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Full transcript of an interview with

Margot Nash

on 14/06/2022; 30/08/2022

by Don and Lyn Longo

for the

**Days of Wrath, Years of Hope:
Memories of Protest and Civil Disobedience
in South Australia, 1965-1983 Oral History Project**

Transcribed by: Lyn Longo

Recording available

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Interview Part 1 of 2

Lyn Longo: [00:00:02] This is an interview with Margot Nash conducted by Don and Lyn Longo on the 14th of June 2022 from 9 AM using Zoom. This interview is part of an oral history project on activism and protest movements in the period 1965 to 1983. Though it often extends into the eighties and nineties. It is supported by the History Trust of South Australia. The audio code for this interview is 39_NAS_20220614. We should begin by acknowledging that we're meeting on the land of the Kaurna people here in Adelaide and Gadigal people in Sydney, and we pay our respects to the traditional custodians of the land.

Margot, we haven't met before except on the screen, but you are highly recommended by Leo Davis and others who were involved in Adelaide protests, to be involved in our project. We know you were part of the Street Theatre that was such a successful and memorable part of demonstrations in the early seventies in Adelaide. As an accomplished film maker, while your time in Adelaide was not lengthy, your influence continues to be extensive. We look forward to finding out about you, the activist, the creative spirit and the human being. Thank you, Margot, for making time for us despite your busy schedule. But enough of us, let's hear about you. And we begin with a formality. Can you tell us your full name and date and place of birth?

Margot Nash: [00:01:54] I'd just like to also acknowledge that we're meeting on the traditional land of where I am, because I'm in Bondi, near the coast of the Gadigal and also the Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation, because it was the Bidjigal people who occupied this coastal region.

Don Longo: [00:02:15] Fair enough.

Margot Nash: [00:02:16] And pay my respects to elders past and present, acknowledging them as the custodians of these lands. We usually say the traditional owners, but actually I think we should say, acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land.

Lyn Longo: [00:02:41] Can you give me your name and date and place of birth.

Margot Nash: [00:02:44] Okay, Margot Frances Nash 28th December 1947 in Christchurch in New Zealand.

Lyn Longo: [00:02:52] Uh huh, a question later that I ask is now being partially answered. Okay. Can you give us some factual information about your childhood, parents, siblings, any influential relatives?

Margot Nash: [00:03:11] Yes. Look, I'd also say I made a film about my family where I actually talk at length about my childhood and where I was born and when

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we came to Australia. It's called *The Silences*, it's about family secrets and it's a feature length, personal essay documentary.

I was born in Christchurch in New Zealand in 1947. I was their youngest. I had an older sister who died, Felicity. And really... *The Silences* is about her and her death and how it was a secret in our family. I have an older sister, Diana, who is sixteen months older than me. She was born in Lincoln and my mother came from New Plymouth in the North Island and my father from Timaru in the South Island.

My father was a working-class boy who was very bright, and went to university... through a very strange thing. A rich relative in Australia who didn't have any children left money to his thirteen nephews and nieces and my grandmother got some money and my Dad was able to get access to his share of that to go to university. He studied at the Canterbury Agricultural College to be an Agronomist.

My mother came from a sort of... well in my film, I say, 'The decaying aristocracy,' and my grandfather, her father, was a remittance man. He was sent out to New Zealand, to the colonies and told to stay there and sent a money to live on. So my mother had great ideas of her grand heritage, but my father came from a much poorer family. He was very bright and very handsome and she was very beautiful and they fell in love. There's a bigger story there, but I won't go into that. My father was later sent to England to study hop breeding so he was quite an expert. He went to Kent and ---- long story short, he was offered a job in Australia by Carlton United Breweries, to run a hop station for the brewery and to breed a disease resistant hop more suitable to the Australian climate. I've done quite a lot writing about this too. I did a lot of research about it.

Anyway, so we came to Australia in 1951 on the Wanganella ship and we went to Ringwood, which was about 18 miles out of Melbourne. Now it's different in kilometres. And we lived in a company house, on the hop station and my father set up a hop farm, so I grew up on the hop farm. I've written a piece for a book called *Locating Suburbia, Memory, Creativity and Place* called *The First House and the Hop Farm* about growing up on the hop farm. It was bush down the back, and I ran wild through the hops and through the bush and all of that. We had all our own fruit and vegetables, so I had a very healthy childhood. My father bred a very important

hop called The Pride of Ringwood, which kind of revolutionised hop breeding in Australia, so in many circles I am hop royalty. (laughter) I am Bill Nash's daughter. (laughter) And I'm actually about to talk to the researchers for a TV programme about the hops. They're doing it on 'Drinks that Shaped Australia.' One of them of course was beer and Dad's hop was the famous hop.

Lyn Longo: [00:07:50] And did it lead to some financial benefits for the family?

Margot Nash: [00:07:54] No. For the brewery it did, not for us. (laughter)

Lyn Longo: [00:07:58] Capitalism at work.

Margot Nash: [00:07:59] Capitalism at work. But it was a very distressing childhood in many ways, because my father suffered from a mental illness. He was manic depressive. He was very intelligent and very clever, but he had episodes and would be hospitalised. So there was a certain amount of trauma, quite a lot of trauma, in my childhood.

And my mother in the end, when I was 16 and my sister was 17, we left. There was a huge drama and we left and we went to live closer to the city. My sister was at university and I was in my last year at school and I was completely--- it was a total nightmare and I failed my last year at school had to go back and do extra subjects.

Don Longo: [00:09:08] Margot, when you say, 'We left,' that's you, your sister and your mother, and you left your father on the farm?

Margot Nash: [00:09:16] Well, we'd already moved from the farm at Ringwood to Heathmont by that stage because all the traffic on White Horse Road, Dad thought it was enemy planes coming in.

Lyn Longo: [00:09:25] So his mental illness was a result of the war?

Margot Nash: [00:09:31] Yes. Well, it was genetic too, but it was exacerbated by the war. He'd been a navigator in the war and he'd been in planes that bombed Berlin. He was quite traumatised, and so were we as the result. So we had moved to a little house in Heathmont, because the house in Ringwood was a company house and we didn't own it. So he bought a little house in Heathmont and then we left him from that house and went and rented closer to the city.

And my mother who'd never worked, sold cosmetics door to door, and worked in chemist shops. My sister had a scholarship to go to university. My mother was very theatrical and I wanted to be like her and be on the stage. She played the piano, and in my film, all the pieces that she played on the piano are in the film. Well, not all of them, but a lot of them. So I went to RMIT --- I wanted to go into theatre, but I wasn't allowed to go and study drama anywhere. I don't know where I would have anyway. I did do some drama stuff.

Lyn Longo: [00:10:54] Can I just interrupt with what year are we talking here?

Margot Nash: [00:11:09] About 63. And so I enrolled to study interior design at RMIT and that was in the architecture school at RMIT. And I became involved in the architecture reviews. So I performed in the architecture reviews and I actually think doing interior design really helped me in my later---

Lyn Longo: [00:11:47] In the filmmaking, yeah.

Margot Nash: [00:11:48] As a filmmaker, yes because it really helped me understand space and light and design and structure.

Lyn Longo: [00:11:54] Can we backtrack just a smidge to what were the politics in the home that you would have been exposed to?

Margot Nash: [00:12:02] Very important. Very right-wing. My mother loved Robert Menzies and my father had aspirations to grandeur that my mother had offered to him. And even though he was a working-class boy, he was--- well they were both very racist. And they always voted Liberal.

Lyn Longo: [00:12:28] And you accepted that. Was there any pushback from you?

Margot Nash: [00:12:31] My first memory of having a sort of political discussion with my mother was doing a school project about Apartheid, it was on Durban. And for some reason I was looking at Durban and I found these photographs that--- the door for whites only and the doors for blacks. And I was outraged by this and I was still at school but I had a huge row with my mother, who was actually very racist. And there were many arguments within the family, but that's the first one I remember, which was about racism.

And so my sister and I are both very left-wing now and we both got politicised during the Vietnam War, but our parents thought we were really off the wall. We

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reacted to their very conservative politics and racism. We never met black people. We never met Aboriginal people. We lived in a very white way, but my sister was a great reader. I wasn't at first, because I think sometimes what happens in families is that one child becomes---all the problems get projected onto the youngest child, and that was me.

And so my sister and I, she was the intelligent one and I had personality. (laughter) She was beautiful, but I had personality. So I didn't read, I thought I was stupid. I didn't read, and she read for me when I was little. Of course, I learnt to read, but it's true to say that I don't think anybody had treated me as somebody who was intelligent until I went to RMIT and I got involved with the architecture reviews and one of the people who was involved in that reviews was a guy called Tim Standfield, who has sadly passed away, who was a friend for life, actually. He was a country boy who was studying interior design too. Tim lived nearby when we lived in Camberwell, he used to come and have dinner with us sometime and we were great friends. He was in the year above me, but he worked for one of the lecturers, Bernard Joyce who was an architect and we used to go around there.

Bernard Joyce's wife--- you want to know about people who were great influences. Bernard Joyce's wife, her name was Robyn Joyce, she was a huge influence on me. She was probably the first person who treated me as an intelligent person and gave me books to read. She gave me Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* to read when I was 16. She gave me Graham Green, she gave me Francois Sagan. She lent books to me, and she was a great reader.

She was an intellectual, really. She was a nurse, she trained as a nurse. And she became an audiologist later after she split up with Bernard. But she was one of those very droll, intelligent women, and I just adored her. And I told her when she was in hospital and she was dying, I said, 'Do you remember when you gave me, Simone De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* to read when I was 16. And she opened her eyes and looked at me, and she said, 'And you never looked back!' (laughter)

Don Longo: [00:16:43] Well, is that a good opportunity for us to ask what the influence of Simone de Beauvoir's book was on you and indeed Francois Sagan's book? I assumed that was, *Bonjour Tristesse*. Is that the one that you read?

Margot Nash: [00:16:57] Yes.

Don Longo: [00:16:58] Had to be that one.

Lyn Longo: [00:16:59] And she must have seen your potential. 16 is not very old for books of that calibre and depth.

Margot Nash: [00:17:08] She gave them to me to read and I loved them. Tim and I used to go and free her. She had two little kids, and we would take her off to discos and things like that. She used to give us glasses of red wine and we'd sit up late, drinking red wine with Robyn Joyce, blah blah blah blah blah, gasbagging. *Tim* loved to talk, *she* loved to talk, *I* loved to talk. So there was ideas flying around and she was a friend for life, Tim was a friend for life and both are sadly passed away now.

Don Longo: [00:17:42] So de Beauvoir and Sagan, what did you take from them? Can you remember?

Margot Nash: [00:17:50] Not really. I just know I was entranced with reading, because I hadn't been reading, it made me a reader and it made me want to pick up more books and read more.

Lyn Longo: [00:18:07] And to see yourself as an intelligent person.

Margot Nash: [00:18:11] Well, that's right. And I still didn't really see myself as an intelligent person particularly, but I was excited and interested in the ideas, in the world that was created. And of course, Francois Sagan and Simone de Beauvoir were women, and they were intelligent women. So they became role models in a way, because you aspire to understand the world in a different way and certainly de Beauvoir, helped me to understand the world in a different way.

But that would be some years before I read more feminism, I was very young at 16. But it was a treasured thing, so even when I moved from Melbourne to Sydney in the late seventies, I would never go back to Melbourne without going to see Robyn Joyce. So she was my surrogate mother really. She wasn't that much older than me, but she was ten years or something. So it was significant at that time.

Don Longo: [00:19:21] So it was a sort of a coming of age for you actually meeting this lady?

Margot Nash: [00:19:28] Coming of age. It was a step along the path to start to formulate my own ideas or find my tribe, the people that I was comfortable with.

Lyn Longo: [00:19:48] Plus expectations of you to live *up* to, rather than the lowest expectations that you were living *down* to.

Margot Nash: [00:19:58] That's right. Because I was always in trouble at school. I was always in trouble with my parents. I was the wild one.

Don Longo: [00:20:10] Were you wild, in what sense were you wild?

Margot Nash: [00:20:14] Well, I was wild.

Don Longo: [00:20:17] Please explain. (laughter)

Margot Nash: [00:20:22] As a child I definitely ran wild in the bush, and I think children are fearless. I loved the hop farm, I loved all the smells and the adventure of playing in the bush. I would take risks as a teenager, and as a young woman, I took quite a lot of risks. I think about it now... but I survived!

I'm just trying to think about when--- my desire to be an actress was still very much there and I at RMIT and I was doing the reviews and things, and I was hanging out in Carlton. I'd moved out of at home and lived in a flat in South Yarra with some girls for a while. And then we used to go to Jimmy Watson's to the wine bar and drink wine and talk and things. Somebody told me that there was a room going in a house in Carlton with a couple of actors. And I went, 'Ooh, okay.' And those actors were Graham Blundell and David Turnbull, and they were both in the Melbourne Theatre Company at the time. David Turnbull was a British actor and I think they thought I was a young girl who's going to do the dishes, but it didn't work out like that.

(laughter)

Lyn Longo: [00:22:16] You'd read Simone de Beauvoir by then.,

Margot Nash: [00:22:18] Anyway, so I went to live with Blundell, and Turnbull and the whole beginnings of filmmaking in Carlton was happening at that time. Tim Burstall and Betty Burstall, lived across the way from us. Betty Burstall who set up the La Mama Theatre in Carlton, like the La Mama Theatre in Greenwich Village in New York. And also, Brian Davies lived next door to us at one point, and he was the Carlton sunglasses Godard character. He started making films in the sixties.

And so there was the beginning of 16 millimetre film making, which I wasn't really involved with, but I was a witness to it and I remember when Burstall's first film,

Two Thousand Weeks was made, because David was in it and our house was used as the makeup place. It was an exciting time.

But I was theatre not film orientated and I auditioned for the Melbourne Theatre Company and much to the surprise of the two fellows I was sharing the house with, I got in. And so I left my interior design course and went and worked at Melbourne Theatre Company. I wasn't there for long. They, gave me a part in *The Crucible* as one of those young girls who scream and I toured with the play too. And I didn't really understand how the male world worked and how sexism worked, but I certainly got a taste of it around this time, because Blundell and some of the other fellows from around Carlton were setting up stuff at La Mama. George Ogilvie who was a director at the Melbourne Theatre Company did these wonderful theatre workshops. He'd trained with the French mime, Lecoq in France. And so I did all his workshops and then the boys started doing stuff at La Mama, and I started going to those too. But they were running it. They'd done the same things as I did, they were running it, but they didn't cast me in anything. And I felt like I had been really pushed to the side.

I went off and did a show at Saint Martin's Theatre and where to my horror and memory, it was a Tennessee Williams play and I played the black maid.

Don Longo: [00:25:17] **Not in blackface, surely?**

Margot Nash: [00:25:19] Well not blackface, but dark. I was very young. I think I only got it because I had big lips and a big nose. (laughter)

So, I did a lot of waitressing around that time. It was not a very happy time for me because I wasn't really trained. I hadn't been to drama school. I'd done some workshops and then I met this guy called Doug Anders and he was from Brisbane. I don't know if he's still alive, he probably is, I don't know. But he came to visit at Carlton Street and he and I got talking. He was going to Adelaide to do a show, and I must have told him how unhappy I was, because I couldn't get a go at anything. He'd been working with a group of people, and they had set up this thing called *Tribe*, which was a sort of a theatre group called *Tribe*, and he wanted to take *Tribe* to Adelaide. He'd been asked to go and mount a show with the Adelaide University,

with the drama group. His idea was to do it based on *Tribe*, but to develop it with the students in Adelaide and he asked me to come, and I said, 'Yes.'

Don Longo: [00:26:52] And that's how you got to Adelaide?

Margot Nash: [00:26:53] Yes, that's how I got to Adelaide.

Don Longo: [00:26:55] Before we get on to the Adelaide stuff, Margot, did you ever go back to university, did you ever to finish your degree at RMIT.

Margot Nash: [00:27:03] No. I ended up teaching at a university but I never finished my--- it wasn't a degree anyway, interior design. It was a diploma. I finished my matriculation, but I didn't finish any higher education, until many years later, when I did a research degree and I got into the programme at UNSW at the College of Fine Arts based on my professional work as a filmmaker. So I did that, and I wrote a thesis about my feature film *Vacant Possession*. I was teaching at that point and I thought, 'Oh, they're all getting degrees and I haven't got one. Maybe I should get one.'

I got an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) but I missed out on university as an undergraduate. Considering that university was free during that time there's some sadness when I think about it.

Don Longo: [00:28:03] Yes.

Margot Nash: [00:28:04] I had life experience.

Lyn Longo: [00:28:07] Yes. And other opportunities that you had to take.

Don Longo: [00:28:11] There would have been some disappointment on the part of your aspirational parents, for you not to have finished university?

Margot Nash: [00:28:18] Oh, they wouldn't have been disappointed. They would have thought that was---

Lyn Longo: [00:28:23] Typical?

Margot Nash: [00:28:27] Typical of Margot. Yeah, I was just a disappointment to them anyway. But in terms of activism, I do have one very strong memory of when I was living in Carlton--- there were two houses we lived in in Carlton Street. We moved from 22 to 32. But it, I think it was at 22, the first house. I remember May 68, I remember the student uprising, I remember the newspapers. I remember because the park was straight over the road from our house. I remember sitting in the park

reading the newspapers about May 68 and everyone was talking about it. I was interested. I didn't really get it, but I was interested.

Don Longo: [00:29:11] This was in Adelaide or in Melbourne then?

Margot Nash: [00:29:13] That was in Melbourne.

Don Longo: [00:29:14] Still in Melbourne. Well, one of our questions was about Paris 68 and the Cultural Revolution, which was something that was agitating university students at the time. And we wondered whether or not you'd come under their spell in one way or another?

Margot Nash: [00:29:30] Well, I did come under the spell of the French student uprising and when I went to Adelaide with the show with Doug Anders, that's when I definitely came under the spell of all of that, because there was such a lot going on. Not in Melbourne so much because I was in the theatre, and working as a waitress and I might have been drinking up at Johnny Watson's and talking with people and stuff, but I wasn't part of the Melbourne University Film Society, for example.

My friend Robin Laurie was very much part of that, but I do remember seeing Godard Films projected on Alan Finney's wall in Carlton. I remember through those shared households and different affairs that I had, which I won't go in to, men had an influence, too. And certainly, Godard was an influence and he made very political films. So I think there was a ferment that was happening around that time, even though I wasn't up on the university campus, I was with the actors and I was watching radical films.

Lyn Longo: [00:31:08] And mixing in a progressive milieu that you didn't have when you were---

Margot Nash: [00:31:14] Mixing in a progressive milieu, I did go to La Mama. We were very interested then in some of the radical theatre groups that were happening in America, like the Living Theatre, who were a big commune. And they're still going actually, incredible. I was aware of stuff going on, but it didn't kind of coalesce until I got to Adelaide.

