

INCITE PROJECT
The Reminiscences of
Charles Reinhart

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PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Charles Reinhart conducted by Interviewer Gay Morris on July 9, 2019. This interview is part of the INCITE Oral History Project.

The reader is asked to bear in mind that s/he is reading a verbatim transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose.

ATC

Session #1

Interviewee: Charles Reinhart

Location: New York, NY

Interviewer: Gay Morris

Date: July 9, 2019

Q: This is an interview with Charles Reinhart in his New York apartment on July 9, 2019. So, let's start with a little bit of your background, your family background, where you're from, where you went to school, your army experience.

Reinhart: [00:00:29] Army, did you say?

Q: Well, a little bit, yes.

Reinhart: [00:00:33] If it's okay, I'm going to—nobody in my family had any experience or real interest in the arts whatsoever. So, I think what changed me was in the second grade, when this wonderful teacher taught us what she called the Indian rain dance. And she said next week on Friday—this was in May—we're going to do it outdoors for the grownups and the other classes. Beautiful May day, not a cloud in the sky. We're doing our toe-heel dance in a circle. And all of a sudden I notice on the horizon this cloud. I'm going around and going around. That cloud is coming closer and closer, gets right over us and starts to drizzle on me. And I remember thinking, you know, this dancing is powerful stuff.

The next big thing is in the fourth grade. The sixth grade is doing the opera *Aida*. So they come to the fourth grade. They pick four boys to do the slave dance. So, we do the slave dance, and as

a reward for that, we get taken to the 1939 World's Fair. And I said dance did it again. Here I am in this miracle of places, the World's Fair, all because I danced.

Korea. The war is now over. I have a friend who was a captain in the Korean army, an interpreter. And he said, "Would you like to see Madame Cho? She's a classical Korean dancer." I said sure. We go to this big warehouse. There's a big potbellied stove in the middle. And she comes out and does a traditional Korean dance. And I went, wow. That was the first live dance I had ever seen. So, those things were so ingrained.

Okay, after Korea, my best buddy of all time, who I met in Korea, is going to Columbia graduate school. And there's a couple of guys in the small apartment on 92nd Street off Riverside Drive. I join them. We all can type sixty words a minute. I'm going to NYU law school. Law and I were as distant as you could possibly imagine. But we all belonged to Brown Steno Service, which was a temp office, right? And we all needed that to eat. So, I called him and said I need some work on Saturday, and they said, "Go to this place." So I go to that place on Saturday, and it's closed. So I call back Brown Steno Service, and the woman says, "We're closed on Saturday. I just came in to check the mail."

And she said, "You weren't supposed to go there today. You're supposed to go on Monday." I said I have classes on Monday. She said, "Well, this woman just called, and I said we didn't have anybody. But I wrote the address down and a name—Isadora Bennett, Dick Pleasant. Why don't you just go there?" I ran there. There they were, Dick Pleasant, who was the founder of American Ballet Theatre, and Isadora Bennett, the beloved manager/publicist in dance and

theatre. And I'm typing envelopes and doing things like that. At the end of the day, Dick comes over and says, "Issie likes you. Would you work with us part-time?" Sure.

Well, that's where it all started. And they took such care of me. They would take me out for dinner and pay for the dinner and pay me for the hours as if I was working. Can you beat that? Not even parents. I'm telling you. This was extraordinary. Dick calls up his college roommate from Princeton, whose name was Shubert, Lee Shubert. He says, "Lee, we've got this student here who loves dance and theatre. What, Lee? Okay, thanks." Hey, kid. If you want to see anything at the Shubert, call this number and they'll get you in, free tickets.

Judy Garland? Forget it. This was Reinhart in Wonderland, right? Anyway, it keeps going on, and they kept me involved. And, that was really the beginning right there. Of course, they were involved with all the dance that was going on. And back then, the 92nd Street Y was kind of where a lot of it took place in the fifties. I'm laughing because I remember going with them one time—we went often. And, it was a small audience, a small world, and you knew everybody. So, I remember I'm with them, and I stop and I say, look at those six people, I think, in the fifth row. I've never seen them before. Do you guys know them? Never saw them before. I said, see? The audience for modern dance is growing, right? That was kind of the life. And the stories go on, but I think that's enough of that.

Q: And so, you weren't booking anything yourself at that point. You were working with them?

Reinhart: [00:06:04] No, I didn't start booking. After that year, I moved to Denmark. And, Dick and Issie were involved in bringing the Royal Danish Ballet over, and I was going to go yell Heathcliff on the moor in Scotland. But once they got involved with the Danes, that did it for me. I went to Denmark. They had a graduate school in English. And, with all the connections that they gave me to the Royal Danish Ballet, it was extraordinary.

So, I guess it was '58. Issie wrote me and said, "Ted Shawn is being decorated by the king of Denmark. After he gets decorated, he's going to come to this point. Why don't you go and meet him? I told him to expect you." So I went and had this great conversation with Shawn. And, in '59 I get a letter from Shawn saying, "Issie told me you're moving back. Would you like to come and work for me at the Pillow?" I said to myself "I wasn't planning on moving back, but I am now." So, then I worked for Shawn in '60 and '61.

Q: And what were you doing for him?

Reinhart: [00:07:24] The first season, I was managing the theatre and doing the publicity. The second season I just did the publicity. Okay. Dick died. Issie becomes the first director of the newly-formed Asia Society Performing Arts Program. And she says to me, "Kid, I'm going to do that, and kid, you're going to travel." So I went off to Asia and then back to Europe to start booking the companies that were coming to the States from Asia to get them dates in Europe. So that's when I first started getting into management and booking.

Okay, I'm back here. And I think it's in 1962. And Issie has given me free this little office, a closet with a little tiny window onto an airshaft, free. Paul Taylor comes in and says, "Issie, I need a manager." And she says, "Paul, I can't do it." And he says, "I know." [Issie says,] "But check out the kid in the closet." This is as if it happened ten minutes ago. Paul comes in. The only thing I'd ever heard about Paul was the 1957 concert he did at the Y, right, which everybody knows about. And I'd heard about that in Denmark. I remember taking the papers off the little chair, because Issie stored all her boxes in there. And he sat down.

And he looks at me, and he says, not "Hello, how are you." He says, "Will you come see my dances next Thursday at 2:00?" And I said, yes, I will. And he gets up to leave. And he turns and he says, "Do you like boys or girls?" I said I like girls. He said, "I like boys. See you next Thursday at 2:00." Boom. That's where it began.

Q: So, you accepted Paul? You accepted. And, what was the first thing that you did for him?

Reinhart: [00:09:51] Going to that rehearsal Thursday at 2:00. Remember, what I knew about Paul is what I never saw, which was the dance so far avant garde that there's no movement, right? And they did *Aureole*. You know *Aureole*?

Q: Yes, of course.

Reinhart: [00:10:09] I'm sitting on a little bench, which is the kind you get in the first grade. I was so blown away. At the end of the dance, I hear this laughter. It's the dancers laughing at me

because my mouth is wide open. My eyes are wide open. It was like lightning hit my feet and rose up through my brain. And it was just one of those instinctive things. This is what I was born for. And so it began.

Q: That's great.

Reinhart: [00:10:42] And, I did everything for the company back then. I booked them. I managed them. I road managed on them. If Jennifer Tipton or Tom Skelton couldn't go, I was the stage manager lighting person. I knew nothing about it, right? So, the stories keep going on and on about that. But, we had a station wagon. We'd rent a station wagon. And there were just six dancers.

