

Interview with
Maxine Glorsky

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Interview with Maxine Glorsky
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Note: This transcript has been edited. Significant changes from or additions to the original text are indicated in brackets. Initials are sometimes used to emphasize source. The recorded interview itself is never edited.

[CASSETTE 1, SIDE A]

JENNIFER DUNNING: First interview on August 31st, 2001.

Okay, Maxine. I was wondering if you could talk to me about how you got stage managing just in general.

MAXINE GLORSKY: Well, I started through dance. In other words, I studied ballet when I was in my home town, which is Toms River, New Jersey. And I really didn't know about stage managing. I just knew I loved dance. I like to watch it. I like to do it, all that kind of stuff was beginning to occupy my thoughts. So the first time I really got an inkling of it was Jacob's Pillow, where I went as a scholarship student, and as a scholarship student there you cleaned off the tables, you helped straighten out things, whatever was necessary to help the housekeeping. And because it was run by Ted Shawn at that point, the theater had ballet, modern and ethnic format and when I saw that, I started - the main thing was the stage. That always was there and people

that ran it were there and the act came in and out on a weekly basis. So I sort of put it together that I should be looking at what's behind that curtain. I would do things like, when companies were in rehearsal, I'd sneak into the audience part of the theater and I think my little head went up like a periscope and started to watch, because I didn't want to -- you know, Shawn had a lot of rules and regulations. So I didn't want to get in trouble with whatever his - his style was. So I would sneak in and start looking and I became very, very observant about what was going on and I realized I could work backstage. So as soon as I could, I wanted to get rid of the pots and pans and clean-up and and start working backstage, which is what I did. And at that point I don't think it was really run terribly well.

DUNNING: What year was this, '59?

GLORSKY: Yes, about '59, yes. That was the first year I was a scholarship student. And the other reinforcement that you had was -- they had Myra Kinch, Margaret Craske, Matteo, Carola Goya, ballet with Peggy van Praagh and you had all this full range of dance, which I think is so wonderful. And, for me, that was a great beginning because it wasn't isolated as all modern dance or all ballet or any of those isolated things we get into today. It was the whole range. And, therefore, as a young person coming from Toms River, New Jersey, it exploded in my imagination because every time you could see the world. And this excited me and maybe it's like looking at something extremely beautiful, like horses or ... or, you know dancers, how beautiful, beautiful the lines are. The commitment to perfection. And in a way when I look at a Degas painting, I feel the same way, horses and dance, you know I think it has stayed with me my whole life. I mean I'm in my 60s now and still have

the same awestruckness because now I know a lot about the workings. I know a lot about the personalities, but somehow that child, the up periscope child that looked at [Laughs] those rehearsals, it's still there in me. And I think what's nice as a human being is to feel that. And so I wanted to be a part of that.

DUNNING: Now I want to ask you, because I have this image of this little head bobbing up, were there other heads bobbing up or ...

GLORSKY: No.

DUNNING: Why do you think it was you and not them?

GLORSKY: Because I, like a lot of dance people, broke rules. I did it quietly. I mean in Toms River, New Jersey I went about doing what I wanted to do. I did summer stock when I was underage. Maybe because iconoclast people fascinate me and I was one, except I was a quiet one. I realized that I could get away with a lot more if I was quiet and did what I wanted rather than being noisy. Now, today, I think maybe I'm noisy and less quiet, but it's because I have a lot of information. And I find that you have to stand up for certain things or for certain artists. In order to get something done, you really have to make a stink, you know, about what you're doing and what kind of vision you're following.

DUNNING: Maybe this is too complicated to get into in this kind of interview, but it seems to me if there were no other kids who were scholarship students popping up from those seats watching the rehearsal, was there something different

about the way you felt about dance, do you think? Or the theater? It's kind of fascinating in a way that you were "it".

GLORSKY: I don't know that, because I can't speak for others. Maybe their interest was more in learning the steps, which I wanted to also, but I wanted to find out what that mystery was.

DUNNING: How they did it?

GLORSKY: How they did it. Because since the stage always stayed the same and I'd see magic in it week by week, I thought, "This is someplace to get to. This is the magic ball that I want to be a part of. How do I get there? What do I have to do?" And then slowly as I worked with people, I started seeing the kinds of personalities and the kind of railroad imagination they have to have to push themselves that far. You also see their frailties. You see less of that. I think as you work with people in time, you start to understand. First, I try to work with people now as the artist that they are, and I want to know less about them as people, because that's the imperfect part. [Laughter] So once I've done that, then I'm very interested in the person, and I, as a stage manager, collect terrible little bits of information about how they are under pressure, what kind of arguments they get into, how they are with the company, all this kind of stuff, because as a stage manager, you're going to work with them in a very tight frame work. You've got to know how they're going to react to that and how you're going to deal with that.

DUNNING: Also they probably let down a little more in

front of you because you weren't on the stage with them performing.

Please cut the following

GLORSKY: Yes, and I can say a lot to them, whether I'm wrong or right. I mean sometimes I think I'm wrong, but I'm also a catalyst. Sometimes now people are very interested to hear how Graham worked or how Glen Tetley worked ~~the house~~,¹ or how someone else solved those problems, because they can't help but acquire ~~choir~~² this huge resume of how people work. So you do that. And I love that. I mean that's important to me. In a way I've lost all sense of time, because I kept swinging from one artist to another artist, but I kept very long relationships. I'm sorry to switch back and forth, but let's say someone like Jean Rosenthal, top Broadway lighting designer, tops in her field, really made a difference through that. And I worked with her in the '70s. What was very interesting to me when I went to her for an interview, she looked at my resume and said one thing that really stayed with me. She looked at my resume, which was quite small, and she said, "Always people have you back. You keep going and working again with people. There are new people, but always people hire you back." And she said, "That's good and that's the reason I'm hiring you."

DUNNING: Well, that's interesting. What a shrewd woman.

GLORSKY: What a shrewd, shrewd, shrewd...smart, smart, smart. And I learned from that. Now when I look at people's resumes and things, I look for that, because she's right. If people are hiring you back, there's a very good reason for it, because they either feel comfortable, you know, because you're being trusted with visions. And so it gets harder and harder and the more you know about something, the more you know about the economics. I

mean when I first started, I think I wanted to do this because I didn't want to deal with money at all. [Laughter] Who wanted to deal with money? That was boring! But now I realize, oh, my God, every step of the way is about money. But at that point I was looking not to deal with that. So I lost in the end. I lost that bet!

DUNNING: Now I wonder if you could talk about your job and where you grew up and tell me about your parents, especially your father. How you got interested in the theater.

GLORSKY: Right. My parents both originally came from New York. My father, Louis Glorsky, he was born in Williamsburg right across the bridge in Brooklyn and Mom was also from Brooklyn, from right across from Prospect Park. And my father was rather a dramatic personality because he came from, of course, Jewish immigrant parents and he wanted to get out of that house so bad, he sold gum in the subway and he did all kinds of jobs like lumberjack, ~~went to~~ⁱⁿ the North Wood ~~to~~ help ed, make tunnels. His father was like a junk dealer, you know, like with the horse collecting junk like the old kind of wonderful idea of that, being an immigrant person with not too much language. And my father loved language and he went to Cooper Union and, of course, as a laborer, he would end up falling asleep in the lectures, but the couple that he was awake for, his vocabulary was huge. He then, when we moved to Toms River, New Jersey with my mom and started a lumber yard. But he always came into New York and he loved plays, especially Circle in the Square, which at that point [was presenting] the Genet play, the really incredible playwright - I'm not going to remember them all, but it fired my imagination. If we saw a movie [Inaudible] Brigit Bardot, foreign films.

Note
No tunnels
in North
Wood.

DUNNING: So you used to go a lot with him?

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: And it was just you and him or your mother, too?

GLORSKY: Well, Mom would go along for the adventure, not knowing that much. My brother -- I don't know -- he was the kind that would go to a Chinese restaurant and try to order a hamburger. So I was the one [Laughter] ...

DUNNING: Was he older or younger?

GLORSKY: Younger. I was the one that took interest in basically...the world, the world at that point being my father and taking me to see the world of theater. At that point it was wonderful Off-Broadway theater, George C. Scott and his wife [Coleen Dewhurst]. He also became friends with a director once when he did his little vacation to South America [Inaudible].

DUNNING: Quintero?

GLORSKY: José Quintero. So my father opened that door for me. So it was very hard for me to stay in Toms River, New Jersey. So, I started doing summer stock, which sort of gave me the same outlet for myself, I did that in Cooperstown and I did that in Atlantic City.

DUNNING: How old were you when you did that?

GLORSKY: I was about 12 when I first took my bicycle down there and said I'm 13 or 14.

DUNNING: You're kidding. You did it on your own?

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: Wow.

GLORSKY: Yes, because it was just summer and they were taking apprentices. So I didn't want to be thwarted. I mean whatever age they wanted me to be, I was going to be that age. It was run by Cheryl Maxwell and then I went with her to different places. I mean I remember once having to go to a burlesque house to see if we could borrow some of their costumes for one of the plays, which I thought was hysterical. [Laughs] I thought that was pretty funny because I sat through the performance.

DUNNING: Were your parents upset?

GLORSKY: They didn't know! I mean I was on my own. I was in Atlantic City at that point. They would come visit, but I was so enmeshed in it and I was so happy to see them, but we didn't really talk about -- you know, we didn't catch up on my shenanigans and what was going on.

DUNNING: Now had you already started to take ballet classes by then?

GLORSKY: Yes. I took them when I was in Toms River, New Jersey because a lot of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo people seemed to migrate to New Jersey, for whatever reason, when that

company was disintegrated or, you know, when it came to stay in America. So there were Russian and French and I was never really good at ballet, but it didn't matter. Just to hear their accents was so wonderful and to hear the vocabulary of ballet.

DUNNING: And a different world.

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: I wanted you to talk, because I'm always fascinated myself and maybe people listening to this will be, too, about all the ballet characters that were involved in the early ballet stuff in this country that nobody knows about. Mildred Hoffman sounds a little bit like that. I remember you said in your notes she studied with [inaudible] and danced, I think, with Littlefield Ballet? Mildred was your first teacher?

GLORSKY: Yes, but as a young person I didn't really question that, you know, because that wasn't my -- I didn't have enough of a personality then to get involved with that. If we talked about anything, it was like talking about her choreography and that kind of thing. And maybe a bit their background, that was actually quite long ago.

DUNNING: Do you remember anything about her class or how she looked?

GLORSKY: She was a little heavy at that point. She wasn't beyond doing "toe tap" and stuff like that, because she wasn't really from the Diaghilev people, you know, from the true ballet people. she was my first option because she was there. And then when I discovered the others, I went there. I mean those were terrible

recitals. How embarrassing. I have pictures from them and it's just -- the worst.

DUNNING: At Hoffman's School?

GLORSKY: Yes. It was like "toe, tap" and stuff like that. I mean today we would look very much down it except for the comedic element of it.

DUNNING: Well, it was a neighborhood school.

GLORSKY: And she would do these recitals.

DUNNING: Did you feel she was a good teacher? Did you get anything from her?

GLORSKY: Not that much. I mean, because she didn't have that much for herself. I mean this was a way for her to earn a living. The others had been in professional companies and had been around the world and toured and actually they were more exacting in their steps and more disciplined in their approach. So I cottoned to them because I could see that that was better work, and then when I got to the Pillow, although Shawn -- you could see best in the theater what different techniques were rather than in the school. And I felt the seeing of the live theater and what it did was made those classes better for the week. In other words, if you happened to have the Royal Danes, the ballet classes were extraordinary. And if we had Ballet Rambert, you know, or some of the real classical modern, and if he had the flamenco, all of a sudden the ethnic classes were packed. And if we had the East Indian people, it was wonderful. So you got to see what the top of the line was of each of those

techniques. I guess that's so different at the Pillow now, for whatever reason. I think they tried to do that kind of thing, but there's less of it. But, for me ...

DUNNING: It was a different world.

GLORSKY: It's a very important [Inaudible].

DUNNING: Just to have their names there, could you mention the other people besides Hoffman that you studied with in New Jersey or whoever you remember?

GLORSKY: This is going back.

DUNNING: Nina Rayewska?

GLORSKY: Yes, Rayewska. She was an unbelievable Russian and she was dresses with a little sash and everything, dyed black hair, very heavy accent, but I liked her a lot because nothing like her had ever come to Toms River, New Jersey. Adda Pourmel

DUNNING: Was she related to Sophie Pourmel, the costume woman at the City Ballet?

GLORSKY: That was her mother. And Adda was one of the baby ballerinas. I enjoyed that very much, and also because she had a wonderful person to play the piano who I became very good friends with later in life, and often went to her house to chill out after tours.

DUNNING: This was the pianist?

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: What was her name?

GLORSKY: Susan Dale. She had studied as a young person to be an opera singer. So I was finding these people in a little town called Toms River, New Jersey. So there were like little nuggets for me that I kept going to at that point. But it all sort of pointed me in this direction of Jacob's Pillow. My mom brought me to a dance camp at one point in which basically ballerinas and people who were recovering from injuries sort of ended up as people who would teach while they were trying to recover their own injury, which in a way was great because you then had very good people who were trying to get themselves together at the same time they were teaching and they were living there for the summer. Sometimes I felt like school was getting in the way, you know.

DUNNING: I'll bet!

GLORSKY: School was like getting to be a real pain, but I decided then when I was going to college that I wanted to get into New York because New York held more of the kind of things I was interested in and because my father kept bringing me here. Although I was afraid at the beginning of subways and the big noise and everything else, but then there was so much here that it was great and because of the Pillow, I had friends here. I also was working with the people that I worked with at the Pillow, because I became stage manager there. And those people at that point were like Maria Alba, Donnie ~~Mc~~McKayle, Carmen De

↑
Tyee-o McKayle
not me Mc

Lavallade, Alvin Ailey. Dick Kuch and Dick Cain I got to know here and Glen Tetley, all those people were [Inaudible] and [Inaudible] Nala Najan, you know.

DUNNING: All those names from the past!

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: But now, to go back a little bit, I have this memory, but I think you didn't really talk about it too much, that it was your mother who found the Pillow for you and got you there.

