. I miss that sometimes.

I did performance art for eighteen years, primarily, with offshoots of books, installations, and videos, and then I switched back to video. I actually wanted to make this point, which is, the reasons I left video in the first place as my primary medium was access, because I didn't think I had it. Well, the reason I came back to it was for the same reason, which is kind of—

COLLINGS: Because you got the job at Westlake?

GAULKE: Well, I didn't start doing video at Westlake, no. No, it was because I was really burned out on performance. And when I did performance, I always had all these props and weird things, you know. Like I'd be schlepping to New York twenty pairs of crutches and a handmade wooden ladder, you know, on the airplane, you know, duffel bags. You know, and it was always like, why can't I just be a monologist like Tim Miller

COLLINGS: Yes, exactly.

GAULKE: But I never could be. That just wasn't me. I love to talk, but in performance I have a very hard time. I can't remember lines. You know, it's really painful for me to talk in a performance. I'd much rather be projected on and be a

character and create these more moody sort of environments, but those require props, and I was so tired of schlepping.

And plus the emotional exhaustion of doing each performance. So I suddenly realized, well, wait, I could video, because now video is so accessible and everybody has a VCR hooked up to their TV in the living room. I could actually— And to make a video would be a similar process to making a performance, but when you're done, it's all in this tiny little cassette that you could mail to people.

COLLINGS: You can mail it, yes.

GAULKE: And I was just like, "Yes, that's what I want to do now." So that was really hard because I had to rebuild my career in video because I really wasn't known in video, and I also was interested in doing some environmental stuff, some gay and lesbian stuff, and then you get ghettoized, you know. It's like, yes, I did *Sea of Time*, it traveled the continent— Not the continent; the globe. You know, I was in every gay and lesbian festival. But then you want to do a piece about environmental issues. Well, the gay and lesbian festivals don't want it. They want to know about what you think about being a lesbian, you know, and preferably be sexy while you're telling the story, you know, because that's what we like the best.

And that used to really make me mad, you know. I was like, "But I'm a lesbian and you should want my work about the environment," you know. So it was really frustrating to do these different kinds of work and to build up a name in those and to be able to try to get grants in that field, and I felt like suddenly no one knew me and I was starting over, and yet it was very satisfying working in video.

And then where was I going? Oh, and then now, then I made this decision that I wanted to do public art. And I don't know, I just thought, "Public art's cool. I mean, like your work is in the public, it's permanent. I should do that. I should like forget this ephemeral stuff. I should do something that's like really solid out there."

And I wonder now, too, if it had something to do with the fact— Well, I don't know. My first major public art commission was the Metrorail station on the Gold Line, which opened recently.

COLLINGS: Yes, wonderful.

GAULKE: And I was pregnant when I got that commission. What happened is, I worked on it all through my pregnancy. It was supposed to be completed in May of '94, my babies were due in May of '94, and that was it. Well, then what happened is the whole thing got taken away from MTA, and it went on hold for seven years. Meanwhile, I'm raising my kids and feeling completely invisible as an artist.

COLLINGS: Really?

GAULKE: And I was just speaking to somebody who has a young child, and she was saying, "How do you do it? How do you make art? How do you do so much and have children?" And, boy, I don't produce as much as I used to. I mean, I think I produce better, bigger things now that take longer to create, but there were years there when I just felt like—

COLLINGS: Did you have childcare at that time?

GAULKE: Well, I went back to work right away at three months.

[tape recorder off]

GAULKE: I try to keep them busy, so that I can be busy.

COLLINGS: Yes, because I think for a lot of artists they sort of feel like, "Well, I'm not making any money, so how can I pay for childcare," and then, you know, it's a real catch-22.

GAULKE: Yes. You know, and I didn't really— It wasn't my life's desire to be a mother. It came motivated more out of my partner Sue, who wanted to have children, didn't want to have them herself, but wanted to adopt. And I thought, "Well, wait. I've done all this artwork about the body. What could be the ultimate body experience is having a baby."

And you know, as a woman, what an amazing opportunity, so I said, "Okay, here's our deal. Since my art is my baby, and I can't really be bothered to raise a baby, I will have the baby. It will be kind of like a performance art piece. I'll have the baby, and you will raise it." So that was our deal.

COLLINGS: Well, I've always said every woman needs to be pregnant and give birth, but not every woman needs to raise a child. [laughs]

GAULKE: I think that's great. So by the time we finally got around to doing it, I was thirty-nine, starting to experience infertility. I went on fertility drugs and got pregnant with twins. So as soon as the twin thing— And I cried.

COLLINGS: Did you?

GAULKE: Oh, when I heard I was pregnant with twins, I cried. I was so upset, because I just thought, "My life is over. How will I ever have time to do anything

again? This is going to be so much work." And I knew the theory of handing it to Sue after it was born wasn't going to happen.

Now, I love my twins [Marka and Xochi], you know, and my life is so much richer because of my relationship with them, but it was a long time to kind of be able to have the physical energy, the time, and emotional energy to make art again. And I'm really grateful that I had that public art commission that went away for seven years and came back.

COLLINGS: Yes, that's perfect.