Don Longo: [00:31:44] And the Vietnam War in Melbourne, before you got to Adelaide, were you aware of it much? Did it have an impact on you?

Margot Nash: [00:31:52] I was aware of it, but it wasn't until I got to Adelaide and got involved with the Moratorium stuff that--- I went to Adelaide in 1968.

Don Longo: [00:32:09] Just as the Paris riots were starting.

Margot Nash: [00:32:13] That's right. The Paris, riots had started and that's where I remember reading the newspaper in Carlton in Melbourne. And then not long after that I met Doug Anders and went with him to Adelaide late 1968.

He did a group developed show, it was called *Rights Underground*, that's what the show was called. And it was sort of based on *Tribe*. I've still got the script of it actually. I think he must have given us the *Tribe* script, where we discovered ourselves with more expressive movement. (laughter) We did all sorts of things, and it was very stimulating. In a way Anders was a bit like a sort of Australian Grotowski character, you know, because he was quite charismatic.

I met Rob Tillett and I fell in love and that was why I stayed, because I was in a relationship with him. I used to dance with the band. I was the *Red Angel Panic* girl. (laughter) I went to Adelaide for that show and the show was great. We were nude and doing all sorts of things. We took Adelaide by storm I think. Theatre 62.

Lyn Longo: [00:33:48] We remember theatre 62.

Margot Nash: [00:33:51] And then I went to work at Theatre 62 doing straight plays. So I was actually---some ghastly things I did at Theatre 62. I remember doing a Feydeau farce, and I remember doing *A Girl in my Soup* and all those more commercial--- well, the Feydeau farce was interesting. In one door and out the other, but I stayed because of Rob. And also, what was I going to go back to? They treated me like shit. I was unhappy there. I didn't think there was any future for me there, so I stayed.

Lyn Longo: [00:34:32] And meanwhile Vietnam, was hotting up.

Margot Nash: [00:34:38] It was hotting up.

Lyn Longo: [00:34:39] And you were ripe for radicalisation.

Margot Nash: [00:34:42] I was ripe for radicalisation. Of course, I set up--- I taught stuff that I'd learnt in all those workshops. I taught movement and I taught improvisational stuff. I did all sorts of things to make money as well as working at Theatre 62. And I also worked as a waitress in Adelaide too, because I had to pay the rent.

Don Longo: [00:35:13] Was Rob Tillett, I assume this is Rob Tillett here? (showing Margot a photograph)

Margot Nash: [00:35:19] Yeah, that's me and Rob. That's Rob and that's me with my fist up. He's got the V up for peace and I've got the fist up for revolution.

Don Longo: [00:35:33] Was Rob in theatre as well?

Margot Nash: [00:35:35] Well he was a musician. His band was the *Red Angel Panic*, the band that did the music for the show for *Rights Underground*. And he did a show called *Viet Rock*, too. There were other shows we did at Theatre 62 too. My memory's not great, but I know we did, I'm just trying to think of the name of the playwright was, oh it'll come to me.

Anyway, I started to rent shop fronts and the band would practise in the shop front. We rented a place in Goodwood, 110 Goodwood Road and the band practised there. Next door, there must have been a shop next door, Peter Bruce, and Eva Bruce were living. Now they were anarchists, I understood Peter Bruce to be an anarchist.

Don Longo: [00:36:29] So that was the Anarchist Bookshop.

Margot Nash: [00:36:33] Was it the Anarchist Bookshop next door to us in Goodwood? I'd forgotten that.

Don Longo: [00:36:36] Yes. Peter has told us it was on Goodwood Road, and he ran the Anarchist Bookshop. Peter Hicks was there as well.

Margot Nash: [00:36:44] Yes, yes. And so a lot of the poets were hanging around because Rob was running poetry readings. So Charles Buckmaster, Frank Starrs, --- and I think that's when I started to hear more politics because of Peter Bruce and Eva and all the discussions. I started to get more involved with political discussions and with Brian Medlin too.

Don Longo: [00:37:19] So prior to that Margot, your politics was broadly, apart from being wild, your politics was broadly anti-establishment but not particularly anything--

Lyn Longo: [00:37:32] Not focused.

Don Longo: [00:37:32] Focused on social change, or anything like that?

Margot Nash: [00:37:36] Well, I think I believed in social change. I was certainly definitely anti-apartheid and I was anti the war. But I didn't---

Lyn Longo: [00:37:46] Translate it into action?

Don Longo: [00:37:48] There were no framework around it.

Margot Nash: [00:37:51] No framework. And so it was probably in Goodwood Road that that framework started to take shape. And Rob wrote poetry, I wrote poetry. We painted the shopfront black, and I think that was the beginning of Holocaust. I came up with that title.

Don Longo: [00:38:19] Oh, right.

Margot Nash: [00:38:21] I remember going through the dictionary to find it, we were going to have poetry readings, we're going to have music, we're going to have theatre workshops, and I'd do all of that. And of course, the street theatre was starting. I can't remember the actual beginning of the street theatre. I'm sorry but I can't. But it was in Goodwood Road and I remember we painted the whole thing black to have events happening there. God, I've lost my train of thought.

Don Longo: [00:38:52] Well, let's talk about the Holocaust Underground Arts Centre.

Margot Nash: [00:38:56] Oh, yes.

Don Longo: [00:38:57] Yes. The title struck me as interesting. Why Holocaust and why Underground?

Margot Nash: [00:39:05] Well, I think we'd done *Rights Underground*, and I knew about the underground that was happening in New York and the underground theatre work, that was happening in New York. This was the hippy time too, remember. And the underground was about, resistance to capitalism.

But we thought we would set up this cultural centre and we'd have poetry readings and do all this. We had to have a name. And I remember going through the dictionary and I came across the word Holocaust and it said, 'a purifying fire.' And this is before Holocaust became associated with what happened in Nazi Germany. That didn't happen until 1978. There was a film Meryl Streep was in where they coined the term. I looked it up once to find where the hell it had come from. It was from a Hollywood film that the word holocaust got associated with the death camps. But it said a purifying fire and I thought it's like the Phoenix, rising from the ashes. So that's why we called it--- and no one stopped me because of course it didn't have-- - it wasn't tainted then.

Don Longo: [00:40:16] There were no connotations with it. Yes, of course.

Margot Nash: [00:40:19] It was untainted at that point. I mean, if it had been tainted by that, Medlin would have jumped on us like a flash. And of course, because it wasn't and so we called it *Holocaust*, and we had all sorts of things that we put out. We printed things and we had all this stuff going on and the band practised there, and it was very lively. So that was *Holocaust*, and that was the beginning of the street theatre, too, because that's when the Moratoriums were happening.

Lyn Longo: [00:40:49] Was the Street Theatre set up for the Moratorium, or was it part of Holocaust?

Margot Nash: [00:40:57] For the Moratoriums. I can't remember the actual events because we did *Happenings* too. We did these events out in the street and I can't remember if they were before the Moratoriums or after or were in the middle of it. I think in the middle of it probably better.

The Living Theatre used to do this thing called *The Plague*, where they would go into a shopping centre and they'd all split up and then they're all start to die, terrible deaths. (laughter) Ohhhhhh ahhhh, and everybody's writhing and dying. So we did *The Plague* a couple of times and it was disturbing.

Lyn Longo: [00:41:39] What was the reaction of the shoppers?

Don Longo: [00:41:45] Well and what was the purpose of dying horrible deaths in a shopping centre performance?

Margot Nash: [00:41:50] It was a performance, and I suppose we were thinking about Vietnam and all the deaths that were happening there and all the Agent Orange. I think that was what we were trying to work in.

Lyn Longo: [00:42:03] But you weren't making links for the public to understand, that was just within your own---

Margot Nash: [00:42:10] No, we just did *The Plague* to stir it all up. But the *Happening* that you've probably read about. It's in the drop box folder was the wonderful thing we did to John Gorton.

Don Longo: [00:42:23] Yes, when you dressed in Superman outfits, is that the---

Margot Nash: [00:42:29] Yes. That was brave, because we went to this town hall and Gorton was speaking and we split up and we had the Superman outfits on, but

we had T-shirts over it. We had little capes and things underneath. And we weren't all in one bunch. We were spread out throughout the whole audience. And every time he said anything, we would go 'Hurrah.' They thought we were being very enthusiastic young Liberals and then we go, 'Bomb Peking, Bomb Peking.' (laughter) At a certain point, we jumped on a chair, pulled our t-shirts off, and we had things like Super Commie Hunter, Super Student Snooper, Super Wog Whopper. And just whatever he said, we exaggerated, and went hurrah, hurrah, hurrah. It was so funny. And we were all dragged out.

**Don Longo: [00:43:40] You weren't arrested? **

Margot Nash: [00:43:41] We weren't arrested, no well I wasn't. No, we weren't arrested then.

Lyn Longo: [00:43:45] The influence of the anarchists is very strong.

Margot Nash: [00:43:50] Very strong. And I think also the living theatre who were anarchists really. And so that kind of, what was happening in San Francisco, the hippie stuff and the kind of non-violent protest that were theatrical, performative protests.

Don Longo: [00:44:12] Well, you said you were wild but Peter was as well, by his own admission I might add, at that time. He was wild.

Margot Nash: [00:44:23] He was pretty wild, too. And we were all sleeping around. It was all that free love. This was the era of free love. And we were all exploring our sexuality, which meant I think a lot of women, like me, spent a lot of time crying. I don't think it was so great for women. All that free love. It was great for the men, but it wasn't so great for women.

Don Longo: [00:44:44] That's often been said actually, that the pill actually helped men, not women and profited men.

Margot Nash: [00:44:50] That's right. And then I can't remember why I moved, but I moved from Goodwood Road to Fullarton Road and I rented a little old shop on Fullarton Road. It had a shopfront and I shared that with Pauline Mutton and John Tapp and *Holocaust* moved from there to 69 Fullarton Road. I am pretty sure Fullarton Road came after Goodwood Road. Yeah.

Don Longo: [00:45:24] This is Fullarton Road at Kent Town?

Margot Nash: [00:45:27] Yes. Yes. So it's this lovely little old shop with a big garden and a little run down shop.

Don Longo: [00:45:36] There was a Maoist study centre there, in Kent Town, the corner of Fullarton Road and one of the small streets. Wasn't sure if it's the same one, but it couldn't have been the same one. Anarchists and Maoists didn't get on very well. (laughter)

Margot Nash: [00:45:56] Medlin was a bit of a Maoist. He was a Marxist-Leninist and a bit of a Maoist. I became involved with Medlin and he was very involved with the street theatre. We did the street theatre and you can see photos of him and me in the street theatre.

Don Longo: [00:46:21] Yes, we've seen those.

Margot Nash: [00:46:23] He was on the box, with the big loud hailer. And I'm down there with a mask. I got arrested in one of the Street Theatres. Peter Hicks right, I'm sure Peter Hicks would have written the Street Theatre and I would have directed them. I think the ideas were against the individualism, so we were group developed always. We were always about, that everybody had a say and that's why I don't think of myself as directing the Street Theatre but I suspect I did.

Lyn Longo: [00:47:14] It was a collaborative thing.

Margot Nash: [00:47:17] It was collaborative, it was all very collaborative and everybody had a say.

Don Longo: [00:47:22] But, this was quite revolutionary in a way, artistically speaking Margot, because Street Theatre wasn't something that was common in the fifties and sixties. And it seems to be very associated with radical movements. Is there some sense in which Street Theatre was conceptualised in the late sixties to promote change and social change or revolution or anti-war demonstrations.

Margot Nash: [00:47:57] Definitely anti-war. I mean, I didn't see anything other than anti-war Street Theatre and I think *The Plague* was all about war, too, and the stuff we did with Gorton was too. Did you read that article, or didn't I put that in the drop box? Maybe not, where I talk about *Holocaust* and all our ideas.

Don Longo: [00:48:21] No, that would be interesting. (Margot searching for documents)

Margot Nash: [00:49:08] Okay. It's *On Dit* volume 37, number 12, July the second, 1969.

Don Longo: [00:49:15] 2 July 69. Okay.

Margot Nash: [00:49:21] And there's a picture of me. '*Holocaust*, prelude to a living theatre.'

Don Longo: [00:49:35] Was that an interview or an article? An interview by whom?

Margot Nash: [00:49:40] (*reads from article*) 'I sat on the floor in Margot's room and talked. I gave up trying to take any relevant facts. A lot of what went on in *Holocaust* I knew about anyway, blah, blah, blah. It's been going for six months?'

Don Longo: [00:49:55] Who's the interview by Margot, does it say?

Margot Nash: [00:49:58] I don't know, I didn't keep the second page.

Don Longo: [00:50:02] Okay, well, we'll get it from the university archives.

Margot Nash: [00:50:19] Here we go. (*reading article again*) 'It is difficult to explain what *Holocaust* is about. It's easier to see it in action. Margot and the others spoke of breaking down the blocks that have built up in front of us, of clearing a way, of bringing from within what will make a person an actor, rather than piling skills upon them and presenting them as a skilful automaton. The group obviously feels the need for a very real and deep communication between them and their audience. They're concerned about alienating themselves.'

One of their members talked about the revolution within, as well as without.

Holocaust is something very deep, which deals with change, as John Lennon says in *Revolution*, 'Will free your mind.' Breaking down blocks is another way of saying it, making yourself open and vulnerable before a person, before an audience. It's another way of expressing the fundamental needs many people feel of ending their isolation with each other.

Don Longo: [00:51:16] Yes.

Margot Nash: [00:51:22] 'You may not dig poetry readings, taking your clothes off in the street and dancing may not be your thing.' Anyway, that's probably quite an interesting thing. There's another publication that came out of *Holocaust* that I've got somewhere as well. I'll just turn the light on. All these things Don.

Don Longo: [00:52:11] At least you've kept all these things, which is good.

Margot Nash: [00:52:13] I've kept them. This is *Holocaust*. (shows photo)

Lyn Longo: [00:52:16] Yeah, yeah.

Margot Nash: [00:52:17] Friends of mine but anyway.

Lyn Longo: [00:52:20] Reminiscent of your first film?

Margot Nash: [00:52:24] Yes. Oh yeah that's right I got Jonas Mekas film *The Brig* and showed it, at *Holocaust*. We got it from the Ubu Film Group in Sydney. There was a sort of exchange of radical films.

Here, we go, it's the influence of the Living Theatre. 'In 1964, a group of U.S. actors calling themselves The Living Theatre became a nomadic tribe in Europe because the FBI were making things hot for their revolutionary in style and context productions. They live communally and an Artaudian influence became apparent in their productions. Julian Beck and Judith Melina, blah, blah, blah. The revolution cannot be achieved by violence, only by like-minded people gathering into communities and showing that their way of life and their life values are better than those of the old civilisation. *Holocaust* has obtained from Ubu, a film *The Brig* by Jonas Mekas.' I'm not going to read all of this but it was about breaking down alienation.

Don Longo: [00:53:57] That's fine Margot, we'll pick up those articles from *On Dit* anyway.

Lyn Longo: [00:54:08] Okay, we'll move on. You were recommended to us in particular for your association with Street Theatre during the Vietnam Moratoriums. And so we'd like you to talk just about that aspect of Vietnam, things like you've already said, it was collaborative and mentioned a lot of the movers and shakers. Just also some of the practical questions. Who made the costumes, who did the scripts, that sort of thing?

Margot Nash: [00:54:41] I think Hicks did the scripts, yes. That's me with the coat.
(looking at a photo)

Don Longo: [00:54:49] Yes, yeah.

Margot Nash: [00:54:51] Okay. So I could talk to you about my costume, which I think I---

Don Longo: [00:54:56] I love that one.

Margot Nash: [00:55:01] Frank Starrs is reading anti-Vietnam War poetry, and I'm doing interpretive dancing in the street.

Lyn Longo: [00:55:07] I like the intensity of the expression on your face.
(laughter)

Don Longo: [00:55:11] This was at the Department of Labour and National Service, wasn't it where blood was thrown and that sort of stuff?

Margot Nash: [00:55:18] Yes, that would be right. I'll tell you my costume in the Street Theatre because I was --- did you ever see Peter Brooks film Marat Sade?

Don Longo: [00:55:29] Yes, we did, yes.

Margot Nash: [00:55:32] So there was a Herald. The Herald who spoke what was happening. So I created the character of the Herald for the Street Theatre. So that's what that long coat is. I was following on from Marat Sade. And we had the masks and the face paint. And I had that big hat. So I was the one who spoke the exposition.

Lyn Longo: [00:56:06] And so were there a lot of practices before you got out on the street?

Margot Nash: [00:56:11] We had rehearsals and things. And I do remember what I was arrested for, because I was arrested in the middle of the Street Theatre. And I remember my line because I was arrested for it.

Don Longo: [00:56:29] You were arrested there?

Margot Nash: [00:56:31] That's right, that's me being arrested. And my line was, 'Rather be a soldier than a cowardly sucker. Got to save mother from the motherfucker.'

Lyn Longo: [00:56:42] Oh!!! (laughter)

Margot Nash: [00:56:45] And they arrested me for indecent language, because I said, 'motherfucker.' So, the judge said, I'd said a disgusting word, and I got fined \$10 or something.

Don Longo: [00:56:57] Yes, it was \$10. Plus \$3 court costs.

Margot Nash: [00:57:02] Yes. And I got a conviction on my record of course, which is a drag.

Don Longo: [00:57:10] Which is still there, I suppose?

Margot Nash: [00:57:11] Oh, yeah. I tried to pretend it wasn't when I got an Australian passport, but they went, 'Excuse me are you sure you can remember anything on---'

Don Longo: [00:57:21] **Did you have to go to court? Did you go to court, went before a magistrate? And what did they say?**

Lyn Longo: [00:57:26] **And your parents, did they know anything of this?**

Margot Nash: [00:57:30] No!

Lyn Longo: [00:57:30] **Ever?**

Margot Nash: [00:57:33] I don't think so. I've got the cuttings, 'Actress fined \$10.'

Don Longo: [00:57:41] **Yes, I've seen those.**

Margot Nash: [00:57:43] But it was nothing compared to what was happening to other people getting arrested. I was never beaten up. Well I certainly don't remember if I was. I don't think so.

So the Street Theatre, they were as I say, they were collaborative. But Peter Hicks would have written scripts. I suspect what we did is that we brainstormed our ideas and Peter would go away and write things and bring it back. And then we'd rehearse them. Medlin wanted us to do stuff as part of the whole Moratorium march. And so there was that one that was at the corner. Where was it?

Don Longo: [00:58:27] **King William Street and North Terrace.**

Margot Nash: [00:58:30] North Terrace. That's right. And so, it was all planned.

Don Longo: [00:58:37] **That was that one? That was at the corner. (looking at a photo)**

Margot Nash: [00:58:40] Yes. Maybe. I don't know.

Don Longo: [00:58:44] **These are Leo's photos.**

Margot Nash: [00:58:46] Leo's photos are very distanced. The ones that I'm thinking of---But, we did things like this, you know, the Vietnamese---

Don Longo: [00:59:14] **We've got that, too.**

Margot Nash: [00:59:16] Yeah, I sent them to you.