GLORSKY: Yes. Mom was a more practical person in that my father could bring me to -- if I said dance, she would look up dance camps and she would look up, you know, what dance was and she actually took me to see Freddie Franklin and Alexandra Danilova's company, which was in New Jersey. And I think that's the first time I saw a performance.

DUNNING: Oh, really. A live performance?

GLORSKY: yes, a live performance, and that meant a lot to me. And the dance thing, I think they were doing *Gaite Parisienne* and I don't remember what else. But I remember that. So she was more practical dealing with who I was basically, which I'm very grateful for.

DUNNING: Okay. I was thinking about what it must have been like even though you had done theater and, to suddenly be at the Pillow with these incredibly famous, important dancers. I mean did you know who they were or did you

kind of find out there?

GLORSKY: I didn't know who they were. I didn't have the background to know. One thing that I especially didn't know is that Ted Shawn was god. [Laughter] And I didn't realize God would be on Earth, but after I met Mr. Shawn, I knew there was God on Earth, or at least there was God at the Pillow in the Berkshires, at which I [Laughs] -- I then realized I don't know where I was all my life! But then I learned, and when I became a staff member there, I was a very young staff member...

DUNNING: How old were you?

GLORSKY: Well, I was like 19, and Shawn would have cocktail hour before the dinner hour, which was good, because I became a good stage manager because I was a little looped with a drink. I think they drank scotch. I don't think I'd drink scotch today, but I was drinking, you know, whatever. Those cocktail parties were fascinating. It was basically the best and I remember sort of staggering down the stairs and then having dinner and going to the theater. I didn't feel anything at all. I was a kid, you know. So that was it, but Shawn -- in fact, I saw the video that the Pillow is selling about Denishawn and these actors are portraying Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn without any understanding of these people.

DUNNING: They're very la-di-da, aren't they, on the tape?

GLORSKY: Yes, I can't believe them, because Shawn was an incredible egotist, but you liked him, unless he was yelling at you and then you had problems. [Laughs] And St. Denis was a very

magical, mythical, spiritual character who would talk to anybody, especially when she was in her 80s and going blind and [Inaudible]. And she was a hoot and also you had to realize that these two people lived on the opposite sides of America, and that's how they got along best! [Laughter]

DUNNING: He in Massachusetts and she in California?

GLORSKY: Yes. And I did read a lot about Denishawn in books and I could see where they needed a lot of earth between them after a while. I mean I think they did a lot of incredible things together. The Denishawn School was franchised and there was a lot of classes all over the place. They toured incredibly and a different kind of touring than we know. You know, in boats and ships. And they spent a great deal of time with other artists in each country and they would learn dances from them. Denishawn sort of picked up the costumes and then put together the dances.

DUNNING: Yes, after the costumes.

GLORSKY: After the costumes. I even got a chance at one point to help straighten out the Denishawn partially men's group costumes that were in the theater, get my hands on that and see that kind of production. And just to read St. Denis, about the sizes of the productions. You know, like she being an ocean and there's this silk material all over the stage. I mean I just like went out of my mind, it was so wonderful. And out of that actually came Graham, which as far as a genre of people I worked with, I could trace them from Shawn through Graham. Because I worked with Tetley and Butler and now this the younger generation of those people. So I sort of kept in a style which

I realize now when I look back, that I loved that.

DUNNING: Do you mean a certain approach to theater?

GLORSKY: Yes, to drama, almost operatic in scale.

DUNNING: I'm curious, did St. Denis go to the cocktail parties when she was there?

GLORSKY: What I remember about her during my period of time is if she was coming in from California, she usually came in ...

[CASSETTE 1, SIDE B]

DUNNING: Okay Maxine, because I screwed up with the tape, could you go back and talk about the cocktail parties and St. Denis as a Venus Fly Trap.

GLORSKY: Well, St. Denis was usually there to teach a seminar which had to do with religious dance. And she would come like actually almost before the Pillow was in full swing. That was good because of what was going on. She brought people in who had no training, maybe about 30 or 35 people, and she would read from the scriptures, from the Bible, and then a musician would either improvise, or to certain music passages, they would dance. And it was pretty wild. It was like the snake pit.

DUNNING: [Laughs] Early encounter group.

GLORSKY: Right, because that's what she wanted to do, because basically I don't think St. Denis had technique. What

she had was that magic effervescent belief system that was so incredible.

DUNNING: In herself or ...

GLORSKY: With herself, yes. And these people could inspire you to do anything, even things you didn't think you could do. So she did that for like a week. I think a week was all they could take! [Laughs] But coming to cocktail parties, she really didn't do that, but you could see when we were at the upstairs cocktail party on his back porch, she would call Ted Shawn, and she would call him "Teddy", and you could see his back straighten out because he realized, "Oop, she's here and I'm going to have to deal and what does she want now?" So what I was saying about the Venus Fly Trap, there are some performers and artistic directors that you realize that they're going to get you just like that Venus Fly Trap, that if you alight anywhere near them they're going to close in on you. And it's the most amazing thing. And once you've been through some of that kind of pull, gravitational thing, this magnet thing that they have, you then, therefore, watch out for it and know when it's being used and what your job is in relationship ...

DUNNING: How not to get seduced?

GLORSKY: Right, or to realize that it is a seduction and be a happy part of the seduction. [Laughter] Sometimes I'm very happy with it. Other times I realize, "I'm really not working with them. Why am I so involved with them?"

DUNNING: Now I asked you about John Christian, because I think he was sort of a mentor and inspiration ...

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: ... kind of got you into it. Tell me, who was he?

GLORSKY: John Christian, first of all, was Ted Shawn's lover. It happened after Barton Mumaw, who was originally -- there was a long relationship with Barton. Barton did a wonderful book that really explains it all, which I didn't even know until I read that book, you know, about the war years and about the men dancers and where -- and then about John Christian. And John was the person who was, by hook or by crook, he was a technical director, lighting designer de facto of that theater. And he was a wonderful man. He was very human and understanding and we hit it off immediately. But it also got into a lot of trouble because John Christian and I really enjoyed each other's company and Shawn, unbeknownst to us, was not very happy with that.

DUNNING: Jealous?

GLORSKY: Yes, yes. Because John just had such a good time he didn't know to keep his mouth shut and me having gone through all that thing in school, I realized always keep your mouth shut and then you could find out later where you can open up to things. But John was just, I think, so happy to have somebody who really cared and really worked hard. He taught me a lot, mostly about perseverance. Like when we did an Alvin Ailey show. The first time Alvin came up, don't ask me why, but his costumer was doing the lighting, and Alvin hated it. So we got through the technical rehearsal and Alvin threw a fit. And

I thought maybe it was something I did, and I remembered that I ran back through all the little dressing rooms and ended up in the bathroom crying my eyes out. And John said, "You know, Max, this happens. Dry your tears. He wants to do things again. And you have to realize that it's not your fault, it's the situation," and that sort of meant a lot to me and I learned a lot right there and then. And I also learned, "Dry your tears and get on with it." And I think even now I can dry my tears and go on. [Laughs]

DUNNING: But you still think back to that?

GLORSKY: Yes, because I think, as a stage manager or maybe as anything in the arts, you always go back to the root to find out where you've learned and why you've learned and how you can learn that again and again and again. And that's very important information, but the first lesson, like first love, you learn an awful lot from that. [Laughs]

DUNNING: And it's heavy.

GLORSKY: And it's heavy. [Laughter] But John often did a lot of -- if they didn't have a designer, and believe me in those days you didn't have a designer. The first designer I ever laid my eyes on was Nicholas Cernovitch, Nicola Cernovitch, who also became a mentor of mine and I worked with him for many, many years, because the next time Alvin came up was with Nick. And I remember, you know, Nick's eyes twirled and everything and he has these visions and he was also at that point forced to stage manage. You know, he had these incredible cues and nobody to call them, and I remember sitting on the floor with him doing his sketches and things and

I said, "You know, I can call your cues." And he looked up and I said, "I can." I was studying dance all day. Of course, I could call these cues. [Laughs]

DUNNING: So for calling a cue, it's good to sort of have a certain sense of dance rhythms in your body?

GLORSKY: Yes. It's good to know that if there's a *plié*, they're going to go up. What you try to make light do or scenic moves do, is look like it's coming from movement or music. And there's always breath things and you have to time within those breaths. There are no lines. Like there's no written script, except I make a dance script which is quite clear and in a way coveted by people because for the first time they can see. It's not like, "Okay. So-and-so enters and so-and-so exits." So what happened, you know, and what musically is that. It's something I've developed over the years.

DUNNING: From watching rehearsals [Inaudible]?

GLORSKY: Yes, and also learning from Nick, because that's what he did. He does a lot of sketches and things. And now in a way it's become a norm. Now I see these little sheets that Nick used to hand do all over the place and done up as a form.

DUNNING: Oh, you mean among other stage managers?

GLORSKY: Yes. But from Merce Cunningham I got a stop watch because he would do so many things with stop watches. I think that's some of the joy of working with so many people. Each one in a way gives you a gift. I think you always

pay for your gifts, but each one gives you a gift which you then incorporate into your larger picture of things. And I think that's why I'm so excited about things, because I don't know where the next gift is coming from. And I don't feel I have to have a level of working with people. I'll work with somebody who's just beginning and I'll work with somebody who's been there for years. And each one says something to me that I feel is important, you know, that I just keep incorporating. And it's just like life. You become very layered and layered and layered and layered.

DUNNING: Things get richer.

GLORSKY: Right. And I also don't feel like just a good technician, but I really try to understand and feel a great compassion for the people I work with and this also is beyond just the dance community, but it's also with the technical people. And I think it just makes it richer.

DUNNING: Just to go back a bit, it suddenly hit me you were talking about calling cues, but maybe somebody who's listening to this won't know what that means. Could you give an example?

GLORSKY: Well, there's the stage, which is like a canvas. With dance, you can have what I call like action paintings. In fact, usually in dance there could be a cue a minute or even less. Sometimes it's a long process and the lighting designer and the choreographer meet and decide where cues are going. But sometimes with a very creative lighting designer, it's just best to go with them. And then when you can see it visually, then you can make the comments, because you're trying to describe light

and that's really hard to do. So sometimes people need to see it visually. The stage manager is the person that gets left with the practical part of it, calling it, making sure, you know, the audience is in its seats, the curtain goes up, the house lights go out, and the cues are done the way people envision them. And also you keep improving upon it until it sort of becomes set for that period of time. And that's one of your responsibilities, is the scenic moves and lighting cues all come together. And then there's sound cues, whether it's live sound or recorded sound. It all just becomes a layering, depending on how complicated it is.

DUNNING: But what are the actual physical things that the stage manager does?

GLORSKY: Well, you're actually talking mostly to labor and you have to warn cues. It's almost like a horse race. You know, they all get in the paddock and then the gun goes off, except there's many guns going off. You have to warn the cues so people can get ready to do them. It's really commands. You're doing things, commanding it to happen, and then somebody is actually executing it. That's a good responsibility right there.

DUNNING: So in the beginning probably when you started, you probably would have just said something to somebody in the wings?

GLORSKY: Right.

DUNNING: A crew person like, "In another minute, you're going to have to do X or something."

GLORSKY: Well, I do it sort of musically. I warn in sequences. Like if I have a lot of cues, I'll warn one through 20. I'll warn the sound, the house lights, and then in sequence I'll say the word "go". "Cue 1, go." "Cue 2, go." "Sound, go." "Fly Floor, go." You've got the follow spot and depending how many. Now as technology changes, different things are coming into play. The next production I'm doing actually has somebody who sequences with sound, video, and projection. Now this is exciting. Now this is stuff maybe like you get in Las Vegas. I'm kind of excited about this because I'm going to learn a lot from it.

DUNNING: It's all electronic?

GLORSKY: Well, they can sequence on the computer the fact that the projection goes and it goes exactly in sync with the music, the whole program. Of course, when something goes wrong, everything goes wrong and it's pretty wild! And also then you have, you know, if you're dealing with union people, are they going to be happy with that? What does it mean to them in the year 2001?

DUNNING: Because it's streamlining the labor..

GLORSKY: You know, you lose something from one end, but you gain it on the other. That's what I always find, and maybe that's what labor is understanding slowly, slowly, because they need the guy who can fix the machines when they go wrong, because you know what happens now, you go to the bank and they say, "The computers are down."

DUNNING: But if you did things verbally in the beginning, now you would do it through a walkie-talkie or ...

GLORSKY: You do headsets. I mean a lot of times in like South America and in some European countries there wasn't such a thing as a stage manager, but what that meant is that the labor had to know the show from the beginning and always had to be there and it had to be the same people. Peter Brooks does that. I think that worked well, but can you have somebody that entire time?

DUNNING: Expensive.

GLORSKY: Yes, and here in America we have schedules. I mean you want somebody, you immediately get out your book and said, "Well, I'm available here and I'm not available there," but in those other situations you must be available.

DUNNING: Now tell the story about how you actually did your first -- I think it was with Ximénez-Vargas [Ballet Español]?

GLORSKY: Right. How I started at Jacob's Pillow stage managing actually is that they hired a legit stage manager, Charles Fischer, who came from theater. So he was looking at dance steps and it didn't make a lot of sense to him. Luckily, I was behind him and I would say, "Go." This worked for a while in this situation, but it didn't work when we got to flamenco because with flamenco you couldn't hesitate. If they want a black-out, they want it now, *punto*, on the step, that's it or else forget it. So Ximénez-Vargas was a very dramatic, incredible group of people from Spain. I was enthralled with them.

DUNNING: Why were they incredible? As dancers?

GLORSKY: As dancers, as artistic directors, because it wasn't just the flamenco. They would do wonderful ballets, the ballets, to me, that were magic. Like they do a Lorca poem, they would do things like "The Gypsy Nun" where the nun would sit there embroidering and these two men with a serape would go across stage and that was it. They twirled once around her very slowly, one on the knees and one with his arms like his body was hot, and then go off. And these were like dreams. And of course the Gypsy nun was Maria Alba.

DUNNING: Oh, I didn't know she danced with them.

GLORSKY: Yes, Maria danced with them and I didn't know she spoke English until a couple of years later when she asked me for an iron to iron some costumes. And I said, "You speak English, Maria. And I've known you for years now," but she was forbidden by them to speak ...

