

**Name of interviewer:** Jan Isaac Shrem and Maria Manetti

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**Length of Interview:** 62 minutes

JS: My name is Jan Isaac Shrem. I was born in Colombia in 1930 of Jewish-Lebanese parents, who had immigrated to South America during The Great Depression to seek their future, but when I was 2 years old, my mother left my father and went to live in Jerusalem, where she had family, and where I lived until I was 9 years of age. Those were some of the happier years of my childhood, 7 years in Jerusalem. I remember our house; in fact, I went to see it a few years ago. And I remember my school, in 1939, my mother returned to my father in Colombia, and I was there until 1946 or when I became 16 years of age. With the help of a sister of my father, who lived in New York, I obtained a resident visa, and with the help of my mother, I was able to get passage on a freight airplane because our family was not well to do. My father just had a dry goods store, which mostly my mother took care of, as he was most of the time just chatting with his neighbors. Anyway, I did not have a feeling of being Colombian. I had stronger feeling on being Jewish always, but I'm proud of being Jewish although I'm not a religious person. My father was a Jewish Orthodox, who tried to inculcate religion to me with an iron hand, so the opposite happened. When I left home in 1946, I never went to a synagogue for praying again, and I was so happy to be in New York, it was my total liberation from, a happy childhood I used... I remember I used to run in the streets. At first, I was at my aunt's home in the Bronx's and then, gradually I got a job as a messenger boy and got my own apartment and I was... I had very happy years in America. When I finished high school in 1948, I worked in the daytime and went to night school to finish my high school, and then to go to college, I kept applying for a scholarship because I was not financially very able, but in those years, veterans had priority, so I had to keep applying further and further west and finally I got a scholarship at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. And I went there, where I got my bachelor's degree, and then went to UCLA in Los Angeles. Most of those years in college, I used to sell encyclopedias door to door. I had this passion for books, which was contagious. As a result, I was able to make a lot of money selling books because of my enthusiasm and my salesmanship, but then in 1955 while studying for my Master's degree at UCLA, I met a Japanese girl in my class. I felt in love with, and I asked her to marry with me, but she said she needed her parents' permission. So when vacation came, she took me to Japan, where I had never dreamed of going, but her parents said, "No." And forbid her from ever dating a foreigner again. So she abandoned me, broke my heart but gave me a big favor because had I gone back with her, I will not had made a fortune in Japan in the book business. Japan in those days was converting from German to English as a reference language, (unintelligible) characters do not lend themselves to scientific expression, so they needed a western language and of course it became English. So I began replacing all those German encyclopedias with American ones, which I imported, and eventually spread out into art books, engineering books and many other books. Later, I had the partnership with an Italian publisher in Milan, and then, I had a new love, whom I wanted

to marry but again could not get permission to marry in Japan. In Japan, when you marry someone the name of the spouse goes into family register which my name will ruin, so as a result, I had an offer to sell my company which at that time I had 2000 salesmen and 50 offices all over Japan, so I sold the company, and we moved it to Italy, where I had the connection of this Italian publisher and we actually married in Lugano where I had a friend who was a laBYer who introduced me to the Italian publisher. And Lugano was just one hour away from Milano, so we purchased a villa there, overlooking the beautiful lake. And we were there for a couple of years. Our first child was born, but then I had a better opportunity for business in France, and we moved to Paris. I was able to purchase a house build by Napoleon for one of his marshals, a four floor house overlooking the sand on the Via de Boulogne and we were very happy 13 years there, with the birth of our second son. And then, living in France, I became very interested in wine, so I went and I got tired of the book business by then, it was not as profitable as it had been before in Japan, so I sold the business, I went to the University of (unintelligible) to study Enology and I had so much talk about Napa Valley there that I asked one the professors to give me the reference, and introduction of someone in Napa, and I was given the name of one the leaders of Napa Valley, Andre Tchelistcheff, he actually introduced quality wine in Napa Valley, being brought to Napa by Josh Delatoure in 1939. He helped me, and then I had become a serious art collector in Italy and France, had the means, the right from selling my Japanese business, and as a result I was able to purchase art and was very interested in art and books were my passions as a child. I used to paint as a child, but never continued afterwards, so with art as my passion I was able to select art, which became my passion for 40 years. And I collected hundreds of the great painter, artist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Beginning with (unintelligible) a surrealism going on into abstraction, minimalism, ad all the movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but then there had this competition to design the winery, I had purchased the land on arriving in San Francisco, where I first started a home, and then the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art agreed to sponsor that competition. There were 96 architects, who participated, and Michael Graves won the award to build the temple to wine, which became very popular and attracted much media attention. In fact, the Washington Post called it, “American First monument to wine as art,” because I had also filled it up with my art inside and outside, I had built a cave theater, so I was able to give expression to another of my passions, music. So, we had many concerts, and I supported the local music events in the Napa Valley. Then, in 2010, my wife passed away after 40 years together. And fortunately, I had known Maria, who I courted and eventually married. We’ve been married for 3 years, very happy years, and she has helped me in so many ways. She is my teacher, and I have a new life with her.