Lyn Longo: [00:59:19] **Yes.**

Margot Nash: [00:59:19] So my friend Carol Faulkner, her boyfriend Philip was a very good photographer and he took a lot of these photos, which is why they're good quality ten by eight black and white photographs. You know, they weren't taken on a little dodgy camera.

Lyn Longo: [00:59:38] **And did you get a sense of audience reaction?**

Margot Nash: [00:59:43] I actually can't remember terribly well, you know, I can and I can't, because a lot of people got involved with the Street Theatre. It wasn't just our little tiny group any more. There were other people. That photograph of the peasants, I can see that Carol Faulkner was one of those peasants. Yeah, she's got a little topknot, and I suspect that I was the second one. I don't know because I can't tell, we had our masks on, but I know it was Carol because of her little topknot. She and I later went overseas together.

So people gathered and painted signs and made masks and it became a big thing. My memories are terrible of the details of it. I don't know why my memories are so bad of the details of it but they are pretty bad. I mean, I can remember performing and I remember being arrested and I remember some of the rehearsals and the sitting around on the floor in Fullarton Road talking.

Lyn Longo: [01:00:57] **It is 50 plus years ago, you are allowed to forget things. We interviewed Ibina Cundell.**

Margot Nash: [01:01:06] Oh, Bobby.

Lyn Longo: [01:01:07] **Yeah, yeah.**

Margot Nash: [01:01:09] Could she remember?

Lyn Longo: [01:01:12] **Yes, she was pretty good.**

Margot Nash: [01:01:16] Oh, good on her. She wasn't in *all* the Street Theatre, she was in some of them. I've got some photos I think that are in my Dropbox folder, which she's in.

Lyn Longo: [01:01:29] **Yes.**

Don Longo: [01:01:29] **Oh. We're seeing her again next Monday, I think.**

Lyn Longo: [01:01:34] **I'll take them with me. She can identify herself.**

Margot Nash: [01:01:39] Yeah. Yeah.

Lyn Longo: [01:01:40] So were you involved with the CPV, VMC, groups at all?

Don Longo: [01:01:48] These are the organisations run by Medlin and Arnold. No?

Margot Nash: [01:01:53] No.

Don Longo: [01:01:55] No. The anarchist groups tended to stay away from organisational things and particularly the VMC which was the Moratorium Committee, it was run by Greg Stevens, and Lynn Arnold. The Anarchists were always on the margins of that, I think.

Margot Nash: [01:02:19] That's right. The other thing that I'm remembering now that I think is interesting, I'm sure people have told you about this, too, was all the parties that Brian Medlin and Pru Medlin used to have, all the gatherings. And speaking of, wild, they were pretty wild, some of those parties. They had a big house and swimming pool and we used to skinny dip in the swimming pool. There were people like John Bray, the judge would be there. It'd be packed with people and incredible political discussions.

And Brian was one of the --- he was a big influence on me, actually, because he was like Robyn Joyce for me in a way, in that he treated me like an intelligent person. And he challenged me. And when the women came and interviewed me about the Vietnam Moratorium film, I told them this story about how at one of those parties, he challenged me about pacifism and direct action. 'Would you pick up a gun to defend your rights, your principles or are you a pacifist?' And I'd never really--- nobody had ever put me on that spot before. I had to really think about it. And he was very intelligent, Brian. He was very charismatic. I remember that discussion vividly because I was put on the spot. I'd never had to think about whether I could pull a trigger and kill another person. I didn't think I could.

And so those were the kind of things that we were talking about at those parties. They were all about the war, they were all about activism, they were all about progressive ideas, and whether he was a Marxist-Leninist or whether he was going through a Maoist phase. I was reading Bakunin and Kropotkin, I don't know, but there was a lot of discussion. And he did treat me like an intelligent person.

Lyn Longo: [01:04:39] We had a quote from you that we were going to ask about, but you've answered it. You said, 'It was a time that really changed your life. It was tumultuous and exciting.'

Margot Nash: [01:04:52] Yeah it was tumultuous and exciting, and it did change my life.

Don Longo: [01:04:55] In what way, Margot?

Margot Nash: [01:04:58] Well, I decided I was an Anarchist for a start, and I was a political creature, and I wanted to be part of making a better world. I wanted to pursue those ideas.

When I left Adelaide in 71, I went overseas, Carol Faulkner and I travelled overseas together, and I took those sorts of ideas with me. But also, it was the beginning of feminism at that point too. After Fullarton Road there was another house, I can't remember where it was, but there was another place. I always had these places where big performances could happen or theatrical things, and somebody told me where it was recently maybe it was Corrie, I can't remember, but it had a great big sort of barn area and we had big parties there.

I was having an affair with Warren Osmond at that point. He was sharing a house with Ann Summers, they just lived down the road. And Warren, who has also passed away, was part of the 'New Left'. He had gone to America, probably to a conference as he was an academic. And he came back and he said, 'Oh, Margot, you might be interested in this.' And he had this leaflet which I wish I still had, but I don't. He handed it to me, and it was the WITCHes, the Women's International Terrorists, Conspiracy from Hell. And I went, 'Wooh.' And, they were demonstrating outside bridal shops and at beauty pageants. And so I was very taken with the WITCHes and that was my sort of feminist beginnings and of course, I'm sure Ann was writing about women at the time. When I left and went overseas with Carole, the book I took to read was Germaine Greer's The Female Eunuch.

Don Longo: [01:07:19] Yes. Yes.

Margot Nash: [01:07:21] So that was that.

Lyn Longo: [01:07:23] And revisiting feminism as a more mature person, you got more out of it, do you think you understood it better?

Margot Nash: [01:07:37] Yes, I'm sure I understood Germaine, yeah totally. Oh, yeah. I felt what had happened to me in Melbourne with the men, who were very controlling of what was going on, and did not allow me a voice, I had no way of

articulating that that was really sexist behaviour. I think Feminism when I started to *read* Feminism and *think* about Feminism, I still saw myself as an Anarchist first, for quite a while, but I was definitely reading Feminism and it started to answer the questions.

Lyn Longo: [01:08:28] And gave you a vocabulary as well.

Margot Nash: [01:08:32] Well, feminism gave us an analysis of power and how power worked. And, the power of gender too. It wasn't just the power of capitalism and US imperialism and colonisation, but it was patriarchal power. And that was the period when all those sorts of ideas were fermenting. And I'll tell you about when I went overseas, but God, on it goes...

But when I came back to Australia some years later, I went back to Melbourne. That's when the whole feminist ASIF started, came together. But when I went overseas, I don't know if you want me to talk about----

Lyn Longo: [01:09:19] Just in general what countries you went to and what experiences you had.

Margot Nash: [01:09:25] We did the hippie trail. We flew to Bali and then we went overland and we got a boat to Singapore. We travelled up through Malaysia to Thailand. We went to Burma. We could get into Burma. I still remember going to Burma and then we went to India.

I wanted to study Kathakali Dancing because---I wanted to go to Poland and study with Grotowski. And I never made it, thank goodness. Grotowski had used some of the exercise techniques from Kathakali, and I thought, 'Oh I'll go and study some Kathakali ' But when we arrived in Calcutta, that was another very devastating time because all the refugees had come in from Bangladesh and there were thousands of people living on the street and there was this incredible poverty and these displaced people. And there was this incredible wealth too. I remember seeing this huge fat Indian woman being dragged on a little rickshaw with a little skinny man running and pulling her around. She was covered in gold jewellery. And that was on one side and on the other side was all the refugees and the poverty on the streets. I wrote poems about, very political poems about all that sort of stuff.

Lyn Longo: [01:11:02] That would have been extremely confronting. So I guess it would be your first experience of real poverty.

Margot Nash: [01:11:10] Absolutely. And I did go and study Kathakali in Kerala, in the South, but both Carol and I got very sick in India and she ended up in hospital. And that's another story, I won't go into that. We were in India for about five months quite a long time.

We went to Srinagar, in Kashmir, at one point, and then we went south to Kerala and that's when we realised Carol was very sick. I got sick in Kashmir too, because we hadn't boiled the water for long enough in Kashmir. I did study for about three months in Kerala. I studied at the Kalamandalam, the Kathakali School. I studied Kathakali Indian dance drama. And then we headed for London. Carol's boyfriend Phillip, the photographer, was in London. And when we got to Istanbul, she was still not terribly well. And she decided she just had it, so she flew to London and I went on alone. It was tough it was very tough time.

We had gone through Afghanistan, when we left India, then we went through Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey, by land.

Don Longo: [01:12:33] By land.

Margot Nash: [01:12:34] Two white girls. That was pretty---

Don Longo: [01:12:39] Would have been confronting and scary, I would have thought.

Margot Nash: [01:12:43] *It was* confronting and scary. This was 71.

Don Longo: [01:12:46] 71, yes.

Margot Nash: [01:12:49] And so Carol went to London and I went to Paris to Peter Bruce and Eva. They had a little baby at that point. And I remember babysitting her, while giving them a night out because he was studying. He was teaching and studying I think, at the university there.

And so I had a bit of time in Paris and then I went to London and Carol, she was going one way and I was going the other, I think politically at that point. She went into therapeutic guru sort of stuff, and I went to the Anarchist Bookshop where they produced *Anarchy Magazine*. I moved in there and worked in the bookshop and I

started having an affair with this fellow Graham. I can't remember his other name now. (laughter) His wife had run off with one or the other Anarchists. He was a bit upset, and so we had an affair and we decided we would go to America--- we sprayed out bedroom with 'Imagination Seizes Power' and we got on a plane and went to America to go and join the Wobblies, the IWW. The Industrial Workers of the World.

Don Longo: *[01:14:23]* Yes, yes.

Margot Nash: *[01:14:24]* And we did. We went to New York and then we went from New York overland to Chicago and went to the IWW, which was still going. At that point, everybody in the IWW the Wobblies were over 60 or under 30 years. But that was pretty exciting.

Don Longo: *[01:14:49]* Why the Wobblies, Margot?

Margot Nash: *[01:14:51]* Oh, you don't know about the Wobblies?

Don Longo: *[01:14:54]* They're a great organisation, but I'm just wondering why an Anarchist went to the Wobblies?

Margot Nash: *[01:14:59]* Because they were Anarcho Syndacalists and they were the one big union and I've still got my little red book. I've put it out for you.

Don Longo: *[01:15:10]* Oh you have. But as a filmmaker, you probably know this already. That the documentary on the Wobblies from 1979 has just been re-released. Did you know?

Margot Nash: *[01:15:24]* Oh, no I don't. What's it called?

Don Longo: *[01:15:25]* Yes. It's been remastered I think and rereleased. I think it's available on Netflix. I can't remember now.

Margot Nash: *[01:15:34]* Do you remember what it's called, I'd love to see it?

Don Longo: *[01:15:36]* Yes, it's good and some of it's available on YouTube too.

Margot Nash: *[01:15:42]* So yeah, so that was 72 and my little red book tells me when I was--- I've got my little stamps. And I was a paid up a member of the union. 3/4/72 to, I can't read the last one must be December or something.

Lyn Longo: *[01:16:06]* So you were living up to your parent's expectations of you as the wild child?

Margot Nash: [01:16:12] I was a wild one. So I went to work for the IWW and I worked on the *Industrial Worker*, which was the newspaper of the IWW. And so I do have an activist past. I kept thinking I'm not really an activist. So the *Industrial Worker*.

Graham got very sick. I think he got scarlet fever. He got terribly sick, and I had to go out and work. I got a job in a bar on the north side of Chicago. And I was lying awake last night thinking about all of this, and how I was so desperate to get a job because my money was running out and he couldn't put in money because he was so sick and I saw this job advertised. I went to the bar and it was a black bar, but I didn't actually notice that there were only black people there. And they said they were so surprised at this white girl from Australia wanting to work there, they gave me a job. They said, 'Can you mix drinks?' And I said, 'Yes, I know how to do a gin and tonic.' My mother did a gin and tonic. So I had to learn how to mix cocktails, I had *no* idea. Tex and Harvey ran it, it was called 'A Touch of Spice' on the north side of Chicago. So that was great. And I had my first snort of Cocaine from Tex I think, in the back room.

Anyway, that was fun. The Anarchist community in Chicago around the IWW hall, was very lively, actually. I still remember packing parcels for the Anarchist Black Cross, because there were all these Anarchist prisoners of war still in jail in Spain, and we packed these parcels with dried apricots and things and sent them off to Spain.

Don Longo: [01:18:19] **Who knows what happened to them?**

Margot Nash: [01:18:20] Yeah, that's right. The Anarchist Black Cross, I was involved with them and when I came back to Australia, I had a bit of to do with the Anarchist Black Cross too, as opposed to the Red Cross.

I became quite good friends with this couple in Chicago. They were an older couple, Bob Wilson and Arlen Wilson and I loved Arlen. They were Anarchists and he was a writer, so they were quite an influence. And I kept in touch with them for a while and then I lost touch with them when their daughter--- their youngest daughter Patty, was shot. She was working in a supermarket, and one night she went to her job after

school, and someone held it up and she was killed. It was terrible. That was a terrible thing for Arlen, and she stopped answering my letters.

I remember her telling me that, because they knew Timothy Leary. He took them to his meditation place to try get over it and wanted them to take drugs. And she was going, 'Fuck you with your meditation. I've lost my daughter.' I lost touch with them around that time, which must have been a terrible, terrible time for them. But she was like another Robyn Joyce, Arlen Wilson was another person in my past. And I did go and look her up a few years ago and tried to find her, but I think she had passed away, I know Bob did too.

So then Graham went off to organise in California somewhere and he didn't come back. And I decided that maybe I should see a bit more of America and maybe go home. So I got a ride across from Chicago to Seattle and I went on this sort of Anarchist grapevine network. There was this older woman in Seattle, and of course, there was this Anarchist network. So it would have been Bob and Arlen, or someone had sent me to her in Seattle and I stayed with her. Then she sent me to this guy in Berkeley, an old academic, who was an anarchist. And I hitchhiked down from Seattle to Berkeley. That was probably the most terrifying time of my entire life. I never wanted to hitchhike again ever. By myself, it was *terrifying*.

And so I went to stay with him in Berkeley. And I remember he was this old Anarchist, books everywhere and blah, blah, blah, blah. A lot of talking. And I just decided I'd had enough and my sister was pregnant and she wanted me to come home, when the baby was born, I had no money and she sent me some money. So I went back to Australia at that point. I was away for about 18 months.

Don Longo: [01:21:30] That's a long time. So your financial situation didn't improve over the last ten years from the mid-sixties to the early seventies. You lived---. [

Lyn Longo: [01:21:43] Frugally.

Don Longo: [01:21:45] Yes, you lived frugally.

Margot Nash: [01:21:48] The reason I could go overseas was because I'd been hit by a car when I did one of those architecture reviews, I got hit by a car, my collarbone was broken and I got damages. It was the director of the show who was racing down this back alleyway, and I must've stepped into his little sports car by

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mistake and Bang. So I've got still got a lump on my collar bone that was broken, but I got money and I saved that money. I bought a car, a little Volkswagen car, because in the middle of all of that up here, I went to Sydney to live with Warren Osmond and then went back again to Adelaide, but that's another story.

So I had some money and that's how I could go overseas because I certainly never saved any money working at Theatre 62 or waitressing but I had that money. But I'd run out by the time I got to Berkeley. So my sister gave me the fare home.

So I went back to Melbourne and looked up the Anarchists in Melbourne and I went to the Free Store, the Anarchist Free Store, in Smith Street in Collingwood, and that's where they were printing magazines out of there and I lived at the Free Store for a while. The Free Store was like an opportunity shop, but it was free. 'You can't steal from the Free Store,' so people would bring their second-hand clothes and all the old derros would come and get a change of clothes, then go out again.

And so again, it was a collaborative, everything was free. And that's when the original---this was in Smith Street in Collingwood when it was a really working-class area. It's very trendy now but it wasn't then. There's a famous photo of us all outside the free store, that was in *Digger Magazine* and I've got a copy of it somewhere. And the people who were living at the free store were Paul Dixon and Anne Hetherington, and they were a couple and they were Anarchists. And then there was Philip Brooks, and there was a whole lot of other people who were [there] and sadly, a lot of the people in that group are now dead, incredibly. But a lot of them got into heroin. I never did heroin.

And there was a sort of flirtation with the criminal underclass, the lumpen proletariat criminals. Politically, we supported anybody who'd been locked up by the state. And a lot of criminals came through the Free Store, which was also frightening.

Don Longo: [01:24:48] A lot of people are dead, which is why we're doing this project, of course, to try and capture the memories of those who are still alive, like you and like ourselves.

Margot, you stayed within an Anarchist framework. You said earlier that you read Bakunin and Kropotkin as most Anarchists do, and that Medlin tried to entice you, I think, into a more Marxist or Marxist-Leninist sort of approach. Were you ever tempted by it? Or did he not?

Margot Nash: [01:25:23] But of course I was interested in Marx and because I was pretty ignorant. I hadn't gone to university and I hadn't studied any of these things, so I was interested. But I would have still felt myself to be more towards the Anarchist end of the spectrum than the Marxist-Leninist. But when I became a feminist, of course, there were a lot of the radical feminists who were Marxists.

Don Longo: [01:25:54] **This is why I'm asking the question now before we get on to ASIF productions.**

Margot Nash: [01:26:02] And I don't know that Medlin was trying to convert me into being a Maoist or anything like that. I think, he was a womaniser and he was also--- yeah. I had an affair with him. I had a two-year affair with him when he was married, which is to my shame. And when I think about it now he was one of those people who I loved, I thought he was marvellous, but I thought he was an arsehole too.

Don Longo: [01:26:37] **Yes, yes, of course.**

Margot Nash: [01:26:40] But he was very influential.

Don Longo: [01:26:44] **Yes. My point in asking the question, Margot was that Marx and Bakunin, there was a long history there. Both analysed the notion of power, but one saw power in terms of the state. The other one saw power in terms of class relations. And I just wonder whether you stayed within the framework of the Bakuninist framework of seeing power in terms of the state and not in terms of class. And if so, did you change somewhat towards a Marxist outlook when you started setting up ASIF productions?**

Margot Nash: [01:27:26] Well, ASIF was the Anarcho Surrealist Insurrectionary Feminists. So we were still Anarchist. But the power of the state, in terms of having a class analysis I think--- don't know how to say it really, except that all of those ideas influenced me.

Don Longo: [01:27:52] **Yeah.**

Margot Nash: [01:27:52] Certainly having an understanding of racism, class and even to this day, I'm still chewing over these things and trying to understand.

I'm reading about colonisation and racism, at the moment. How colonisation, that sense of incredible superiority that we can just come and take the land and take the gold and treat the people as less than human, racism comes out of that and fascism. So I'm still very much involved with chewing through those sorts of ideas and I'm

making a little film at the moment, which is about the covert rise of fascism, amongst other things.