DUNNING: We're a little bit out of sequence, but since you mentioned her, one of the things I was hoping we'd be able to do in this interview was talk about some of the people who have been lost. I think not that many people know who Maria Alba was anymore and yet people who do have such a strong feeling for her. Could you talk a little bit about what she did and why people felt that way?

GLORSKY: Maria could make an illusion of the most beautiful sensual creature that you ever saw because she wasn't afraid of showing her real sexual self. So, you know, Martha talks about

how the sensuality around the mouth, things like that. Well, Maria just had all this kind of stuff in her dancing. And that's why a Spanish company, as good as they were, these flamenco artists, got her immediately to perform with them. And she had a great deal of trouble at that point because a lot of people when they're very, very good and when directors choose them right away, there's a lot of jealousy in companies. They all suffer. I mean Carmen de Lavallade had that with Alvin. Maria Alba had that with Ximénez and Vargas.

DUNNING: But Alba wasn't actually Spanish, was she?

GLORSKY: No. She was Irish. She was a Fitzgerald!

[Laughter] So she took the name [in English it would be] Mary Dawn. Maria Alba. And she came out of a Catholic school, I think which helped a lot with the repressed sexual kind of dancing.

[Laughter] Later when we toured, we actually went to the school, you know, and I couldn't believe that she came from there, you know, knowing Maria. Maria was wild offstage as well as onstage. She took in a lot of animals, too. She was a great animal lover. She'd work in the bars to support herself and I remember her agency would say, "Why don't you just find a rich fella?" And she often did find different fellows who were like in the numbers racket and stuff like that. I mean Maria was very wild. And, unfortunately, she also did drink a lot. I mean when she would come over to my house and make three-alarm chili, if I wasn't fast enough hiding the booze, the booze would all be gone and she wouldn't be interested in eating. I mean towards the end that was a real problem. But I think a lot of wonderful dancers sometimes they just can't -- they can't see another way, you know, like Martha or someone like that. They just can't imagine themselves not dancing. And although they're good at

choreography and things like that, but they always think of themselves as their number one love, which is to dance.

DUNNING: Yes. Now when you came to New York, you went to NYU to get a degree in speech therapy, I think?

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: You actually were also studying at several studios and also stage managing, weren't you?

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: And this was in the early '60s, right?

GLORSKY: Yes. NYU got me here, under whatever pretense, to go to school to get a degree. Okay. But at the same time I was studying mostly at the Graham School and I was working with a couple of choreographers and did a little dancing. I was never really good at it, but it was instructive and I think that's why I care for a lot of performers and their backstage situations, that they're comfortable, that they have a dressing [room]. You know, all that kind of stuff is important for a performer.

DUNNING: And you've been through it.

GLORSKY: And I've been through it, so really got that. So I do spend a lot of time doing that. I'll work out the dressing rooms. Sometimes in some companies you can put all the men and all of the women in one, you know, whatever dressing room, it doesn't matter. Others, like when I worked for the Graham

company, I would spend a lot of time after I got the casting list and if some spear-carrier got a little part, I'd make sure he had a little quiet area for himself. And the performers always knew it.

[CASSETTE 2, SIDE A]

DUNNING: You were stage managing Graham's company and studying at the same time?

GLORSKY: No, not at that point. I really started stage managing more in the '70s. I had to graduate. I was doing things if they came up. Like if Nick was doing Valerie Bettis or Paul Sanasardo, I was always turning up, wherever he was.

DUNNING: [Laughs] Like a bad penny, huh?

GLORSKY: I'd turn up, but then finally he said to me, "Maybe I should pay you." I said, "Yes, that's great."

DUNNING: Why not? [Laughter] I wanted to ask you before we get into the stage managing in the '70s, you studied at Graham for a while. I think you also studied at New Dance Group?

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: And I wondering if you could talk about what those places were like, who you studied with, whether you saw Graham there, what she was like.

GLORSKY: No. I actually saw Graham when she came to the Pillow, and I knew from Shawn's reaction that she must be really somebody, because whatever happened between them was so alive and at the same time I remember seeing her in the back of the Shawn Theater and I felt a presence like I felt no other presence before in my life. And then I got really interested in finding out more about this person that Shawn was very worried about! [Laughs]

DUNNING: What do you mean that she sort of coopted ...

GLORSKY: Well, remember a long time ago, I mean these people are like people we never forget.

DUNNING: Oh, the battle they'd had.

GLORSKY: Yes. I mean she left him and he had championed her and that never -- these things never die with people. And I don't care how old they are. Maybe that was thirty years ago, but it was like it was yesterday to him. And any time Shawn had a strong reaction, I wanted to know what was going on because he was so sure of himself and to see him insecure at any given point was something that I was really like had a curiosity. You know, it was all through body language that you really felt it. Not that so much was said, but you could feel it.

DUNNING: Did she seem insecure around him?

GLORSKY: No. [Laughter] She seemed like a deity, you know, like someone that came out of a lotus, just like that picture of St. Denis. She seemed that things came to her. There was an emanation is what I felt. So when I got to New

York, I studied and the thing about when you go to the Graham School was that beautiful studio with three studios in it. It had a garden.

DUNNING: Oh, on 53rd Street. Yes.

GLORSKY: It had Noguchi benches. I mean the design of it was unbelievable. So right away you felt like you went to some ashram, you know, or -- I don't know -- you just felt that immediately, the floor's silken from people's feet. The mirrors, those low benches, those costumes she wore, her incredible teachers, some cruel, some loving, some inspiring. Wow. I mean it was all there, you know. And also in that school it was like the Tower of Babel. There were all these international people.

DUNNING: [Laughs] Even then?

GLORSKY: Japanese, French. You know, nobody spoke English. The common thing was the technique and the technique you learned like from Helen McGehee, who was very exaggerated, from Stuart Hodes, who was loving and wonderful, from Mary Hinkson, who was a tiger. And I remember one time no one came to class and Dudley ...

DUNNING: Williams?

GLORSKY: Dudley Williams had looked in the door and he said, "Nobody's here. I'll teach." So he came and I mean there was just like a lot of inspiring things that happened.

DUNNING: Was he a good teacher?

GLORSKY: Wonderful teacher.

DUNNING: Why?

GLORSKY: Well, you know, each one had their own take on the technique and like he could do prances like nobody else in the world. He was wonderful. So when you learn from the person that can actually do it, that you can see it physically, that you admired on the stage, there was nothing like that. Mary Hinkson was a tiger. When she would go across the room it was like you were watching a cat through the jungle. I mean this kind of thing. From Bertram Ross, who was also very exaggerated and abstract, and when Martha taught he would often demonstrate. She would do things like very dramatic, "To be or not to be, that is the question." And he would one of the Graham exercises and ...

DUNNING: She would read "Hamlet"?

GLORSKY: She would just say it. Martha was very well-read. She knew a great deal about many things and she found a way for it to be incorporated. I mean anyone that could like do what she did with Clytemnestra or all the kinds of dances that she got herself involved with, had to be very well-read. But at the same time it was her take on these important works of art. She made opera. Her stage was opera. You know, in retrospect, since I've been very young, I haven't talked a lot about Martha, but she was a total inspiration. Totally. And also because of her demands -- I mean I worked in the studio, because I was working when Jean Rosenthal, I would sometimes help with the scenery or something like that. Martha even cooked up soup one day in her little dressing room area.

DUNNING: What kind of soup?

GLORSKY: Oh, I can't remember, but I just know it was like a little hot plate. She was very kind to teach people and also the inspiration for me of Jean Rosenthal and also just my immersion in her technique. The New School was a smaller studio and it was more like New York. It was jazzier. [Snaps Fingers] Like even Martha's musicians who would play for class, you know, were an abstraction. I mean they would get into the piano and just strum things and then they would leave off beats and you'd be hanging in air and you don't know what was -- and I remember Geordie Graham coming in with coffee for them because I think they were also -- you know, they were maybe a little alcoholic or that 9:30 class was a little too early for them. But the music that came out of them, again, was inspirational. Then you'd go to the New School with Donnie McKayle, and Donnie had long combinations that dancers would like ~~try~~ and everything. And it made so much sense to you and he allowed that long combination, but it was to jazzier, honkier tones, low rhythms. You know, where [with] Martha [it was] plink and plunk and I don't know what and then with him it was all this juicy stuff. But the studios were small and I basically mostly took with Donnie at the New School. I mean I picked my favorites because I was stage managing and I had limited time, and I also worked a lot with Donnie. But those classes were getting harder and harder for me. [Laughs] I had to bow out. I mean there was a point with the Graham stuff that I realized, "Max, you're not gonna dance," and I just couldn't go anymore. I couldn't put myself through it anymore.

DUNNING: Did you ever do ballet as an adult?

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GLORSKY: No. Ballet was really hard. I mean I did it at Jacob's Pillow. You know, you have to use ballet for strength also and a lot of the Graham people, like Mary Hinkson and Helen McGehee all went to ballet, you know, after that era was over where you didn't dare do that. That other generation, the one that really became the Graham magic, they all took anywhere. And it's hard to be a modern dancer in ballet class. Your feet don't point quite the same.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: But in the '70s I was working with Kazuko Hirabayashi, who I adored her work and also her manner, and all that oriental genre was very important to me and a natural progression from Graham, because Graham and Denishawn - you know, took a lot of the oriental, the in and out, the kind of stuff you see in oriental Indonesian dance. They were great because they just picked up what was good and then incorporated it into like a soup and then made something magnificent. And Kazuko, although her English at that point was difficult, she did wonderful things, Stone Garden and things like that. I wish today we could see it again. So much of her work was so incredible.

DUNNING: Some of the stuff she did, [Inaudible]?

GLORSKY: I think Kazuko was another -- you know, very good choreographers make very good dancers. It just happens. Just goes with the territory.

DUNNING: Was Lance Westergard a product of hers?

GLORSKY: Well, "product" is an interesting word. I mean I think you have many people that make you a product, but maybe at some time it was important. They give you the opportunity, and therefore, because most of everything we do in art is about opportunity. Does it exist?

DUNNING: And whether you grab it.

GLORSKY: And whether you're there.

DUNNING: Yes. What about the Clark Center. You were there for a while, weren't you?

GLORSKY: Clark Center, first of all, it was where Alvin had his studio before he had his studio, and actually that wonderful woman ...

DUNNING: Louise Roberts?

GLORSKY: Louise Roberts. She made homes for people that she liked and I mean it was a Y situation and Alvin really basically had the run of the place. I did things there like teenagers doing *Bye-Bye, Birdie*, stuff like that, and then costumes would be stolen, you know, because these are like the inner city kids, so they couldn't help stealing from each other! [Laughter] It was a nightmare. But I was working with Nick a lot and for a while I was up in the light booth and nobody knew it was me and not Nick until there was one demand, I think from Alvin, "Who's up there?" And I had to confess because Nick was studying Chinese at Columbia. [Laughter] So I mean he was studying Chinese with these people who knew Chinese. I mean he was like a wild man trying to get this Chinese down. [Laughs]

DUNNING: About when was this that you were at Clark Center?

GLORSKY: Probably late, late '60s, early '70s.

DUNNING: Are you feeling tired. Do you want to stop a bit?

GLORSKY: Yes, let's stop.

[PAUSE. INTERVIEW RESUMES 9/1/01]

DUNNING: Interview with Maxine Glorsky, September 1 [2001]. Okay, Maxine, tell me, just out of my own curiosity, what did your notation about learning drafting at Lester Palakoff mean?

GLORSKY: Because I started stage managing basically with just gut feelings and learned as I went along, I wanted to hopefully acquire some what I felt were good skills to bring to the job. And so I was studying drafting. And drafting is a tool that designers use whether they're set designers or lighting designers. For instance, a set designer drafts the scenery. He does that for several reasons. It goes to bid based on his drawings. In other words, they need a price for it. Also it shows someone how to actually build the scenery and all that kind of thing. So all those details are on paper. Nowadays sometimes they do it on computer or you could do it the old-fashioned way that you hand-draw. It has a lot of measurements and a lot of details and there's many different

views of it, a side view, a front view, you know, and a lot of times it will discuss materials and how something is painted. So that's the scenic point of view.

DUNNING: When did you do this?

DUNNING: Yes. The problem for me with anything I ever tried to do, whether it was just study a language or anything, read a book, is I was always so busy that I never really completed anything very much. I wanted it, but then I would get busy and I could never complete it.

DUNNING: Do you miss the fact that you didn't have it or do you think it wasn't that important?

GLORSKY: I think everything is important. I just couldn't acquire it [Laughs] fast enough. So I always feel like I'm faking my way through some of this. Like with the lighting designer, drafting means that he plots out where the instruments are, how far away they are from each other, what's on each pipe, the front of the house position, and then it's also for -- like if he gives it to his electrician, it's a way for the electrician to figure out cable, equipment, and that kind of thing. A designer also has what they call a hook-up which shows you on what dimmer it is and all those little details, because you can not go into a theater without a plan. I have known in the past like Johnny Dodd and people like that or sometimes a man called Blu.

DUNNING: Oh, Blu. I know Blu and he's a wonderful lighting designer.

GLORSKY: But sometimes they don't do that. So in a way they're more economically viable, but sometimes it's not exactly always a good way to work. I mean the two I mentioned I'd call them the exceptions in that they can create in that fashion.

DUNNING: Yes. Somehow I think Blu needs to! [Laughs] He's such a poetic type. Now I wanted you to talk about Delacorte, because I think there are a lot of people now and in the future who have no idea what that was and what it meant, because I think it was a very important way of introducing a lot of people to dance.

GLORSKY: Yes. When I was a young person and first came to New York, I saw the Delacorte. The Delacorte had gone on for a good many years under many different people or maybe just handful, maybe like four or five, over the years. It was an eclectic program. Sometimes it was like five companies an evening. Usually it was done within a week or two-week period. So each company or companies had to perform each week. You had a wide range in those two weeks which you could see much of what was going on in dance. Also the other side of that, the flip side of that, is the audience. The audience was -- first of all, they could go to it for free.

DUNNING: And it was outdoors.

GLORSKY: And it was outdoors and it was like this wonderful Greek seating in the middle of Central Park. I mean we have ancient theaters all over the world. The Delacorte in a way is a new theater, but it's our ancient theater. And it has all those wonderful things, because it has water behind it. It has a lake. It has the sky, the moon, the clouds and, of course, the airport. [Laughter] And dependent on what's on the

program, it could be frightening, it could be delightful, it could be romantic, depending on what you're watching and it's very effective.