Q: Who were the dancers?

Reinhart: [00:11:19] Paul, Bettie de Jong, Dan Wagoner, Sharon Kinney, what's her name from the Midwest? How many have I mentioned? One, Bettie—oh, Liz.

Q: Liz Walton?

Reinhart: [00:11:41] And, the other one whose name I can't. Liz Walton, and there's one other. Oh, Renee Kimball.

Q: So, there were six?

Reinhart: [00:11:52] There were six dancers and myself and Jennifer [Tipton], and sometimes Jennifer didn't make it. It was just myself and the dancers.

Q: So, the first thing that you did was book a tour for them?

Reinhart: [00:12:08] That's correct.

Q: And was that in the United States?

Reinhart: [00:12:12] Yes. You see, previously, I was hired by Carnegie Hall to go on a tour in this country with a cellist they brought over from France. So I got to know a lot of the presenters. And, I was hired by Columbia Artists to go out with a the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, so I learned the presenters in this country. And I'd learned the presenters in Europe. So, I was in a pretty good position. But to put it in the right timeframe, there wasn't anybody who was just booking dance at that time. There were a lot of music people who had dance companies on their roster. And, this was the era when this explosion was happening in that the National Endowment for the Arts and the foundations were saying, "This is what we need to help right now—our American indigenous art form, modern dance." So again, those elements coming together which made the possibilities much easier.

Q: And was it difficult to book this very young company? Did people know about Taylor and his company? Or was that something that was difficult to do?

Reinhart: [00:13:44] Well, I had to overcome the Louis Horst review of 1957 when he wrote, “Last week Paul performed at 92nd St. Y, and then a blank space and signed his name at the bottom,” when Paul did one of the seven new dances where they didn’t move at all, right? But, that wasn’t that difficult to overcome. I don’t know why. It was just the right time. I’m sure I had tremendous anguish at the time. But time can make you forget certain anguishing moments, right? But, we’re able to do it. Oh, I wanted to tell you a story. May I?

Q: Of course.

Reinhart: [00:14:26] When Paul was dancing with Martha Graham, Glen Tetley, who was a choreographer, was also in the company. And I was booking Glen Tetley. He said, “I want to tell you this story. When Paul and I were in the Graham company, after rehearsal Martha called us both into the small studio.” I’m playing Glen Tetley now, right? “And, Martha gives us a few movements and then starts to feel our calves and say how wonderful it is. And then she steps back and starts talking about dance and the Gods and the heavens and the spirituality.” And Glen says, “I’m just soaring right up there with her. And then I fell in love with Paul Taylor as I heard him say, ‘What a crock of shit.’”

I don’t think you’ll get that story any other place, but anyway, it really points out how down-to-Earth Paul was, how deeply intelligent to see beyond the façade of things. Anyhow, I just didn’t want that story to get lost. And see, the switch was happening, and the switch being that, up to the early sixties, America looked to Europe to tell it what it should wear, what it should

appreciate, right? Things changed starting now. And so, there was an excitement in Europe about these new American developments. And jazz, which was not a new American development, and technically neither was modern dance, but their awareness of it was.

So, when I was living in Denmark, there were a lot of American jazz musicians living there. I think they could smoke pot there without too much trouble. And, there were people, especially in France, really interested in what was happening here in modern dance. And so, the sixties opened up tremendous possibilities. And then the State Department began to realize, hey, maybe there's something to our advantage here. And, I think our first State Department tour was to South America. And they didn't pick what we were to perform. And so, we're doing *Sea to Shining Sea*, which is a piece Paul did making fun of America, right? In a light, funny way, but making fun of it.

At that time, the relationship between Peru and the United States was very bad. After we performed in Peru, the main newspaper said this was terrific. And if the US Government permits the Taylor Company to do *Sea to Shining Sea*, it can't be all bad. You would think they would have applauded that back in Washington. They never permitted us to do it again. Don't ask how politics work.

Q: When you were touring in those very early years, what would be a typical week? How long would you stay in each place? What were the venues like, that sort of thing?

Reinhart: [00:18:28] When we toured, we toured as a major company. The venues were good theatres in South America and in Europe.

Q: But even when you were touring in '63, before you did the European tours?

Reinhart: [00:18:44] I think '63, '64, we were invited to the Berlin Festival. It was the first time we were treated really first class. Back then, you couldn't fly directly to Berlin. Remember the divide. So we had to fly to Frankfurt and another plane to Berlin. And we were treated—we were in the first class, the Kempinski Hotel, five-star hotel. And, they treated us like we were a major, major company. And that happened pretty much all over Europe with our European tours. Paul had been previously to Europe "third class", but not anymore.

Q: And was it the same in the United States when you were touring?

Reinhart: [00:19:38] No. We were touring mostly colleges and universities. That was the major part of touring. And, I remember going to the West Coast, and we're performing in Berkeley, I think it was. And we couldn't afford it, so we asked them, do they have people who would open their homes so that we could not have to pay for hotels? And they arranged that. It was a different world. It took a while for that to build up here, and it was almost immediate in Europe and South America and Asia. We were the hot stuff outside of our country. You're always appreciated at home last, right? It's nothing new.

Q: And what about budgets when you were touring in the United States and in Europe? Why were you doing home stays in the United States and then being treated in this first-class way in Europe? How were budgets managed?

Reinhart: [00:21:11] I'll tell you a quick story, which I think explains how well we did with that. Paul's living in the studio, on 6th Avenue—was it 38th Street? —illegally. And then we moved to 550 Broadway, and he's living there illegally. And one day he calls me and says, "I just bought a house." I said, a house? What do you mean a house? He said, "You know, a brownstone." I said where? "On Vandam Street." "Paul, how much did you pay for this?" "\$100,000." "Where did you get the mortgage? "Mortgage? You have to pay for a mortgage. I wouldn't do that."

So I quickly went back to my financial records of money Paul had received over the last couple of years, and I saw there's the money. What did he do, keep it under the mattress or something?

Q: That's interesting.

Reinhart: [00:22:18] I mean, of course this is a little exaggerated, but I had this image in my mind of him going twenty, forty, sixty, eighty, a hundred dollars, until he got to a hundred thousand. I think he had a bank account. But anyway, that's how well we did. Now remember, the dancers are only paid for performances. They weren't paid for rehearsal. That was the accepted mode back then. And, see, there are many things we didn't have to verbalize, Paul and I, because we were both born in 1930, and that means children of the Depression. So, if you're

taking a cab, you hop out of the cab two blocks before you get there to save the last click concept, right? And that's the way it was running the company for both of us. So, he did start to pile up money.

We made money touring. It wasn't fair, in a sense, because the dancers weren't paid for rehearsals. And now the dancers in the Taylor Company are about as well paid as practically anybody, if not better, which is so wonderful. But that's the way it was. And Paul benefited greatly from that. Plus, he's working with Rauschenberg, right? He's working with Katz. And, after a while, I remember one time he was short on money. Now, this has to be in the seventies. And he said, "You know, I have this orange crate that Rauschenberg made. You think anybody would buy it?" We got \$40,000 for an orange crate...back then. That must be \$400,000 today. I have no idea, but wow. So, here's to the painters and their support of modern dance.