GAULKE: And I felt like I was older, a more mature person, a more mature artist, and I felt like I could do a better piece as a result, too. But the problem with public art—

COLLINGS: Let me just—

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GAULKE: —is you can't be terribly idiosyncratic. It has to be very kind of, you know, about— Well, you know, I love work that's about place. You know, I've very much— And that's something I really got from Sheila de Bretteville. Sheila was very much about— One of the founders of the building and the designer. Her work is a lot about place, the power of place, and telling stories from a place. And my passion for counteracting injustice really plays into that, because I can go into a community— And it started when I started working with the kids in East L.A. and the teenagers, is that I could be a facilitator and a conduit for their voices to be heard. You know, here are kids of color. They don't have a platform to express their views. So through art I can help them create that platform, just like I can, through art, give a voice to frogs, disappearing frogs, or rivers who are being polluted, you know. So, again, back to that notion that my art is a vehicle for other voices to be heard.

So, public art's not about me, you know, and yet it's about things I care about, so when I did the Metrorail station, it's about the two rivers, the Arroyo Seco and the L.A. River coming together, and the people who've lived in that place, the Native Americans, the people that live there now, the hopes for the future, you know, the sculpture which, again, I did not literally sculpt but had to hire someone to do.

Ruth Ann Anderson sculpted the water bearer woman from this wonderful historic photo that my colleague Susan Boyle found when we were working on the *L.A. River Project*. She had done research and come across this photo of this woman

pouring water into a vase. And I found that quote that said, "The Gabrielino woman who carried water by hand from the *zanje madre* to the households was the city's first municipal employee, the city's first waterworks." So if you're going to tell the story of water in the city of L.A. and the river and the water, and here's this woman, let's honor her. And it was just so exciting to be able to create this bronze sculpture of her standing atop the platform and then to reproduce the photographs so people could see she was a real person. We don't know her name anymore, but we can honor her memory.

So that's the thing. And the piece I just did in Lake View Terrace [Branch] for the new library branch out there is also honoring the history of the community, the history of the place, the animals that used to be in that place. It's a series of seven poles with icons on top of them and lots of quotes on stainless steel panels that are set on the poles.

COLLINGS: Now, how did you happen to get the MTA commission?

GAULKE: I submitted slides to a registry of artists. Any artists can put their slides in a registry, and then what they do is they pulled out, I think, six finalists. So they said, "We're doing this blind. Let's pull out six artists that we'll consider."

And then those six artists had like an hour-long appointment where we came and we talked about our work, and just basically were interviewed by the architect, a representative from the community, a representative of the art world, and MTA people. And out of that interview, I was the artist selected.

COLLINGS: And you had already designed the station as you described it?

GAULKE: No, no. No, this was—

COLLINGS: In your mind, I mean.

GAULKE: No.

COLLINGS: You didn't have to pitch a specific idea.

GAULKE: No, I didn't have to pitch an idea. No. It was just basically based on past work, and the major past work that I had just completed was the *L.A. River Project*, so that multiple-monitor installation, which they were very impressed with, thought was fabulous. But I couldn't do anything like that, because I couldn't do anything electronic, because that's too hard to maintain.

And I remember recently I went to lunch with— I reconnected with the guy who was the community representative on that panel, and he said, "We were conscious we were taking a big chance with you, because you'd never done anything like this."

COLLINGS: Oh, really? Yes, I was curious about that.

GAULKE: I'd never really built anything really physical, you know, although I felt that I had the skills, because in performance you build props and you work with lighting designers and you arranged space rental and, you know, you do publicity. And you have this kind of batch of skills that I thought were easily translatable to public art, but I'd never worked with architecture. I'd never made anything that had to last forever. I didn't know anything about concrete and metal and all those things.

But it was wonderful, because it was like all those skills I'd learned at the Woman's Building and in performance art and in organizing *Target L.A.* and stuff,

now like, oh, my gosh, there's this whole other set of skills I have to know about? You know, you can't put dissimilar metals together? Ay-yi-yi, you know.

COLLINGS: Why did they take the risk with you, did he say?

GAULKE: He said they just had a good feeling about me. And it turns out some of the artists who I was competing against actually got other stations on the line. So, yes, they had a good feeling about me.

COLLINGS: So once you start getting things like that, you just get more and more of them, I would think.

GAULKE: Right, but they're few and far between. There just really isn't that much going on, and it's highly competitive. Now I'm part of various pools at Cultural Affairs that oversee Parks and Rec[reation] and bridges and libraries and different things. So it's the same process where then you become one of four finalists. In that case, you actually pitch a concept. So when I did Lake View Terrace, I came up with a concept, and I made a little maquette and stuff.

But you do a lot of work for next to no money, and you get very excited about your ideas, and then someone else is the one who decides whether you get to do them or not. So it's very— It can be very frustrating. It's not like being an artist where you can just go to your studio and make the art that you want to make. You're dependent on other people giving you permission, and you can't do it on your own because you can't afford to do it. You don't have the access. It's, you know, thousands and thousands of dollars it costs to build that kind of stuff. You just can't do that.

COLLINGS: Yes. Well, what are your plans for the future?

GAULKE: Well, I hope to land some more public art commissions, and I want to finish my *Frogskin* book.

COLLINGS: The digital book?

GAULKE: The digital book. I want to have a functioning website so that people— You know, because, I mean, I love being parts of archives like this and stuff, but I want to be more accessible to people. You know, I'll get graduate students that are writing a paper or something, and they want to know about this or that. And if I could say, "Yes, just go to my website, and there's a blurb and photographs."

COLLINGS: Oh, absolutely, yes, you need that.

GAULKE: So that's been something I've been wanting to do. And I don't know what else. I would like to do some more of that idiosyncratic kind of work.