DUNNING: It's very changeable.

[PAUSE]

GLORSKY: I think in the past Harkness, Mrs. Harkness, did it, Adam Pinsker did it. TAG, the company that I formed, took it over when it was offered to us as, you know, either someone has to take this over or get dumped into the lake. I felt it was very, very important. I mean I would love to have watched the line. I've seen people fist fight to get in. And this was about coming to see art. And at the same time to talk to people like the New York State Council on the Arts, they felt that it wasn't very high art. But I have a lot of problems with that. Why is something that can be popular not considered high art? I mean we had an eclectic program. We also had things that were very appealing. We had ballet people. We had the Trockaderos. We had the Rockettes. And ethnic people and lots of modern dance. Leading companies. First of all, they just loved that audience. They just loved to be there. It was a great celebratory event.

DUNNING: And I think it was a very open audience as well.

GLORSKY: I mean the thing, it was always under the Joe Papp aegis and so he wouldn't tell you certain things like he upped the salaries of his workers and what you budgeted for wasn't what the budget was, or that the funding from the Parks Department, he was taking and that really belonged to dance and,

you know, there was a lots of things to iron out. And also individually you had to contact companies and you actually contacted individual dancers. And I remember talking to Honi Coles, the wonderful tap dancer and we said, "Honi, we'd like to see you on to program. We can't tell you how we're going to pay you." He says, "You're gonna pay me to do that?" And I said, "Oh, yes, Honi. We're going to pay you to do that!" [Laughs] And then we'd worked out a very complicated schedule because being outdoors and having so many companies, when a program closed, you then had to tech, in the late night, another program.

DUNNING: Because it was the next day?

GLORSKY: It was the next day, yes.

DUNNING: Did you go on for like a week or two?

GLORSKY: Yes, yes, and usually during the rainy season!

[Laughter]

DUNNING: Yes. I remember seeing Pilobolus skidding across the stage.

GLORSKY: Well, the truth was you couldn't get dancers to stop even if it was raining, or the audience. You couldn't get anyone to move. They wanted to see it, they wanted to be there. I mean I remember Alvin Ailey sliding across the stage with this wonderful gorgeous creature in Carmen De Lavallade and I think a lot of people have very special memories.

DUNNING: Oh, yes, I do.

GLORSKY: I mean for a while we were thinking of resurrecting it, but, you know, all these small festivals now in these terrible little spaces that have taken over during the summer sort of put a little cold water on it. You know, people think that this is okay. I don't feel it is okay. I think dance has to be presented in a good place.

DUNNING: Well, I think back when the Delacorte was in operation, it was kind of the only thing like that for dance, wasn't it?

GLORSKY: Yes. Yes.

DUNNING: Now I wanted you to talk through the interview about some of the people that you've worked with, and I thought of Ailey, because it's probably partly because of the Delacorte, but you worked with him for a couple of years, didn't you, and toured a lot?

GLORSKY: Well, the first time I met Alvin was at Jacob's Pillow and that's a very fast beginning, you know. In other words, you see them Sunday and Monday you're teching them and Tuesday you're opening. And at that point people didn't really carry their own stage managers. So you were it, you know, and John Christian did the lighting. At that point I think companies were also bringing their own designers up, because I had met Nick during that period. But, as I said in a previous interview, that they had the costume designer, Ves Harper, do the lighting and that was ...

DUNNING: Oh, Ves Harper? Oh, my goodness! [Laughs]

Was he as dreamy as he sounded?

GLORSKY: Yes, but Alvin wasn't. Alvin was a power house. Also at that time he was dancing. I mean when I worked later with the company when the leads were Judy Jamison and Jenny Truitte and we did a long Gil Shiva tour by bus.

Jimmy

DUNNING: In the United States?

GLORSKY: In the United States, but I think it was like three months long of one-night stands. And Nick started out on that tour, but I ended up having to execute the lighting and stage managing. And the first stop after Nick left, I lost my voice. So that was kind of funny. [Laughter]

DUNNING: That must have been incredible because everything would have to come down and go up all the time.

GLORSKY: Yes. Well, I saved my voice for the cue part, you know, when I talked to the electricians and things like that. The curtain people I could hit on the shoulder, and the company I could mime time, like "five," "ten." [Laughs] That didn't last too long. It was a problem. But the thing about the lot of these choreographers, Alvin among them and Merce among them, they're not very clear about what they really want or if they say anything. I think the era those people came from the designers had to show them and if they didn't like it, they were either quiet or they got angry, but they didn't have really a communication, largely because they were doing their own work and then they would divide it when they got to the theater into what was visually happening and then they were also dealing with what the costumes looked like. So when you're actually dealing

with an artistic director, there's a lot of stress for them. So you get sort of mumbles, you know, that they're not happy with something and then in the theater you don't have a lot of time. Your time is blocks of four hours. You know, like you can go as long as 12-hour day usually in theaters. So it depends which block they're in and you want to get it solved, but it's like you want to hear what they have to say now so you can fix it. And you can't go talk it over at dinner because they've gone and, you know, it's not like a Broadway show where you're sitting for a month looking at these kids.

DUNNING: But it's interesting. It sounds like what you are saying in a way is that today it's different, that the artistic directors are much more involved?

GLORSKY: Well, I think they've learned and also because the art of our lighting and our scenery is so very good in America that if they really want something, they have to speak, we have to have a conversations. It's not much of one, because in New York we don't talk very long because we're all so busy doing what we're doing. The designer trying to earn a living with many things and the dancers teaching. To get everyone together is one of the things we are constantly trying to do. And also dancers know now that either the shop order or the theaters want, X amount of months in advance, a light plot, just like now they want the program. So we're sort of working more ahead. It still ends up to be the same chaos here and there, or it's chaos because of the amount of time, but I think they're just clearer. They're just more sophisticated.

DUNNING: I was wondering if you could talk about a season or a tour that you remember with particular fondness as being wonderful or taught you things or that you were very fond of the people involved, and then talk about a tour, and don't mention the name, if you don't want, that was not that way.

GLORSKY: Well, the one thing about me that I've been very lucky is that I don't pick people to work with that I don't like their work. I have to like their work. I've learned don't take a job if I don't like what they're doing. Once in a while as an exercise, I will or if I have time that's down time that I'm not working, I'll do that, but I do it seldom. So in a way I would have to tell you tour by tour, and I could do that with some. The other thing to realize about dance is people don't stay the same. We all age, you know. So what I could tell you about what it was to do Tallchief as a dancer and then working with her with Chicago City Ballet is another deal. Or, like Linda Hodes, a wonderful Graham dancer who I also started with when she taught in the studio. And then later she was with Glen Tetley and worked with her at the Pillow, and then later when Jean Rosenthal asked me to stage manage for Martha at Brooklyn, I was very young then and Linda was in the company. And then I worked with her when she came back as Martha's sort of right-hand person, rehearsal director, associate, artistic director. So people don't stay in one place and I don't stay in one place either. So what I know now and what I thought then, I find it's me that changes because of what I know, what I've done, what I've accomplished. I can remember back to the time that I was this young girl at Jacob's Pillow and what I did to compensate for my lack of knowing exactly what I was doing is I'd take dance classes madly all day. You know why? There was one very good reason. I was not nervous when I called the show, because I took

all that energy and spent it out so that what was left was somebody who could mostly observe and could react to the problems and could do the work of it. So that's what I was doing. It was a great means for a young person not to get very nervous.

DUNNING: Too frazzled, yes.

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: I think one important thing you need to talk about TAG, what, how, and why it happened, how you guys put the whole thing together, who you presented and why it didn't last.

GLORSKY: Ooh, well, it lasted ten years.

DUNNING: Yes. Why it didn't last thirty. [Laughter]

GLORSKY: Because people like new ice cream flavors.
[Laughs] I was working at that point with several companies.

DUNNING: And when is that?

GLORSKY: In the '70s. And TAG actually started in '71. I had started with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in the '70s. I had just finished with Harkness. I was working with Kazuko Hirabayashi, Lar Lubovitch, John Butler in several different venues, you know, when he'd do his work on Carmen or when he did Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. I did Brian MacDonald and I started with Martha later, but the thing about TAG is that we were doing many smaller companies and we were running around the city trying to get the same things together in situations which didn't have what we needed. Like in every place we needed a

scrim, we needed a certain amount of light, we needed a floor, we needed a good crew, you know, sound people. We needed good lighting implementation. A lot of companies didn't have the money to rent or we didn't think about that then. So just every like week we're doing the same thing and then Beverly and I ...

DUNNING: Beverly Emmons.

DUNNING: Beverly Emmons and I started looking at each other and said, "Why don't we just try and put this together in one thing? And why don't we try to find young people work?" To bring them into the field when they come, you know, everyone comes to New York to find jobs. So we started really thinking two-fold. Here were these companies that we were doing the same thing every week and it was getting boring to try and get the same things together. And we needed a good crew or to find a stage manager for this company. We were always asking questions individually, or "Could you do it? If you can't do it, who could do it?" So we started like that, and then I remember Stuart Hodes was at NEA. So I remember Bev and I went to Washington and we said, "Listen, we don't have a lot of time to like deal with grant writing ...

DUNNING: [Laughs]

GLORSKY: "... because we're doing all this stuff. Could you just tell us what we could write for that we could get?" And he said, "Well, an office." And Bev and I said, "Okay. We can do that." So [Laughs] we did that and we probably got help from arts services Jane Yokel, Margaret Wood, Mimi Johnson who was doing services for companies like helping them financially

and was booking different genres of companies. And, lo and behold, we got grant money for an office. [Laughs]

DUNNING: You still sound surprised! [Laughs]

GLORSKY: To this day I don't believe it. And so we opened an office. And we just kept doing our work and then trying to think in larger terms. And we started talking around through Schuberts who was then the Billy Rose [Inaudible] and was interested. He joined our staff. And then Michael Kasdan, who was a Broadway general manager and also a sculptor and potter actually, he joined our staff. And then it started to take more form. Also when Bev said, "You know, it's just you and me," I said, "Well, we need a man because that's important in the world at large." So Bill Hammond came on board.

DUNNING: He was [Inaudible] and Ailey's general manager?

GLORSKY: Right, because Bill -- actually TAG had opened, we moved in to the office, and Bill was called back by Alvin. And actually I had recommended him to Alvin after that long three-month tour and when I said, "I think I've had enough," I was starting to talk like George Faison and I knew had to ...

DUNNING: Which is like what?

GLORSKY: Well, like I came from Harlem with my hands on my hip.

GLORSKY: "Yo, baby"? [Laughter]

GLORSKY: Right! What's a nice Jewish girl doing in a place like this? [laughter] doing. That was very hard and I think I was devastated. At the end of that tour Martin Luther King was killed. Touring in the South with people throwing menus at you and stuff. I mean I loved Alvin's work, but ... try doing one-night stands for three months and see where you are.

DUNNING: And people don't do them on buses anymore, do they?

GLORSKY: No, but you can sink just as fast, if not faster, on an airplane! [Laughs]

DUNNING: Did the dancers find out about the Martin Luther King assassination during touring? How did they respond?

[Maxine Glorsky's response to this question was cut off when side A of the original cassette ended. She wrote the following material to fill in the missing information. -S.K.]

We were performing at a college where the student body was mostly black. Sometimes in touring the South the schools we played in had been cooking schools. When we learned of the assassination the company was devastated. The bus ride back to New York, which normally would have been joyous, was silent and tearful. Many of the company feeling what will happen next. We had lost our black president. The bus let us out in midtown to New York's rioting streets. The very next day we had a performance at Brooklyn Academy of Music. Everyone was with heavy hearts. I was exhausted and I recommended Bill Hammond to the company and left.

That was 1968. The same year I toured with Glen Tetley Dance Company and Merce Cunningham Dance Company. -M.G.

[CASSETTE 2, SIDE B]

DUNNING: You know what? Why don't we go on? [It seems there was a logistical/technical interruption -S.K.]

GLORSKY: Okay.

DUNNING: And then we can go back to TAG when you won't have to just regurgitate it. [Laughter] Actually what I did want to ask you about TAG that we hadn't gotten to was tell me, just give me an idea who were some of the companies you presented, because I think a lot of those companies are pretty much lost now to people's memories.

GLORSKY: Well, I can even tell you. Luckily, I got very organized and I can tell you like the first season of the Dance Umbrella just to give you an idea of the scope of it. There were twelve companies. The first company we opened with was Viola Farber Dance Company, and Cliff Keuter Dance Company, Lar Lubovitch, James Cunningham and the Acme Dance Company [and Merce Cunningham -M.G.]. See, I have a list of it. We just did so many companies in total. This is another season: Kazuko Hirabayashi, Elizabeth Keen, Katherine Posin, Margaret Beals and the Impulse Company, Dan Wagoner and Dancers, Five By Two, which was ...

DUNNING: Bruce Becker?

GLORSKY: ... Bruce Becker and Jane Kominsky, yes. So that was our first season.

DUNNING: Did you mostly produce people who just came to you to you or did they have to audition?

GLORSKY: Yes, I've leaving something out. We did a selection committee because we didn't want the onus of choosing. So we had two selection committees, one for the Delacorte and one for the Dance Umbrella, who helped us decide who was on it, and then it was then more eyes than just our own. And that's what we did. We didn't want to be that kind of producer. It didn't seem fair to us.

DUNNING: That you would pick the people?

GLORSKY: Right. I mean everybody has their favorites, you know. But that's the way we did it. We felt that was more, God forbid we use this word in the arts, "democratic".

[Laughter]

DUNNING: But it also goes along with what you were talking about before, that you and Beverly and the others really weren't interested in having it as an ego trip, that you were very much behind the scenes.

GLORSKY: We were trying to deal with needs and I mean our hearts went out to companies that came to us needing stage managers or this and that, and the other thing. And we got quite involved with the dancers community and what their needs were.

DUNNING: Yes?

GLORSKY: So that went part and parcel with having a selection process. And we tried to -- which I think is good. I wish more people would do that. I mean nowadays you go to the Pillow, you see the same as at the Joyce.

DUNNING: It's all repeated, yes.

GLORSKY: It's like we're not looking anymore. We're not helping. Or maybe the companies can't afford it, but it depends. I mean it's to be looked at, but you understand that we keep going in a little loop.