I wasn't one or the other particularly. I think Warren Osmond, who was much more of a socialist, he wasn't an Anarchist, he influenced me. But then I liked the WITCH's and I liked the wildness of the Anarchists and the performative nature of it.

Don Longo: [01:29:04] Well, let's talk about--- I'm conscious of the time. Can we talk a bit about---

Margot Nash: [01:29:09] I was worried about---look we can go for longer.

Don Longo: [01:29:11] It's 10:30 your time I think, so we've got another hour or so. ASIF productions Anarcho Surrealist Insurrectionary Feminists. I love the title. Could you tell us a little bit about how that was set up, back in June 1973 I think it was. And we'll talk about your manifesto as well. And what were the aims of the movement? And did you achieve them? (laughter)

Margot Nash: [01:29:41] Oh, yes, we overthrew the sexist, racist, classist society, we did it, it's marvellous. No, of course not.

Well, when I was at the Free Store, I did a show at La Mama with a group of women, and Robin Laurie was involved with it. We had met before, but there had been that big gap when I'd been overseas and I'd lived in Adelaide. And we kind of connected strongly and it became a great friendship and a political friendship.

I moved out of the Free Store because I thought those men were really controlling too, and also it was terrifying. I went away once and came home and somebody had been shooting a gun through the ceiling under my bedroom. There were bullets under my mattress. I thought I'm out of here. It was pretty scary stuff.

Robin and I rented a little house in Cromwell Street in Collingwood and she was involved in film. I was much more theatre, she was more with film, she'd been involved with Melbourne University Film Society. We started looking at films. She'd bring a projector home and she introduced me to a whole lot of radical films. And we cooked up ASIF together, really, in that little house. So those men from the Free Store and from the anarchist group were pretty threatened. And the more feminist we were, the angrier we got. And we decided it was wild little thing to do. It was really only just the two of us, although there were other people that were

involved with ASIF. But it was mainly me and Robin. Tim Pigott was involved, Eddie Van Rosendale was involved and Isabelle Rosenberg, but it was mainly me and Robin. I came up with, ASIF, I remember, it's like it was a bit like inspired by the WITCH'es, I suppose.

Lyn Longo: [01:32:14] So you started with ASIF first and fitted in words?

Margot Nash: [01:32:20] No it evolved. A for Anarchy, and we were really interested in the surrealists, too, because it was another way of thinking. We had read the Situationists, too, we'd read *Society, the Spectacle*. We were fired up. Andre Bretton had written a manifesto, Valerie Solanas had written a manifesto. There was a whole range of manifestos, and we thought, well, *we'll* write a manifesto. And so we wrote a manifesto.

Don Longo: [01:32:54] Marx, did it first one, why not continue?

Don Longo: [01:33:00] *The Communist Manifesto*, of course.

Lyn Longo: [01:33:03] You left nothing to chance in it. (laughter)

Margot Nash: [01:33:08] So we had a lot of fun, and it was written collaboratively. And I have to say, I see my hands on it, particularly with those terrible poems, which were my poems and they're dreadful. I'm so embarrassed by them now.

Don Longo: [01:33:21] Were they yours were they? I wondered who they were because there weren't signed.

Margot Nash: [01:33:32] Thank God, I didn't sign them.

Don Longo: [01:33:35] Well, you're on record now, they were yours.

Margot Nash: [01:33:41] So the manifesto was written--- I know that Robin and I would have--- I would have written stuff. She would have written stuff. I probably had my hand on the pen most of the time, or the typewriter.

We had a gestetner in the lounge room and there were lots of meetings in that lounge room about this, and men came to them too. If you've seen the ASIF poster, it says 'Dangerous, Dick McPhallus power crazed ruler of the ununited universe' but below there are some other blokes saying 'If you need a hand ladies, we're here.' (said in deep male tones) So there were a few men who were helping us, too. And it wasn't just women, but it was mainly me and Robin. It was a spectacle thing, too. We did

the poster, which we pasted up everywhere. I ended up without a copy of the original. Luckily Robin had one and we copied that and digitally restored it recently.

We wanted people to think there were hundreds of us, thousands of Anarcho Surrealist Insurrectionary Feminists. We were going to tear down the patriarchal, sexist, racist society. (laughter)

Don Longo: [01:34:59] Yeah.

Margot Nash: [01:35:00] So it was a performative thing. It was like the Gorton happening. Frighten people, give people a shock. ‘Wooh, there is something else happening here.’

Lyn Longo: [01:35:12] But were you actively reaching out to other women to join you?

Margot Nash: [01:35:21] There were some other women who were involved, but we were really a tight little group. There was Isabel Rosenberg and her partner, Eddie and Tim Pigott. So there was a small group, and I know we tried to get some of the women from the Pram Factory.

We had consciousness raising groups too. I've got some photos from a consciousness raising group in that house in Collingwood and Helen Garner was there and Carol Porter, Jane Clifton, me, Robin. Carol Porter did some of the design work for ASIF, she would have been closer.

So we wrote the manifesto and we put the first issues of ASIF out and we roneoed it in the lounge room. That caused a stir, mainly amongst the Anarchist men.

Don Longo: [01:36:37] Well, that was a question that we had Margot, about the gender relations within the groups. Your ASIF manifesto can be fairly confronting, particularly to men at the time, probably even men now. And I speak as a man I suppose. (raucous laughter).

Margot Nash: [01:37:02] Well I'm a bit scared reading it.

Don Longo: [01:37:05] Yeah, she was scared, too. Yeah, but I guess it raises a question about what were the gender relations amongst the groups prior to the manifesto if you like and how did the gender relations change or what was the reaction amongst men and women to the manifesto?

Margot Nash: [01:37:21] Well, I think some of the Anarchist men were really threatened. They were very threatened. I remember, and I think I told the women

when they came and interviewed me about the Moratorium film, I might have told them or told someone the story recently how I was called up to a meeting at the Free Store, upstairs at the Free Store, and all these men sat around and grilled me, because somebody had dug up that when I was very young and had no politics whatsoever and I was doing the architectural review, I'd been in a Young Liberals Review. I had no politics clearly, it was just a chance to perform but they accused me of being an ASIO spy, of being Young Liberal and a spy!

Lyn Longo: [01:38:24] So you were at risk of being kicked out of an Anarchist group? Kind of a contradiction, isn't it? (laughter)

Don Longo: [01:38:35] So what were their objections Margot? What did the men, or even the women, object to?

Margot Nash: [01:38:42] Look I think people were so scared of us that mostly they didn't say anything. But I remember one young man. I don't know who he was or what his name was, but he had dug out that I'd be in the *Young Liberal's Review*. And I still remember him saying, 'How do we know you're not a spy?' I just laughed at them.

Lyn Longo: [01:39:02] Best reaction.

Margot Nash: [01:39:04] I know they were very threatened, but some of the men actually had the opposite response. They thought we were exciting and wild. We were. We were pretty gorgeous, and there we were with our little fists up. And we did two issues of ASIF and then we made the film. We made *We Aim To Please*. That was the third issue of ASIF. And that was really confronting.

Lyn Longo: [01:39:34] We've tried really hard to get to watch a copy, but so far we've only managed to watch a couple of promos. But that was probably enough to get the flavour.

Margot Nash: [01:39:47] No I distribute it. We don't let it be freely distributed.

Don Longo: [01:39:51] Oh right. Okay.

Margot Nash: [01:39:53] If you ever go to Melbourne and go to ACMI it's part of the permanent exhibition there, and you can go into their little Cinematheque and request to have a look at it on the site there. Or you can ask me, but you'll be too shocked. (laughter) We were very outrageous and we were very, very outrageous.

It has been restored by the National Film and Sound Archives and I do have it on Vimeo with the password. But I don't sell copies very often. It's still confronting for me and Robin.

Don Longo: [01:40:38] So is that why you don't make it available? Is it because you don't want to be associated with it or you don't have to confront people.

Margot Nash: [01:40:46] We shot close ups of our cunts. So, you know, there's our little girly bits up there on the screen. It's kind of a bit much really. We did it, because it was all about the fear men have of women's sexuality. So we said, well, here it is, let's have a look.

Don Longo: [01:41:10] It reminds me of Courbet's painting of *The Origin of the World*. Have you seen that?

Margot Nash: [01:41:18] No, but I can imagine.

Don Longo: [01:41:23] But I guess, look at our age, there's not much we haven't seen. We'll try and get a copy of it.

Margot Nash: [01:41:30] I'll send you the link if we really want it.

Don Longo: [01:41:31] We would love to see it. Yeah.

Margot Nash: [01:41:34] I thought you might.

Lyn Longo: [01:41:35] A great excuse to go to Melbourne.

Don Longo: [01:41:37] Yes, it is a great excuse to go to Melbourne.

Margot Nash: [01:41:39] Oh well if you want to do that then I won't send you the link--- no I'll send you the link. But it is about to be in Melbourne Film Festival because they're during 70 years of Melbourne Film Festival. It's screening, on the last day as part of a series of feminist films. And it's screening at the moment, in Berlin in a big exhibition called *No Master Territories: feminist worldmaking and the moving image* at the HKW Museum in Berlin, which is the House of Culture of the World. They're showing the poster, the leaflet, the manifesto, the magazines and the film.

Don Longo: [01:42:18] Oh, that's fantastic.

Margot Nash: [01:42:19] Yeah, it's amazing.

Don Longo: [01:42:21] And I was particularly interested, being a Francophile, I was particularly interested that in 1978 you got an award at the 'L'Homme

Regarde L'Homme,' Film Festival in Paris. Well, I don't know the film festival. So what was it?

Margot Nash: [01:42:35] It was an Ethnographic film festival and I don't know who put it in there, we didn't, but we got this award, it translated as 'Man Looks at Man' and so on principle we refused it. (laughter)

Don Longo: [01:42:46] Oh, well that was one of the issues I wanted to ask was that it was a 'L'Homme Regarde L'Homme,' film festival, that is to say the men's film festival on man as such, not on women.

Margot Nash: [01:42:58] It was on 'Man' with a capital M.

Don Longo: [01:42:59] Yes man L'Homme

Margot Nash: [01:43:00] That's right 'Man Looks at Man', it was a Jury Award, but we refused it, so we never got the piece of paper. But I still put it on my CV.

Lyn Longo: [01:43:10] It's fascinating, that they should choose that film for the award.

Don Longo: [01:43:15] So the film was distributed around the place. It was made available to people.

Margot Nash: [01:43:25] The film was distributed on 16 mm through the Sydney Filmmakers Co-op for many years.

Don Longo: [01:43:30] And so somebody in 1978 must have thought, 'Oh this is a film that should go to this particular film festival.'

Margot Nash: [01:43:40] Somebody took it, I think it was---- what was her name, Marsha. It was Marsha Bennett took a group of films to Paris to France. A group of films, from the Sydney Filmmakers Co-op. And it might have been through that. I think it must have been through Marsha Bennett, that the film got there. And so it's been shown all over the world and it keeps being shown, keeps coming back because it's very naughty, confronting and it's very funny.

Don Longo: [01:44:18] Well, it would have been very naughty in 1976 and 78 but nowadays with a lot of porn and a lot of things and a lot of violence in the cinema, it would be less confronting, would it not?

Margot Nash: [01:44:34] It's still pretty confronting. It's still pretty confronting today. But also, I think a lot of feminist stuff was very serious and it was very, very wild and funny. It has an exuberance and energy to it and that's what people really loved and still love about it.

These two women curators from HKW in Berlin contacted Screen Australia and previewed a lot of feminist films but they only chose a couple, and *We Aim To Please* was one of them. They have really made it quite central too. So that's good. I won't go to Berlin for the screening, but when it was screened at the Sydney Film Festival 15 years ago and I sat there with 2000 people looking at---

Lyn Longo: [01:45:25] Your---bits.

Margot Nash: [01:45:29] I cannot believe we did what we did, but we did, because we were into shocking people and making fun of---rather than saying how terrible everything was, made fun of things. You see people like Trump, they can't bear to be made fun of.

Lyn Longo: [01:45:48] It's a very powerful weapon, humour.

Margot Nash: [01:45:50] Yes, it's a very powerful weapon. So, Robin moved out of the little house and went and lived at the Pram Factory theatre. She had a long-term relationship with Jon Hawkes, and they founded Circus Oz. I moved out of that little house too eventually and ended up at the Pram Factory also, working at the Pram Factory theatre. And that was another sort of activist area, if you like, because it was a collective of 50 actors and some of us lived there. I lived there for quite a long time. And so that was another thing.

Don Longo: [01:46:33] Margot, can I just rewind slightly? There's a question that you didn't answer before about what were the gender relations like amongst the Anarchist groups? I mean, did they want you to make tea and coffee when you had meetings? Because we've had this conversation with people in the CPA, Communist Party of Australia where women were encouraged to join, but then they ended up making the tea and coffee. What was it like?

Margot Nash: [01:47:04] I can't remember. I know that I did quite a lot of work in the Free Store and I can't really remember any of the men doing work in the Free Store, folding things and getting rid of all the crap.

Don Longo: [01:47:12] Yes.

Margot Nash: [01:47:13] Yes. The men spent a lot of time sitting around the kitchen table smoking dope and talking. And later, when they all got into heroin, they were all stoned. So I don't think they expected me to do housework, I have no memory of ever cooking a meal at the Free Store. I cooked meals at the Pram

Factory. But we were pretty out there, in terms of gender stuff at that point. I mean, they wouldn't have expected us to or dared to ask us to really.

Though as I think I told you when I moved in with Blundell and Turnbull years before that, they certainly expected me to do the housework. But I didn't. I wasn't very good at it anyway.

Don: [01:48:01] One more question about the manifesto. I was particularly interested I think I mentioned yesterday, about the references to Wilhelm Reich in the manifesto. I assume that was from *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, or did you make a persistent study of Reich? He was an interesting and rather curious character, as you know. But I guess the broader question about referring to Reich is psychoanalysis seems to run through--- certainly it runs through surrealism, as you know, but it seems to run through the manifesto as well. Was there any attempt to come to terms with psychoanalytic approaches and why Reich in particular?

Margot Nash: [01:48:48] Look, I became very interested in psychoanalysis, but a lot later, and I went into psychoanalysis, but a lot later. At that time, we'd bought the Freud stuff, so I think the manifesto was pretty anti Freud, too.

Don Longo: [01:49:06] Yes.

Margot Nash: [01:49:06] Yes, I think it is. Whereas, of course, feminists wrote about Freud later.

Don Longo: [01:49:11] Yes they did.

Margot Nash: [01:49:12] Rethought things, changed their minds about some things. Reich there was a lot of discussion about Reich because of the Orgone Box.

Don Longo: [01:49:23] Yes, that's another story. (laughter)

Margot Nash: [01:49:27] But sexuality because we are all----

Don Longo: [01:49:32] It was about sexuality obviously.

Margot Nash: [01:49:34] We were all very interested in sexuality. And there were people I can still remember at the Cromwell Street discussing Reich. Tim Pigott brought a narrative around Reich and probably Eddie too, But Eddie was still reading *Das Kapital*, I think he's still making his way through it *now*. But he was always reading Marx.

Don Longo: [01:50:02] Well that's good.

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Margot Nash: [01:50:06] So, there were a lot of discussions around Reich. That was about sex, sexuality. It was that whole era--- I think we were trying to understand why as women, why we were so unhappy, because, we had bought the free love stuff and then we had felt--- many of us felt very exploited by it.

Don Longo: [01:50:37] Well, Germaine Greer tries to come to terms with Freud as well in various ways. But, sometimes *for* mostly *against*. You might like to know Margot, that Peter Bruce became a psychoanalyst in his---

Margot Nash: [01:50:51] I do know.

Don Longo: [01:50:54] So there might be a connection between being an Anarchist on Goodwood Road and being in psychoanalysis.

Margot Nash: [01:51:00] Did you interview Peter Bruce?

Don Longo: [01:51:03] Yes, we have. We have already. And he's in Sydney now. You probably know he lives in Sydney.

Margot Nash: [01:51:09] Yeah. Our paths have not crossed.

Don Longo: [01:51:13] He was here. He was here for almost a year when his wife was a senior executive in the state government. And then she got kicked out when the Labor Party got in a few months ago, and they went back to Sydney. So we were meeting quite regularly with them.

Margot Nash: [01:51:32] Reich was certainly--- what is the orgone box and all of that? And did it work, and all of that? So they were part of the discussion, he was on the agenda, but I've forgotten. I think I might go and read *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*.

Don Longo: [01:51:54] It's a terrific book. Yes, that's right. I noticed you also had a quote from Daniel Cohn-Bendit, which I thought was interesting. It goes back to May 68, of course.

Margot Nash: [01:52:09] 'Be realistic, demand the impossible.'

Don Longo: [01:52:12] And extolling the imagination was very much May 68 as well in France. But there is one thing you say in there, which Lyn said, 'Are you going to ask her this?' And I said, 'Yes, I'll ask her this.' If I can find it now.

Margot Nash: [01:52:28] I hope I'm not too embarrassed.

Don Longo: [01:52:29] No, it was at the end, you say.

Margot Nash: [01:52:35] We said.

Don Longo: [01:52:36] You said, 'We shall build our barricades with reinforced steel and reinforced dreams.' That's surrealism and revolution there. And then, 'We shall fight with poetry and guns.' Given your concern about the bullets that went through your ceiling, perhaps there were too many guns.

Margot Nash: [01:52:59] Yes.

Don Longo: [01:53:00] I mean, was that provocative obviously?

Margot Nash: [01:53:04] It was provocative. I mean, the bullets that went through my ceiling were from criminals. They weren't revolutionaries, they were crims, drunken crims in the kitchen below. Well, I think we were just being provocative really. I think if you wrote something like that today, you'd have the SWAT team on your doorstep.

Don Longo: [01:53:24] You would, indeed.

Margot Nash: [01:53:25] Whereas, you know, back then it was just hot air, it was just a lot of carry on. We shall do this. We demand the end.

Don Longo: [01:53:37] Well, being a fan of surrealism, I'll endorse your last five words, 'all power to the imagination.'

Margot Nash: [01:53:45] All power to the imagination.

Lyn Longo: [01:53:46] That encapsulates it.

Margot Nash: [01:53:50] Recently I started reading Sylvia Lawson's book, which is called *Demanding the Impossible*. I think those slogans that were on the walls of Paris and the 'society of the spectacle', the sense of creating spectacles to shake people up and make people see things in different ways. And you can see the influence of that in the circus. The circus work that Robin did, with all the big spectacles.

Don Longo: [01:54:20] Yes.

Margot Nash: [01:54:21] We were all very influenced by May 68. But in a way I can't give anything deeper, because it's so long since I've read anything that Daniel Cohn-Bendit wrote.

Don Longo: [01:54:30] Yes, we should explain that we spent some years in Paris ourselves in the early eighties while you were doing *For Love of Money*, we were elsewhere.