COLLINGS: One of the reasons the protections that people with tenure have, are that they can write anything, say anything. They will not be fired for their views.

GAULKE: That's great. [laughs] Wow.

COLLINGS: Do you feel any sort of hindrance in that respect?

GAULKE: Well, a little bit. A little bit, you know.

COLLINGS: I mean, public art is like very solid, very— You know.

GAULKE: Yes. Public art goes through so many reviews that, you know, you're not going to do something— Well, occasionally artists do do things that they get in trouble for. But you know, even like on my Metrorail station, I quoted a Lewis MacAdams part of a poem about the river. It says, "The river is a rigorous mistress, but when you tickle her with your deeds, you can still hear laughter from beneath her

concrete corset." And I loved that quote, because it was a metaphor to me of how the river had become concretized and the deeds you tickle her with are your activism, so that you remind people that she's still alive and she's there and this sort of drive to green the river.

But then he talked about her having a concrete corset, I thought, oh, that's going to be too sexual, you know, because it's a very sexy quote. And I thought, oh, you know, I'm going to get in trouble for that. Oh, somebody's going to say, "You know, that's not appropriate for public art," or something. And no one ever commented on it. But, you know, I think I probably kind of go into self-censorship mode, which is very easy for me to do because I was raised as the Christian good girl, you know, so it's very easy for me to self-censor.

And I can't even remember what your question was originally.

COLLINGS: My question was, you don't have tenure.

GAULKE: Oh, yes, yes. So in my job, I mean, I think I tend to be a little out there, you know, like showing my students that video or— So sometimes I get concerned, and what I do is I use my colleagues as sounding boards, you know. Like, for example, when my students do work, and I am totally for free-speech, but, I mean, I don't want them to be inappropriate. I don't want them to curse for the sake of cursing. But if they want to do work about heavy issues and stuff, I'm all for that. But whether I'm going to show that piece in an assembly to the entire class, that's another matter.

And so what I've done over the years is I just bring my higher-up administrator in and I say, "I love this piece. I think it's a really good piece, and I'd like to show it in assembly next week, but I want you to tell me that that's okay." Because it might be inappropriate, and sometimes I just don't know. So I let them make the call, and then I feel— And I do that a lot out of self-protection, because I don't want to do something, get in trouble.

I remember once I was informed by my headmaster [Tom Hudnut]—I was cleaning out my files recently; I came across the note he sent me—that a phone message had come into the school, anonymously, saying, "Cheri Gaulke is showing her students pornography." And he sent me this really nice little note. It was, "Just thought you should know about this. Be careful," or something.

And what I think it was is I was teaching photography at the time, and we had a book of a lot of different kinds of artists' work that manipulated situations and stuff, transformations or something. And there was Joel-Peter Witkin, whose work is very kind of S and M, and I wanted my students to see his work, but there was a particular image of a man who was hooded and his penis was attached to a lever and it was being stretched out with weights. And my tenth-grade fifteen-year-old boys were just like all in a titter about this image, and they were just like— You know. And what they would do is they would come in outside of classroom with their friends. "Come in," and they would show them this picture, which I thought was just kind of funny, you know. To me it was like— You know, it wasn't like I was saying, "Okay, you guys,

let's look at this dirty picture," you know. It was in the context of a whole book of work where there was tearing and, you know, different kind of manipulations.

I remember actually I met Joel-Peter Witkin at an opening, and I said, "Oh, it's so fascinating the way you tear and manipulate these surfaces." You know, and I said, "Well, how did you do that thing with the person looked like they were dead or the head that was off a body or something?"

And he looked at me with great disdain and said, "If there is a dead person in my photographs—," or—

COLLINGS: They're dead.

GAULKE: —"they are dead." You know, "How dare you imply that I had done any kind of Photoshop manipulation or anything? This is the real thing."

And you know, all those things are issues in— They're ethical and aesthetic issues in artmaking, and I want my classroom to be a place where we look at those issues. And plus, you know, if things are a little titillating, teenagers, I mean, they like it. I mean, part of it is also a tactic to just kind of draw them in, but the intention is not, you know, to be showing them pornography. That's not where I'm coming from. So I get a little nervous when things like that happen. Nothing's happened like that for a few years, though.

COLLINGS: Is the person who's directly above you sort of a unique person who protects the kind of work that you do or perhaps the kind of work that other people are doing in a really special way, or is that more reflective of the whole school?

GAULKE: No, I think— Well, really the only person above me ultimately is the headmaster. He is really all of our bosses. We have a department chair, but a department chair is not really our— You know. I mean, they're in charge of kind of orchestrating the department, but the headmaster is where the buck stops.

Tom Hudnut, I have great respect for him, and he was once an artist himself. He was once an opera singer, and he also is a preacher's kid, so we have similarity in our backgrounds. His father was in the Episcopal church, and his mother was a great feminist. So I feel like he has a lot of respect for his employees, for his people here, that there's a lot of intellectual freedom and mutual respect and that sort of thing.

And, boy, when I had my Metrorail opening, you know, you don't want to abuse like the e-mail system and tell everybody about your art show kind of thing, so I didn't really do that. I think I told my art department colleagues about it. And I got an e-mail from the headmaster's assistant saying, "Tom would like to send out a schoolwide E-mail inviting people. Would that be okay with you?"

And I'm like, "Yeah!" And he wrote this lovely E-mail, invited the entire school, and I had, I think, three hundred people at my dedication, of which a good— I mean, there could have easily been almost fifty people from my school. I mean, there were people from the business office, you know, teachers. It was so wonderful to feel so supported, and people really were excited for me.