DUNNING: Maybe has dance gotten more institutionalized, do you think?

GLORSKY: Well, I don't think people are looking for new things. We were always looking for an interesting mix and maybe they couldn't hold up for maybe a whole program with what we were doing, but maybe they could in the Delacorte and maybe that would stoke a little audience for that delicate thing like a Phoebe Neville, you know?

DUNNING: So, in effect, you were building?

GLORSKY: We were always building, yes, yes, and that was important to us. We cared about the community as a whole. I mean, yes, we did work with people individually and also I always stage managed throughout. Even though I did TAG, I always stage managed for whoever I was stage managing for at that point. And that's the way it was. It was a whole

different atmosphere.

DUNNING: Yes. Sounds like it. So it went on for ten years and then what happened?

GLORSKY: Well, we had trouble with funding. I look at Joe Papp for how to do things, I mean he got institutional funding, and always felt like things like the Delacorte and some of what we were doing should have become that. If it didn't, you always felt like you were back-sliding. We did have quite an expensive season when we did the Camera Mart space.

DUNNING: And that was way over on the West Side?

GLORSKY: Yes, and it was in like a television studio, which was great. We brought in seating and lighting, but that was quite expensive to do.

DUNNING: What was quite expensive about it?

GLORSKY: Well, first of all, being in a studio like that and then making a theater always is a little more expensive than you want to believe. We ordered excellent seating. I think it was French at that point, but we had gotten a good deal in that it was a company that wanted to promote their product. But still in all, it was too much and the funding didn't balance it out.

DUNNING: This was about '79 or '80?

GLORSKY: Yes, because TAG went down in '81. And I think things also have a certain shelf life, like there's a catalyst

of some kind and then that's gone. I mean there's Dance Umbrellas all over the place now and they really took our name. Sometimes they asked and sometimes they didn't ask us, but in a way the idea was copied in both London and Boston and I think a few other places. I think we inspired young presenters at that point, and we'd meet with them and we'd try to encourage them. I don't know. In a way, it was heart-breaking. It was a dream. It was a ten-year dream. We gave it our best shot. Things changed, people changed, and that's okay.

DUNNING: And you probably were all pretty exhausted by then, too, I would think.

GLORSKY: Yes. I mean when you look at like my chronology, the volume alone was pretty immense. So, yes, we were tired. We were tired. I think if we had more reward, it would have been more interesting, but you can't keep doing the Sisyphus thing, you know, where the ball keeps rolling down on your head. So ten years, I think, in the arts it not a bad run.

DUNNING: No. And it was essentially running it with you, Beverly Emmons, Bruce Hoover...

GLORSKY: Bill Hammond, Michael Kasden, Michael O'Rand.

DUNNING: Who's Michael O'Rand?

GLORSKY: Michael O'Rand was a very talented person that worked as Michael Kasden's assistant.

DUNNING: And Kasden was?

GLORSKY: Kasden was the general manager for the events, because he had the Broadway knowledge of what would pull in. You know, all the box office, all that was meticulously documented. We had Regina Hoover, who helped us with fund-raising. All of us did a little of everything. Later Margaret Wood was involved, and then Mary Kelly Leer was the last of the general managers, but by that time funding was diminishing. We had a Rockefeller grant which really set it up. And when you go fund-raising, you see all these companies, you know, piles and piles of paper, and I used to say to the person, "We know every one of these companies. If you give us the money, we can get their season's on. That's how we saw it."

DUNNING: Yes. But nobody did?

GLORSKY: Well, you know, you talk to people that don't understand theater.

DUNNING: Yes, that's true. Okay. Is there anything you can think of off-hand that you want to add to the light stuff that I should have asked you about?

GLORSKY: I do want to talk about individual people a little bit.

DUNNING: Oh, good.

GLORSKY: And I want to also talk about, you know, life and work and we all get sort of beschnitteled. [Laughter]

DUNNING: Beschnitteled? [Laughter] So are we talking life or work? Go for it, lady.

GLORSKY: Okay. I want to talk a little bit about lighting designers. One of your wonderful questions was, "Why do you list them everywhere?"

DUNNING: Well, I was fascinated, because in your curriculum, in your C.V., you often would list what the company was and then who the designer was.

GLORSKY: Because the designers are the people I work with as strongly as with the dance companies' directors and choreographers. And together, we amass a schedule and it's also their visual art. You know, you have the choreographic art, which is a visual thing, but then you have this other surround that's very, very important. And, again, and it's a great American art form.

DUNNING: Yes, yes. Say why you're saying that, though.

GLORSKY: Because everyone has tried to copy American lighting design.

DUNNING: For dance?

GLORSKY: In general. It's been good. What usually happens and what's happened now is all that touring we did in Europe is now coming back to us. Now the modern dance at this point, a lot of it is coming from Europe; Kylian, Nacho Duato, all these people. And it's all those years of touring that we did, the Europeans have got it now. And they also maybe have a better surround for the arts than we do.

DUNNING: You mean because of state funding?

GLORSKY: State funding, yes. I'm sure there's problems in that, but they have the theaters and they have a lot more going. And we don't really basically. We're nomadic. We don't have a home. So it's a off putting. But I work with the designers that have really meant a lot to me. Nicola Cernovitch was really the first one I worked with. And his lighting, you could tell a story. A lot of it was with color. And also just to know something about Nick -- he came from Black Mountain and he was actually a photographer and because Merce Cunningham was there, he wanted to tour with Merce and he got a book out about lighting.

DUNNING: [Laughter] Ah! That was how he started?

GLORSKY: He started with red, blue, and green.

DUNNING: Oh, my goodness!

GLORSKY: I mean certainly that exploded into ...

DUNNING: So we was self-taught.

GLORSKY: He was self-taught, yes.

DUNNING: I guess most people were then, because there weren't great courses all over.

GLORSKY: Yes. Then I worked with Gilbert Hemsley, Jr., who was a big guy. He was like an opera unto himself. He was heavy. If Gilbert ordered a drink, it was two drinks because he

didn't want to delay the... I mean these people and their minds are very fascinating to deal with. I mean I worked with Glen Tetley with Gil, and with ABT and the opera, and Gil actually hired me to do [Inaudible] ^{Nixon, ANN Dunning} and the electrician up at the McCarter Theater in Princeton, which is the silliest thing I ever did. And through Gil, Jean Rosenthal, who is a very important lighting designer. She did the big Broadway shows.

DUNNING: Can you talk about her because I don't think people really know [her]? I know they know her book and what she did, but what was she like to work with? Didn't she give you a sense partly that you had to keep going, not kind of pay too much attention to all the fuss the way Christian did?

GLORSKY: Yes. Jean Rosenthal, she was a little woman, very compact. She had studied dance. She had done a lot of the original lighting for New York City Ballet, for Martha Graham, for American Ballet Theater. She did opera and she did -- I worked on two big shows with her. A musical, *Illya Darling*, with Jules Dassin as the director. Melina Mercouri was the lead actor. *Apple Tree*, which was Mike Nichols' first Broadway show, with [Alan Alda, Barbara Harris and Tony Walton. -M.G.] She [Jean Rosenthal] was an amazing, amazing woman. She could deal with all of those kind of things plus an office. She has a great secretary that would tell her what meetings she had. She was very orderly. She organized the way you do hook-up, the way you do shop order. She was formidable.

DUNNING: I hear you're formidably organized, too. Do you think you got a little of that from her?

GLORSKY: Yes, but I'm not rough like Jean. Jean was --

I think when you work with a certain genius, that there's a roughness about them, especially when you're in their territory. I mean once I forgot my notes and she quizzed me about those notes and I said, "I'm sorry. I left them at home. I'll go and get them." She said, "No, you don't have to." She knew every one of those notes.

DUNNING: Oh! [Laughs]

GLORSKY: She took me over the coals, also because at that point she had made her way in a man's world and I was more comfortable with labor than she actually was. She had had it rougher than I did at the period of time that she came in, also because of her position.

DUNNING: Well, there weren't really any women, were there much?

GLORSKY: Yes, there were. There was like great stage managers like Annie Sullivan, who worked on Broadway. There was -- I think her name was Maxine Elliott.

DUNNING: Oh, yes.

GLORSKY: I mean some very famous ones. I mean you don't hear too much about the little ones who maybe got discouraged early, but there were some very formidable people, women people, who made it in the field, like Jean Rosenthal. Everyone came to her door step.

DUNNING: You were talking about Nick's use of color. Were there things that distinguished Gilbert Hemsley and Jean

Rosenthal?

GLORSKY: Yes. Jean could make -- let me give you a for-instance. Melina Mecouri, who's Greek, she came into the theater with Oliver Smith's scenery and Jean's lighting and she cried, because there was Greece. There was the Greece that she couldn't go home to because of the political problems in Greece at that time. She actually cried. What else can you say? That kind of says it all.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: So Jeanne could make, actually with very little equipment. People would be really surprised today at the amount of equipment she used to get that wonderful shadowiness in the Martha Graham stuff or some of the beautiful effects, just the line effects. I mean what you could see outdoors, she could make on the stage. Now that sounds simple, but it's complicated. So that was her magic besides being very organized, because she did many shows on a large scale.

DUNNING: What about Gilbert Hemsley?

GLORSKY: Gilbert was a divine man. Gilbert was all over the place. I mean if he was in Jeanne's presence, he would try to open the door and light her cigarette and everything went to filth. I mean he'd stumble. He'd sweat through his shirt. He wouldn't pay his union dues because he forgot. He'd run out of gas on the highway, but he did the kinds of things nobody would touch and spun it to gold. And, therefore, I found that very fascinating. And then he would take on the Met. Actually the Metropolitan Opera used him when the Russians came in. It was

stuff nobody else would touch, but Gilbert had a big heart and a big body and a big thinking, but the small things would totally mess him up. But that was a lot of fun in a way. He taught at Madison University. He liked young people and [brought them along and] gave them fancy titles. They really couldn't do the job, but he put 'em there to learn. I mean he was totally different. Each one of these people you understand is totally different.

DUNNING: It sounds like it, yes.

GLORSKY: The field is lighting, but the personalities are quite different. I feel very lucky to have worked with all of them.

DUNNING: But why did other people not want to take on the kinds of projects that Gilbert ended up taking?

GLORSKY: Because it was scary.

DUNNING: Or they were too hard?

GLORSKY: They were hard, yes, if you're going to deal with a Russian crew or a German crew and on a big scale. I mean Gil would do things like have warm beer for the Germans [Laughter] and cold beer for the Americans. Gil thought on that kind of plane. He made it human. He did the lighting for Martha Graham on the two seasons that she did at the Metropolitan Opera House. And so sometimes I would say to Gil, because I knew Gil intimately -- we had done opera together. Oh, I can't tell you -- I knew him very well. And I would say to him under my breath, "The lighting's not good enough. This is Martha

Graham at the Met." Because Gil was tired, you know, and he would be falling asleep and I'd hit him in the belly and say, "You make this really good."

DUNNING: [Laughs]

GLORSKY: But, you see, nobody hears that kind of thing, but that's what you had to do to Gil. He could to it.

DUNNING: He just needed a prod.

GLORSKY: He just needed a prod. Not too many people would dare say.

DUNNING: Yes. Do you want to talk about some more lighting designers?

GLORSKY: Yes, because there's a list. I worked with Tom Skelton. The reason he was so wonderful is, first, he's terribly bright, in a way kind of like leprechaunish, impish, and he could do some wonderful new thing that would get his point across fantastically. I remember there was one situation where they didn't pay him for his light plot, so he sent the paper work to them, but he cut it in half.

DUNNING: [Laughs]

GLORSKY: And I thought that was the most brilliant thing ever, that he had done the work, but they hadn't paid him. So he cut it in half and sent it to them.

DUNNING: Did he get his pay?

GLORSKY: Yes. And I worked with him doing Peter Pan and I also introduced him to Craig Miller, who became a protege and a formidable lighting designer in his own right. Also through Beverly actually. Beverly Emmons, since we formed TAG, I also worked with Bev a lot when she did a lot of Off-Broadway things, which was a lot of fun for the both of us.

DUNNING: Because she could let loose a little bit?

GLORSKY: Well, because she was very good at that. She was very good at going beyond somebody else's dreams, and sometimes she scared me because I thought, "How the hell are we going to do it," you know. We did a live event at the Seagram's Building and she was bringing [the artist] Christos so we could wrap the building.

DUNNING: In light?

GLORSKY: Or whatever. I mean it wasn't sure. It was a little frightening, some of these meetings, you know, like, "What are we promising here?" [Laughter] I was lucky enough to work with Jules Fischer doing things like, mainly the Fosse shows interested me, because I loved to be in that lucky seat watching Fosse work. It was a great privilege. I'll never forget that.

DUNNING: The lucky seat being your seat in the back?

GLORSKY: Actually being a part of the show when it's in it's conception. I usually work more with designer's assistants but you really got to see the workings of the show, from the

rehearsal period to several theaters before it actually opened on Broadway. When it opened on Broadway, you were essentially finished.

DUNNING: Oh, I see.

GLORSKY: But he was magnificent. He was really ahead of his time, watching how he worked. Also Michael Bennett. ^{Jules} George Fischer, did a couple of shows with him, but it was more of the beginning of Michael Bennett's career before *A Chorus Line* and all that kind of stuff. And then Craig Miller, who was someone that I find out in the Midwest and told him he should come to New York. He died quite young, about thirty-four, but he did a great deal of work before he died. And then the young man now that I work with a lot is Clifton Taylor. We met when he was doing Ballet Hispanico. He's a little more terrier-like than ^{Craig} Fred, but there's many things about Clifton.

I don't know
a Fred

DUNNING: If you were looking at a show that he lit, is there some way you would know that it was his work even if you hadn't looked at the program?

GLORSKY: Sometimes. I mean it depends on the vehicle, I think, and designers change as they get older and now with our new technology changing, they're changing what their bag of tricks are.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: Depending on budget.

DUNNING: I was thinking that I wanted to ask you, it seems to me, but I'm not sure if I'm right, that lighting for

dance has really changed and developed a lot in, say, the last maybe thirty years or so. I remember seeing stuff by Nan Forcher at Ballet Theater where everything just everything seemed to be lit from the bottom. And then Jennifer Tipton making kind of a place for dance on stage. And Clifton adding the poetry.