Lyn Longo: [01:54:44] Him studying, me managing eventually three children in a one-bedroom apartment. I loved it.

Don Longo: [01:54:56] I did my PhD in Paris. That's why. But that's beside the point. All right. So we have some broader questions. I'm, again, conscious of time for some broader question you want to ask. But before that, we want to talk about *For Love or Money*.

Lyn Longo: [01:55:10] We managed to watch it last night. It was actually brilliant, and I thought it was as relevant today as it was then and astounding just how it was. It felt like you could have put it together this year. And where--- how did you access all that wonderful footage and photos?

Margot Nash: [01:55:36] Okay. So this is a project I came into a bit later. It had been going for a while when I became involved in it, and because I had edited *We Aim To Please* and some people thought it was edited in a very interesting way. And I was a fairly big feminist so they approached me and asked if I'd like to edit the film. I was working as assistant editor at the time, and I remember being in the editing room when they came in and asked me. I went, 'Yes.'

To me, working on that film was a fantastic experience because it really was my Australian history lesson and also my film history lesson but I didn't do the research. There were four of us. Margot Oliver, who's a historian, she wrote the book that we did with Penguin, Jeni Thornley, who's a filmmaker, and Megan McMurchy and me. So it was the three of them who approached me and Jenny and Megan had spent a long time in Canberra at the National Film and Sound Archive, combing the collection, looking for images of women's work. So, you know, they would watch feature films and then just choose one section where the maids were in the kitchen,

It was like hen's teeth trying to find images of women's work because and there's a great story (which is one of my favourite stories) about *For Love or Money*. They'd found this Fox Movietone newsreel of *Madame Lameroux*. It's a sequence from the thirties with a woman in a sequined dress. It was called '*Come up in Sequins Sometime*.' And they had gone to interview the woman who had sewn all those dresses, Madame Lamoreaux. She had thick glasses because her eyes were so gone from doing all that fine needlework and she said, 'Oh, they gave me something when they came back. I've got it here still'. And she went to bedroom and she brought out a 35 mm tin, and it had the offcuts in it. And the offcuts were the women in the workroom.

Don Longo: [01:58:18] Yes, of course.

Lyn Longo: [01:58:20] Oh, what a treasure trove for the film makers.

Margot Nash: [01:58:22] What a treasure. So that was the kind of work they did. They did that forensic kind of detective work. I remember when they brought in, it was like 'sweaty palms', it was so exciting. But I didn't do that research, they did that research. They split up the stills and the movies and Margot Oliver was writing the history for the book.

So Megan and Jenny worked with me in the editing room and Margot Oliver on the book. So we had three people in the editing room, and then Megan and Jeni worked with Margot Oliver on the book. We couldn't work with four of us in the editing room because we couldn't get a consensus. With three, we could get a consensus, but it took us a long time. The film took five years to make. With three we had two against one. But if you had four, you could get blocked too much. And so Margot went and worked on the book and then the book we used as a basis for the film's narration.

I was living in a share house in Redfern, a big old crumbling New Orleans mansion in Redfern. We had an editing room there with a sixteen mm winding bench. The film had originated at a Women in Labour conference where people had said, 'Well, we need a film that shows women's struggles, labour struggles,' and this is a story that hasn't been told. They wanted a women's history of work. This was the late seventies when I was making *We Aim to Please* in Melbourne. I came up to Sydney to live and I was of course very notorious because of *We Aim to Please* because it had been screened at the Sydney Filmmakers Club and around the place and I decided I was had it with theatre, so I was working in film. So I was very lucky, incredibly lucky for me that they asked me to come and edit the film. And then because I worked on it for years, we ended up as a collective. And so we had, as you probably saw the endless credits. A film by the four of us and then directed by, produced by. Well, we've thrown all those out. We just now have a film by the four of us and we're also all still friends. Megan looks after the film and liaises with the group and I look after the technical side of *For Love or Money*.

When the National Film and Sound Archive restored the film, I was the representative from the group who went in and looked at what they'd done and made changes. So we're all still very connected to the film and it was an incredible experience and to be living in Redfern at the time. It was also a great time because at the film makers co-op we had a black film worker and the films that I was seeing and the filmmakers I was meeting, and there were Aboriginal filmmakers that I also did work with. And so living in Redfern brought the stuff about colonisation and Indigenous history into focus.

Lyn Longo: [02:02:02] I thought that there were two elements that really set it apart from anything else that we've seen. And one was the footage that you had of Indigenous women, I'd never seen before. Fantastic. And that you did have some focus--- Don would have liked more, on migrant women and their work in the workplace.

Margot Nash: [02:02:28] Absolutely. Yes, absolutely.

Don Longo: [02:02:31] I would have lot more because my mother was one of those migrant women working in a jam factory, or working for the blue rinse ladies of Burnside. Burnside as you know, is a North Shore of Sydney toff suburb. And she was be patronised every day. But that's another story.

Margot Nash: [02:02:49] It's another story. So *For Love or Money*, was just a huge experience for me and a sort of big political history lesson, because the more I worked on the film, the more I learnt, the more I questioned things. And it influenced how I edited the film too, and particularly the Indigenous stuff.

I lived in a big share house and Carol Ruff was in that house too and she was a painter, and a muralist. She painted the big mural on the Redfern Railway Bridge. And so that was when we were in that house and people, Carolyn Strachan lived there and she and Alessandro Cavadini made the film *Two Laws* with Borroloola mob up in the Northern Territory, so we had the Aboriginal women from there come down to stay in the house and they would sit in the lounge room with their clapstick singing. They called us the porcupines because we had those little short spiky hairdos. And there were bands like the Aboriginal band *Us Mob* who used to come and stay in our lounge room when they were in town and so it was a big Redfern house and the film was made there.

Lyn Longo: [02:03:59] And was it from those links that led you to this mentoring of Indigenous filmmakers that happened a bit later?

Margot Nash: [02:04:08] That happened later. Well, I had worked with an Aboriginal woman called Lorraine Mafi Williams, who I'd met through the co-op and she lived around the corner in Redfern and I worked with her making her film *Eelemarni*. Madeleine McGrady was the black filmmaker at the Co-op, that's where I met Tracey Moffett too, I'm trying to think how the stuff out of CAAMA came about, because it was later after I made *Vacant Possession*.

Lyn Longo: [02:04:50] **We looked at what CAAMA stood for. So for the recording, Central Australia Aboriginal Media Association.**

Margot Nash: [02:05:00] Yeah. Huge. And, but when I made *Vacant Possession*. I had an Aboriginal advisor and it was about, have you seen *Vacant Possession*?

Lyn Longo: [02:05:16] **No**

Don Longo: [02:05:18] **I have, I've seen it. Yes, it was good, it was great.**

Margot Nash: [02:05:23] In *Vacant Possession* my ideas came out of making *For Love or Money* and the stuff about land.

Don Longo: [02:05:37] **About possession of land, possession of property. The terra nullius problem. So it was really good. I like the idea of the ramshackle house representing terra nullius.**

Margot Nash: [02:05:54] So I think it came out of that. And I ran some script workshops in Alice Springs because I'd written the script for *Vacant Possession*. I'd won awards and done all that. But anyway, I got offered the job. I went out there a few times and those filmmakers that I worked with like Erika Glynn are really going, great guns now. So amazing, you know, people like Steve McGregor and Danielle MacLean, I think they were the first scripts they ever wrote. Well, now they're just flying high as Indigenous filmmakers and writers.

And so a very long time ago, I had a very small part in those very early days. I mentored Danielle on a film shoot, so I went out to the desert, I think maybe three times, and then I started working in the Pacific, working with women and teaching them documentary filmmaking. And I went out there to--- I did that for quite a long time, before I started teaching at the university. I needed a job, really.

That was through my friend Jill Emberson, her father was Tongan, and she'd been involved with working in the Pacific with women. And she rang me and said, 'Look, are you interested in, they're looking for someone to run some documentary

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workshops in Fiji' and I went, 'Sure.' And I went there and the women came in from all the different islands. So, Cook Islands, Niue Island, Papua New Guinea, Samoa. I'm still in touch with some of those women, they're big on Facebook. So I ran workshops. They were all working in television stations, but this was to make documentaries as opposed to news.

I developed a two-stage workshop where they developed a script and they went back to the television stations and they made a documentary and they we had stage two with screenings of the films and awards and that was quite wonderful. And so I met some wonderful women, from the islands and Kiribati, which is disappearing under the sea level rise at the moment. And the woman from Kiribati, she was fantastic.

So they were really marvellous women, but there was no funding in the islands for them to make documentaries. And so it was a funny programme in some ways, because it raised their expectations that they could make documentary films. And it's hard enough here to get money to make documentary films. So they made films and they had an experience of it. But they're all working in news still.

Don Longo: [02:09:10] All right, again, I'm conscious of time. It's 11:15 at your end, so you really need to go. And we did have a few broader questions. You want to get to that Lyn?

Lyn Longo: [02:09:23] Yeah.

Margot Nash: [02:09:24] We can do that because I don't think that zoom is going to cut you off.

Don Longo: [02:09:32] No. Well we subscribed to make sure it wasn't going to.

Margot Nash: [02:09:37] Oh yeah. No I'm fine to keep going. My class isn't for three quarters of an hour.

Don Longo: [02:09:44] Okay. Alright.

Margot Nash: [02:09:46] I haven't had a cup of coffee yet.

Don Longo: [02:09:48] Oh no.

Lyn Longo: [02:09:49] We can pause.

Margot Nash: [02:10:10] I'll get my water bottle.

Lyn Longo: [02:10:17] The last section, we project into the future, both present and future and look to use the activist's knowledge and experience to inform the

young and future activists. And just as a general comment, we've participated in the kid's campaigns against climate change. And yes, there were lots of people, but I felt that they missed the theatrical element that the Moratoriums had. Do you agree that there's a place for Street Theatre and for visual protests?

Margot Nash: [02:11:02] Well, there is Extinction Rebellion. They do real spectacle things. I'm not involved with them. I don't know how effective they are, but certainly---of course it's because it draws people's attention. I think the young people involved in climate action are just so fantastic and they're very passionate. But I think a lot of them are terribly depressed about the future of the planet.

Lyn Longo: [02:11:36] **And there aren't the structures as the years pass, for them to maintain their activism, because the universities are no longer the place where progressives gather and where the support is there.**

Margot Nash: [02:11:54] Thank you to the right-wing government for reducing funding through universities. I think what's happened has been intentional, there's so much damage done by the Liberal Party and I hope that Albanese can turn those tables around a bit. He's certainly started, to do things, whereas Morrison would never have done any of that, but it is very depressing what's happening with climate I think at the moment. My partner is an environmental scientist, a sort of activist around climate and things. He writes and organises stuff and he gets very depressed.

Lyn Longo: [02:12:37] **Yes.**

Don Longo: [02:12:41] **Well, speaking about depression, I've got this question that I ask people, and it's really at the origin of this project back in 2003. And it's about the role of protest in a liberal parliamentary democracy that we live in.**

In 2003, you probably participated as well, Margot, there was a huge protest across Australia and indeed across the world against the Iraq war. In Adelaide we got 100,000 people. Just think about that. In little Adelaide, 100,000 people in the streets, 10% of Adelaide's population was out there saying, 'No, this is a stupid war, we don't want it.' And yet John Howard, who was Prime Minister at the time, decided to join the 'coalition of the willing' and said, 'We don't care what you think, we're just going to do what we want anyway.' And my initial disappointment turned, well to anger I guess, and I won't say rage. There's probably some of that as well.

But it made me think in broader terms about what is the role of protest in a liberal parliamentary democracy. Does it have a role? And if so, how can our elected representatives, ignore what was manifestly the majority of the population being against the war, but they still went ahead and do it. What's the point of having a parliament for the people, when the people's voice isn't heard. Have you got some thoughts about that? How do you feel about that. What, is the role of protest in a bourgeois democracy like ours?

Margot Nash: [02:14:23] I think it's really essential. I've been going to the Sydney Film Festival and I've just seen a big documentary about Navalny. And I also watched a documentary called *Fearless*, about the women who are standing up to Putin. And you can see what's happening... we know what's happening in Russia, that it is an authoritarian, autocratic state, but you cannot protest there. Those women were just thrown in jail on trumped-up charges. Navalny, they tried to kill him. That's what happens in an autocratic state when you try to actually speak. And there's got to be some sort of revolution there. It's terrifying. You can see what happens when people are not allowed to protest and how brave those people in Russia are, those young women.

I mean, Navalny's a bit of a weird character, but it's very brave what he's done. And you think how lucky we are here, that we can still protest. But that's the structure of the state. The state will do what it has to do to protect itself. And I think that what the Liberal Party have done, they've taken money out of supporting free speech, out of the ABC. They've attacked the ABC. They've taken money out of the universities and forced the universities into becoming moneymaking machines. They're trying to get--- and all the Chinese students, I had to try to teach screenwriting to students who couldn't speak English. It was a nightmare. But it was the cash cow of the international students because they'd had all the money taken away. So that the university, which had fostered all that free thinking and those debates back in the Moratorium era, that is no longer. And everyone is very scared about holding on to their jobs.

So you control through fear, you control people. And then every so often people rise up and they will. It's like Freud, *The Return of the Repressed*. They will rise up again. And I think that will happen. And I think the climate stuff is what's brought people out too. There's been some massive demonstrations, but thank God we've got a Labor Government for all their faults compared to the Liberal Government. Then at least the Uluru Statement of the Heart, which is really pretty mild...

Don Longo: [02:17:09] Yes, it.

Margot Nash: [02:17:12] ...is being dealt with and we've got people like all of those women and all those Aboriginal women in Parliament at the moment. I think you can't quite believe that change is happening, but it is. But I think the role of

protest, is really important. And if people don't have the right to speak, then we have a fascist authoritarian regime and we do not want that.

Don Longo: [02:17:43] You mentioned John Gorton and your stunt back in 1969, I think it was. John Gorton was the man who said that, 'He would tolerate dissent as long as it's ineffective.' (laughter) It's actually more or less a quote from Herbert Marcuse, which I don't think Gorton had read. But I guess that was the crux of my question about the Iraq war and Howard's ignoring of the protest was that well they'll tolerate dissent, but they'll ignore it anyway.

Margot Nash: [02:18:18] That's right. That's right.

Don Longo: [02:18:20] So I just wonder whether there's some other way of protesting which is more effective. But there probably isn't. What do you do? Or is it the nature of the of the liberal parliamentary state, which is a problem?

Margot Nash: [02:18:38] Well, I think the structure of it and the structure of the police and the prisons and things that just locks people up. Look at the incarceration of Aboriginal people and we live in a world that is---- the role of racism in America and here is really powerful and the role of the state in keeping--- I mean, look at what they're doing in America, they've made it very difficult for black people to vote. And now they're trying to take away women's rights.

And so that's my fear. That's why I'm trying to make a film, which--- its title is called *Undercurrents: meditations on power*. What's happening under the surface? What are they doing when we're not looking? During the pandemic, they had a field day changing laws and doing all sorts of stuff. And it's the power of money, the power of capitalism. But whether we're ever going to see an end to it, I have no idea.

But we will see an end to the earth if we don't. And that's the problem at the moment, and that's what my partner has been writing about and researching. Where we are in terms of the planet and we've already gone over some tipping points. And they've *got* to listen. They've *got* to listen to that. But some of them will *never* listen. But that's why there has to be more protest and there has to be people who, whether they're in the system or outside of the system, *have* to speak. And we had somebody like Morrison in power who just had that smirk on his face and took no notice. But at least Albanese's a friend of Billy Bragg. (laughter)

Don Longo: [02:20:23] So she (Lyn) was so happy to see the smirk go. You wouldn't imagine it.

Lyn Longo: [02:20:29] Much champagne was consumed.

Margot Nash: [02:20:32] The smirk was so ghastly. But he's a dangerous man, Morrison. That Pentecostal Christian and his sense of entitlement. And that sense of entitlement that Trump has and that Putin has. And it's got its roots in colonialism, the entitlement that you can do what you want to. And you just do it, you don't take a notice when people say no. And so there has to be radical change.

I find it so interesting that the radical change that we're looking at now with the change of government has been brought about by women in the Liberal Party.

Don Longo: [02:21:16] Yes.

Margot Nash: [02:21:18] They are the ones who are talking. It's the Teals, funded by, what's his name, Simon Holmes a Court. A millionaire who's put money into the Teals. I'm in an electorate with a Teal, who won; Allegra Spender and she comes from Liberal Party blue stock, but she's good. She's good on climate change. She's an economist, she's an intelligent woman and I think those women in the Liberal Party just got so sick to death of not being listened to, so then you get a reaction.

Don Longo: [02:23:02] So you mentioned that Albanese may not do very much, but at least he's a decent man perhaps. Are you optimistic then for the future?

Margot Nash: [02:23:12] Yes and no. Because my partner's is an environmentalist and that's his whole area that he's researching. He's writing book at the moment. And, I'm very aware of what's going on with the climate and I feel quite--- well, I'm not gonna live to see it, but we may live to see --- we will live to see it getting a lot worse than it is. And you have to have hope. If you don't have hope, you can't keep going. But I think you just have to do what you can do.

I believe in history being retold because otherwise people forget. Your project's great. I saw a beautiful film at the film festival yesterday called *Young Plato*, and it was about Northern Ireland, and a Primary School for boys. They were teaching the boys philosophy in primary school, these eight-year-olds. It was so beautiful. It touched your heart, and gave you hope to see these wonderful teachers, a wonderful man, the teacher who was working with those boys and getting them to think and to see that different people have different ways of seeing things and thinking about things. To respect difference. And that's what I think we don't have enough of. We

don't respect difference enough. It's like the Indigenous stuff or the migrant experience, where difference wasn't respected. But just to see people doing community-based things or quiet things on the ground is very heart-warming. My partner, Mark, he puts money into collective wind farms, run by collectives. What can you do? You just have to... I'm trying to make my little film.

Don Longo: [02:25:18] Would you still call yourself an Anarchist?

Margot Nash: [02:25:20] No, not really. Not in the same way. No. I think that was a bit childish. It was a bit romantic and I don't know what I'd call myself. I certainly feel like I have progressive politics and I have a friend who's about to turn a hundred, and she said, 'I'm still a democratic socialist.' And I'm still a bit of an Anarchist.

Lyn Longo: [02:25:45] And film making is obviously still a passion. Do you see that as a force for educating the world?

Margot Nash: [02:25:53] Yes. But a force for bringing ideas. I saw the most extraordinary film yesterday, Israeli film, which where ---it's impossible to describe, but how it spoke, the protagonists spoke, how the truth, it was a real truth telling. It was incredible about what's happening with Israel, what's happened to Israel.

Don Longo: [02:26:26] With the Palestinians?

Margot Nash: [02:26:27] Yes? Devastating, it was devastating. It was a fictional film, but it won a big prize at Cannes and I wanted to see it. But I was absolutely shattered from seeing it. But it was also because it was truth telling. And I think the truth must be told. Power looks after itself and tries to protect itself.