But, yes, we made it because we were not nonprofit. In fact, when I got Paul to go nonprofit in 1966, he really didn't want to do it. He said, "I know there's got to be a board with a nonprofit, and they're going to take my company away from me." And I swore to him that with his name on the door, nobody is ever going to take the company away from him. And that's what happened. And the point is, he left his estate to the company, right? I mean, he left his estate to the board.

So, we had our first fundraiser—I forgot what dance we were doing—at the studio, I think, at 550 Broadway. I remember cutting up the cheese and buying the crackers and putting them on a plate. And there were about seven chairs. And, six people are there, and I'm in the seventh chair.

And Lincoln Kirstein came in late, and I gave him my chair. And he looked at the dance with his hands over his eyes. As soon as it was over, he got up and he ran out. Next week, we had a check in the mail for \$2,500, which was a lot of money to us. So, I was so shocked because, did he see it between his fingers or what? Anyway, that was our first fundraiser.

Q: And when was that?

Reinhart: [00:26:05] About '66, '67, something like that, yes.

Q: And in those early days, how long were the tours, and how much touring did you do?

Because, the dancers weren't going to get paid in rehearsals, and so were you touring all the time, or were the dancers dancing with other companies?

Reinhart: [00:26:27] We toured as much as we possibly could.

Q: And so, how much would that be, say, in one year more or less?

Reinhart: [00:26:32] I don't know without checking the records, but it was pretty good. And then we did a home season, and that happened because of Dick— Richard Barr. He produced all the Albee plays. And, he was trying to help Paul. And, he rented a theatre which was called the Billy Rose Theatre then. It was a Broadway house—to do a season for Paul.

Q: And that was the first Broadway season they did?

Reinhart: [00:27:21] No, I think the first one was at the Little Theatre, which is a Shubert theatre, which we did a weekend. That's right. And then we did the Billy Rose. I wish I could check my files.

Q: We can do that and fill that in.

Reinhart: [00:27:44] That went pretty well. Plus, at the same time, Ford and Rockefeller, etc. were getting interested. And they were starting to put up money to present New York seasons. And, again, being at the right spot at the right time, since I was the only one with an all-dance management, they asked me to do it. And I did it with [New York] City Center and BAM [Brooklyn Academy of Music]. We all combined for one year and put together—and the Billy Rose, the three spots—and sold subscriptions to all three theatres. It was terrific.

And then, City Center with Norman Singer, an unheralded, fantastic guy, who produced things outside of City Center at the ANTA Theatre on 52nd Street, which is now called something else [August Wilson Theatre] as well. They get divorced a lot in the theatre business, don't they, change their names all the time. And, so all these companies, were going to be able to perform. And, of course, Paul was a major, major star in all of that. It's good times.

Q: So, already in the sixties, he was very well known?

Reinhart: [00:29:14] In my office he was. I think there was a growing awareness around the world. And, Jean-Louis Barrault, does that mean anything to you?

Q: Yes.

Reinhart: [00:29:35] This had to be—oh my God, yes. It must have been around '67. He came to New York. I met him. He came to the Taylor Studio. And I remember over dinner he said, “I’m now running the Festival of Nations in Paris. And I want the Paul Taylor Dance Company to come,” in 1968. Remember 1968? There was a French revolution. Do you know how it started? The Sorbonne is right around the block from the Place de l’Odeon, where the Odeon Theatre is. So, after the second night, I’m coming from the dressing rooms after the performance, and I see all these kids coming in the door. And I said, no, no, the dancers aren’t ready yet. They just came in, and finally they said, “We’ll give you one hour to get all your stuff and get out of the theatre. We’re taking it over.” This was the start of the 1968 French Revolution, which brought the country to a standstill.

De Gaulle left the country, he was so scared of it. So we got caught there for a week, but I’m sure you’ll get all those stories. Jean-Louis Barrault and Paul would go on stage at night to talk to them. And Paul was trying to convince them that we’re not part of the establishment. You don’t understand. We’re so far out. It didn’t work, of course. And of course, in our contract, as with all contracts, it says you don’t get paid if there’s civil tumult, right, or acts of God. Jean-Louis came to us with a check for the full amount of our stay.

Q: Wow.

Reinhart: [00:31:36] I know. I still don't know if it was his personal money or what, because they blamed him eventually. He was fired from that position because he tried to bring in the protestors instead of being against them, reach out to them. Great man, great man.

Q: But they didn't allow you to dance?

Reinhart: [00:31:58] No. They threw us out of the theatre. And we're in a hotel, which is right next door. And again, to give credit, there was a very well-known restaurant, fish restaurant, called La Mediterranean, on the same square. And they snuck over food for us. And finally our orchestra conductor, John Parris, had a friend in Paris who owned a bus. So, I guess we opened on a Monday or something and closed on the Tuesday. And then probably Friday or Saturday, at 3:00 a.m. in the morning, we creep out of the hotel, get onto this bus, to escape to Belgium. I was thinking if I had been sharp enough to have sold all the seats—there were thirty-some-odd seats, and we were, what, eight or nine people, right—to get people out who were dying to get out, they would have paid anything. We could have endowed the company forever. Anyway, we made it to Brussels where we had a performance.

I've got to tell you this story. We're performing in a big hall where they built a stage for us. And the audience is sitting there. And in the background is big windows overlooking the beach and—the ocean, is it? Yes. And, during the performance, Liz, Liz Walton, is doing turns. And I see her go off her turns, which was so unusual. And I said to her after, Liz, what happened? She says,

“Well, there was this red light I was spotting on, and then the red light started to move.” It was on a ship out in the ocean. It was a gambling place, anyway, at a beach resort.

Q: And this was in Belgium?

Reinhart: [00:34:06] Yes. Now, the rest of that trip is phenomenal. I’ve got to go back to the planning of it.

Q: And do you remember what year this was?

Reinhart: [00:34:17] ’68.

Q: Okay, ’68.

Reinhart: [00:34:19] This is really important because it’s all about Paul and who he really is. We had this great tour, okay? In the middle was two weeks in Denmark, I think. And emotionally, that was important to me because I’m from Denmark—I mean, I lived there. And, they never had modern dance. And we were part of the Royal Danish Ballet and Music Festival, which was the biggest item of the year. And Flemming Flindt, who was then the head of the Royal Danish Ballet, got us this incredible gig with television which paid a lot of money. And we also performed at the festival.

And he said, “There’s only one thing I want out of this.” I said, what’s that? “I want *Aureole* for my company.” I said, no, that’s not going to work, because back then, no choreographer would allow his work or her work to be done by anybody but their dancers, right? And here is a ballet company wanting to do *Aureole*. So I go to Paul. He says, “No way.” But Paul, being that child of the Depression, I show him the economics of the whole tour, and I say if we lose those two weeks [in]Denmark, we lose the whole tour because we will have nothing in the middle. And after a while, he said, “Okay, but I don’t want too much to do with it.” Okay.

Opening night of the Danes doing *Aureole*, Paul had hurt his leg in Paris—that’s right. It’s in a cast. It’s out in the aisle. I’m sitting next to him. The Danes are doing *Aureole*. I can’t breathe because I know Thor is going to strike me with lightning. In the middle of the first section, he says, “It sure is different, but interesting.” [Sighs] That changed everything. And that’s why we have the Paul Taylor Company as it is today, our repertory company. This was historic. The only other repertory company was Alvin Ailey, who started out as a rep company, right? So, this was historic. And it happened there.