COLLINGS: I think this is an example of kind of the turn really in your work where the early work in the seventies was sort of against representations of women, and now the later works seem to be, well, in a certain sense, more positive. It's not reacting.

It's bringing out perhaps new information, the information about the Tongva woman and so on. It's not comparing one image to another image; it's just bringing out the one image and presenting it as truth.

GAULKE: Yes. Right. And I think, you know, that just comes from maturing, too. I've noticed, you know, just in terms of ones ongoing relationship with ones parents, that there was a time when I was the rebel and critical of what my parents stood for and all that kind of stuff. And then over time, I've begun to value what I get for them and honor that, and even though there may be disagreements and still points of tension there, that's okay. I don't need to take potshots, kind of thing, hopefully. I hope I'm not taking potshots.

COLLINGS: Okay. Is there anything else that— We sort of talked about another session. I sort of feel like we've kind of come full circle. Do you?

GAULKE: Yes. Why don't you stop it.

[tape recorder off]

COLLINGS: Okay. We're on, and we're going to talk about the Cape Fear River project.

GAULKE: I've always been interested in multiple-monitor installations, but they're, of course, very expensive to be able to produce. And *L.A. River Project* was an opportunity to do that with the kids, with the twelve monitors. After that toured by the Smithsonian, I got a phone call just out of blue one day. A new museum was forming in Raleigh, North Carolina, called Exploris, and they said, "We saw this installation

that you did about the river, and we would like to hire you to do one of these for our museum."

So since *L.A. River Project* was twelve monitors with the same image on all the monitors, so it essentially looked like flowing water, it always felt to me like a huge expense and a lot of equipment to do very little in a way. I mean, it was very stunning and lovely, but it didn't—

COLLINGS: Now, was it sort of live in the sense that you had a camera here, a camera here, a—

GAULKE: No.

COLLINGS: So it was sequential in that sense?

GAULKE: No, not even that fancy. It was literally the same image on all of them, but because it was framed in such a way, it kind of created the illusion. And I remember actually one of my favorite moments during that exhibition was seeing a little preschool like toddler coming up to the edge of it and trying to stick her hand into it, like it was water.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's so cute.

GAULKE: Yes, that's really cute.

So anyway, when they called me, I said, "You know, I'd love to do a piece like that, and I'd like to change it a little bit. I'd like to kind of do more with it and make it more of a narrative and make it multiple channels, instead of one channel." So what happened with that project is we hired an artist and river activist in the area who knew the river, the Cape Fear River, and the watershed, and she also knew people. She's

just a great woman. Her name's Louise Kessel, a printmaker and river activist. And she organized the journey.

So what we did is she found these middle-school-aged kids from all different areas, because we wanted kids from different parts of the watershed along the river, too, boys and girls, but all kind of middle-school-aged. And she planned this journey that we would go down that started at the headwaters. The headwaters is where it starts, right?

COLLINGS: Sounds like it.

GAULKE: The head. And we did a little ritual at the beginning where we all brought waters from our own areas, and we poured them into the headwaters. And every place we went, we gathered water from the river and carried it on our journey. And so we had this wonderful jug that was made by an artisan along the river that we filled with water all along the way.

So then that piece ended up being a twelve-monitor installation, permanent installation, in this museum, which is a wonderful museum. But it's three channels.

COLLINGS: Oh, it is a permanent installation?

GAULKE: It's a permanent installation.

COLLINGS: It's there today.

GAULKE: It's there today, yes.

COLLINGS: Oh, my gosh.

GAULKE: Yes. And the idea hopefully is when the museum wants to update that installation, that that will tell the story of another river, and there's been talk about

going to Vietnam and telling the story of a river there. But for now it's a regional river.

So the kids were exposed to different facts or different aspects of the river along the way, like a folk artist who drags logs out of the river and cuts them with a chainsaw and makes these whimsical animals. Or we went with a scientist one day and learned about point source pollution and saw where factories are putting their effluent right into the water. We learned about different birds and snakes and fish. We met with an old man who had been a dairy farmer on the river, and they dammed the river and formed this huge recreational area and flooded his family home. And that was really a heart-wrenching day to meet with this man who told the story of the Army Corps of Engineers essentially destroying the home that he had grown up in and his land.

COLLINGS: Wow.

GAULKE: And then later in the day, he came along with us when we met with the Army Corps of Engineer guy who talked about it from his point of view, and it was very, I think, moving to see these two men meet on camera and kind of accept each other, you know.

So the piece, though, editing it, editing a three-channel piece was really difficult. I felt as if somebody had invented a new dimension. You know, there's two-dimensional art and there's three-dimensional art, and then there's time-based art, you've got that time element. And it was if there was yet another dimension that I'd never really had to deal with, and I worked—

COLLINGS: Juxtapositions.

GAULKE: Juxtapositions. And, you know, I worked with Joe Leonardi, who for many years was at the Long Beach Museum of Art Video Annex down there, who's a wonderful editor, and he's editing a number of my pieces, *Sea of Time* and *Out Loud*, maybe some others. He had since moved to Oregon. I actually hired him to come down, live at my house, and I think we spent about two weeks editing *Out Loud* and the Cape Fear project the same summer and working just almost around the clock, just stopping only to eat and sleep and then going back to it.