BY: I wanted to take a minute and go back to your childhood; you come from this very rich Jewish-Lebanese heritage, you spent 7 wonderful years in Jerusalem. Talk a little bit about what it was like growing up in these different places. What kind of traditions did your family celebrate? whether religious. Did you observe religious holidays, whether rites of passage, what markers cultural identity, do you remember?

JS: I was very, I was very happy living in Jerusalem. I do remember we went to synagogue, but not often. My mother was nothing Orthodox Jewish, but I remember about the Jewish traditions and about our Jewish friends and relatives, and I had always been very, very proud of being Jewish because of the rich history or Judaism, which I studied and I continue to study.

BY: What do you do to keep connected to those traditions?

JS: Mostly reading, I read a great deal, books connected with Israel history, its achievements.

BY: Did those family traditions change after you came to the United States?

JS: Not the Jewish part, but I... The 7 last years I spent in Colombia from the age of 9 to the age of 16 were very unhappy years because I had a brother who did not know Hebrew, and my father wanted to force him to learn it and force me to teach it, but he was not willing to do so, so I had a miserable time. Also, I was a very conscientious son, very obedient, and he would common said (unintelligible) the five o'clock prayer, because there are so many... there are five prayers during the day, but the 5 p.m. prayer is the (unintelligible) I said, "Yes, I did." And I was honest and contentious and he hit me in the face. "You are lying, go and say it". So, I had a very unhappy childhood because of that Orthodox religion, and I became an agnostic because of that.

BY: Do you remember being part of this Colombian society and culture?

JS: Only de Jewish part, because we went to, we were very closely knit, all the Jewish in that city were together, we met together, we ate together, we of course, we met Friday evening and all the Saturday at synagogue, but I did not have direct relationship as a Colombian, mainly as a Jewish child.

BY: So, what do you consider yourself today?

JS: Jewish American.

BY: Okay, and are there times that you really feel American?

JS: Oh, very much so. I came here at the age of 16, and I have done very well in my life. To a large extend from what I've learned in America, and from the contacts I have had in America.

BY: Did you have family or friends here? How did you end up coming to the United States?

JS: My father's sister was living in New York, married to a school teacher of whom I was very fond, who helped me a great deal; he was American. And I was very happy from the time I came to the United States at the age of 16, and then later on at the age of 18 went to college, after the age of 25 when I went to Japan.

BY: Can you talk about a time when you felt that you tried to fit in, whether maybe it was challenging...

JS: I don't think I had trouble fitting in. In fact, I remember at the University hearing of anti-Semitism, and I never ever felt persecuted. I was very proud of being Jewish, and actually, I was in contact with a Jewish organization in Los Angeles from whom I borrowed a film to show about Judaism and Israel at the university, and I do remember that I put posters in visible places inviting people to see it.

BY: So, you have a certain entrepreneurial spirit and your character in your life. What do you attribute that to? And did your life in the United States have anything to do with that?

JS: Of course. America is the land of opportunity, and I learned so much here. My first job here was messenger in a large corporation, and then when I started going to school I began selling socks, which had the guarantee if you get a hole in them you send them and you get a new one, a new pair back, but of course people wouldn't bother to send their socks. That lasted a short time, but then I began selling encyclopedias from my first year in college because I needed financial support, which my family could not provide me, and I did very well because of my passion for.... And also, I met so many American friends, specially a pianist lady who was a widower but who helped me a great deal during my college years in Utah.

BY: What has been most challenging for you?

JS: I cannot think of anything that's particularly challenging, I have no complains, I have had many friends who had helped me a great deal, many opportunities.

BY: What are you most proud of in your life? You have a very successful life.

JS: Yes. I get success both financial and personal. I had a happy marriage for 40 years, and I have another one, already 3 years now. And then also, being able create a large, a very large art collection which has been praised in which I lend to many museums. In which, we are now selling some to... Because my wife has taught me to give charity with a warm hand, not with a cold hand like had I planned to do by leaving in my will that everything will go to a museum. Actually I'm now, I'm selling some of the art, two fans of philanthropy and we are building a museum art college at the University of California in Davis, which could not have happened if I had not been able to have the have the art to sell to finance it.