And so, that concept of that it’s never going to be the same, it can be different but still worthwhile, interesting, is what dance is all about, because even when Paul was still there, and he had X do Solo 1, and then X leaves the company and another dancer comes in and does Solo 1, it’s different. Well he used to love that because he loved the little things he could do with it and that the dancer could do with it that might be more interesting, perhaps. So, ’68. Then we went to England, and that’s when Paul fell apart.

Q: Yes, I wondered if you would talk a little bit about his health problems. He had many different kinds of health problems, and they started pretty early. It sounds like he was already having problems with his leg even in '63, '64, with that aspect. But also—

Reinhart: [00:37:55] He fell apart emotionally.

Q: Yes.

Reinhart: [00:38:00] Don't forget we're there, but I need to go back. Paul is in high school. I forgot [what] it was called, Episcopal something or other. And, one day when the ADF is in North Carolina, this guy comes up to me and says, "I was in school with Paul." I said, really? Tell me, what was he like? He said, "Well, he was a loner. But we all kind of liked him. In fact, back then," he said, "we all had this thing for those army World War II air force jackets. And we would pay Paul to paint them in the back for us." That's how he made his money to keep him going in high school.

And, I don't think anybody knows that story, so I just wanted it out there because there was Paul again, being a loner, looking at the world as only through his eyes as he could. And still, he was an outlier who was liked. That's an interesting combination.

Okay, back to the tour in Britain. St. Helens, which is a small town which exists because it has the Pilkington Glass Factory in it, and Lady Pilkington was our sponsor, halfway between Manchester and Liverpool. I think Paul had fallen in love in Denmark with the only guy in the

country probably who didn't speak English. Again, there was that Paul who wanted to be close and not close at the same time. We'll have a certain area of communications but not too much. Anyway, he was very depressed after we left Denmark and traveled to England.

Q: Was this person a dancer?

Reinhart: [00:40:26] No, somebody he met in a bar in Copenhagen.

Q: But Danish?

Reinhart: [00:40:30] Yes. And, Paul went off to Liverpool—I think he writes about this in his book, to some degree, too, *Private Domain*—to do what he did frequently in his life. Or, I should say, many times—I don't know about frequently—which is, 'what's going to happen to me is going to happen to me,' and he went through a terrible time in Liverpool, somehow made it back a half hour before the performance. I happened to be there when he was really stumbling up. And I said, "Paul, the dressing room is over here. Curtain goes up in a half hour." And he performed.

Anyway, you know the story about—it had to happen not too many years from what I'm talking about. I think it may be a couple of years before. Back in New York, 550 Broadway, he forgot his key. It's late at night. George, who doesn't speak or hear, living in the studio with Paul, so Paul can't call him. It's the middle of winter. So, Paul crosses the street, sits in the doorway and says, whatever happens to me happens to me, which was a motto heard on many occasions, crumpled up like this, freezing, freezing.

George wakes up in the middle of the night. Paul's not there. He goes to the window, which is a long walk because they're in the back of the studio, looks out the window and sees this person across the street and recognizes Paul and goes down and literally saves his life. That aspect of Paul played up right to the end, even to the last time I saw him before he died. He said, "I'm going to outlive you all."

Can I tell a story about the last time?

Q: Yes.

Reinhart: [00:43:02] He told a story he'd never told before. Back before he and I started, the company had been in Mexico City. And in Mexico City, because of the altitude, you have these oxygen tanks and masks in the wings of the theatre, right? So, the first piece is *Aureole*, so this had to be '62, early '62, just before I'd met him. And, the women are out first, right? And, he saw at rehearsal that they're putting on their oxygen masks when they come offstage. So he thought, I'll get a head start. So, I'll just put it on now, way before I have to go on. So he's got it on. The next minutes go by, and they say, "Paul, you're on." He goes, "Oh." And he walks out on the stage, faces the audience and stands there.

And Dan [Wagoner] yells, "Paul, move." Paul was telling me this story. And he said, "So, I started to move. It had nothing to do with the dance, but I just started to move." Anyway, I just

want to make sure that story gets told because he had just thought about it at that time just before he died. Sorry. I've got more stories if you're interested. Go ahead. You go ahead.

Q: Well, I just wondered if he, over time, just never took care of himself. I mean, it seems like he was always dancing with injuries and that sort of thing.

Reinhart: [00:44:37] Yes. You know, and he was taking pills, which were legal, I think, the pills he was taking. And his warm-ups were not everybody else's warm-ups. They were much shorter. He just dared life and didn't take the best care of himself. I remember when we were in Berlin. His stomach was really acting up. And I took him to a German doctor. It was then the German doctors' offices were in the German doctor's house. Paul didn't like that. And he didn't have a white coat on. And he examined Paul and said, "I'm going to take you right to the hospital and operate now." And Paul looked at me and said, "Get me the hell out of here."

I took him back to the hotel. He's not doing too well. I went to the theatre to tell the dancers that Paul may not make it that night, and they're trying to figure out how do we do. There were six dancers. How do we do? Bettie, are you going to do Paul's solo in *Aureole*, because she wasn't in it, right? There was only five dancers in *Aureole*. About a half hour before curtain, Paul comes in kind of bent over and says to me, "I don't want to speak to anybody. Just take me to my dressing room." We did *Aureole*, *Scudorama*, and *Piece Period*. I've never seen him dance better in my life. Maybe it has to do with low expectations. I don't know what. He was so brilliant.

At the end of the performance, the audience leaves, and an elderly woman—I came out from the dressing room into the theatre—comes up to me and says, “My name is Mary Wigman. I’d like to meet Paul Taylor.” Mary Wigman was an idol, right? I remember taking her back, and I said, “Paul, this is Mary Wigman.” And his face went like—just lit up. It looked like the stomach got better in about a second and a half. He was so honored and thrilled. And she told him wonderful things. So, I think that helped him get through that tour. That was his medicine. You talk about ailments, but the stomach was big.

Q: And it went on for many years, too, apparently.

Reinhart: [00:47:20] Yes. He was always popping antacid stuff. But he’d eat anything. There was this thing, this truck driver thing, about Paul. He was confident in his unbelievable intelligence. But we’re made up of many things, just not one thing. And one of the things that he was made up [of] was the truck driver thing.

John [Tomlinson] told me that when they did the memorial for Paul at Lincoln Center, the stagehands did it for free because they so adored him, because Paul always enjoyed going and thanking them and talking to them. There was that part of Paul, too. He would make the decision on whether he liked somebody. I don’t know. I used to think it was thirty seconds. I think it was probably a second and a half, and then that would be it. Do you want to hear some more stories?

Q: Sure.

Reinhart: [00:48:55] Early on—this is back when the studio was still at 6th Avenue—I wanted to take a class by Paul. Paul didn't like teaching. And I took my friend Ted Steeg, who made the first documentary on Paul. So the two of us get there, climb up five floors, and there's Paul. And we're in short pants. He said, "Oh, you can't take a class in short"—nobody else is there, just the two of us—"in short pants." So we went back and got two pair of sweatpants, smelly, sweaty sweatpants. Now I knew why they were called sweatpants—and put them on us. And we took this class.

Also, in that studio, coming back from a tour, he and I are carrying all the luggage up, three or four trips, right? The last trip, Paul says, "I'm hungry." I say me, too. He says, "But I'm too tired to go all the way down and go to a restaurant." So, he lived there illegally, but he had a small refrigerator and a Bunsen burner as a stove. And there was a red pail with sand in it, as if that was going to put out a fire, right? So, he spread some newspaper, turns the pail over to get the sand out of it, goes to the sink, cleans out the sand, turns on the Bunsen burner kind of thing, takes what he's got in the refrigerator, puts it in a pot and cooks it. And we sat there on the floor eating dinner. Don't ask me what we ate or how old it was. But anyway, there was, again, that practical aspect of Paul Taylor.