And I remember— And the problem is, you couldn't play all three at once. You would edit the different parts, and you could use timecode to figure out what's happening here and then what would be happening on screen two and screen three, but you could never sit there and watch them all together. So finally, we got to a certain place in our work where we thought, "We'd better look at this and see how this is working."

And we came down to my school where we hooked up three VCRs and three monitors. We couldn't really time-sync them, but we could sort of hit go, hit play, at the same time. And we watched it, and it was absolute visual chaos. It was so disturbing, you couldn't stand it. So we had to go back and completely edit it from scratch, and realize what we tried to do was make Channel B be the sort of storytelling channel, the one that carried the narrative, and A and C were support channels that showed like— So, say, if you were showing, you know, a scene of nature, you had the

naturalist talking about nature on the center one, but on the left and the right you would have different shots and sometimes animals.

COLLINGS: And sometimes you'd repeat, you have the echo, repeat the same shot in A and C.

GAULKE: Exactly. And I wish I had done more of that, because in some ways that was really a good thing to do, to just repeat the shot so that there were moments of— And then what we would do is kind of like when you're eating sushi and you eat the pickled ginger between the different sushis to kind of clear your palate, we would use just the flowing water images, like in the *L.A. River Project*, as a kind of—

COLLINGS: Wipe.

GAULKE: Yes, a wipe between the different scenes. And that was very interesting because it was like I had to boil each of the things the kids did, like going to the hog farm or various things, everything had to boil down into about thirty second segments.

COLLINGS: So were you orchestrating the on-camera activity?

GAULKE: I just shot everything without any idea about how it was going to go together. I just was with these kids. I helped drive the van. We slept on the floor in community centers every night. It was really intense and really exhausting. We cooked for each other. Nobody made our food. That was part of the thing. Louise is really a believer in, you know, sort of everybody chipping in, so, you know, every night different kids and different teams that would make the sloppy joes or the bean and cheese burritos or whatever we ate.

COLLINGS: Oh, that's wonderful.

GAULKE: And I just shot, shot, shot. I just tried to shoot everything. And I tend to do that and then make sense of it all in editing, which, you know, one of these days I'll maybe plan something in advance. I don't know. Maybe that's just the way you do a documentary.

COLLINGS: Yes. How long was the trip?

GAULKE: We did it in two legs, so each leg was about five days, maybe, of two individual weeks. We did the top part of the river and then the bottom part of the river.

COLLINGS: So you got that on the basis of the *L.A. River Project*.

GAULKE: Right.

COLLINGS: And you sort of got the Metro station on the basis of—

GAULKE: The *L.A. River Project* as well. And I think the fact that that is a permanent installation has helped me also in using that as leverage for future public art pieces, because, you know, when you apply to get a public art commission, you have to say how many other public art commissions you've done. And, you know, it's very hard to have really completed or gotten many of these commissions, so I sort of count that as one of them, because it's a permanent installation.

COLLINGS: And the *L.A. River Project* was also kind of what moved you out of the Sisters of Survival, is that right?

GAULKE: Well, it's part of that whole, I think, transition of moving away from just solely women's issues and moving more into the community and using my art more as

a vehicle for other voices than my own, you know, beginning to work more with kids in East L.A., first the young kids and then the teenagers.

COLLINGS: And what would you say was the work that got you the position that you have here now?

GAULKE: Well, let's see. I had been going back and forth between various teaching jobs, like, you know, Cal State Long Beach [California State University, Long Beach], Otis [College of Art and Design], you know, kind of little individual classes here and there, and then also doing arts administration at the Woman's Building, and I seemed to kind of bounce back and forth between there, but there was no permanence or any kind of long-term security, no health insurance, no retirement fund, none of that stuff.

Sue heard about this opening at Crossroads [School], which was a part of the high school, and said, "You should apply for that."

And I'm like, "I don't know how to teach high school. I've been working with college kids." It seemed like a little beneath me, you know, like working at a high school, kind of dumb, you know.

But she said, "You know, this could be a more permanent— You need like a regular gig," you know. So I started working there and I got that job. And I'm trying to remember what I taught. Yearbook, graphic design.

COLLINGS: Oh, going back to the lithography.

GAULKE: And that's the thing, too, is doing performance art, it's not like there were performance art jobs out there. Nobody was really teaching performance art, so you had to kind of fall back on the other stuff.

And then just in terms of feminism, too, that was also kind of a disturbing thing for me, is when I taught at Crossroads, and I'd been working in the feminist art movement and really believed in empowering women and stuff. And here I was suddenly at a coed high school, and girls were acting ditzy, drove me nuts, and I felt like we had not made any progress.

COLLINGS: And this was the Valley Girl time, too, wasn't it?

GAULKE: Yes, yes, it was that kind of like toss your hair and kind of like, "Oh, my god," you know, yes, and just it really kind of sickened me. And girls getting nose jobs, you know, and stuff like that.

And then when we would have art openings, this one teacher from Westlake School for Girls, Kevin O'Malley, who's my colleague now, and a male feminist would come to our art shows, and I really liked him. And then we heard that there was an opening at Westlake School for Girls. And he liked me and he liked my work, and so then I got a job teaching at Westlake. I remember—

COLLINGS: Teaching video?

GAULKE: No. They didn't offer video at that time. I taught seventh grade art, which was sort of an overview of line, shape, you know, kind of one of those intro classes. I even taught drawing and painting for a while, which was really digging deep for me, back to, you know, learning that stuff in college.