BY: What advice would you give to future generations of people coming to the United States?

JS: Study hard, work hard.

BY: Do you remember taking risk in your life, in your career...

JS: Of course. All business entails some risk and sometimes is successful if we have good judgment, sometimes we make mistakes, but largely I have been successful.

BY: Okay, why don't we shift, I would like...

MM: I don't know if I can talk as well as he does.

BY: If you can introduce yourself, and today .... I neglected to say that today is March the 18<sup>th</sup>, and we are in San Francisco.

MM: Maria Manetti Shrem, and I came in the United States. No... I was born in Florence, Italy with a bang because the day that Mussolini declared the war to the rest of the world and got together with Hitler and that was the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1940. And my poor father was called to the Army and he didn't even saw me being born, but somebody said: "Tosca, my mother (unintelligible)." He was on the train to go to the army. He said: "Oh good, so she doesn't have to be a military, she doesn't have to go to the war". So, my early childhood was not easy because I was under the bomb and my father and my mother are ready adult, I was the second, and after that they had another son, 43 and another 44, so I had lots of compassion for them because they had to protect us and procured food, which was not very easy to find at that time. So, my childhood was slightly outside of Florence. we had a neighborhood that we were very close, you know, was not extravagant but we never had the problem with food, we always had great food, everything homemade completely and organic, but was a difficult time for the Italian, you know, as in Florence because also when the ally came on our side were the German, and the other side the allied, so the allied were bombing our side, so our home was bombed and everything, so you know, but very grateful for those experience, because they have allowed me to appreciate every small little things that I have in my life now and that I have had in the past 30 years. So I went to school in Florence, my grammar school, my high school and college. I graduated with Economic and Languages, and I got married for the first time age 22 to an American citizen. So my karma is, Jan karma was with Japanese, my karma was with Americans, not with Italians. Not with Florentine, and we started the business together and it was a designing and manufacturing and exporting and marketing clothing in (unintelligible) something like this, also suit. Again, I feel very fortunate because that was the foundation of my work and my career, they gave me, eventually the success that I had in my third business. I had three businesses in my life. Always concentrating in fashion. So, after 10 years that I was married, I was exhausted because I was running the company with 300 people, and I was very young, but I guess my entrepreneurship spirit came out. I always felt that I have a little seed of (unintelligible) because my two sisters and my brother didn't have that. I was... I became very close friend with Aldo Gucci, he made the Gucci name what is today, not his father, no Gucci Gucci. He did. And he was a Gemini like me, so I think, me and him had a little seed of the medicine, with different. So, I felt in love with a young student, and in Italy there was no divorce at that time in 1970, and when Edward DeGeorge, my first American husband, asked me to become American citizen, at that time was very easy, I was still living in Florence to the consul general and all that. I said: "I don't need to have American passport. I'm Italian. I don't need American Citizenship". Of course, I regret a little because I could not do anything regarding, I worked very hard, super hard, 15 hours a day, made a success of the company, I did, now he became a gentleman the (unintelligible) run the company, but I could not get anything out with me, so I had to sign everything to him. So, if I wanted to

come to the United States, which I only had a permit as a tourist, I had to go to Santo Domingo to get a divorce that I was accepted in the United States and to have that power of attorney that brought to a laBYer that I had to leave everything behind me. So, I followed my heart and I came in this country with \$2000 dollars and with my clothes and little, very little, but I didn't care, I was happy and I got married immediately and had my divorce from Santo Domingo. I was scared to death when I left Italy, and I went from New York to Santo Domingo. The plane was 10 hours late so arrived in the middle of the night, I didn't know where I was, all these black people. You know, in Italy at that time there was no black people, with big lips, I was terrified. And this taxi driver, because the laBYer that was going to meet me, he couldn't wait until midnight, he had family so he left, and I gave him the name of the hotel, scared to death and I was in the middle of the jungle in this taxi with this black guy. And my family didn't know where I was, so I could had been...

BY: Which the (unintelligible) this?

MM: Dominican Republic. I forgot the city, the capital of Dominica Republic. But the following morning, it took me to the hotel. I pay him. I felt, I was terrified to hold 45 minutes trip, and the following day, we went... the laBYer came. He was representing my husband, and we found another laBYer to represent me. So the little money I had went all into that. We went to the city hall or so down, no, the court hall and I did have the divorce but the sent it to me two weeks later and as soon as I received the divorce, which went to Carson City, and we got married and we had breakfast at Wendy's. That was our celebration of our marriage. But I was happy and I did not have no money, nothing but I was happy. And the metro fest just yesterday, to the Italian consulting I told him. But the first place together was a little room and a bathroom below a house in Montclair Hill in the Hill of Oakland and Steven (unintelligible). My husband built the little shelf. We put a hot plate and I cooked a soup, I cooked pasta, I was not doing anything, so I was cooking and the people upstairs, they were smelling of this and the men was going crazy because the wife didn't know how to cook so, anyhow. And I (unintelligible) the spaghetti in the butter gloss because I have no at a place. So, and now, you know, I have all of these. But, you know again, I am grateful for being born under the War, going through, you know, other kids will have a nice piece of bread with butter and jam and we will have that piece of bread with garlic spread and olive oil, because it was less expensive. But I've never envy anybody, anything to anybody, so anyhow.