Q: So, did he teach you?

Reinhart: What's that?

Q: Did he teach you a class?

Reinhart: [00:51:05] Yes, we took the class.

Q: Was that the only time?

Reinhart: [00:51:11] The only time. He really did not like to teach. And I remember when he had to, when we were on tour, it was a part of it, right? There would be, I don't know, fifty, sixty, eighty people in the studio wanting to take a class. And he's teaching the class with the dancers demonstrating and moving around and helping. He was not happy doing that. I can understand that.

Q: Is that why he never really wanted a school?

Reinhart: [00:51:37] No, he didn't, which was interesting because for practically [all] the other choreographers, it was the school [that] was the main stream of income. Not with Paul, no. But again, he didn't want a school. But if somebody else wanted to do it for the Taylor Company, okay. And that's what happened. He was very open about that.

Q: So, the major income really came from touring, all the time that you were[with him]?—

Reinhart: [00:52:05] The major income came from touring. And then, once we established the foundation in 1966, I was trying to remember what lawyer I got to do it free, but I can't

remember. And, then we started going around to foundations, et cetera, and trying to build a board. Oh, I have to tell you this. '62, we started. '71 was the last year.

Q: For you?

Reinhart: [00:52:40] Yes, for me. And the reason it was the last year is because all these other projects were happening. And, the National Endowment for the Arts came to me to develop a dance touring program, the dance component of an Artists in School program. I'm doing the ADF. And, there was a feeling amongst some in the dance world that it wasn't morally right. The endowment came to me and said, "Legally, you're fine," because I wasn't making the choices of what companies were on these tours. There was a panel doing that.

So I went to Paul, and I can remember that conversation. He was so pissed. And I said, "Paul, remember, cream always rises to the top. Whatever I'm involved in, you're going to be there because you're at the top." It took a couple of years for him to forgive me. But once he did, it was gone. But it was a rough couple of years.

Q: So, were you only representing his company?

Reinhart: [00:53:54] Oh, no. I had about four or five companies I was representing but only one that I was doing the management and raising money for. That was Paul. The others I was just booking, getting dates for. Glen Tetley—I tried to keep it so that there was two of each in terms of price. So, if Paul wasn't touring in the fall, Glen Tetley could tour in the fall. So, if Lucas

Hoving, smaller company, less expensive, Don Redlich, smaller company, less expensive, the same thing, because no one company could fill all the possibilities.

So I had those four and then Alba/Reyes [Spanish Dance Company], Maria Alba , one of the greatest Spanish dancers of all time, who, by the way, her name was Joan Fitzmorris, and she was from Milwaukee. That was incredible. And, so that was it.

Q: So, were you touring with them all the time that you worked with Paul?

Reinhart: [00:55:15] No. I stopped in the last couple of years and had somebody who was working with me do it.

Q: Because that must be quite grueling to have to—

Reinhart: [00:55:25] Yes. I didn't tour all the time with Paul the last couple of years. I just couldn't because of the other projects and the other companies. At one time it was all on the same plate, the projects and all the companies. So, I tried to find other management for the companies. Paul wanted to do his own by himself, which was smart, and has continued doing that all these years.

Q: So, how would you characterize him as a dancer? You saw him dance many, many times.

What were the major characteristics of his dancing?

Reinhart: [00:56:13] I've never seen anybody with that quality of movement. Nureyev, Baryshnikov, eat your hearts out. They both tried. They both tried the solo in *Aureole*, to dance *Aureole*. Nureyev didn't even try to get it right. Baryshnikov did try. But that flow of movement, that bodyweight flow, which looks so simple to some audience members, is the most difficult solo I know of, male solo that I know of, Paul's own solo. Well, it's your choreography. You do what you can do best, right? You're going to do things amazingly. It's been a problem for years. The closest is Sean Mahoney, who's doing it now. That bulk that he had—you know the story about Syracuse and swimming?

Q: No.

Reinhart: [00:57:20] He didn't go there as a swimmer. He went there, and he's working as a waiter to get some money. And he sees these guys in the special little dining room. And he says, "Who are they?" They said, "Oh, that's the swimming team. They're athletes." He said, "Well, I could swim." So he goes up to the coach, and the coach says, "[Grunts] Okay, let's see what you can do." And I saw the clippings. Pete Taylor, he was called, leads—he was a champion swimmer for them, not just a swimmer, right? So, that's where the swimming comes in.

I know nothing about swimming, so I'm going out on a diving board here. That motion of swimming, that flow, is what was in his body and what made him such a great dancer, too. It's a flow. It's not a clash. I still see him moving in so many pieces.

It's interesting about Paul and his dances and what he remembers and doesn't remember. He brought back *Orbs*. And *Orbs* was the first full-length, the only full-length piece I think he ever did. And in one section—it's the autumn section—he plays a preacher who's drunk. And he exits the stage, when he was doing this part, by going off backwards into the wings as if he's about to fall drunk. When he brought it back, he had the person, the guy doing it, walk straight into the wings. We're having dinner. I say, "Paul, that's not how you danced that." He says, "Oh yes, it's how I danced." I said "Paul, I promise you. I stake my life on it."

In the middle of the restaurant he gets up and starts to do the part where he's walking off facing the wings and then does it backwards. People just thought, what's going on here? Is this our mid-lunch entertainment? And he comes back and he says, "You're right." So, the point is, what can't be remembered here [motions to brain] can be remembered in the body muscles, in the muscle memory, which is fascinating, isn't it?

Q: Yes.

Reinhart: [00:59:57] I think it has a lot to do with the appreciation of dance. It comes in a whole different other passageway.

Q: So, were there a lot more dancers by '71 than there were when you first started? Did he keep adding dancers?

Reinhart: [01:00:17] Yes, he started to build gradually. I think when we went to Spoleto, which was—when, '65 or something like that, roughly—that's when Twyla [Tharp] and another one joined to make it eight and nine, because I think Danny may—not then, but Danny—

Q: Danny Williams?

Reinhart: [01:00:55] Yes, [he] joined.

Q: Senta Driver?

Reinhart: [01:01:00] No. This one I'm trying to think of wasn't in very long. But she was at Spoleto. No, that had to be '65 because we couldn't afford to bring Alex Katz. And there was a special thing with the airline since it was the twentieth anniversary of Victory Day for the Second World War, right? So there was a special deal for GIs who wanted to go back to Europe. So, that's how Alex got to Spoleto. I remember that now. Oh my God. We were commissioned to do a new piece. Nureyev was there with Fonteyn, with the Second English Ballet Company. And Nureyev had that big fit when after his performance—oh, he invites us, Nureyev, to come to rehearsal, him and Fonteyn and the company, and a lot of photographers.

And I see the rehearsal stop, and I see her whispering, Fonteyn whispering into Nureyev's ear. And he comes forward, and he said, "Everybody out except the Taylor Company." So we were allowed to watch the rest of that rehearsal. And there was a party after they performed that

Menotti [phonetic] gave. And when Nureyev got there, all the food had been eaten. And he had such a rage, he started picking up plates and throwing them against the walls in the room. That storm of his made international news the next day.