FORCHER

important
NAME

in
lighting

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correctly.

GLORSKY: A lot of really fine designers, especially someone like Jennifer Tipton has an operatic scale of the stage that you look at. It's a very classy-looking stage and a lot of breath-taking things happen. The thing that you need is time. A lot of these companies don't have time. In order to make magic, you need a certain amount of time reserved for lighting and you also need -- I mean one of the problems with, let's say a Ballet Theater light plot is over the ages it gets very heavy and maybe not all of that is pertinent to what's happening. It's like this huge repertory that you have. Now in rock 'n roll you can maybe have the money for all that kind of lighting, but in a ballet company then you can't do that. But periodically it almost needs to purge itself and try to get simple again. But you know even when you're trying to clean our your files, what that means. Do you really want to take the time to do that?

DUNNING: And the risk.

GLORSKY: And the risk? I mean so much in theater is based on what amount of time you have, what is your budget, and all those un-magical things that no one wants to deal with. That's the problem.

DUNNING: Yes. Let's see. Oh, you said you had worked with Jerome Robbins?

GLORSKY: Yes. When I did Harkness Ballet, he did some of the pieces he did for Ballet Jazz U.S.A.. And it was really quite incredible to work with him.

DUNNING: Why?

GLORSKY: Well ...

DUNNING: You can't say anything terrible that hasn't been said already about the guy!

GLORSKY: No. Also I got to do his *Les Noces* with Ballet Theater with Jean Rosenthal and Gil. Actually Gil did it.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: I don't think you could say something true about someone that's true all the time, but, for instance, there were a couple of things that happened in that situation. You'd sit in the theater for hours and take one single light up a point and down a point, up a point and down a point. And I would say to Gil at that point -- I think we were in Brooklyn -- I said, "Gil, it's not about the light. It's about [power -M.G.]. I know you're looking at the stage and you're trying to do your best and you're sweating this out, but if you hear what this man is doing and you don't do this up a point, down a point bit with him, we're never going to get over this point. So every time he says, 'Up a point,' take it up a point. If he says, 'Down a point,' [Inaudible]." That was actually with ABT. With Harkness, it was just after the dancers [of City Ballet had let him fall into the orchestra pit, not warning him that he was backing up too far -

M.G.]. But it didn't really stop him from being mean and ornery, which was [Laughs] what we had out on tour. [He had a broken leg, was on crutches. -M. G.] The other thing that happened, which I don't think too many people know about, is that there were bomb threats whenever we did his ballets.

DUNNING: Why?

GLORSKY: I don't know. All I can think of -- I don't know why ...

DUNNING: Because of the dancers?

GLORSKY: I kept thinking it's some dancer calling up on the phone and saying, "I've planted a bomb in the hall and it's going to go off," because once when I was actually running a show a police officer came up to me, tapped me on the shoulder and said, "We have to clear everyone out." And I remember stupidly saying,

[Last segment of interview was cut off on recording. Maxine Glorsky filled in the following material]

"If you wait a few moments this dance will be over." When we played BAM we had another bomb threat during a Robbins rehearsal. We filed outside in an orderly fashion and waited until it was safe to go back inside. So when I think of Jerry, naturally I think of those moments

[END OF INTERVIEW 2]

[CASSETTE 3, SIDE A]

DUNNING: Interview Number Three with Maxine Glorsky, Side One. September 29, 2001. We did do the "What does a stage manager do?" last time. I think you got it all in there. Now I was wondering if you could talk a bit more about how the job has changed over the years since when you started. Obviously the technologies.

GLORSKY: Maybe as far as stage managing is concerned, there are a lot of what we call toys or effects that are available now. A lot of things are done by computer. The light boards are all on computer for the most part. There's a lot more effects. There's instruments that can change gel automatically and that can move. There's more video being used in performances. There's even movie effects. The problem with that becomes can dance afford it? The smaller companies love to use it, love the effects, but ...

DUNNING: But video and film?

GLORSKY: Yes. Yes, because in a way they're very creative people and they really want to be cutting edge and they do a lot of thinking before they do a concert, but then it becomes can they afford it and can they get those kind of elements in each place that they go to when they tour? So in a way that has changed. It's not so simple anymore. And each one of those elements takes up its own amount of time and maybe you need a certain kind of technical person to deal with it. Otherwise, I really think stage managing is much the same. It's problem-solving, bringing people together, coordinating people,

making a schedule that can work in the amount of time. So all those elements really remain the same for a stage manager. So in a way it's new as far as technology is concerned and old as far as what a stage manager does. So you have old and new.

DUNNING: Yes. Now I've heard people referring to your job as crucial, even though nobody ever sees a stage manager or seldom does. You have to have a stage manager, I think. Isn't the stage manager kind of the lynch pin for everything? Isn't that why they're crucial?

GLORSKY: Well, I've been working with the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company and we're soon to do a City Center season. And you have an overworked administrator, a very highly creative choreographer, someone who's done Broadway and ballet, and what happens is if you don't have a stage manager, lots of things can go in the air and a lot isn't pushed to be done, because a stage manager understands that the choreographer is going to need his props, the scenery, the amount of time in the theater. And the designer has also his elements of focusing and the time he needs for light cues. Well, the stage manager has to look at all that and start pushing through where nothing is moving. Sometimes it's like a log jam. It all gets put in the air, but it doesn't get into a practical mode. So you hear the complaints from the set designer, from the lighting designer, you do hear it from the administrator and the cash flow problems. And then you have to sort of listen to all that and start pushing where you can push. Otherwise, it's going to be more costly when we enter the door, especially of a union house. Are we all going to wait for the trucks that haven't arrived yet? We have a eight-hour call. At the end of that, we have to be focused. Any time anything is late, well, there's such a limited amount of time it's like

over, that time is gone. And then you really basically have a small crisis. So you have to sort of keep pushing at these things until they get accomplished. One of the things I do is I look at time and I know this has to be done then. So I really start pushing harder when I'm closer to the fact that this is it now.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: [Laughs] And then you have the kind of thing that you want it as perfect as that choreographer wants it. So you have to know that piece, but that piece has to be finished for you to know it. I mean that kind of thing goes on, and in a way a lot of it can be thought of as crisis management. At the same time you have people that are organized and do their work in advance so that you can do things rather more methodically. But there's obviously, because there's a kind of tension to these things and it's also being able to deal with the tension when it comes up, or if something doesn't work when you're right there at a tech rehearsal and to try to think fast enough to make it work or calmly enough to explain what you're really after so the people that are helping you understand what the concepts are. You know, in New York you get very little time for meetings and things like that. These meetings are crucial like between the crew or between however a theater set themselves up, that you say as much as you can about the project. So you must do all this research, write it down, and commit it to paper so that if they forget it because they have other things that they're doing, they can look at that piece of paper and say, "Oh, yes, I remember we've had this conversation." So that's what you have to do.

DUNNING: I know that you're going to be giving a lot of your papers to the Dance Collection. Are some of those charts and lists in among the papers so people can see how you did that?

GLORSKY: Yes. Yes, it will be.

DUNNING: Yes, okay. Did you want to say ...

GLORSKY: No. I have a big smile on my face because I think I've kept every paper! [Laughs]

DUNNING: I know you did, having looked through some of them!

GLORSKY: I mean like Lar is doing *Les Noces*, which he's now calling *The Wedding*, and I have papers from '76 on it. And in a way it's a damned good thing I have those papers.

DUNNING: It helps?

GLORSKY: It helps very much, yes, yes, especially since this time he's so limited on his rehearsals that it gives me a chance to review what was done before. This is a re-creation, so he'll have some wonderful scenic elements, but just to know what the nugget of that work was when it was first done is a very helpful process.

DUNNING: Yes, yes. Now one of the reasons I think what you have to say about dance in your work is so important is that you've had a very special vantage point over the field that probably, you know, you can observe a lot that you wouldn't if you were a choreographer or a dancer right out in front. I

wondered if you felt that the relationship of dancers to company directors or choreographers has changed much over the forty years that you've worked, whether dancers are still pretty much -- I mean I think people think of dancers as dumb children, some of the people who don't know too many dancers. I feel as if they've gotten more sophisticated, but I wondered if you had any feelings about that.

GLORSKY: Well, I think when one meets a dancer or sees their work and sees how intense they are, maybe you don't get to know that person or that brightness, but I find them incredibly bright and also they keep renewing my feelings about the spirit of people, because that perfectionism resides all through their life and it's in their entire make-up of the way they live. And that is wonderful to be a part of.

And a lot of them are very well-read and when they have to change careers, they often become lawyers or physical therapists or writers, because they take all the they put into that other discipline into something else and it's pretty immense what they can do. So I always love it. The creators, for me, are the ones that are in a way genius quality, because nobody sometimes has thought of the kinds of things they've thought about or the way they've thought about something. And so in a way I feel very often it's a privilege more than anything else. I feel lucky, although you're pulled and you go through a lot of torment in trying to work for them in a way because you just want it to be the best. The reward is, I think, knowing those kind of people, maybe not knowing them like a friendship thing, you know, like a buddy thing, but knowing what the depth of their work is and what's important to them. And also they're very good in emergencies. When things go wrong, they're very quick. It something is going wrong during the show or finally they have to

come to make a compromise of some kind, the ingeniousness of it always leaves me with awe. [Laughs]

DUNNING: Quickness like that.

GLORSKY: Yes. I feel very lucky in that respect, to know people and see how clever they can be. Also that's true of the lighting designers and set designers, of course, have things to deal with. But often like watching Oliver Smith work out, you know, a big scenic move that's turned to -- if I can say -- shit on the stage and then sit and tell people very methodically how do to it so it comes together almost musically.

DUNNING: Yes. I never thought of it being a musical thing.

GLORSKY: Yes. All of it is, because we all are dealing with timing, lighting timing, dance timing, music timing. So I feel it's a great place to be and a great place to learn, and you have to, no matter how old you are, you're going to learn if you get anywhere near this position.

DUNNING: I'm curious, too, about whether you've noticed over the years any changes in the way dancers and choreographers interact in rehearsal or onstage.

GLORSKY: Well, all I can say is dancers have gotten technically better and better.

DUNNING: Do you mean in terms of dance or technology?

GLORSKY: In terms of their own dancing. At least the people that I choose to work with, their abilities are quite

amazing. I mean I was at Jacob's Pillow so long ago and the dancing from lead people I see every day in what you might say the corps people or the people that make up the company itself, they're incredible technically.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: And that's another thing that's kind of inspiring, that you can see that, how much it's grown on that level if you look at the Cunningham Company or Lar's present group of people that he's working with. Also dancers are now dancing older.

DUNNING: Oh, yes?

GLORSKY: Oh, yes. It used to be like maybe in the Graham Company you would see older dancers, but now I'm seeing like Jiri Kylian's older dancers and all that kind of thing. One of the things that I feel is there's so much to give at certain ages, that each age has its own gift to give the public. So I feel that we're lucky in this time that we have more of them.

DUNNING: People have told me that in the old days like, I guess '50s, '60s, and back, dancers were much more -- not subservient, but kind of less independent in rehearsals, but now they sort of chat with their choreographers and offer their opinions. Is that true or not from what you've seen?

GLORSKY: I think so, yes. I do agree with you on that. There can be downright disagreements, but I think it's healthy. I think before, yes, you didn't speak up and maybe in ballet you

don't speak up, but now because there's so much modern in the ballet, I think you're getting more interaction which I think can only be good. I don't feel that's a negative thing.

DUNNING: I remember Paul Taylor saying once about one of his dancers that he nearly drove him crazy because whenever he'd pause working on a new dance, the kid would come up and say, "Paul, how about trying this?" [Laughs]

GLORSKY: Right. Well, that's a different story. I'm watching Lar work, because that's the most recent company I'm working with now. The total respect and challenge that he gives his dancers, they can't wait to like get into it. I mean it gives me a chill thinking about it, you know, that kind of -- and then his timing is so exact and all the groups things are so complicated that you need a great concentration. And then I think someone like Lar also tells them when he thinks it's wonderful. And you can see the actual love and respect coming.

DUNNING: Because some choreographers don't comment?

GLORSKY: Well, choreography's a very elusive muse. To be a good choreographer -- everybody wants good choreography. It's not often there. And when it's not there, we know we're missing it. I mean could be very good dance, could be very good music, but if it all comes together, you have an ecstasy and an experience, and a cathartic one. And when it doesn't, you realize that we're missing something.

DUNNING: Yes, yes. Now you've talked some about this, but you may not want to talk about companies that were difficult

or name them, but I wondered if you could talk about what makes companies good or bad to work with. Obviously, preparedness is valuable, but ...

GLORSKY: Good or bad to work with? I think it's a personal perception. I like working with all different kinds of companies, ethnic companies and ballet companies and galas and modern dancers. What would bother me if I had to stay with one company and have one person's mind for maybe a year. I think that would make me crazy. I think what keeps me healthy is that circular and overview kind of thing that's constantly moving. Sometimes working with a solo artist like a Margie Gillis...I think the main thing for me is I couldn't work for a company maybe I didn't respect, or I'd have to like something about it, or I'd want a new experience, and then I could say, "Okay. You did that experience and it wasn't exactly what you thought it was and what did you learn? You learned you don't want to do that again." Or I'll find somebody else to help them, this kind of thing. I don't think I've ever worked with what I could call a bad company. Each one had its own different style or different personalities.

DUNNING: One of the things that I also wanted to ask you is, I mean you have worked with so many different kinds of dance, companies that perform ballet, flamenco, modern, Broadway, opera. Do they make different kinds of demand on stage managers, the different dance forms?

GLORSKY: Yes, absolutely.

DUNNING: Somehow listening to you talk about flamenco, I had the feeling that that was the most immediate some way.

GLORSKY: Well, with flamenco you have to expect that there always will be changes and that it could be very secretive, what's going onstage and you being off stage left, you may not know that the heck's going on. So you have to realize that, for whatever reason, there are rhythms -- because everything is live usually with that. So things can happen or a shoe could come off or a heel could be, and that kind of things when they're making sounds, there can be a problem. [Laughs] Or the singer doesn't show up, overslept, you know, so this program has to change. Or they don't want to in a matinee do the entire thing, so they shorten it, but shortening is done through heel beats to the guitarist. So you're ending up with too many cues.