And then eventually, Kevin was teaching photography and really wanted to start doing video work, and he got a patron, one of the board members, actually Helen

Bing, to contribute enough money to buy a whole video editing system, cameras. And then he said, you know, "Would you like to start teaching video?"

And so I started teaching video, and then I was really happy because I was actually teaching something I knew, I'd done as my own artwork, I was really committed to. And then, of course, three or so years into it, we merged with Harvard School for Boys, and we were able to bring video to the school and develop it so that now we have three video labs and just hundreds of kids that are taking it. It's probably one of our most popular courses. It's really great.

COLLINGS: They were able to hire you to do video because you had already done the Cape Fear project?

GAULKE: No. You know, when you teach in a high school, probably different than a college, you kind of just fill in wherever, you know. It's sort of like it's all sign-up based, so the kids sign up for classes, and, "Oh, gee, we've got to add extra drawing and painting class. Gee, Cheri, can you teach them?" "Ay-yi-yi, okay," you know. And it's not necessarily my strength, but I will work with a colleague or develop a class really quick.

So, yes, I've taught photography, and I hadn't done photography since junior college. I've taught photography here for a bunch of years. And now I'm happy because I feel like I teach— I feel more comfortable since I feel like I'm teaching something that I'm strong at myself, you know, in my own work and stuff.

COLLINGS: You know, I wanted to ask you— This kind of raised a— When you were talking about being at Crossroads and how distressing that was, I was thinking

about a quote that I got from an article written by Terry Wolverton, where she says, "I sense in this generation of women a hunger for the kind of community or context for their work that existed in the 1970s." And I was struck also by something else that I was reading, which said that this *Naked Lady* sculpture by Kate Millett raised to the roof of the Woman's Building in 1978 to celebrate the fifth anniversary, that this photograph actually appeared on the front page of the *L.A. Times*?

GAULKE: Yes, and that was Sue's and my idea, doing that.

COLLINGS: Yes, you've got really good sort of public, publicity, and administration skills. But I guess, I mean, the idea that, you know, the anniversary of the Woman's Building, the sculpture of the woman, the front page of the *L.A. Times*. I mean, we would never see this today. So I'm just sort of wondering, do you agree or disagree with this statement by Terry Wolverton? Is there in this generation a hunger for the kind of community that existed?

GAULKE: I hear it a lot from college and graduate students. I don't really sense it with high school students yet. They're not there yet. But just over the recent years being interviewed by people writing papers or doing dissertations, I hear that all the time. And even when for a while, when I had studio assistants that I would kind of recruit from women at local art colleges and stuff, there was that real sense of, "Oh, I'm so sorry I missed that. I wish I had that in my life now."

You know, at CalArts there were a group of women that formed. They saw something in the trash that caught their eye, and it was the catalogues from *Womanhouse* that were designed by Sheila de Bretteville. She had die-cut it so that

the book itself is shaped like a house. And these are like really valuable, actually. They're valuable collectors items. But the librarian was cleaning, and apparently there were a bunch of them, and they were like in the trash. And these students at CalArts saw them and pulled them out and then realized that CalArts had this whole history of really kind of being there at the beginning with the Woman's Building. The Feminist Studio Workshop really grew out of the program at CalArts when the women teaching at CalArts decided they needed the room of one's own and they needed to leave the male-dominated institution and start their own school.

And so these women— What was it called? The F-Word: Contemporary Feminisms and the Legacy of the Los Angeles Feminist Art Movement. They organized a conference and brought back a lot of women who were involved, and I spoke, and it was wonderful. And just this passion that they had for kind of unearthing what they saw as their "herstory," you know, was really gratifying.

COLLINGS: Is this an interest, do you think, in working through feminist issues and women's issues in work in the way that you were in the seventies, or is it about having a female-oriented space in which to do other kinds of work, such as the kinds of work, for example, the environmental work that you're doing now?

GAULKE: In other words, is it about content or is it about a support group?

COLLINGS: Yes, exactly.

GAULKE: You know, I'm not sure I know the answer to that. I think it's probably a little bit of both. I think it's a little bit of both.

I was just thinking actually on my drive here this morning, I was thinking how when I was a young student in the Feminist Studio Workshop and learning about an artist like Betye Saar and how she was so cool and she was sort of doing all this work about being African American, using Aunt Jemima, and making these wonderful little assemblages, and how she did her work. She was a young mother, and she did her work in the kitchen. The kitchen was her studio. And it's just that that was so cool that she was, you know, a woman having to cook and take care and raise her children, but yet she managed to chisel out a little space to be an artist, too, and there was sort of a romanticization, maybe, or celebration of her doing that.

And I was thinking, you know, that's not going to appear in any article today about any artist. They're sort of like this— In some ways, I feel like it's back to the way it was before the Feminist art movement when women sort of don't want to talk about being women, I don't think, so much anymore. We don't want to draw a lot of attention to, you know, what might be extra hard for us or, you know, we'd rather not draw attention to it.

COLLINGS: Well, does that have something to do with the idea that one doesn't want to appear to be recycling ideas from another period in art history, that the critics would be harsh? Or does it have to do with feeling that those are not the most pressing issues and that one doesn't need to make art about that?

GAULKE: I don't know. I'm not sure I really know. You know, it's hard for me to say because I'm not them.

COLLINGS: Do you, yourself, feel that you have an interest or a need to make what would be considered in the most strictest terms feminist art?

GAULKE: I think all of my art is feminist art as defined by that definition, the function of feminist art is to raise consciousness, invite dialogue, and transform culture. That's my credo, you know. And do I still want to use my art to draw attention to issues that are particularly facing women? Yes.