Q: What about the tour where I think you started in Luxembourg, and you rented a van, or you had a van and went to Spoleto?

Reinhart: [01:02:53] That was the Spoleto tour. Yes, we went Icelandic Air, which was the most—I won't say cheapest—inexpensive way to get to Europe, right? And, you land in Luxembourg. And I had a great friend who lived in Holland. And she had got us a Volkswagen bus, an old Volkswagen bus, so that we could drive from Luxembourg down to Spoleto. The dancers weren't too happy about this, but I told them, look, we'll stop on the Riviera. We'll have a couple of days there.

The problem with the van is, going downhill, top speed was only thirty-five miles an hour. So, when we got to the Riviera, like, 11:00 or midnight, we had to leave early the next morning. They weren't very happy with me.

We got a villa, though, outside of Spoleto. And there's a couple that live in the villa who take care of things. And they were cooking for us. So, most of us are having red wine that night. It tasted a little—well, maybe we didn't know about Italian red wine. The next day, out my window and out the others' windows, we see that couple in the back yard in their bare feet

stepping on the grapes. And their feet were so dirty, that night everybody ordered white wine [laughs].

Spoletto, Alex did *The Red Room* there, which became *Post Meridian*, with huge red things and these discs that came down—fabulous piece. Alex and I had a challenge in a local bar of who was the better jitterbugger. So, the girls in the company got to try us both out. But they wouldn't vote.

Q: So, would Paul participate in this?

Reinhart: [01:04:59] No. He didn't participate in that one. The one thing he did participate in—oh my God—Halloween. If we were on tour in this country on Halloween, there was a special tradition. We would dress up. We couldn't spend more than, like, two or three dollars for costumes. And then we would all go into Paul's room kind of like one at a time to show off. Did he give prizes? I can't remember. All I know is, when I went in, there was nobody there. There was just this big black cloth that all of a sudden started to move and grab my ankle and pulled me under.

And then, in the company was Eileen Copley. I don't know if anybody has talked to you about Eileen Copley, but she was English. And she joined the company. Robin Howard is the father of modern dance in England. And he produced with the Taylor Company. I've got lots of Robin stories, but anyway, Eileen was very proper, very sweet but very proper. And at the Halloween party it's her turn, and we're all out from under the black cloth sitting over there. And she comes

entering this way. She has a simple black dress on, elegant but very simple. And then she comes down, walks to us very elegantly, turns around, and she's completely naked in the back. So, there were lots of traditions on Halloween night. That was the big night of the year for the Taylor Company. And Paul was a big part of that.

Q: Really?

Reinhart: [01:06:43] Yes. And then, of course, later on when he bought his place in Mattituck, out on the North fork of Long Island, there would be parties out there on Christmas and Thanksgiving.

Q: And was that when you were still with the company?

Reinhart: [01:07:04] No.

Q: That was later?

Reinhart: [01:07:05] No, that was later on. But we were friends, yes.

Q: So, what was his relationship to the dancers [when you were with company], because you were almost the same age, really.

Reinhart: [01:07:17] Good question. With the first company, it was family. And he was really heartbroken when one would leave. After a while, it was okay because they weren't family. They weren't the same age anymore, right? I won't say he ever liked it, but that's the way it was. They put in their time, and of course it's the shortest career imaginable. But the first group, with Liz Walton, Da, Sharon, that was heartbreaking for him because he was always kind of searching, wondering about a family. After he did—oh, come on, Reinhart. What's his most famous piece?

Q: *Esplanade*?

Reinhart: [01:08:29] *Esplanade*—thank you. He said to me, in the second section, which is the family section, and they're all reaching out to one another, he said to me, "Do you see that they never touch?" There he is. That's it. That's everything, I think. I think the Butts [phonetic] family, do you know about the Butts family? I think it was devastating to him. He was in love with this family out on the farm and loved the loneliness out there as well as the togetherness, which is always the contrary of Paul. And when he found out they were paid to have him, I think that was kind of devastating for him.

But, I think he lived the way he wanted to live. That, I think, is the key. Don't feel sorry for him. He found a way to be together and not to be together. And, I just thought of when I was a teenager in New Jersey, I used to come into the Village. And I was aware that this café had painters. This café had theatre people. This café had musicians. But I never saw anything for choreographers. I didn't realize this for quite a while. And then I realized that everybody else creates by themselves. And after a day of doing that, I've got to go out and have a drink and talk

to people. The choreographers in the studio with the dancers are all saying, “I just need to be alone now. Leave me alone,” right?

Q: What was his relationship with George Wilson?

Reinhart: [01:10:36] They met in a bar, and Paul did learn how to sign. In fact, in the opening scene of *Sea to Shining Sea*, Paul was one of the pilgrims landing. Dan Wagoner was one of the Native Americans. And Paul starts to sign to him and then eventually pushes him down so he becomes the Plymouth Rock and steps over him. There’s a lot out there. That’s what *Sea to Shining Sea* was about.

I think it covered everything. They were lovers. And then Paul, after that, Paul made sure he always took care of him, because George worked at a factory where they made boxes. And one of the machines severed part of his fingers. And the government wouldn’t accept the fact that that was his way of communicating, because he would have gotten benefits. So, Paul made sure he was always taken care of, had a place to live, and made him studio manager. And that went on until George died, even though Paul lived the rest of his life as he wished. But he always made sure that George was taken care of. Yes, extremely loyal that way. George was a sweetheart. I don’t know how interested he was in dance, but he was a sweetheart. But he came to everything. He was always there.

Q: In the archives, there are many drawings by George of their life together.

Reinhart: [01:12:34] Oh, they're wonderful, aren't they? Yes, I think they served a big purpose in each other's life, even if it didn't always match at the same time [laughs].

Q: So, do you have some more stories?

Reinhart: [01:12:53] Yes. Let's see. Oh, yes. When Paul was a student at the ADF, 1952, he got a scholarship. So, he was working backstage under Tommy Skelton. His job was to pull the curtain. I saw his transcript. We just did an exhibit at the ADF and pulled out Paul's original letter to the ADF and then his transcript. And, he got a C in Stagecraft. I think they were kind. It should have been an F probably. Anyway, he pulled the wrong rope, and the curtain got stuck. Okay.

Decades later, we're in North Carolina, and Paul is premiering a new work, and I'm sitting next to him. Well, something happened, and the curtain got stuck. And I went, oh my God, he's going to kill me. And he leans over and says, "Now we're even." Paul, your memory's okay. Well, looks like I covered—pretty much everything, Reinhart. Oh, I said that, too. Did I tell you that, when I saw him the last time before he died, he said he was going to outlive us all?

Q: Yes.

Reinhart: [01:15:12] And, of course, he's right, because his work, which is him, will outlive us all.

Q: That's right.

Reinhart: [01:15:23] I just feel so incredibly lucky that I knew Paul Taylor. And, my daughter, going through some of my stuff recently, found a file of letters from him to me. I just don't know how lucky I've been. And to understand life and how these little meetings, little coming together, little incidents in one's life, I kind of believe that maybe we have these buttons inside of us and that a certain experience can lighten one up. And I feel that's what happened to me. I don't know how my buttons got there because, as I said, I'd looked in my family, and there's nothing even close, which I guess goes back to that battle which goes on between nature and nurture, right? But I think being kind of an outsider myself growing up maybe had something to do with the world of modern dance at that time, also being an outsider.

Q: That's interesting. Why do you say you were an outsider growing up?