DUNNING: Oh, my God. So it's kind of seat of the pants in a way.

GLORSKY: It can be very seat of the pants, but that makes it kind of fun. I mean it's like a racing car driver! [Laughs] I think with opera it behooves a stage manager, of course, to read music and you might have large scenic elements to deal with and orchestra and, of course, singers, which is another whole world and a lot of really strong personalities. I always liked dance because it's the most disciplined of all the arts and I rather like disciplined people, because a dance company, you can say, "We're going to do this date a year from now," and you can count on that as solid. With Broadway shows, they always think they're going to do this, but maybe they don't have the theater or the director isn't available. So they can change a lot. But it's a great experience in those venues because there's usually a lot more money than in dance. So you

get to see how stuff can be done with money.

DUNNING: Yes! That shocking state of affairs.

GLORSKY: So it's very nice to work with that.

DUNNING: You probably get paid a lot more, too, don't you?

GLORSKY: Yes, yes. Everybody, yes. You work differently with different venues. Often with like ballet companies there's a lot more rehearsal time and let's say more time in the theater because you're there for longer periods than you would be with a modern dance company, with the exception of White Oak, who seems to be able to write its own ticket.

DUNNING: Yes, I should hope so, considering who's running it!
[Laughter]

GLORSKY: Right. Right.

DUNNING: I know a couple of them and you have actually talked some about Maria Alba, I wondered if there are choreographers and other artists that you feel particularly have felt particularly close to over the years. I know Glen Tetley, I think, is somebody -- and Lar, which we talked some about him, but could you talk about them as people as well as artists, why you feel close to them?

GLORSKY: Sure. I'll start with Glen Tetley because that was early. Glen actually had studied to be a doctor and then wanted to be a set designer. He knows a lot about art. What I

mean by "art" is museum quality art. And he in his own career did ballet, modern with Martha, and he worked with John Butler. He also did Broadway shows. So he was really a good one for me to begin working with, because he had all that going. He also wanted to make his own company and have scenic elements, but Glen as a person was -- if you went out on the road with Glen, you had to get dressed up for dinner. [Laughter] Now as a technical person, I was all day in the theater. I'll be damned if I wanted to get dressed up for dinner, but going to dinner with Scott Douglas, Carmen De Lavallade, Mary Hinkson, I got dressed up for dinner, and enjoyed their talk, their laughter, their drinking. Glen is Irish. [Laughter] Scott is Texas. So it was great to tour because there was a friendliness that sometimes you don't share with the choreographer and dancer. But Glen, because that was the kind of person he was, we often had a lot of dinners together and even though there was a lot of hardships in touring with him, it was great fun. So that was nice. Maria Alba as a person, Maria could attract a lot of lower class men and laborers. She enjoyed bar room activity, I would say. She liked stray animals. Her apartment was full of stray animals that she saved from the streets or the back of a bar room and that kind of thing. She would come over to my house make what she called "three-alarm chili". She was also a big drinker, but she was also a lot of fun to tour with. I mean the touring I did with her, I also, besides stage managing, lighting, was the driver. So you really felt very gypsy. If we rented a car and all the tires were like going down, we'd go to the garage and pick out tires and the rental company was starting to look for us because we changed all the tires on one of these cars. You know, we were touring for over a month and some of the way they booked us was like going from one end of America to another, and in the early days that's the way you did

it.

DUNNING: Really?

GLORSKY: You really drove.

DUNNING: Oh, drove, yes.

GLORSKY: Yes. You found station wagons. It's hard to rent a station wagon now, but it was station wagons you went in and piled all your stuff and your people and drove from one end of America to another and did these dates.

DUNNING: Like one-night stands?

GLORSKY: Right. Right. So what you'd hear, you'd know everybody's life story because if you're going to sit in a car, you know, [Laughs] you know what they like, what they don't like. You know a lot about their personal life. Someone like Lar, although I've worked with Lar, I would say, more years than anybody, maybe over 35, I know Lar is a very private man. I know him the least, I would say. And I don't try to be friendly with Lar, but we like each other. And he'll say something like, "You've looked after my ass for 35 years." I mean it's very sweet. Lar can be extremely difficult in the theater, extremely difficult and controlling.

DUNNING: You mean difficult about getting what he wants?

GLORSKY: Yes, yes. And in a way it's because his vision is very clear, it's very clear, and he wants what he wants when

he wants it. So it takes so long to get to this position, I think, and to be a master choreographer, you want him to have what he wants. Oftentimes he can be insulting to different designers. You know, like the lighting designer usually takes a lot of heat.

DUNNING: From everybody or just from Lar?

GLORSKY: Well, with Lar, in particular, because Lar will not veer. It's got to be what he wants when he wants it. That can be very difficult and very hard for a designer who's got their own mind to take.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: Working with someone like Martha Graham, I never tried to be friendly with Martha, but I think they have a feeling when you know -- they know when you care for them a lot and it was glorious for me to work with her, because as a young person she was my total idol. So to work with her was wonderful. Also the woman I worked for, Jean Rosenthal, as a lighting designer, did early work for her. Also to meet such people like Noguchi and just to see also a woman of great vision and genius was an amazing thing for me. So you get to know these people through the work, but then because of the little cosmos that you live in with them, you get to know a lot about them extremely fast. And as a stage manager, maybe you hear more than anyone else what they're going through when you're actually in the so called battlefield with them.

DUNNING: Yes, yes.

GLORSKY: So that was nice.

DUNNING: What about Alvin Ailey? Tell me about Alvin.

GLORSKY: Alvin Ailey, to me, was like a tom cat in a way. His work was wonderful, but his own personal life, sometimes he'd come in and you realized that he had a night on the town that no one could quite believe, you know, like a tattered tom cat. The ears were a little chewed and that kind of thing.

DUNNING: But did it get in the way of his working or was he able to switch back and forth?

GLORSKY: He could immediately come to the front and be right there. But I worked with Alvin Ailey early in his career, and also I had the privilege of working for him when he was still a dancer, which was wonderful to behold.

DUNNING: Everybody says he was like no other.

GLORSKY: He was like a tiger, a lion, something that was animal. And Alvin, otherwise, was pretty quiet. I mean a very nice man. He was fun to be with, I remember that. I always distracted him on tour and I think my friend Bill Hammond always wanted to have my head because I would distract Alvin by letting choose music to play when the audience would come in. I know that's not supposed to be done, but on a road sometimes it's very good for the audience who doesn't usually come to dance to have that kind of informality.

DUNNING: Why would you need to distract him, because

he was nervous or doing other stuff?

GLORSKY: Well, because sometimes when the choreographer is on the road, his work basically is done. So then they're uncomfortable all of a sudden because they can't any longer work on things. They really just have to put up with the schedule. In a way if they're not dancing, it would be better if they let the people who are actually doing it and the dancers just do their work, because it's their baby, but they have completed their work and they're not used to being idle.

DUNNING: [Laughter] Oh, I see, yes.

GLORSKY: Do you know what I mean? It's their work, but they're just not used to being, you know, like, "Okay. Just go sit over there and it's all fine." [Laughs]

DUNNING: Yes, yes. I was trying to remember. You said something about Baryshnikov, Mikhail Baryshnikov on the documentary about you, something to do with it being interesting to work with him because of his intense rapport with the audience?

GLORSKY: Yes. I think Misha's always had a great rapport with the audience. I remember seeing him as a ballet dancer. People feel very special about seeing this man, and you can feel it in the audience. And you can feel it from him. He feels such a commitment and that's what you actually see, is this great commitment to what he's doing. I mean at the same time with White Oak, it's so much what he wants to do in a way like notches on his belt. Oh, he's got this choreographer. Okay, that's done. That choreographer. Okay, that's done,

because whatever happened long ago in his own country, maybe he didn't have those opportunities. So he's made up for it very fast. Nureyev was like that, too, although a totally different personalities.

DUNNING: How was he different?

GLORSKY: Nureyev, of course, was more flamboyant.

DUNNING: Offstage, too?

GLORSKY: Oh, yes. I mean mink coats to the floor and a mink hat with mink paws and just a manner about him that he was there to be looked at. Misha doesn't want a stretch limousine. You know, he wants it quiet and he won't get into it if you have it there. And I mean they both have their physical therapists and this kind of thing, but I think Misha's just quieter waters than someone like Nureyev was. Nureyev, I felt sometimes, there's a phrase I have, "the million-dollar baby you can't spank." He's got to know that he's totally off the wall and he's got to rein himself in. Misha is a director of the company. He's not the choreographer, but he has a very big choreographic knowledge. His ability to help younger dancers, both in teaching class to them, which he does ...

DUNNING: Is he a good coach?

GLORSKY: Well, he's excellent. He's excellent.

DUNNING: How?

GLORSKY: Well, because he has all that training from

Pushkin and also he's a great modern dancer.

DUNNING: Why do you say he's great?

GLORSKY: Because he allows himself to be whatever it is that he's doing, totally committed. To work with him as a choreographer, I think, must be really quite something. Sometimes, especially with modern choreographers, you can see they're a bit intimidated, but I think because of his total seriousness to get the work done and they're very lucky to experience that. Also the way he can execute things. Even though you might say he's an older dancer now, he can execute things a lot cleaner than a lot of people can, so that you can actually see the structure of the choreography and the steps. Also because he's such a good showman, he would never make himself look bad. And in a way he'll help a choreographer because of that also.

DUNNING: Oh, sort of coax him how to did it better to get a better effect?

GLORSKY: Right, because this timing that he has is totally unique in that he always can call on it. It's always there for him. Either he worked hard for it or it was always a gift for him. When you see him dance, you realize. Well, if you ever see someone else do what he does or the same part, you can then see what the vast difference is.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: That kind of thing.

DUNNING: Kind of refinement, yes.

GLORSKY: Yes. The refineness of the steps, the articulation, and that kind of thing that dancers so admire in other dancers. He's not an easy one to deal with. There's a lot of tension about him because of his position and because of who he is. You know, when you talk to him, you're talking to about five different hats on that one head. So there's a lot of tension with that for someone to actually work with him. And sometimes he can't be clear because he's not clear about it himself, but he never lets on. [Laughter]

DUNNING: Well, it's interesting, because my real experience with him, other than seeing him, has been to interview him, and he's a wonderful interview because there's absolutely no side to him. It's like talking to somebody you've known forever.

GLORSKY: Yes.

DUNNING: But boy, moody, oh, my goodness!

GLORSKY: Right. He says sometimes about journalists, which I found very interesting, when he sees something actually in the paper, he says, "Well, that's the way I felt yesterday, but I don't feel that way today."

DUNNING: Well, that's interesting.

GLORSKY: And he gets sort of angry in a way, because that isn't what he feels today. And that's the way it is sometimes working with him. "I don't feel that way today, but

yesterday ...

DUNNING: He sort of crosses over.

GLORSKY: Yes, crosses over. But I always find that very funny about him, because everybody waits to hear what he says.

DUNNING: [Laughter] And it turns out that was Tuesday's version! [Laughter]

GLORSKY: So that's not today's version. I mean sometimes in the five years I worked with him, I would say to the dancers, also because of his accent, "Could you tell me what the rehearsal is?" And they said, "Maxine, I don't know." And I said, "What do you mean? You're with him all day." "But I didn't understand it either." I said, "Okay. Fine."

DUNNING: What about Merce? Did you work with him much?

GLORSKY: Yes, I worked with Merce. I thought he was quite amazing.

DUNNING: When did you work with him?

GLORSKY: I worked with him -- it was in the '60s and he would talk at that point -- you know, people change. When I say one thing, it was my experience in the '60s.

DUNNING: That's why I asked you.

GLORSKY: Yes. He would in a way play favorites with dancers. He would talk to maybe two people and not to the

others. So the others always felt like they were left out. But then I learned for stage managing with him that he sort of left things too open and I would say -- we were on a South American tour, "Merce, I need to know now what you want because the phones don't work here. I can't call you up." He said, "But how do you know the theater's going to allow that schedule?" I said, "I'm going to get it there, but first I want to know what you want." And he would try to like not do that, and it was like, you know, "Just tell me ..."

DUNNING: He wanted you to be a "chance" stage manager!

[Laughter]

GLORSKY: Well, the first time that I actually worked with a stop watch was because of Merce, because you'd time things for him. He'd say, "Okay, how long is that?" He got very intense about this stop watch. And I thought, "Okay." So then he would say, "Well, in X amount of minutes that's it, bring the curtain in," or something like that. And so you sort of got into that. It was very loose. You know, I was used to more exact cues on the music or something, but his work is absolutely done in silence and then the music or the electronic stuff is what comes afterwards. So that's another style that you have to be open to, but it was a lot of fun to work with him because there were modern artists around, like Frank Stella, Jasper Johns, and those kind of people who were in his life.

DUNNING: And Cage.

GLORSKY: And John Cage, who toured with us and that was a magnificent ...

DUNNING: Was he fun or was he sort of distant?

GLORSKY: I always felt about John Cage that he was Krishna, that he would tell these wonderful stories and was very mischievous and very leprechaunish and like they had a piece, How to Kick, Pass, Fall and Run, [How to Pass, Kick, Fall and Run -S.K.] and he would be onstage drinking a bottle of champagne. And just before he went out -- and at that time he was sober before he went out [Laughter] -- and he would tell you the end story of which to close the curtain on. But drinking a bottle of champagne, the speech became slurrer and I was always thinking, "Oh, my God, am I going to know when he's hit this end story?"

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: So it was that kind of stuff the that you'd set up with him and then you were wondering if this was going to really happen.

GLORSKY: Actually it sounds a little bit like working with the flamencos. [Laughter]

GLORSKY: Yes. [Laughs]

[CASSETTE 3, SIDE B]

DUNNING: Let's see. You were saying that you'd worked with Agnes de Mille and Bob Fosse. Do you want to talk about them?

GLORSKY: Yes. Agnes de Mille. I actually worked with Ballet Theater, and actually was just a lighting designer's assistant.

It was either Jean Rosenthal or Gil Helmsley, depending on who was lighting the ballets. And with Agnes, I often got sent to talk to her because we were late in teching, and because I knew so much about dance I could distract her from the fact that her time had come and gone. [Laughter]

DUNNING: You were good! [Laughter]

GLORSKY: So they would send me down to "Please go talk to Agnes because we're going to be a half-an-hour late," and I would -- first of all, I'd tell her the truth, that we were going to be a half-an-hour late and then I would ask her questions either about her work or listen to her talk. I mean at one point it was Eliot Feld had just premiered his new ballet. Now I can't think of the name of it.