BY: What was that neighborhood like? How old were you at that time?

MM: Thirty two.

BY: Thirty two. Okay.

MM: You know, and I had lived a life, wealthy life, traveling little low by the world. Traveling United States by car Mercedes taking well beautiful old (unintelligible) Michael Angelo and Raffaello and after with the car, the Mercedes we both visit client Olympic way. So I

did, I've gone United States the five or six time. New York, San Francisco, either the north or the center of the south enough to take you like one month enough to come and back in four days to take the boat and done. So I led so much about United States. I love the United States at this point and they appointed my English was not so good but it was getting better. I was a navigator, I was a good navigator, became a good navigator, but... So, when I came here, after losing everything, for the first we are, I was touching myself, I'm really living here. And I am a sinner because I'm divorced women. I didn't even realize that here every fifty percent of people are divorced. So, when... I did 300 hundred resume, my background, I used only 3 and I got immediately 3 job offer immediately. When my Steven (unintelligible) called (unintelligible) comes said that "This is February, we already enough people" I said but this person is very special, I think you should talk to her because she was... I had ready (unintelligible) with the president to buy (unintelligible) of all store because they used to come in my show room and buy (unintelligible) and used to have them in our home and entertain them. So, I, you know, I knew already the top. So, and I make me when they offer me to be the assistant of the president within for a higher position paid and everything, I said: "Oh please! First I need to talk to Mister Shoemaker I need to explain to him why I had to get divorce, so why a divorced. And that person who you might be a source for the certificates of mine but the men says: "oh of course, of course you have to talk to him. This is who I would make an appointment for you to talk to him" but after I went to I just make me and they offered me a less pay position. I don't even ask the guys. As a Department Manager (Unintelligible) Assistant to the president and to give me a buyer position in based on my background, but to offer me to be a department manager in the Gucci shop and then I followed my heart. I said: "I am a client; I was a client to Gucci in Florence. So I say: "I'm going to take this job." Indeed I did that I think because they didn't have a buyer. So six months later, I am back. Well my families, of course when they came to the airport to take me there were crying, because Steven was a student, with seven hundred dollars. (Unintelligible) And after (unintelligible) life of traveling and nice clothes and beautiful home (unintelligible) classical and everything, but you know, that's why I need to write a book of my life to, you know, to motivate people so anyhow. I took the job which was a (unintelligible) and they didn't have a buyer. I became to (unintelligible) or any less than four years I didn't even know their salary when I realize my salary was nothing, so eventually I got my salary and I had ten people working for me, I became the director of the good ship franchise edges of making and I open for them twelve pay store, they had two, I open other ten, so that was\_\_ and I was the only successful department in the hole (unintelligible) and I became very good friend with Gucci, who offer me when I told them that I was leaving (unintelligible) I wanted, since I was an entrepreneur I want to (unintelligible) to my own business, because I was very intensely and I had very logic mind and anyhow, so Gucci's wants to lose me and they offered me a distribution for all United States all the small collection of accessories and behaving to a speed is before with all (unintelligible). And (unintelligible) Putting company of old Bloomingdale, Saks everything. At that time was much easier than is now because now there's only two or three and that time every city in America had a department, a specialty store owned by