You know, when I heard that story on the radio about the women sold into slavery in India, and the cool thing about that story is how these women formed a credit union, and they began to, in very small bits, pool their resources. And what they were able to do is buy one woman's freedom.

COLLINGS: Oh, my gosh.

GAULKE: And then that women went out and got a real job, and she continued to give back to the credit union. So one woman at a time, they were buying these women's freedom.

COLLINGS: Gosh, what an amazing story.

GAULKE: And then there's the whole thing— I mean it's just fascinating, and I thought I want to do an artist's book or a project or a piece about that because I want to make that visible because it's just so wonderful about how resourceful—

COLLINGS: Yes, that is.

GAULKE: You know, women can be so victimized and yet can be resourceful and transform their own lives together, and that's very powerful.

COLLINGS: Yes, that's a wonderful story. It would be wonderful to see that made into something.

GAULKE: So I think, you know, back to teaching at Crossroads and then getting this job, and I was working concurrently at Crossroads and Westlake School for Girls, and when I was so disturbed at Crossroads, feeling like the girls were ditzy— And I don't mean to be dissing Crossroads as a school. I don't think it was Crossroads' fault. But when I came to Westlake School for Girls, there were the girls that I hoped existed. There were the girls who were going to be the future senators. You know, they were with other girls, so they didn't have to act dumb or act silly. They could just be themselves. And so as a result, they didn't have to dress fancy or look sexy. They wore funky boxer shorts hanging out of their uniforms. And they were up on the stage being articulate, and they had a women's studies program and were bringing famous women. And I was like, "Yes, I'm so glad. These are the women."

And then three years later, I find out we're going to merge with a boys' school, and I'm like, "Great." You know, and I had always thought, you know, female education, separatist education— Like my best friend growing up went to a Catholic girls' school. That always seemed kind of stupid to me, like, you know, how do you meet boys? And you should be around boys because you should know how to be with boys, that kind of thing. But, you know, obviously, it meant a lot to me, feminist separate education. And then when I saw it at Westlake, it was so powerful.

But I do have to say that I'm really proud of our school, our merged school, and I think that girls are able to be strong here. And I mean, I just feel like I'm ever vigilant about those issues, you know, but there are people who care, you know.

COLLINGS: What period of your art-making career has been the most galvanizing for you so far? I mean, I'm not saying— I'm only saying " so far" because I know you've got many, many good years ahead. [laughs]

GAULKE: You know, I will always love the seventies. 1978 was probably— I think I did— What did I do in '78? I did maybe *Broken Shoes.* That was a very fun year for me, for some reason. I did the Feminist Art Workers. I may have done *Wu Is Me*. I produced so much.

I just feel when I look at my résumé, it's a very fat résumé, but it's fat at the beginning and things slowed down considerably. I do think— I mean, my volume of production just— I can't be at the level. I mean, I have to support myself, my family.

COLLINGS: Yes, well, you're working full time, you've got two kids.

GAULKE: Yes, yes. I mean, in those days when I was— All I did was make art. And, plus, in the seventies, the economy was so different. I mean, you could just live on nothing. I mean, I used to pay $30 rent for like five thousand square feet in Old Town Pasadena, and we had these humongous studios we paid nothing for. And it was incredible. You know, we just could have fun and make art and make love and, you know, just had a great old time.

And nowadays, you know, as Americans, we have to work so hard, I mean, just to keep our heads above water. I meet people that say that that's not true around

the globe, too. Like Europeans work so much less than we do. And I can get very plugged into that with my kind of Puritan work ethic, you know, just sort of whining about people who are tenured. They don't seem like they have to work hard enough.

COLLINGS: Yes, exactly. [mutual laughter]

Is there work that you're making now that you wouldn't have made if you hadn't had children?

GAULKE: Boy, that's a good question. Sue always teases me that I did work *This is My Body*, and then when I made her take her clothes off and get covered in mud and be the Venus of Willendorf, it was like and this is my "This is My Girlfriend's Body." And then she'd say, and then I'm going to have children, and it's going to be "This is My Baby."

Since my work was sort of autobiographical and kind of about those sorts of things, I kind of imagined that I would make art about my children. And I guess, actually, we haven't even talked about any of this work. In some ways, I did, because I didn't really make it about them, but I made it about being a family, you know, and Sue and I did those two installations. The first one was called *Thicker Than Blood: Portrait of Our Lesbian Family*, and that was a huge fifty-foot-long wall installation that was inspired by the fact that many people will send us— You know, at the holidays, you know, your relatives send you the Sears portrait that they had done of their family. and we noticed that no one, none of our friends ever sent those photos.

Was it because we were artists and those photos just weren't cool enough? Or was it because somehow we didn't consider ourselves family in that sense? And so

we decided to create an artwork where we would ask all of our friends to go to Sears and have their portraits done. And, again, it was kind of a conceptual performance piece to send all these odd families, queer families, but they weren't all queer, they were some of them straight, but they were odd in that it would be a mother and a daughter or it would be, you know, just different kinds of family groupings, but however you consider family, go to Sears, have your portrait done.

And then we framed those in gold leaf and put them on this long wall that said "family" very large and asked questions of who to call in case of emergency and all those questions that you have to fill out on forms. And when your family's not like a kind of normal family, what do you write? And what do you do at your job if you're in the closet and you're gay or lesbian, and they want to know next of kin or who to call in case of emergency? Do you put your partner? How do you explain who that person is? I mean, fortunately, I'm not in the closet, so I don't have to worry about any of that, but there was a time when that I would get all sweaty and nervous just filling out a form like that.