Reinhart: [01:17:15] I was the only Jewish kid in Chatham, New Jersey, and had to fight for that, literally. Anyway, without going into all of that, I couldn't wait to escape it. And, for the last forty-five years, all I've been seeing out my window is New Jersey. Even before I moved here I lived on Riverside Drive and 82nd Street. So, there's my punishment.

Q: Well, it's an okay punishment, I would say.

Reinhart: It's what?

Q: It's an okay punishment with this view.

Reinhart: Yes.

Q: And also from a distance.

Reinhart: Well, poor New Jersey. It's caught between Philadelphia and New York, and it's struggling.

Off camera: Charles, can you tell us about the painting to your right?

Reinhart: [01:18:20] Yes. Paul has given me a lot of presents through the years. He gave me this portrait and a portrait of myself, which I put someplace and I can't find. But we're both wearing the same shirt. We're both prisoners. He looks much better than I do, which is perfect. That's what he would do. But he looks great, doesn't he?

Q: When did he do that?

Reinhart: [01:18:49] Not recently. This is going back. I can't remember exactly. And I don't know. The painting I have of Alex Katz I bought in the early sixties. I paid Alex a hundred

dollars a month for twenty-five months. And, if things go really bad, I'll always have that. But I love this. The things with the butterflies and the seashells, they're all over this place.

Q: And those were gifts from him?

Reinhart: What?

Q: Those were gifts from him?

Reinhart: [01:19:34] Oh yes, always, yes. By the way, I have read *Private Domain* three times. The third time, I started to realize what is beyond and inside the cover. There is a depth to that book about himself which I only clearly got – I had too much self-interest the first time, but now I see how he really exposed himself. But he makes you work at it. I think it's extraordinary that one person should have three talents like that—writing, painting and, of course, the big one, making dances, and that this person, in some aspects, was the most observant person I've ever known. And so, that's what his big joy was, you know? He didn't need a lot of company. Keep it short.

Q: And also, as you say, he's with people all day long as opposed to a painter who's alone. So, that's important, too, I think.

Reinhart: [01:21:11] He always kept busy. He's out in the gardens until he could no longer get out of the chair, out in Mattituck, always doing stuff. And that fall down those steps, the cellar steps in Mattituck, you don't know about that?

Q: No.

Reinhart: [01:21:28] That's what the last illness was about. He didn't turn the light on. He was going down the cellar. So, he tripped and he fell. He couldn't get up. So he said, "Well, let's just see what happens." Three or four hours later, somebody came to the house, saw the cellar door open, and found Paul. But that was the beginning of the end. If you look at his life, I guess the ultimate example, since it led to his death, of what happens, happens.

Q: That's interesting.

Reinhart: [01:22:25] Yes. Wow. Why didn't he turn the light on? I don't know.

Q: But he seemed to have this disregard for himself in a certain way, physically.

Reinhart: [01:22:40] I think he liked the challenge. What shall be, shall be. Let's see, okay?

That's what I think it was.

Q: Well, that's a mark of his choreography for himself also, it was always challenging.

Reinhart: [01:22:56] Oh, absolutely, because in his work, you see him going in a direction. And all of a sudden there's a switch, you know? That's, to me, kind of the essence of his genius. He never lets you go all the way with a ride. I mean, *Esplanade*, his most popular dance, but look at that second section, okay? Anyhow, it's amazing. That's why I think his work is layered. And that's why it'll be eternal. There will always be things to discover. And what you discover will be what you bring to it.

Q: What about the ugly dances that he talked about?

Reinhart: [01:23:56] Well, after he did *Aureole*, he did *Scudorama*, which is as ugly as you can get. Okay, you like it? You like *Aureole*? Don't get too comfortable. That's Paul. And so, he did *Scudorama*. He liked to go the other way all the time. It was the challenge.

Q: Was he easy to work with?

Reinhart: [01:24:20] For me, yes, because I think we were the same age, right? And also, being of the same age, there was this instinctive communication of what should happen. And, he said some nice things to me during our lives. But, he could be terrible. I remember once—was it the ANTA Theatre or the Billy Rose? There's a season going on. It was Mother's Day or something. And I decide not to go to that performance. At intermission—it was a matinee—I get a call from Carolyn, Carolyn Adams, saying, "You've got to get here. Paul is about to fire all of us. He's gone flipping out." I get in a taxi, get there as quickly as I can. Paul is calm as could be. So, he'd

gotten over it. And I know there had been incidents where he went off the deep end, but then apologized, too.

I think he's gotten easier with age. And even when he's lost it, more likely apologizes when he's lost it. Have you interviewed John [Tomlinson] yet?

Q: No.

Reinhart: [01:26:22] Because if there's anybody for the last umpteen years, it's going to be John on all aspects of his life. So, that's important. But, look. Memory is a funny thing, right? In fact, Paul did a dance on memory. But I don't remember him lashing out at me. I'm not saying he didn't. I just don't remember it. I remember him coming to my rescue twice, one as we're playing in Seattle at the Downtown Theatre. The Seattle Symphony is the sponsor. I am there with the dancers. There's no tech help. I get to the theatre, and there's no crew. The lights are sitting on the stage. This is, I don't know, three or four hours before the performance. I've never put a light on a pipe before, okay?

So I'm trying to figure out how to do it and trying to reach someone from the orchestra who don't understand why we need a crew. Just put up your own chairs. Time comes for the performance. I've got some lights up on it, and the pipes are low. Paul and the other dancers come out to do *Aureole* in their white costumes. Paul doesn't say a word, just walks over, picks up a lighting instrument, attaches it to the pipe. And the other dancers follow.

We're coming back from South America. We're changing planes, I think in Mexico City. And I've got to make sure that our luggage is transferred from the plane we left to the plane we're going on. So, I'm there doing that. Finally get it on, and I realize the plane is just about to leave. I run up from the airfield into the corridor, running like crazy, go through the gate, get to the plane, and there's Paul standing in the doorway. He won't let the stewardess close the door. You're going to love this guy or you're going to love this guy, right?

He wrote me a letter. Molly was a dancer in the Taylor Company, and she and I got married. Our first son we named Taylor. Before he was born, I told Paul we're going to call it, whether it's a girl or boy, Taylor. He wrote me this letter, the most touching piece I've ever received, on how he felt. He said it's the greatest honor he could ever have. And you know the greatest honor I ever had? When he dedicated a dance to me.

I don't think I've ever said that before. It's too buried.

Q: What was the dance?

Reinhart: [01:30:11] 2011. Oh, come on Reinhart. Don't have a blank moment on this one. It was those wonderful solos. I'm so sorry.

Q: We'll get it. (*The Uncommitted*, 2011)

Reinhart: [01:30:27] It was—because that’s something he didn’t like to do. He didn’t like to dedicate dances. Wow. He still lives with me. You know, the thing now when I see the performances—I saw one out there, the Bach Festival. I can see them now without the kind of professional attachment I’ve always had in the past, which was what is the audience—how are they reacting? What do people think about it? How’s it going over, kind of thing? I sat back, and I saw *Musical Offering*, which hit me like it never hit me before, because I wasn’t worried about is it too long or too short or anything like that. It just blew me away.

It’s like, almost a first experience now. You know, when you’re working, there’s always the outside what-ifs, those kinds of questions arising all the time. Now, it’s just me, myself and Paul. And, man, can he make dances. You know, I used to think that one of my positions with Paul was like the court jester. I could make him laugh. And his laugh was such a great laugh, even on the phone. And I remember that made me feel good, that I could make him laugh. But, he continues to make me smile.