Don Longo: [02:26:50] Of course. Well, there you are, you're still an Anarchist. With that comment, you are still an Anarchist. What's the title of the film Margot?

Margot Nash: [02:27:02] My new one?

Don Longo: [02:27:03] No the one you were talking about.

Lyn Longo: [02:27:06] The Israeli one.

Don Longo: [02:27:07] And your new one too.

Margot Nash: [02:27:09] If you get a chance to see it. It's on Mubi actually. It's called *Ahed's Knee*. I'll just find it and tell you how to spell it. A H E D apostrophe S, Knee. Look, when I started, I thought I can't stand this character. He's awful. He's driving me---What is this, it's about a film maker and who cares? And then you get

really, drawn in and he takes you to the precipice edge. It was most powerful. Stay with it. If you've got access to Mubi, it's definitely on Mubi, *Ahed's Knee*. It's really worth seeing. That's probably the most powerful film I've seen recently.

Don Longo: [02:27:57] And what's your new film, Margot?

Margot Nash: [02:28:03] Well, it's only going to be a short film. It's called *Undercurrents*.

Don Longo: [02:28:07] Undercurrents?

Margot Nash: [02:28:09] Well, I haven't made it yet.

Don Longo: [02:28:10] I realise that.

Margot Nash: [02:28:11] I'm in the middle of making it, it's a meditation on power. I'm interested in Reich. I might go back and read a bit of Reich, because I'm interested in fascism and what's going on under the surface. I made *We Aim to Please*, then I made a film called *Shadow Panic*, and this is the third film in the trilogy. I've always wanted to make a third film. It's a poetic meditation on power and war and colonialism and racism. Yes, that's what I'm delving into at the moment, and into critical race theory and even though it's a poetic film, I've got to get it right.

Don Longo: [02:29:05] I recommend the Frantz Fanon's books on power and colonialism. They say all we need to know about colonialism, I think, and the effect it has on people.

Margot Nash: [02:29:18] I've been reading Aimé Césaire, but Fanon, of course. There's a conference in Berlin, looking at Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* and people are responding to the links between fascism and colonialism. And that got me really interested. But there's a lot of stuff around at the moment, but it's only a little short film. But I can't let it go until it's right. It's not right yet.

Lyn Longo: [02:29:54] Now a couple of your films had some Maori focus. Does that go back to your place of birth?

Margot Nash: [02:30:08] I made a film a couple of years ago with the Maori performance artist Victoria Hunt who is based here in Sydney. We were paired up through the digital mentorship scheme at the Sydney Opera House, but then we collaborated on the film. It's called TAKE and it's a colonial story and yes, of course, because, I have Maori friends and my family all live in New Zealand and I'm

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a dual citizen. So, when I met her and heard her story, I was very keen to work with her and that's been great and we're good friends. Whether we'd do something else together or not, I'm not sure. I'm much more Australian than New Zealander really these days. Well I have spent most of my life here.

Don Longo: [02:31:06] Yes. It's 11:35 at your end there Margot, I notice.

Lyn Longo: [02:31:15] So we of course haven't covered everything that you've done.

Don Longo: [02:31:20] Now I want to talk more about the manifesto, but that's for another time.

Lyn Longo: [02:31:23] But is there anything that we've missed out on, that you really want to be recorded?

Margot Nash: [02:31:33] No, I think it's pretty good. The Pram Factory was a big collective, the emphasis on the collective, but I've ended up being a sort of bit of an auteur film maker rather than a collaborative film maker. But I've collaborated with Victoria to make TAKE and I'm trying to collaborate on a new film at the moment, but we'll see what happens with that.

Lyn Longo: [02:32:08] Well, we really appreciate the time you've given.

Margot Nash: [02:32:10] Yeah, well, I hope it's useful.

Don Longo: [02:32:12] Yes, very much so. Thank you very much Margot.

Lyn Longo: [02:32:15] And it's a completely different perspective too, on protest, one that we've not had before.

Margot Nash: [02:32:23] Yes. Because I haven't mounted campaigns and done all that. But I suppose everything I do is informed by all those experiences.

Don Longo: [02:32:37] And if we come to Sydney, we might get in touch with you and we can talk further about the ASIF productions, which is a really interesting.

Margot Nash: [02:32:47] And I do have a lot more stuff, you know. I'm a bit of a hoarder.

Don Longo: [02:32:54] Oh, good. She's not, I am so, there you are. Thank you very much Margot. I really appreciate it. You better get to your exercise class.

Margot Nash: [02:33:06] It's only over the road, but I've got a number of messages and things I need to deal with. So good luck with it all.

Don Longo: [02:33:21] Are you still there?

Margot Nash: [02:33:22] Yeah. Yeah.

Don Longo: [02:33:23] Ah, good. Before we sign off, we'll send you a copy of the transcript, obviously, for you to check through and make sure and authorise before it goes anywhere else.

Margot Nash: [02:33:35] Are you going to transcribe it?

Lyn Longo: [02:33:38] We've got software that does a first effort.

Margot Nash: [02:33:41] I've tried that, it's a nightmare.

Lyn Longo: [02:33:45] It still needs 15 plus hours to fix it up.

Margot Nash: [02:33:50] I realise that. Okay, goodbye.

Interview Part 2 of 2

Lyn Longo [00:00:05] This is a supplementary interview with Margot Nash, conducted by Lyn and Don Longo on the 30th of August 2022, from 9:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time using Zoom. This interview is a follow up to our earlier interview on the 14th of June 2022 to ask some additional questions and tease out some outstanding issues. Like its predecessor, it is part of an oral history project on activism and protest movements in the period 1965 to 1983, though it often extends into the eighties and nineties, it is supported by the History Trust of South Australia. The ID code for this interview is 39 BIS_NAS_20220614. We should begin by acknowledging that we're meeting on the land of the Kurna people in Adelaide and the Gadigal people in Sydney, and we pay our respects to the traditional custodians of the land. Thanks, Margot, for making time for this additional interview, despite your busy schedule. We're keen to follow up on some issues from our first interview of the 14th of June.

Don Longo [00:01:22] And the first one is.

Margot Nash [00:01:26] Oh, Jim Cane at Myponga.

Don Longo [00:01:31] Well, yes, you sent me this photo and I printed it off and I sent it to Jim because he didn't have one when we spoke to him about it.

Margot Nash [00:01:40] And I probably would never--- it wasn't a very good quality one.

Don Longo [00:01:47] He did say it wasn't very good quality and he was trying to get detail, and I said even the original was a bit fuzzy. But anyway, we wanted to ask you about the pop festival. I spoke to Jim yesterday about the photo because I wanted to know more about it. And he said, he can't remember too much about it, but he said ask Margot. (laughter) He thinks that you were there as well, which I think you were.

Margot Nash [00:02:13] Well I took the photo.

Don Longo [00:02:15] Yes, that was one of my questions. Who took the photo? That's good. And he said there were about ten of you, that went down there to try and leaflet some of the attendees at the festival, and to put some anti-capitalist sort of slant on the festival itself. And so he said, 'Look, ask Margot about what she remembers, what she knows about the Myponga Festival and how it was received.' All the different leafleting that you did and any other recollections you have about the festival. There were 15,000 people there, apparently. So it was quite a lot.

Margot Nash [00:02:56] It was. But it was our sort of---it was the South Australian Woodstock.

Don Longo [00:03:01] Yes, yes.

Margot Nash [00:03:04] I have some other photos, too. I've got one where there was a tent and people had signs at the front that said, 'Smash Hip Capitalism.'

Don Longo [00:03:20] Ah yes.

Margot Nash [00:03:21] So we were attacking anybody who was selling anything probably, because they were Hip Capitalists. And I don't know. (laughter) I don't remember a lot about it. I also took some pictures of Rani Costello, who was a little kid at the time, and Rose Costello and Lou Costello's son. And Rani is now a lawyer and lives not far from me in Bond. I pulled those photos of him out and sent some to him some years ago. So I'm familiar with the photos that I took. Medlin was there because I took a photo of him, with his fist up and some sort of hippy headgear. (laughter)

Somebody contacted me but I haven't had time to go looking it up. A young fellow contacted me, well he's an old fellow now, but he was a young then and I can't remember his name, but I can find it because he friended me on Facebook, so we're Facebook friends. He's a musician, he lives in Adelaide and he came with us and he piled into the car with us. He was a bit of a fan, and he was just a kid at the time. He remembers going to those parties at Medlin's place where we all took acid and he thought it was all terribly exciting and everything. Anyway, he told me that he remembered going to Myponga. He had more memories than I did, and maybe because he's younger and probably wasn't smoking so many drugs as we were then. (laughter)

But he said we went up to Murray Bridge on the way and that makes sense because that's where Rob's family were. His mother and father lived in Murray Bridge. And

I've also got photos from Myponga of Rob and Lester [Wahlquist playing their acoustic guitars and me dancing in the middle of the crowd in what looks like an old tablecloth, (laughter) doing expressive dancing. So I've got photos of Myponga, but my memories are really more associated with the photos than any real memories at the time.

Don Longo [00:06:02] The way that Jim spoke yesterday was that, he gave the impression that the ten of you, that he said went there, went there as a form of protest.

Margot Nash [00:06:12] Yes, I think that's right.

Don Longo [00:06:14] Is that right?

Margot Nash [00:06:15] I think that's right. But I can't remember what we were protesting about. Hip Capitalism.

Don Longo [00:06:21] Yes Hip Capitalism is what he said.

Margot Nash [00:06:22] Yes, Hip Capitalism. And so we decided to go and protest. And then Lester must have come because Lester was there and Rob had ---they had their guitars, so I'm sure that was Myponga. You could ask Rob, but I've got the photos and I'm sure that we did some sort of--- we drew a crowd and they sang songs and I danced.

Don Longo [00:06:44] Yes.

Margot Nash [00:06:45] And ah, sorry. That's about all I can remember. My memories are connected to the photographs more than to the actual event.

Don Longo [00:06:54] And Jim remembered his jacket. He said, 'Yes, I used to love that jacket.' And that was the one that he recognised and he thought, 'That must be me.'

Margot Nash [00:07:09] It is him. I think I had a very low-grade camera at that point, so they're not great quality. But if you want to see the other photos---

Don Longo [00:07:18] That would be nice.

Margot Nash [00:07:20] At some point and if you want to, let me know and I can let you have them, because some of them were scanned but I don't think I scanned Medlin, and I didn't take the photos of myself dancing of course, somebody else did. But they ended up on Facebook some years ago, and Rob posted some. And then I

found some, and I found my copies, which were from a newspaper, I think. Anyway, my copies are not good quality, but they're a memory of it.

Don Longo [00:07:58] Okay, that's good. Thank you very much.

Lyn Longo [00:08:02] We want to ask a couple of questions that come out of rereading the manifesto. (laughter from Margot) Okay, there's a reaction already. But let me talk about my reaction. I found it a remarkable document, so comprehensive and passionate and lots of anger. So I want you to reflect back on how you felt about it at the *time*, and how you feel about it *today*, looking back at it. Whether it's still relevant today.

Margot Nash [00:08:38] Looking back at the time, I think that starting to understand feminism was a revelatory sort of experience for me, and I would include my friend Robin Laurie in that process too, because we were really best friends at that time and we discovered feminism together and we made *We Aim To Please together*, which was the third issue.

We did the manifesto, we did the screen-printed poster, we did the two issues of ASIF, and the third issue was the film. So we wound each other up, but we had explored, we had discovered feminism together. And it was revelatory because I had no--- I think as a young---I was very young. And I think the manifesto shows how young and I in some ways we were. It's written by young people who were very passionate and fired up.

A number of things had fallen into place 'n starting to read and understand about Women's Liberation and feminism and reading different texts. It wasn't just we read one thing and went, 'Oh, hey.' No, it was quite broad. We read widely and talked a lot, and that house we lived in where we did the manifesto, we had a gestetner in the front room. We printed it and we printed all the little magazines in the front room. And it was a real hotbed of people coming around talking and discussing.

I think, things that had happened to me that I hadn't understood as a young woman in terms of male power, fell into place. And I guess that is what makes you angry, when you go, 'Oh, I get it now.' I feel that there were a number of things that had happened to me that I thought it was my fault. I thought there was something wrong with me. And I didn't understand the structure of the patriarchy and of male power. And once I started reading, that kind of fell into place. And so that makes you angry.

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And then when we started doing ASIF and I'd been part of the Anarchist group. I can't remember what I told you last time, but I'd gone overseas after all the Vietnam stuff, and I went with Carol Faulkner, we backpacked all the way across Asia. And the book I took to read was Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*. And I remember leaving it on a bus somewhere in India. And so I was definitely reading Women's Liberation at that point, but I still saw myself as an Anarchist and I'd been fired up by the Anarchists. I pursued the Anarchist connection, when I went to London, I went and lived in an Anarchist bookshop and then I went to. I think I told you about that and then I went to America with the IWW.

When I came home. I went to live at the Anarchist Free Store in Collingwood and it was when I moved out of there. I mean that was pretty tempestuous time in our lives. I can't think what I call it now, but it was a bit scary. It was a scary time too, because there were crims coming in and out. And anyway, I moved out and Robin Laurie and I got a little house in Collingwood and we shared that house in Cromwell Street. That's when we started cooking things up together and she would bring a film projector home and show films. And I saw films I had no idea even existed. And also, she was very political, and as I say we discovered feminism together. We explored it together.

I think I got fired up about writing a manifesto, who knows where things begin. But when I look at the manifesto, I know that it was something I was very passionate about, and I certainly did the writing on it, but I didn't do it alone. Robin would have had a really big hand in it, too. And also, people came around and I remember reading it out and showing it to people. Some of the men who came around were good comrades, and there were a couple of the women. I've got some of a women's consciousness raising group we had in the lounge room there and I took the photos. And there's Helen Garner, Jane Clifton, Carol Porter, me and it would have been Robin. And so it was yabba, yabba yabba. And there were other women's consciousness raising groups that I remember going to.

Big gatherings in Melbourne, and the manifesto started to take shape. I think Robin was working, and I wasn't. I was probably living on the dole and I know I came up with ASIF, the Anarcho Surrealist Insurrectionary Feminist. I remember coming up

with that and I think I had my hands all over that manifesto. And I now think, why didn't someone stop me in a couple of places? Or was I so fired up I wouldn't listen. I don't show it to people very much, I feel actually when I look at it now, I'm a bit embarrassed by some of it, but some of it I think is fabulous.

Lyn Longo [00:15:36] Yes it is.

Don Longo [00:15:37] Well that was one of our questions. How do you feel about it now and about ASIF productions itself?

Lyn Longo [00:15:39] Still relevant I think

Margot Nash [00:15:43] Well, you know, I kept ASIF as my email address, and my production company. ASIF I kept that, well, I'd come up with it, it was my idea, because it connects me to the past, I suppose. It connects me to that passionate past. But when I look at the Manifesto, I didn't read it again before we did this interview. I pulled it out, but I slept in this morning. But I did read it not so long ago because there's a big display in Berlin.

Don Longo [00:16:20] Yes, you told us.

Margot Nash [00:16:21] Yeah.

Lyn Longo [00:16:23] And that's part of it.

Margot Nash [00:16:24] I don't think the Manifesto is part of it. I think I sent them the magazines. And when we printed the first issue of ASIF we stapled the Manifesto into the front. But the copies of the magazines that I got scanned at high-res scan that I gave access to the Berlin people, had the Manifesto separately. And as far as I understand it, I've had three lots of friends go and see it and take photos for me, but nobody's been able to really tell me whether the manifesto is up or not. I must ask my friends again, but I think they just used the magazines, they didn't use the Manifesto, and I think I didn't talk to them about the Manifesto. And I think there's a part of me---when I read it again, I thought, 'Oh, it's fabulous.' And then you come to a couple of bits and you go, 'Ooooh no...'

Lyn Longo [00:17:22] But it is fairly long. There's plenty in it that's worth keeping.

Margot Nash [00:17:27] It's the language. It's 'The Richard Nixon's of this world should be exterminated.' I've used the 'exterminate' word. That's terrible.

Lyn Longo [00:17:43] However, I don't think anyone reading it thinks that you're getting out your guns and firing wildly at politicians.

Margot Nash [00:17:53] Extreme anarchist--- extremists tend to meet at some point and the extreme left and the extreme right can meet at some point. It was the extreme right that exterminated people who didn't agree with them. And there I am and I'll take responsibility for it, talking about exterminating Nixon. So I go, 'Oh, no, I wouldn't do that today.' Why didn't somebody stop me? Why didn't somebody challenge me. Maybe they did and I went, 'No.'

Don Longo [00:18:24] Well, possibly, or possibly they agreed with you to some extent in terms of the sentiments too.

Margot Nash [00:18:28] In terms of the sentiments. But it's a fabulous document there's no question about that. It's wonderful, and I can't change it now. There's something else in there that's similar, I can't remember what it is. So there's a couple of things that just go too far. But it is a passionate document. And I think we were inspired by--- A lot of people wrote manifestos. You mentioned Andre Breton, *The Surrealist Manifesto*, but also the Valerie Solanas.

Don Longo [00:19:11] Yes.

Margot Nash [00:19:12] The SCUM Manifesto. The Society to Cut Up Men, and she was right out there. And so we thought, 'Wooh, wow.' (laughter) And so, there is the history of writing manifestos. And I think it was probably, a bit of Solanas and a bit of the Surrealists. And then there's the Communist Manifesto, all of that. So it was an opportunity to try and put your ideas down.

The people who would have had a voice in the writing of that Manifesto would have been Robin, a big voice. She would have had a big voice. And we were living together, we were sharing this little house and we were yabber, yabber, yabbing all the time. But people like Isabelle Rosenberg, who has passed away, and Eddie Van Rosendale, who was her partner, he's still alive. He was reading Karl Marx then I think he still is. Anyway, that's another story. But Eddie had a fine mind, and Eddie I know would have had an input to that. Carol Porter was around, but I think she was a bit scared of how wild we were. Tim Pigott. I've no idea what's happened to Tim Pigott, but I remember him being around during that time.

Who else would have been around? But you see, what happened when we printed the Manifesto and it was stapled into the first issue of ASIF. The Anarchists at the Free Store, where I had moved out of, they were absolutely outraged. They had a big reaction, because they took it as an attack on them, as if they weren't wielding male power, which they were, but it was everywhere. But they were outraged. And so there was this--- it caused a real schism within the Anarchist group, but we didn't care. We didn't care what they thought particularly. But I do remember being called up to a meeting at the Free Store, upstairs and reprimanded. But I was reprimanded and I was accused of being an ASIO spy.

Don Longo [00:22:19] Yes.