DUNNING: *Harbinger at Midnight?*

GLORSKY: Yeah, I think it was *Harbinger* was the first, and she really thought of him as a whipper-snapper and she had a way of talking that was very strong and very opinionated. So she was a hoot to talk with, but I could see why I was sent down to the trenches to go talk to her while her time eeked by, because if she unleashed what she was going to unleash, everybody was like in trouble. So I mean that was like a fun job.

DUNNING: So she got it out on you and then she was okay?

GLORSKY: Right. Yes. But I was very amused by it because she was such a strong personality and as a young person, that was quite a job to be given, to "Go down there and talk to

Agnes de Mille and see if you can distract her while we're doing this for a half-hour."

DUNNING: What was Lucia Chase like?

GLORSKY: Lucia Chase was like the mad woman of Chayo[?] because schedules would change. She was handling a lot. Ballet Theater was very big.

DUNNING: When was this when you were there, '50s or

...

GLORSKY: Well, I was with Jean Rosenthal, so it had to be, yeah, '60s, '70s, because they always used me as an assistant. And so there was probably a good ten years of it. But Lucia would change schedules or someone would like be forcing her to do something else, but when you have a big company, to change is quite chaotic. So once in a while, because somebody yelled the loudest, she would change something, or the kind of things that happen in ballet companies, you know, if there's an injury or something like that, then everything gets to be a little bit chaotic. With Lucia, there was a lot of stars, international stars, so it was a big deal. So it was rather fun to see her going over to the piece of paper and changing everything because you just wondered if then all the parties would know what the heck they were doing. So just watching somebody in that element, and also because she had been a dancer and things like that, she knew everybody so intimately and the way she could charm them into things or force them out of things was a very interesting thing to watch.

DUNNING: I've heard! [Laughs]

GLORSKY: So that was fun. With Bob Fosse, which was, of course, Broadway, I just adored watching him rehearse. He was really a theater man. If people were at the box office, he was aware that they were there lining up for his show. If his girls danced, he would make sexual sounds that they had gotten to him.

DUNNING: [Laughs] From the wings or ...

GLORSKY: No. From when he was directing and he was out front. Like those wonderful girls that he had chosen and worked with, he then -- just like you could just see his joy and his sexuality about what they were doing, you know, and, of course, a Bob Fosse dancer is like the sexiest thing on Earth. I was there when a scenic element didn't work and it was during probably previews when an elevator didn't work, and he didn't throw people in, he didn't yell at people, he didn't call the stage manager out, he didn't yell at the shop. He explained to the audience what had happened and he said, "We'll do the best we can." Because he knew what everyone did in the theater. He would say, "Oh, don't give me that drop. It's too much money. You shouldn't put it here. We'll put it there," and he really made very good decisions and I always wanted to see his stuff done on different dance companies. I thought that would be great, to see that. He was a phenomenal director, a phenomenal mind. You could see it in his films. I worked for him that period of time that he had a heart attack and ...

DUNNING: When were you working with him? What decade?

GLORSKY: What decade? I have to look it up in my thing, which would take too long at the moment.

DUNNING: What show?

GLORSKY: It was Pippin, it was Chicago, and I think there was one other, probably three shows I did with him. And Pippin was great. We did it in Washington, D.C. and I'm trying to think of the actor who was the lead in that. At the moment I can't. It was a black actor and he ...

DUNNING: Ben Vereen?

GLORSKY: Ben Vereen. Ben Vereen came into the office mad as hell because he had trouble getting his hotel room because he was black in Washington, D.C. I want to tell you, I hadn't met him before. This was like, "Hello." [Laughter] And he was lookin' for somebody to kill! [Laughter] And I could see why Fosse loved him, because his energy was incredible. But just watching Fosse put together a show and his kind of imagination -- also Pippin was a statement against war, you know, he had these talking heads onstage, you know, from battle and just what he could say in musical comedy was really of great depth and yet it was a lot of fun getting there, you know, with all the bumps and grinds and things and all those people working very tightly together. And then people like Chita Rivera and ^{Owen} Owen Verdon, and actually going to work every day and watching these people work was the best.

→ Famous Broadway dancer + Fosse wife
DUNNING: Well, somehow from what you've said, and I want to make sure I heard it right, it sounded when you were talking about what a theater person, what a director he was, was he one of those directors who just gets the whole picture in his head?

GLORSKY: Yes. It's all his concept. He is so strong. Actually the best follow spots in the world are follow spots that Bob Fosse has demanded. So much in theater now, in musicals now I see absolutely copies of Mr. Fosse's work, un-credited, unsolicited, unsung, and it's really that very strong concept that people just take from freely like it's folk art, but this man had very strong concepts.

DUNNING: He did.

GLORSKY: Totally. From the costuming to the lighting to the scenic. The way he worked with people, I would say I wish there was documentaries done on the way he worked because God forbid he didn't like somebody in the cast. And I saw that once and that was excruciating. You know, sometimes these directors, to get something out of people, is like sticking in a knife and twisting it. But I didn't see that very often in him, only maybe once or twice over a pretty long period. But just his enthusiasm and the way he worked with both the produce-orial people, the scenic and lighting people, his own cast was truly a great place to be.

DUNNING: There's something I want to ask you about Lucia Chase that I think of sometimes and wonder about and I wonder if you had any sense of it. I've wondered sometimes, because she poured so much money and energy into that company so endlessly, what was in it for her? I assumed when she started, it was a way of giving yourself partly a dancing job, but why do you think she did it?

GLORSKY: Well, Lar once said to me about being a dancer, once you're a dancer, you're always a dancer. And I think

Lucia's commitment to that company was just as if it was like blood. It had to happen. It had to be there. You don't know any other way. It must go on, and I find that [Laughs] and I think that ...

DUNNING: [Laughs] Thank God!

GLORSKY: Yes, and I think that was within her and not that I knew her in long periods of time, but you could see that her commitment was total and the fact that the show couldn't go on was just an unthinkable act. Why? I don't know why. It's just the way it happens. If it's in your genes, you're going to do it.

DUNNING: You just don't have the choice.

GLORSKY: You don't have the choice.

DUNNING: Yes. Now is there anybody else you wanted to talk about before we go on, any other people you worked with?

GLORSKY: Well, I think we've covered the main people. I mean there are wonderful people like Kazuko Hirabayashi or John Butler, but in a way we've covered what it's like to work with them in that we've covered so many people at this point. I think they all have great gifts and it's just wonderful to see like dance of a certain period of time unfold in front of one so one can see the rainbow and refer to it. Like I'm watching now in Canada the work of James Kudelka, which has grown phenomenal.

DUNNING: What is the job, from the *Gala* or from the...

GLORSKY: Actually a little bit from the Gala [Inaudible] and also he was with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens both as a performer and a choreographer. But now he's gone back to his original company, which was the national, and become a director. And now he's directed it for a number of years and you can see that the work has grown tremendously. And that's really wonderful to see. It's that choreographic thing that's the hardest little nugget to find in the dance world.

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: So just when you see somebody growing and then you see them in a good place, it's ...

DUNNING: It must be very exciting.

GLORSKY: It's very exciting, yes.

DUNNING: Now I wanted to ask you what kind of person one needs to be to be a good stage manager.

GLORSKY: Well ... I don't really know. [Laughs]

DUNNING: Okay. Let me put it this way then. If you had to pick a young stage manager, a fairly new one, for a company, they asked you to help them because you couldn't work with them, you had some other conflict or something, and say you had three youngsters who all wanted a job, what might make you choose one over another?

GLORSKY: Well, I think somebody who doesn't want to argue, but someone who is interested in problem-solving. I was

just at Jacob's Pillow this year. This is like 2001, and David Chapman is the technical head there. And it's very interesting to see his choices of people, because they have like three different theaters. And it was cute because there's an innocence in some of them, you know, that I find funny because I tend to work with companies who are very creative, but may not know all the answers immediately. So they were asking me for things and I was laughing and I said, "You don't get this, but soon you will when you meet them, how I can't answer these questions. Or I can't write this stuff down because the work is being created," you know? "But let me tell you what I do know." But it didn't fit their list and then I had different young ones asking me from different departments the same thing, and I remember saying, "Can you get all these phone calls together because this one's calling me from sound and this one's calling me from this," but because I know it's David Chapman's choice, I know that I should -- you know you're working with young people who are in training and really want to do this. So you take the time to explain to them your reasons. But why is somebody good? I don't know. It's a cross between a personality thing, some technical knowledge, which you must have. It's this funny kind of combination ...

DUNNING: You mean knowledge of lighting and ...

GLORSKY: Yes. It's this funny kind of combination and also a sympathy to performers and creators. You must feel a camaraderie there and not be too judgmental about everything, because you're a facilitator, but you're facilitating things that are handed to you or being created. So you just must stay open. And I don't know what makes somebody good or bad. It's like what makes anybody good or bad. It's ...

DUNNING: Well, patience, I would think, would be one quality.

GLORSKY: Patience and maybe not giving up. Maybe if you stay in it long enough, you get good, like in any field. You know, if you're still able to do it and earn a living at it, there must be some reason why. But I don't know what makes those people. It's like sand in an oyster [Laughs] and you get a pearl. [Laughter]

DUNNING: And the last thing, which is sort of connected to this and maybe the same question -- I'm not really sure -- what would you tell kids? I know you've been doing some teaching, some seminars on stage managing. What are the most important things you would think of, do you think, if anything, to tell kids if they were contemplating a career as a stage manager, things that they should keep in mind and be prepared for or ...

GLORSKY: Well, I think there's a lot. It's so much to say on so many different levels that, you know, you can only give people what they want to learn when they want to learn it and at what stage they want to learn it. You know, anyone who's worked with young people knows that. It's sort of what gets them, at what point does it reach them. I did a master class in North Carolina School of the Arts which I thought was an excellent, excellent program.

DUNNING: This was recently?

GLORSKY: Recently. And the stage managers there learn drafting, they do actually get to stage manage a lot of different productions during the year, and so they get

experience. I think the thing that you have to watch if you go to school for it is that you don't come out thinking you know everything.

DUNNING: [Laughs] Yes.

GLORSKY: What basically you know is how that school does something. When you start as a professional, you almost have to relearn everything by virtue of who you're working for. And that changes your picture. And what is that? That is experience, the best teacher. And I think we all know that in whatever field you're in, experience is your teacher. There are only certain things you can learn and then it's the experience of doing on a daily or yearly basis. That's when you start to have the knowledge. And then you find that knowledge - when I talk to people who've been in the field for a while, it's interesting how we all know virtually the same kinds of things. So it's very great for me, because stage managers, there's only like one with a company perhaps, unless you have a big ballet company where there's probably more than one. It's very fun for me to talk to these people, because there's like a shorthand of certain personalities we deal with or certain theater problems we deal with or certain union problems we deal with. So that is exciting. With young people, you have to in a way feel your way with them to know what they need, and if you have somebody that's argumentative and stuff like that, that's really not a good person. If you have somebody ...

[PHONE RINGS. TAPE PAUSED]

DUNNING: What did you go into the course with as a starter?

GLORSKY: I had videotape of all different kinds of venues. I did have a duet that Misha did with one of his dancers. With Lar Lubovitch, we made a theater at the ~~Sun Center~~ Orange

CRENSANZ Center an old Synagogue - for Men's Studies 2000 year.

DUNNING: [Inaudible]?

GLORSKY: The making of the theater, how we put it together. I had some footage of that. And I had the finished product. So that was kind of ...

DUNNING: Oh, so they could see how you put it together.

GLORSKY: Right. I also had a tape with a flamenco company with the lighting designer's voice and my voice at a technical rehearsal, so they could see how we work and then that we had a record of it that we could then, because we didn't have a lot of time, we could review what we said to each other and fix it first on paper and then in the small amount of time before the opening. So they could see ...

DUNNING: That's sort of like videotaping a rehearsal.

GLORSKY: Yes. But they could hear our conversation. Then I said to them, "You know, if you don't ask me questions, I'm go to learn a lot more from you than you are from me," and I got them to talk, because I was told that they don't seem to participate a lot. I also asked this class to contain not only stage managers, but lighting designers, because our communication is the most important part of a theatrical production. So I wanted those two elements and then they said

to me later, "It's too bad we didn't have dancers there, too."

DUNNING: Yes.

GLORSKY: So I also made it come from them and I also gave them a run-down of the way I work. I showed them my cue sheets, my preliminary sheets, schedules and all that work that you do on your own. And then gave them examples and then they had their own things that they brought, which I really found rather cute. I get them really to participate, which was really my aim, especially when they said that was the hardest thing was to get them to ask questions. So they really enjoyed it and I found that I enjoyed it, too. I have taught stage managing to a regular college group of people and I didn't like it. First of all, they came late to class, which I just couldn't bear because as a stage manager, that means, you know, you're losing money for the company if you're not there. [Laughter] And I told them that.

DUNNING: Did they laugh?

GLORSKY: No. They didn't get it. So I mean as soon as I found the first tour out, I was on it and I got substitutes for myself. So really if I teach, I need to teach to someone who's serious.

DUNNING: Well, that was really all I had to ask you. Is there anything I've missed? I know we've done this in such spread-apart chunks. I mean we can always catch up on the phone. I can tape stuff over the phone.

GLORSKY: No. I think in a way I think I've talked

myself out. [Laughs]

DUNNING: I don't believe it.

GLORSKY: But I think, for me, everything is fresh every time I start a new project. It's like, "Okay. What's this little venture going to get me into?" Also as a dance stage manager, I have traveled most of the world doing it, which gives you, as a person, a big perspective of what the world looks like, what it's like to work with different people in different countries with different languages, different persuasions, which I think also has become part of my abilities and being and enjoyment. So even though I've done other things, I always seem to come back to stage managing. It seems to suit me the best.

DUNNING: I remember somebody telling a story or hearing a story about you managing -- I think it was with Tetley on a European tour, managing to sort of deal with theaters in a variety of countries without knowing a word of their language! [Laughs]

GLORSKY: Right. Right. There are many ways to work.

DUNNING: Yes. Well, thank you very much, Maxine.

GLORSKY: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]