Q: That’s great. I think he liked to tease you sometimes.

Reinhart: [01:33:03] Oh yes, as much as possible. Oh yes, he loved teasing. He was wonderful. Wow. My late wife, Stephanie, he adored her, too. We went on a couple of vacations together. We went on one to St. Bart’s. Somehow—I think it was through Baryshnikov; I’m not sure—he got us free rooms at this great hotel. And the thing was, he was up so early, going to the beach to collect shells. And he’d come back, and we’d be getting up, and the day was half over for him.

I don't think I've ever met anybody who was so comfortable in himself.

Q: Really?

Reinhart: [01:34:01] Yes. I remember we performed in Paris and were invited to the US Embassy. And I think the ambassador was JFK's brother-in-law. I can't remember his name.

Q: Oh, Sargent Shriver?

Reinhart: [01:34:26] Yes, I think it was Shriver, right. And, he wasn't there, but they only had drinks, and dancers eat after the performance. I thought, uh-oh, this is going to be tricky. But it wasn't because Paul came to me and said, "Is there any food?" I checked. There was no food. He said, "Please tell the dancers we have to leave. Please tell our host we have to feed the dancers." And I did that, and we all walked out. I was so proud of Paul because feeding the dancers, crucial.

When we moved to Durham, the ADF, there were practically no restaurants in town, so we couldn't feed the dancers after the performance. So I got people to do dinners at their homes. And that tradition still goes on even though Durham is a restaurant town today [laughs]. It's nice that way, though. Feed the dancers. God, I love them. Anyhow.

Q: Okay, I think that it's been an hour and a half.

Reinhart: We okay?

Q: Yes. Great. So, what happens is there will be a transcript, and they'll do some fact checking.

All of those dates that you can't remember and stuff, well, I'm the same.

Reinhart: Which is most of it, yes.

Q: I'm the same way. So, those will get filled in one way or another, names and that kind of thing, spelling. So, that will all happen. Then you'll look at it and see if you want to add anything or subtract anything. So, all of that will get done. And you'll have a lot of control over what goes into it. And then, if we or you decide that there are other things that you didn't say this time that you'd like, we'll get back together again.

Reinhart: Who have you done so far?

Q: You're the first.

Reinhart: Really? Because I'm the oldest? Oh, God. Get the old man first [laughs].

Q: No, it isn't that.

Reinhart: It makes sense.

Q: My colleague has done two. She did Jennifer Tipton and Linda Hodes. And then, next week, or the week after now, I guess, I'm going to speak to Bettie.

Reinhart: Great.

Q: And then we'll do, like, five more people. We're just kind of starting. But, this has been great. You knew him so well and for so long.

Reinhart: Don't forget Alex Katz, because it was like this.

Q: Oh, really?

Reinhart: [01:37:31] As I told people before, when Paul was asked what was it like to collaborate with Alex Katz, he said, "Collaborate? We don't collaborate. He makes obstacles, and I have to overcome them."

Oh, the other thing is, before *Aureole*, Paul used mostly avant garde new composers, right? So, after he did *Aureole*, he was asked why did you use Handel? You've been using all these new composers. He said, "Well, Handel was new to me."

Q: That sounds like him.

Reinhart: [01:38:19] Yes, of course.

Q: It's a new era, a new era. Cunningham is gone, that whole generation.

Reinhart: [01:38:41] Yes, that's true. I was just, a couple of weeks ago, up at the Pillow because I worked there in '60, '61. And then '74, I was acting director because they were in financial debt. But I was still doing the ADF. And, I told stories about the Pillow, which was something.

Q: I go to the Pillow a lot because I have a house in very northern, northwestern part of Connecticut.

Reinhart: Oh, really?

Q: Yes. I go a lot.

Reinhart: Terrific. I'm so glad it's doing so well.

Q: Very well, very well. And they have so many extra things now.

Reinhart: It was like a picnic ground. They've opened it up. They've taken the gates away. They did that a while back. And now people come, and they can sit at tables outdoors.

Q: That's what we do, go with friends.

Reinhart: [01:39:46] Yes, that's terrific. That's really great. But the point is, I spent a summer up there with Ms. Ruth St. Denis, right?

Q: That's incredible. I never saw Paul dance. That's a real regret.

Reinhart: Really?

Q: Well, I sort of came just as he was—probably '75 or '76 is when I started. I've seen the company throughout the years, but he was not dancing. He'd already stopped. I think he stopped in '75.

Reinhart: [01:40:30] '74, wasn't it, when he fell? I remember that at BAM.

Q: Were you there?

Reinhart: Oh, yes.

Q: You were there? You saw it, but you weren't involved with the company?

Reinhart: [01:40:40] No, I wasn't involved with the company, but I'll tell you what I remember. When he fell, and then the curtain came down, I got out of my seat to go backstage, and I said, oh, maybe I shouldn't because I'm not involved. I didn't know what to do. Sometime after that,

Paul said, “You didn’t come back, did you?” You know, yes, but you don’t want to assume. Oh, boy.

Q: He had a hard time for a while with the drugs and all these other things. But he came out of it.

Reinhart: [01:41:31] Yes. He was really happy at Mattituck.

Q: Yes, it sounds like it. But I think most dancers have a horrible time when they have to quit dancing because, look at Graham. Oh my gosh. And Cunningham, he was in a wheelchair before he stopped.

Reinhart: [01:41:54] The difference between Graham and Cunningham is, Graham, to the end, wouldn’t change anything to fit her present condition. But Merce did. If he was going to sit in a chair; he made sure he could do what he could do. Well, with Graham, is she going to be able to get up? Is she not going to be able to get up? Oh, egos, thy name is choreographers.

Q: Or artists of any kind.

Reinhart: [01:42:24] No, that’s true. I mean, to hear Alex and Paul’s relationship, it’s been pretty explosive. It’s just amazing to me how long it went on, though, being that explosive.

Q: And why was it? Because they’re both strong egos?

Reinhart: [01:42:47] As you said, great artists, right?

Q: Well, one time I interviewed Jasper Johns at Berkeley. He'd gone out to do some costumes for Merce Cunningham. And he said he hated doing the costumes. He hated it. So, I talked to Cunningham afterwards, and I said Jasper Johns says he doesn't like doing your costumes. And he says, "That's because he wants total control, and he doesn't have it."

Reinhart: [01:43:17] There you've got Paul and Alex, exactly—control, exactly. And, you know what? I understand that. But I've heard them both talk about the other...I know *nothing!*

Q: That's funny. So, he was really the artist he worked closest with, I guess, for the longest period of time.

Reinhart: That's right.

Q: Because he worked with Rauschenberg, but only at the beginning, really.

Reinhart: [01:44:11] Well, then they had that breakup, yes. That's true. You know, the Merce-John Cage relationship was an interesting one, too, wasn't it?

Q: Yes, yes.

Reinhart: [01:44:29] Anyway, my whole thought is, thank God we have those geniuses around. If they're going to entangle one another, so be it.

Q: Yes, as long as they keep doing the art that they're good at.

Reinhart: [01:44:44] I've gotten to the point where, if I come across an artist who's too nice, I think, I don't know.

Q: Well, I think that will do it for today.

Reinhart: [01:45:14] But make sure you do Alex.

Q: Oh, yes. No, he's one of the ones for sure, I think.

[END OF INTERVIEW]