Margot Nash [00:22:19] I was accused because when I'd been very young and wanted to be an actress, I'd met this guy. I'd been doing workshops with Wal Cherry down at the Emerald Hill Theatre and I met this guy called Bert Cooper and he offered me a chance to be in a review. I was in the Architecture Review at RMIT where I studied interior design for a while and I did the architecture review. So somehow or other I met Bert Cooper and he said, 'Do you want to be in this review?' And I said, 'Sure,' because I wanted to do anything to be on the stage. But it was a Young Liberals review. It meant nothing to me at that time. But that's when I was called up about that. I was a spy because I'd done a Young Liberals review. I just laughed at that. I still remember they were terribly serious calling me to task, and accusing me of being a spy. That was ha ha.

Well, you know what happened to all the Anarchists, half of them got into heroin, and they're dead now. That's what was going on. There was a lot of drugs going on, but there were some fantastic people around that time, too.

And so anyway, the old ASIF, we did the first issue, we did the poster and but that was more me and Robin, though Carol Porter would have worked on that poster. Maybe she screen-printed it, I designed it. We put it up everywhere trying to say that there were millions and thousands of us when there was really just mainly me and Robyn. A few of the people were a bit scared. We were pussycats, really, but I'd been brought up by a mother who was very outspoken and *I* was outspoken. I *still* am outspoken. And men didn't like that back in the day, they don't like it now sometimes, because I challenged them. So I asked questions about things and I didn't

know my place. And that's what I was told at one point. 'You don't know your place.'

Lyn Longo [00:24:38] Illustrated everything you were saying. In the manifesto.

Don Longo [00:24:40] Coming from radicals that's a bit shocking.

Margot Nash [00:24:42] It was very wounding at the time because I had no theory. I had no real role models. Though I did have one role model who saved me. I think in many ways was this older woman called Robin Joyce. And she was wonderful. She gave me *The Second Sex* to read when I was 16. So I didn't really understand it, but I read it and I sort of got it. But I didn't get it really until later. Yeah.

So, we did the two magazines and then we made the film, we made *We Aim To Please* and we were both working in the theatre by that stage, and by the time we made *We Aim To Please* we had moved out of Collingwood and I was living in Cardigan Street and Robin was living at the Pram Factory. *We Aim to Please* was shot in my bedroom at Cardigan Street in the back garden and her bedroom, her mad bedroom at the Pram Factory. *We Aim to Please* was as shocking as the Manifesto, but in a different way.

When we were filming, *We Aim to Please*, I showed some of the footage, not the nudity stuff, but I showed some of the footage that we'd shot to a filmmaker, a male filmmaker, and he told me we weren't framing things properly. So we realised he didn't have a clue.

Don Longo [00:26:40] He didn't get the film, obviously.

Margot Nash [00:26:42] He didn't have a clue what we were on about. And so when that came out, that first screening at the Pram Factory, some bloke got up and shouted at the screen. We caused a big stir.

Lyn Longo [00:26:58] Well, that's what you want, isn't it? If you don't get any reaction, you haven't been successful. (laughter)

Margot Nash [00:27:04] And I think the interesting thing about *We Aim to Please*, is that people still love it. I just went to Melbourne Film Festival all these years later where it screened as part of their 70 year anniversary. And Kate Jinx, who was moderating the discussion, said, 'Why do you think *We Aim to Please* is still active?' Since it was made in 76, it's continued to have screenings, if not every year, every

second year. And, 'Why do you think people are still interested?' I think it's because it is so audacious and so irreverent, and it's funny. And I think the modern feminist work, it's a very serious subject, is very serious. And we had a very serious subject, but it's witty and it's funny, and it's shocking. And so people love it and they still do it. So people see that it's still pretty radical.

Don Longo [00:28:18] So we'll talk a bit more about it in relation to *Shadow Panic*, a bit later on, if you don't mind Margot. Because we tried to compare and contrast the two films to some extent and the mood is very different, as you well know.

Margot Nash [00:28:35] Yes, the mood is very different.

Don Longo [00:28:37] Very different so we'll explore that in a minute. You continued with ASIF productions and because of those four terms, Anarcho Surrealist Insurrectionary and Feminism are tied together and it made me think, well as much as we like your Manifesto, what do modern feminists or younger women now, think of associating those four terms in one sentence?

Margot Nash [00:29:10] They think it's funny.

Don Longo [00:29:13] They wouldn't understand it would they?

Margot Nash [00:29:14] At that screening Kate Jinx said, 'Margot, what does ASIF stand for?' And I said, 'The Anarcho Surrealist Insurrectionary Feminism,' and the whole audience burst out laughing.

Don Longo [00:29:24] Because you think they didn't understand it. I mean, surrealism and anarchism isn't really something that's on people's minds nowadays. Insurrectionary is a little bit confronting perhaps.

Lyn Longo [00:29:38] And it's very grand and a bit over the top.

Margot Nash [00:29:41] That's right. I think it's the same thing, it's audacious. It's an audacious thing. And because it's juxtaposing these things people go, 'Oh,' and that makes them think. I've never gone asking young people what they think about all those things. ASIF, mostly people just think that's my email address and they don't think about it particularly.

Don Longo [00:30:14] But you haven't renounced any of those terms, because you're still using them.

Margot Nash [00:30:18] Well I think the word insurrectionary is tricky because of what happened, in America with the insurrection, but we were thinking of the Paris Commune.

Don Longo [00:30:28] Yes of course you were.

Margot Nash [00:30:29] The insurrection came from the Paris Commune, and I stand by that. And, the surrealism came from a different way of seeing the world, trying to see the world differently. The anarcho, we were steeped in all of that and then the feminism. So it was perfect. And then it had a little acronym, it's funny, ASIF.

Don Longo [00:30:54] It is.

Lyn Longo [00:30:56] Very relevant. I like it.

Don Longo [00:30:58] I guess my question is more about that modern day feminism and how you wouldn't necessarily associate feminism with any of the other three terms. I don't think as far as I know.

Margot Nash [00:31:09] I don't know. The young women I think they have it---well now we've got all the LGBTQI stuff.

Don Longo [00:31:24] Yes.

Margot Nash [00:31:25] That really changed everything. We weren't commenting on that back then at all, not really. But I think that from teaching too, I know that young people, a lot of their concerns are around gender and identity and that they see feminism, I think more in terms of struggles for equality or wage justice or whatever, or old-fashioned feminists like me.

But there's a new generation of young women who are very interested in feminism and they want to know and they're interested. And I think the effect that these films of mine are now getting all these screenings, which they are, I'm having a little, moment in the sun with some of my old films now, not just *We Aim to Please*, the films are obviously speaking to an interest by young women.

Don Longo [00:32:31] Hmm. Well, I'm glad you've kept the name, Margot. But then we are of a similar age, so we come from the same background.

Lyn Longo [00:32:41] Now, I'm going to give a couple of personal anecdotes and get your response to it in terms of different views of feminism. I was a junior primary teacher and I remember vividly in the seventies, the school I was at must have been reasonably progressive because the budget was being spent to upgrade the books that were available at the library, to have them reflecting equality. But in practice, the books that were bought, took all the worst of male characteristics and rewrote the book with a female name. So I was considerably underwhelmed by the sort of books that we had access to. So that's one point about, what does equality mean?

And the other experience I had was, I got a position on what was quite a high-powered committee called Women and Girls in Education in the Northern Area. And some of the members were really important people, that went on to do very great and very public things. The convenor whose name I won't mention because the anecdote I have is unpleasant, at one stage said to me, because I was young and having babies, that if she found out she was pregnant and it was a boy, she would have it aborted. And I found that extremely confronting. And the impact really was for me to feel that I didn't fit in that group anymore.

So that leads to the feeling that there were two views of feminism. One was, 'We want everything men have had and to replace men in all aspects of society.' And that men and women are the same. And the other version that, 'Women are different and we have particular skills that are not valued.' Would you like to comment on that very long-winded series of anecdotes?

Margot Nash [00:35:14] Well, I think one of the things that we used to say back then is we don't want to be equal with unfree men. We wanted to have an analysis of society that talked about power. And so we weren't just for straight equality and changing the names of women. We didn't want to be women who behave the way men had behaved, or felt entitled to behave the way they treated people. And I think there's been a lot of change. And so we certainly weren't in that camp. And I think a lot of feminists aren't. What you're saying tells me how many different feminisms there have been and still are, or what people think of as feminism. But if they actually read feminist theory, they're not going to be spouting some of that stuff.

The stuff about wanting to have male children aborted or whatever. I think there was a particular period where feminism got wound up, and a huge split occurred ---we considered ourselves to be radical feminists, but between the lesbian separatists and the separatist feminists who wanted to set up women only communities. And they did. There's a community that's still going, [1970-mid 1980's] Amazon Acres. And there was a whole question about boy children, whether they would be allowed on the mountain or not. And it split everybody down the middle, it was terrible. And I heard Barbara Creed speak that she felt--- she's a lesbian, she made a film called *Homosexuality, a Film for Discussion* where she said she felt that, hope I'm not misquoting her here, but I don't think I am, 'That there was no place for her, if that's how people were thinking about boy children.'

She made this wonderful film, *Homosexuality Film for Discussion* which is played in schools. It was a working film to go out into schools, and it did, to talk about different attitudes towards homosexuals, including lesbians. So I think the lesbian

separatist turn, when it happened it was a split. And, I really toyed with it to some extent, because there was a period of time in Sydney where the Women's Warehouse, there were women only dances, and it was very lively culturally. There was a lot of women's bands and there was a lot of art movement. And where women were trying to reclaim their creativity and their voices and women are still are doing that.

But I think it was very confronting for a lot of lesbian women because a lot of them had boy children. And I don't know if this is true, but as I understand it, when you have a sperm donor, if the sperm gets exposed to the air, you can end up with a boy. But I don't know if that's true, but someone told me that. But a lot of boys. And so that brought it home in a big way, because I know quite a few lesbian mother couples who have bought boys up and they're just wonderful. And they're loving parents and the boys are great.

Lyn Longo [00:39:17] And adding to that anecdote about aborting the boy, I said it was a very powerful committee and there were quite a lot of principals and deputies and really people that had a lot of power and status and knew it. Whereas I was a *mere* teacher. This person was quite happy for me to organise the snacks and do the dishes.

Margot Nash [00:39:51] What year was this?

Lyn Longo [00:39:56] Late eighties.

Margot Nash [00:40:01] You have to remember, well I'm remembering my trajectory. By the early eighties, I'd spent five years working on *For Love or Money*, which was the history of women's work in Australia, which was informed by radical feminism, lesbian separatism, Marxist feminists, a whole range of different disciplines. Not disciplines, but ideas. And there was a group of us and we debated hotly. And the film, I think, is also still very relevant today and gets screened all the time.

And we were looking at colonisation as well, and the effects of colonisation and because we were looking at power and the powerlessness of women in the workplace. That film is a history of the struggle for equal pay and the radical trade unions. I'm sure you've seen the film.

Don Longo Yes it's terrific.

Margot Nash It's got the early women's trade unions and it's got--- we started with Aboriginal women's traditional work and so we were very political during that time, but we weren't positioning ourselves as lesbian separatists, but we were radical or we wouldn't have done it. It was something that had been requested that I think came out a 'Women in Labour conference', which I wasn't at, but I think it was Sue Bellamy who sadly passed away recently, saying 'We need something on the history of women's work in Australia. There's nothing. We need something we can use in the workplace, something we can use when we're teaching, something that's going to be useful.'

And so we spent years making that film and it's still--- it just screened in New York. Pioneering Women Filmmakers session as did *Shadow Panic* screened in that session too. So, these quite radical films are still interesting to people. But I was a bit more sensible by the time I got to *For Love or Money*. But also, I wasn't on my own, I was in a collective.

Don Longo [00:42:27] That's good. You happy Lyn?

Lyn Longo [00:42:29] That's fine.

Don Longo [00:42:31] Can we move on to something else? I wanted to explore the connection between *We Aim to Please* and *Shadow Panic* in the sense that both arise from a surrealist approach. You said before that *We Aim to Please* was pretty funny and there was a lot of vitality in it, which is true I think. *Shadow Panic*, we watched it a few days ago. And I found it puzzling because it was so different to *We Aim to Please*. The mood was completely different. Where *We Aim to Please*, I've written down here. 'It was funny. There's was a lot of vitality, lot of laughter, a lot of irony, a lot of desire, even.' But in *Shadow Panic*, we wrote down some words that came to our minds. 'Brooding, fear, threats, corruption and the notion of memory is there as well.' There seems to be a whole new ontology on show. And I wondered whether this reflected a change in your feminism or a change in your use of surrealist themes and surrealist approaches. Why the change of mood?

Margot Nash [00:44:00] Well, a number of years have gone past and I'd done a whole range of other things in between, including *For Love or Money*, which was a very sobering experience. And, I'd also been in psychoanalysis, which was another very sobering experience. And, I was living in Sydney, not Melbourne and Robin was in Melbourne.

I think *We Aim to Please* benefited from her--- Robin's a real clown, she has a great comic presence. She's in *Shadow Panic*, but it was not a collaboration in the way that

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We Aim to Please was absolute collaboration. She went one direction, I went the other. She went into theatre, community theatre, I went into film. She stayed in Melbourne I went to Sydney. She came to Sydney for a while and went back to Melbourne, which is where she is now. She's still doing community work and theatre work and she works with groups as a facilitator for other people's creativity. Whereas I moved towards wanting to make films myself and wanting to be more of an auteur I suppose. And because for a while I was shooting other people's films and I was editing.

I went on to *For Love or Money* as an editor. And I became part of the collective, but I didn't start out in the collective, I became one of the filmmakers. In trying to get work as a cinematographer, I was part of the Sydney Filmmakers Co-op, which had taken a lot of my time when I come up to Sydney, and it was all very sober and serious, a lot of it, and I wanted to get back to what I saw as my roots in *We Aim to Please*. I wanted to get back to that kind of anarchic way we'd approached it.

And when you try to raise money for a film, they want everything set in stone on the script. When we made *We Aim to Please*, we just opened shoeboxes and went, 'Oh, this is a good bit, let's shoot this.' We had a script and we threw it out. No one's going to give you money to make a film without a script. And so I had to write a script. I spent five years on *For Love or Money*, too. And I wanted to do something that was a bit wilder, a bit more interesting and also spoke to the things that I was thinking about and I was caring about. And so that was psychoanalysis. That's The Redhead in *Shadow Panic*. Colonisation, that's The Investigator. I'd had terrible relationships and I was hopeless at romantic love and that's the silly old hothead. So that's three parts of me, I suppose.

But it is different because it's my story. It's my film. I cast Robin as The Redhead, and I wanted to put her on the screen in all her beauty and gorgeousness, which I did. But I cast her really as my mother, which was psychologically tricky. So she's in the gold dress and my mother had a gold dress like that. That was me exploring what I'd been doing in a Jungian psychoanalysis, so I was exploring dreams. And I read Jung and I was reading James Hillman, so the unconscious was fitting into all of that, to that strand of that character.

Don Longo [00:48:36] And being a Francophile, I was particularly interested in the credits which mentioned *Hélène Cixous* and Luce Irigaray.

Margot Nash [00:48:54] Yeah. Yeah.

Don Longo [00:48:55] And I wondered whether they were authors that people read in the mid-eighties?

Margot Nash [00:49:05] At that point, yes absolutely. We were all reading the French feminists. Liz Grosz was teaching at Sydney University and her door was open to letting people like me go and sit in on lectures. She was enormously popular. I didn't sit in on a lot of lectures, I sat in on some and everyone was reading Julia Kristeva [0.0s] It was all very hard to read, mind you, it's difficult. But I liked *Cixous* because she was a poet. I read *Angst* and went, 'Wow.' I used a couple of quotes out of *Angst* in *Shadow Panic* but I also used, what's her name? Christ, my memory. *The Colour Purple*, what's her name?

Lyn Longo [00:50:03] Walker, is it?

Margot Nash [00:50:04] Alice Walker. I also used an Alice Walker poem and I had to contact Alice Walker and get permission. I had to contact *Hélène Cixous* and get-- I actually spoke to her on the phone. (laughter). She was lovely. I had to get permission for all these things. So I was a bit of a bowerbird, just picking things. I wasn't a great scholar. It wasn't like I was reading Kristeva and marking every paragraph or reading Irigaray and marking every paragraph. I was just taking bits and pieces that spoke to me. And, we were all interested.

The French feminists had a different way of looking at things and they were critical of male psychoanalysts, too. So it was a lively discourse that was going on at the time. And I think *Shadow Panic* speaks into that period because of that.

I wrote a script and I actually got some money. Unbelievable. Even though they thought it was going to be the *Heaven's Gate* of Australian filmmaking, because the script had pictures in it and it was quite an unusual script, but it was quite a beautiful script. And I followed the script, when we were on the shoot. Sally Bongers shot it and she had an incredible eye. And yes, so *Shadow Panic* was the panic, the anxiety, the external world, which I'm still panicking about. An internal world, which was

looking at psychoanalysis to see how we trip ourselves up, and what we understand, what we don't understand about ourselves.

Don Longo [00:52:03] But you projected onto the external world as well because it's the political corruption that's in there and the scenes of missiles and rockets and the military presence is very strong.

Margot Nash [00:52:18] That was the Star Wars. That was Ronald Reagan's Star Wars. That was a cartoon thing of Star Wars, and the nuclear weapons.

So at the moment I'm making, I'm trying to make--- I'm having a lot of trouble with it. We're trying to make the third in the series, *We Aim to Please*, *Shadow Panic*, and I'm making a short film at the moment called *Undercurrents, meditations on power*. So that's trying to bring those three films together in some way. But Robin thinks I need to have more jokes in it, and she's probably right, but I'm terribly serious. (laughter) I can be quite funny as a person, but when I start making films like, it gets very serious.

Don Longo [00:53:04] Yeah, well, being of a melancholy disposition, I loved *Shadow Panic*. I think it was great. But then I'm always a bit of a pessimist. But you did say in there too, in your blurb on *Shadow Panic*, you quote John Lennon and Yoko Ono. That, 'woman is still the nigger of the world.' Do you hold to that?

Margot Nash [00:53:31] I think that song of John Lennon was so audacious and outrageous, and Yoko. We put all the words in one of the---I think it's the second issue or maybe it's the first issue of ASIF. It's such an outrageous [song]. It's designed to shock and it works because you do not use---- not unless you're black America. Then you can say, 'Hey, Nigger, how are you?' They can do that, but we can't use the word Nigger, it is a terrible slight but I think when he said, 'Woman is the Nigger of the world.' I think at that period of time women were seen and are still, in some cultures, seen as slaves, to be dominated, inferior.

Lyn Longo [00:54:27] And to be feared. You've got to keep them in their place because they're dangerous.

Margot Nash [00:54:32] And that's why you have to keep those terrible blacks in their place, because they could be very dangerous. And I'm reading a bit of critical race theory at the moment about colonisation. And, really, I think there's huge fear of the 'other' and they had to construct the other as being inferior, as being stupid, as being without agency in the world and that enormous struggle of black people is so

incredible. I think that it was a shocking set of lyrics. And people can take offence if they like, but I get where John and Yoko were coming from.