And also, the other thing about that piece is that we felt that we were constantly being defined by heterosexual family, you know, like we were sort of a subset of our parents kind of thing. And what we wanted to do is say, what if we conceived of all of our friends, who we consider our extended family, to be in the context of our relationships? So now suddenly all these people are a lesbian family, because we are a lesbian family.

So Sue and I did that first artwork before we had children, *Thicker Than Blood: Portrait of Our Lesbian Family*. And then after we had children, we began to feel that there weren't enough images out there of gay and lesbian families and all the different ways in which they're formed, you know, like ours where you use artificial insemination and you have the child yourself, or you adopt, or maybe you were married and you had children, and now you realized you were gay and you're with a same-sex partner but you have these children from a heterosexual marriage. And so that became really interesting to us.

And then also just biracial issues. You've got men, your white men adopting a Guatemalan baby, you know, or Chinese, and you've got all this kind of stuff, too. So then we created another installation called *Families Next Door*, which were the Sears portraits of all these families.

Plus it was really great to collect stories. We had people fill out questionnaires about what happened when they went to Sears. That was the sort of performance aspect, you know.

COLLINGS: I was thinking about that, yes.

GAULKE: And I remember this one lesbian couple from the first installation saying they're having all these problems with the posing, working with the woman who was taking the picture. And they didn't want to be in the pose that she was putting them in, and they wanted to face each other and hold their hands and look into the camera. And the women finally, like a light bulb went off, and she said, "Oh, you mean like a couple?"

And they said, “Yeah, like a couple.” [mutual laughter]

So, you know, these wonderful stories about people’s experiences about kind of, you know— What do I want to say? Not invading Sears, but—

COLLINGS: Well, sort of meeting, meeting Sears.

GAULKE: Yes.

COLLINGS: Meeting Sears halfway.

GAULKE: There’s a word. I can’t think of the verb that I want. Not subverting Sears, but sort of like invading Sears with this new kind of definition that they should be aware of.

So, you know, and I do that everywhere I go. You know, it’s like when the girls were little babies and we would walk, and people would say— In the mall, and they would say, “Who’s the mother?”

And we’d say, “We both are.” And people would just get this strange look like, “How could that be? Did each of you have one?” And so it’s this constant— Sometimes I feel like my life is just constantly about raising awareness about things with people.

COLLINGS: Well, particularly when you have twins, for example. Everybody feels like they can—

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COLLINGS: Other kinds of pieces that you wouldn't have made if you didn't have the children.

GAULKE: Oh, just this one other example of just daily life, too. Just the other day, just last week, I went into the bank to do a— What do you call it? Notary Public on a form. And the type of form it was, she had to ask the question— You had to like, "Do you solemnly swear that all the things you're saying are true, so help you God?" I said it, but then I asked, "What if I don't believe in God?" Like how can you— It's like weird, you know.

And she says, "Oh, oh, okay. Well, there's an alternative version. Would you like me to read you that one?"

And I said, "Yes, I would." So she gets out the thing, and it says, you know, something like, "I swear these things to be true," blah, blah, blah, you know, "to the best of my" whatever. And I was like, that's so great. You should use that one? I mean, why— Don't we have this separation between church and state? Why would you use that other one? Why don't you use this one as your standard?

And then she's like, "Yes, that's so true." And then the teller started having this whole discussion about it.

COLLINGS: So you turned it into a performance piece.

GAULKE: But, you know, part of what I feel like now that I have kids, too, is like I'm making the world safe for my children.

COLLINGS: Well, I wondered if the environmental stuff had something to do with that.

GAULKE: Yes, I think for years, much like the women in art school that didn't want to be identified as women artists, because they were afraid it would damage their careers, for many years I could deal with any political issue, I could deal with sexuality, the body, the environment, but I was just terrified to deal with being a lesbian in my artwork, because I was sure once it was out that I was a lesbian, that it would destroy my career. I mean, I really thought it would destroy my career. I thought I would be discriminated against, I would never get another grant, I wouldn't get a job, I wouldn't be invited to shows.

COLLINGS: And was this based on any particular example of somebody?

GAULKE: I'm not sure. I don't know. I just was really afraid that it would really—And so to start making art about being a lesbian was really a bold kind of personal step for me. It was very scary.

But then, you know, it's like once I did it, I was hooked. It's like once I came out at my job here, I will never go back in the closet. It's so liberating to feel that nobody has anything on you. If you have a dirty little secret, you give away your power. And so now I'm just like I'm fierce, I'm fierce about these issues, because I don't want my kids to feel bad, you know. I don't want my kids to feel queer. I want them to feel normal.

And I remember, you know, when we went and looked at preschools, in the week we happened to go to this particular preschool which we ended up going to,

there was a display on the wall of pictures. All the kids had done drawings of their fathers, “What my father means to me.” And I go, “You know, my kids don’t have a father. They have a sperm donor, but what will my kids do the week that you do this exercise?”

And the school went, “Yeah, you’re right. Okay.” So then when my kids went to that school, it was like “The men in our life,” you know. And so I feel like all along the way it’s like constantly, you know, having— And really, if you’re just who you are and you feel safe enough to share who you are, people will work with you. You know, it’s not a hostile thing.

COLLINGS: Yes.

NAMES LIST