Lyn Longo [00:55:18] The world's reaction to Yoko Ono is a statement on feminism in itself. She was universally loathed.

Margot Nash [00:55:29] Loathed? That's right.

Lyn Longo [00:55:32] She'd corrupted John of course.

Margot Nash [00:55:36] John really loved her. She was a performance artist and she still is.

Don Longo [00:55:43] You also say in I think it was one of the blurbs on *Shadow Panic* you speak of, I love this phrase, quote 'the wild ncolonized energy of surrealism,' ncolonized is the word that really sticks out, of course. Do you still feel that surrealism has a place not only filmmaking, but in poetry or anywhere else? Surrealism as you know, was a political and an artistic movement. Do you see surrealism as a way of doing film?

Margot Nash [00:56:21] I do. When I think about---like there are many feminisms, there are many different kinds of surrealists and I don't always like the work. The ncolonized is because the unconscious never lies. The unconscious cannot really be colonised, and that's why it's so powerful. And so I think I wanted to step into that space in order to find new ways of talking about things or saying things.

I still love Maya Deren's films. I still love some of those early surrealist works because they're so wild and wonderful and that's where I wanted to go when I was doing *Shadow Panic*, I wanted to be able to just step into that unknown space and find images and turn something around, so you see it in a new way. So I still find that very interesting.

Don Longo [00:57:26] Yes. And people often speak of surrealism as something that's been spent, that's all over now, after 100 years of it. I don't think it is frankly, myself. And do you feel that has still a lot to give and as a way of seeing the world?

Margot Nash [00:57:45] Yeah. But Salvador Dali was a fascist, that's the other thing. I wouldn't go oh he's a surrealist, he's fabulous. It depends. And that's why I said there's something about it that's useful and interesting and can open up ideas or, open up the world of poetry or because it steps through 'the real' into another place, and I still like that.

Don Longo [00:58:13] Yes. I've been reading Jorge Battaile, that's why I'm focusing on that. Thank you. Well, we want to talk a little bit about the persistent themes that you have in your films for a little while. We touched on them last time, but I thought we would tease them out a little bit more. The themes of the films we've seen, we haven't seen all of them, I have to admit, but we've seen a lot of them. It seems to me that family relationships are very, very important, particularly in *Vacant Possession* and *Silences*, and *Call Me Mum*. Race relations are ubiquitous in yo'r films. And the intersection between class'and women are also there in your films. Have we got it right. Those three big themes? (laughter from Margot)

Margot Nash [00:59:19] And all those things, yes.

Don Longo [00:59:20] Yes. And why the return to your mother in *Silences* after so many years.

Margot Nash [00:59:34] *The Silences*?

Don Longo [00:59:36] Yes, in *The Silences*.

Margot Nash [00:59:39] Have you seen the film?

Don Longo [00:59:41] In *The Silences*, is that about your mother?

Margot Nash [00:59:46] You haven't seen the film?

Don Longo [00:59:47] No.

Margot Nash [00:59:49] Oh, okay. I think if you'd seen the film, you'd understand.

Oh, you haven't seen *The Silences*.

Don Longo [00:59:56] No, no, we haven't been able to unfortunately.

Margot Nash [00:59:58] Oh. Okay.

Lyn Longo [01:00:01] Well, was that one that wasn't available?

Don Longo [01:00:04] We've had a bit of trouble downloading for some reason so we weren't able to do it.

Margot Nash [01:00:10] You stream it through Ronin. You don't download. You stream it.

Don Longo [01:00:14] Yeah, we had some trouble with technology and somehow or other it didn't work.

Lyn Longo [01:00:22] We ran out of time.

Margot Nash [01:00:24] I can send you a link, but I think if you see the film, you'd know the answer to the question. The film is about my mother and well it's about

me, but it's about my mother and my relationship with my mother because I use all my films to tell that story. I had a very difficult relationship with my mother. It was not a warm, fuzzy, loving relationship because she was very problematic and difficult.

It's about family secrets. It's about the undercurrents, what's underneath the surface, that actually had a big effect upon daily life. And also, it's about my father who was mentally ill. And so I tell that there were two big family secrets. And one of them was that my father was mentally ill. And the other one, I won't tell you because, *see* the film.

Don Longo [01:01:24] Don't tell us.

Margot Nash [01:01:26] And so I tell people about my father's mental illness in the trailer and in the beginning of the film, because it helps you to see what's going on. And so the fact that I grew up with a mentally ill parent and also my mother was extremely--- I think she was pretty mentally ill herself. Narcissistic and difficult and quite nasty. I spent a lot of time in psychoanalysis, not just the Jungian, then I went into another one later a Lacanian Freudian psychoanalysis. And when I came out of that, that's when I made *The Silences*. I was still in it, I was still doing it when I made *The Silences* and it helped me understand what was going on and what happens to a child in the family, how it affects their lives. And that's why I revisited it, because I'd learnt so much in psychoanalysis that I hadn't understood before and I wanted to express that in a certain way. And I felt that all my films had been dealing with those issues and that's why I repurposed my films in order to tell the new story.

So there's a lot of *Vacant Possession* there, because that's my father in *Vacant Possession*. He was a scientist, he was nuts. But *Shadow Panic*, there's quite a lot of *Shadow Panic* in it too. So at the beginning of *The Silences* I say, 'I search for ways to tell the story. I find images in films I have made like this,' which is the one that you're looking at the time. And that's what I did. I went back into all of my films and films you wouldn't have seen too, to find images to tell that story. It's a complex story, and so that's why the stuff about family and the mother is a recurring theme in all my work. And also the fear. My father was frightening, he was a frightening man. And so there's that fear as well, that runs through some of the films, that comes from childhood and *The Silences* is the one that brought all that together and told the real

story. Well, my story from my point of view and my sister would tell the story differently.

Don Longo [01:03:58] Yes, we'll try to download it again.

Margot Nash [01:04:02] I can send you the link.

Lyn Longo [01:04:29] I think our smart TV's not very clever.

Don Longo [01:04:33] Anyway, in *Vacant Possession*, there's a sort of a nostalgia.

Margot Nash [01:04:36] Don't do it through your TV.

Don Longo [01:04:39] That's what we tried to do.

Lyn Longo [01:04:43] Could be it's *us* that's not smart.

Margot Nash [01:04:44] I think that's the problem. But you have to set the smart TV to pay the money. No, do it through your computer and then stream it. Well, that's what I would do. I don't know. I haven't got a smart TV, I've got a HDMI cable from my computer. So if you're streaming, you should be able to put it through your TV.

Don Longo [01:05:02] We watched *Vacant Possession* through the TV's so we tried it again with *The Silences* and it didn't work.

Margot Nash [01:05:06] You did that through Ronin? So you'll learn a lot more about me, because that's my story. But it's my mother's story. And it's a terrible story, too. And it's a very sad story for her.

Don Longo [01:05:29] And well you told us about it at the at the last interview, the relationship between you and your mother. So we know the story, but we'd love to see it on screen as well.

Margot Nash [01:05:43] And my parents were very racist. I think I fought with my mother from a very young age about racism and so those sorts of themes have always been a part of my trying to make sense of the world.

I made *The Silences* not to work out what had happened, but to express that. But then I did learn things making *The Silences* as well. And I've actually written a big academic chapter about the creative process of *The Silences* that was published by Sydney University in *Sydney Studies in English*. It's called the *The Silences: process, structure and the development of a personal essay documentary*.

Don Longo [01:06:38] I'd like to read that. In *Vacant Possession* we detected a strong nostalgia for a home, a place of your own, a place where a person could feel safe and secure. Is that something that you feel yourself, given the relationship you had with your parents, the lack of a home is an issue for you?

Margot Nash [01:07:07] Well, home *wasn't* a safe place.

Don Longo [01:07:09] No, it wasn't that's right.

Margot Nash [01:07:11] No, not at all. And so I've had to create a safe place, a home for myself.

Don Longo [01:07:19] Yeah. I was wondering whether that little shack in *Vacant Possession* is still there?

Margot Nash [01:07:26] No, I don't think so.

Don Longo [01:07:28] If and when we go to Sydney. I said to Lyn we must have a look for the shack.

Margot Nash [01:07:32] No, no. Well, as it was the little house that we used--- I grew up in a little weatherboard house, but the house that we used, it had the veranda enclosed and we took the veranda off and put it back on again later and we blew the roof off and gave them a new roof.

Don Longo [01:07:53] That's film makers for you.

Margot Nash [01:07:55] We didn't shoot the interiors there. The interiors were shot in a studio. We only shot the exteriors there. And I went looking for it a year or so ago and it's just McMansions, all along that road, looking out over the water. No, it's very different.

Don Longo [01:08:13] Like most coastlines in Sydney, or here. It's yes, McMansions everywhere.

Margot Nash [01:08:18] It was real hillbilly land when we were shooting.

Lyn Longo [01:08:22] Now, I want to ask a question I think I know the answer to. You've been an academic as well as a filmmaker. Do you give equal weight to the value of that in your life? Was academia more a means to an income so that you could get to your main passion? Where do the two aspects of your life fit?

Margot Nash [01:08:49] Well, it's an interesting question because and you'll understand more when you see *The Silences*, but I grew up thinking I was really stupid. That I was unintelligent that I was nothing. And so I had no confidence in my brain whatsoever when I was growing up, and I didn't do well at school. And my

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sister was---- as often in those dysfunctional families, one child was pitted against the other and my sister was intelligent and she was beautiful, and she was clever and I had personality.

I had a thing about it, that I wasn't smart. And I think that's why--I talked about Medlin. Medlin was one of the first people who treated me like I had a brain. And my friend Robin Joyce treated me like I had a brain, too. And so while I took the job at UTS, and I'd been teaching as a casual, teaching filmmaking at UTS and teaching at the Art School, teaching film. When I actually took the job and I became tenured it was because I had a film I couldn't get made. I was 55 years old and I didn't have a roof over my head, I didn't have a home. And so I took the academic job, but it meant I had to produce academic outputs. I could use my films as creative outputs. But I found it very difficult to make films when I was teaching full time and to do creative work.

The first thing that I wrote academically, we had a conference at UTS on creativity, and I thought, 'I can write about creativity. I'll have a think about that.' And I gave a paper and I developed it into a journal article. It was printed in the international *Journal of Screenwriting*. It was the first thing I'd written. It took quite a long time to get to that point. It's actually been reprinted with an easier name. But the journal article was called *Unknown Spaces and Uncertainty in Film Development*. And when it turned into a book chapter, it became *Developing the Screenplay -stepping into the unknown*. And when I wrote it and I reflected upon what I knew as a film maker and what I'd used in my teaching and then began to write it and discovered that I liked doing that writing. And I didn't know that. And I also discovered that I could do that writing. It was a revelation to me. So then it was a lot of work to get an academic journal article published in an international journal. But I did.

Don Longo Tell me about it!

Margot Nash I went to Brussels and I gave that paper in Brussels and I saw that there was a whole community of people, international academics giving--- and I found it very lively and interesting.

Lyn Longo [01:12:43] And that you fitted in that world too.

Margot Nash [01:12:46] Fitted in that world. I didn't realise that I could fit into that world. I discovered that I liked academic writing and that was fantastic. I've published quite a lot now and I also like research. I was in a research area at UTS and we got some money to put a book out called *Locating Suburbia, memory, place, creativity* and I wrote a chapter about growing up on my father's hop farm.

I got money to go to the hop fields up in the Ovens Valley. And I met this old bloke called Rupe Saines who had worked with my Dad. And I did all this research and I wrote the chapter for the book. It's still probably the most viewed thing on Academia.com I have written because I am hop royalty, (laughter) and I really loved doing it.

But I also started going to conferences and I saw people because I was mainly teaching screenwriting. People were writing about the early silent era and about the scripts and how people wrote scripts in the silent era before we had screenplay layout. That intrigued me. And I became very interested in Lottie Lyell and Longford, and I did some original research and went into the archives in Canberra and found some of the scripts or scenarios and analysed them and I published about Lottie and also a bit about the McDonagh sisters.

I couldn't get films financed, I had a lot of difficulty --- everything I put up, just got knocked back. So it was easier for me to write academic articles when I was at the university to get my research points. But making films is very hard when you're a full time academic, but it's hard when you're retired too, I've got to tell you.

The last thing I wrote was about adaptation and that chapter on adaptation, that's proved very popular too. And I'm about to give two guest lectures on it, one to the undergrads and one to the postgrads. So that was very affirming for me, and also pleasurable.

Lyn Longo [01:15:43] **So what started probably as a means to finance your passion, has become a passion in itself.**

Margot Nash [01:15:52] Well that's right. And it meant I could keep my job at the university and keep my research outputs and get promoted to Senior Lecturer. And then you have to do more research outputs. So if you've got something on the go and

you're getting something published and you can kind of keep ahead of it. But then it was something I found I liked.

Don Longo [01:16:16] People that I've mentioned your name to, have often said to me, 'Oh, the feminist film maker.' And I always say, 'Well, she's a film maker, but on some feminist themes.' Do you consider yourself a feminist film maker, and in what way?

Margot Nash [01:16:36] Sure. Yeah.

Don Longo [01:16:38] Does that annoy you when people say, 'She's a feminist film maker.'

Margot Nash [01:16:41] No.

Don Longo [01:16:44] It would me, I think.

Margot Nash [01:16:46] Badge of honour.

Don Longo [01:16:47] Oh, is it that, okay. (laughter)

Margot Nash [01:16:51] Oh, no. That doesn't worry me at all. Okay, I have made films that I wouldn't call them feminist films. I did work at Film Australia for a while. This was before I went to work at the university when I needed to earn a living. But probably because people see me as a feminist film maker, I don't get offered work very often. I don't get offered any work directing.

Don Longo [01:17:42] But you've got a resume that proves----

Margot Nash [01:17:44] So? But I did go out and work at Film Australia for a while. But it was not the happiest time in my life and I'm not very proud of what I did. Okay, but I felt that if I was going to make films, I wanted to make films that I cared about and I'd rather work in the university where I could actually explore ideas and teach and try and make films, but it just meant I made a lot less films.

Don Longo [01:18:14] The power of film to change society, to change things. You still believe in that because you did in the seventies?

Margot Nash [01:18:22] Yeah. Yeah. I think there's so much stuff at the moment. We're drowning in media. Back when I was young, films had the power to change people's lives. And they did. Certainly, there were films I saw that changed my life. And I think there still are and we know the power of the media. The media is very powerful. Yes, I think film can change things. There's a difference between making a film and working on the ground for UNHCR or something like that. When I saw that

film, Barbara Creed made, *Homosexuality, a Film for Discussion*. I thought about her taking that into classrooms in the seventies, and young lesbian gay students suddenly going, 'I'm not alone.'

Lyn Longo [01:19:40] Yeah.

Margot Nash [01:19:41] I mean, I thought that's where film has the power to change lives.

Don Longo [01:19:46] No, it's good. Thank you. That's fine. Lyn has another couple of questions.

Lyn Longo [01:19:50] Well it's a final statement, really. In Manifesto, back in 73, when revolution was in the air, you said, 'The most revolutionary thing is to be yourself.' Do you still hold to that view? And can you comment?

Margot Nash [01:20:09] I'm not sure what I meant by that, really. (laughter) I think I was trying to say---I don't know if that was my idea, or Robin's, or someone else's, but you know that to be true to one's self and rather than to accept what other people say, but to actually find out for yourself what things are about.

Lyn Longo [01:20:35] And I think too, that it followed on from some talk in the Manifesto about how women constantly try to improve their looks for that terror of growing old. So covering your face in plastic, I think is how it was put. (Margot laughs) So it had a practical component as well.

Margot Nash [01:20:59] The makeup. And because we weren't into makeup or anything like that, we were just, you have to be true to yourself.

Lyn Longo [01:21:06] Yeah. So that's where it came from, but I thought---

Margot Nash [01:21:10] I don't mind a little bit of lipstick sometimes.

Lyn Longo [01:21:14] I'd just take my glasses off. Then I look much better.

Margot Nash [01:21:19] Exactly.

Lyn Longo [01:21:21] Yeah, but I think that remark was bigger than just don't worry about doing yourself up for the blokes. It expressed I think, your view of yourself in relation to the world.

Margot Nash [01:21:38] Well, to actually be somebody who doesn't accept what other people say about you or how the world sees women, but to actually find out who you are, yourself and to the question things, to be curious.

Lyn Longo [01:21:52] And throwing off the yoke of your parent's opinion of you, or low opinion of you

Margot Nash [01:21:58] That's right. And I think I had a very low opinion of myself. And I think Robin had low self-esteem too, in terms of what she looked like. I certainly had low self-esteem in terms of my intellectual ability. And I think we've both had to try and throw those things off. And they're very powerful in society that judges you on what you look like and who thinks you're wonderful and who doesn't and other people's ideas of you rather than your own and who you really are and whatever that is. But I think that's something we discover all the time.

On some level, I think we don't change that much. But at another level, I think if we're curious, we're learning things all the time. My great heroine at the moment is my friend Norma Disher who turns 100 on the 19th of October, and she's the most engaged, politically curious person I've ever met. She's just wonderful. And I think that's why she's still powering along in her 100th year is because she's very loved and she's very curious. She knows more about what's going on in politics than I do, that's for sure. 'Did you watch the Insiders Margot?' Well, she said to me, 'I think I'll stick around a bit longer, not just for my 100th birthday, but I think I'll stick around until the 'referendum''

Lyn Longo [01:23:36] **Oh, I love it.**

Don Longo **It's like Irene Gale really.**

Margot Nash [01:23:39] She's my heroine. She's just so engaged with the world and with ideas. She's always been like that. She's somebody who when she sees something that needs to be done, she likes to be part of trying to fix it. Making a change in the world. And so, that's why she's my heroine, really.

Don Longo [01:24:07] **There are a few activists that we've met actually, that we've interviewed who are in their nineties and who are still going strong and still have that fire within them. And so it's been inspiring to see.**

Lyn Longo [01:24:22] **Is there anything that you want to add, Margot?**

Margot Nash [01:24:26] No, not really. All right. I mean, I hope I get to finish my little *Undercurrents* film.

Lyn Longo [01:24:33] **So do we.**

Margot Nash [01:24:35] It's very serious, very sad. I've got to liven it up a bit, but I'm learning a lot of stuff in trying to make it. I'm reading interesting things that I haven't read before. I'm a bit daunted by it at the moment. I got so far with it and

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then it stopped. But that's what happened with *The Silences*, too. I had to wait till something happened... the key that unlocks it. Always look for the key that's going to unlock the story. And so I'm still looking for that, really. But I hope I finish it.

Don Longo [01:25:15] Well it's got terrific reviews, *The Silences*. And we will definitely explore it. I'm glad you didn't tell us one of the secrets.

Margot Nash [01:25:25] No, no, not at all.

Don Longo [01:25:27] Thank you very much, I think.

Margot Nash [01:25:29] Good luck with your project.

END OF INTERVIEW