family. So you could sale to every city, separate. Now you sell to New York and they send it to all the other store, is really very... I feel very sad for the people in the fashion, that designed and everything. So and I knew because of my first job and class when I was here today. Joseph the (unintelligible) I, nobody taught me anything. I used to throw away all these documents that will come when I realize will support that we are very important not only learned about them, and then I made them even better, so they help me after to do the distribution, because I could talk to do chairman and C.E.O. of Saks or Bloomingdale knowing their business and they said: "How did you learn, I work lingers (unintelligible) the Italian, they come and didn't understand, I am talking about seventy nine now, seventy nine. You talk of what lingers it was a work for six year (unintelligible) retail and I learn in the parting company with a parting company and the president then the president, I Report or I get rid of everybody and I report only to the president because it was too some well and I started this company by putting a taking a loan of sixty thousand dollar or our house in Berkley in our third house. My husband, my second husband loved to build. So he- we both for very little, a small little house in the student that you have that really do their foundation to have roof they have anything. So I said: "By I will be all this happens (unintelligible) built them and I have to jump out from the kitchen window to go out to come to San Francisco to work. So you know, very interesting, there are so many anecdotes. But I was always very optimistic and I did the great job. Joseph (unintelligible) that Gucci offered me the position and I design a system that was do not exist to design a years later goods and I have to have one hundred twenty people there. So in this book because you see here you let me know how you do know the path to success, and eventually in 1990, I sold the business, because there was a big fight in the Gucci family, I lost the contract because they knew people that in a few. That kicked out their uncles that made everything for everybody, and you know, stole the distribution that I have prepared in the silver tray from me and after (unintelligible) They didn't know what to do and they closed the division, but I took Fendi, another Italian designer and Mike Kors but I was so exhausted, so tired and I went to a financial advisor and I say: "OK, we have this company, we have this asset, we have this money, can I, you know, live quite well without a company anymore?" Well there's a word to have you can do if they want to do a full step, you can do it if you sell the company even better. So I decided to put the company for sale and I asked my vice president to find the buyer will give them hundred thousand dollar, you know who are funded by me and I and eventually we'll also give them money but was a mistake and that was it and that was so good because it was just before the big recession 1992, 1994, all happening, the retail, the whole sale business, so right in my business. But I have no sold, 80 cross the company. If I have not sold, we would have been... and my deep, and my husband, the love of my life after twenty year and mid-life crisis and he decide to leave the marriage. So I was devastated, because you know I was burnt-out, and after the happened so it was very tough. You know everybody in life has a tough moment, for me it was between '88 to '94 was very difficult. But after that, we are still very good friend with my formal husband, that (unintelligible) in December we have lunch together. I decided to manage my investment to the best of my ability so I had to learn because he was doing all the

administration and did and do mental illness will do the load because when I married Stephen Farrow I lost a beautiful (unintelligible) classical It was venial (unintelligible) So when I saw upper valley I told him. I told him I said: "One day I would let to have a little home," and he says: "We don't have any money I said: Look, this is a castle in the air, you know if we materialize fine, if you doesn't materialize and now we have, I have this incredible Tuscan villa in 60 acres that everybody come and (unintelligible) because it's a really beautiful place, so, the—OK, so that at that—So, in the last 15 years before marrying Jan, I travelled the world over, when I kept and here I work very hard but I decided to see so I used to work 18 hours a day seven days a week. I said "*basta*". You see, I couldn't done it too small to quantity and I said: "uh" because I knew the amount to work will entitle and I am a perfectionist. I said: "for (unintelligible) do only for equal". So, I am helping of doing, of course, my property will have three times more value now. But again, you know you have enough money to eat well and to live okay and to be able to travel and be without the headache that money wise. You don't need more than that, you know, what do you need more? So we met at you know, Jan and I met. We used to know each other through social and sweet life Mitsuko and when I found out that she passed away when out to dinner and our romance started there in 2011, 2011. So now pretty much, my, you know, my life has been very exciting. At time I've been exhausted, I said: "oh, I wish I will big goal (unintelligible) too many, too many headache. But I know how fortunate I am. Most of all to be here in America because I believed the America is a land of opportunity. I love this country very, very much. I love the system. Everything is much faster. You can accomplish many more things, if you have passion, if you work hard, if you are resilient, you don't take enough for an answer. And at the same time, you are more than generous, you know, this country is done so much for me. I love this country.

BY: I want to go back for a minute here, your childhood, growing up and thinking about this, being Italian and which your family religious. Did you--?

MM: Yeah, we went every Sunday to Mass and we—I my after school, in grammar school was with a nun. We were very close to the nun Sor (Italian language) still remembering her. Yeah very, very religious. My mother was very religious, and I love my childhood. Also, was not easy but I love and I am very thankful for... Matter fact, I was not due to go to school because I was going to become a seamstress. But an uncle of mine from Sicilia, he talked to my mother. She's too smart, you need to send her to school and I-- you know, I need to thank him because the school were closed, so by the (unintelligible) the professor of one of the school, she used to do after school teaching for kids, and my mother asked her if she would teach me for privately for the following year to apply and this lady Flora (unintelligible) I still remember name, I owe her so much. She taught me, because I was a very, very young. Both of us very good student, very conscientious. She taught me so much they went, I went for the examination, I passed in the second year, immediately and when I went to school with the other kids, teenager, I knew more than anybody else because she taught me so much. So again, that was luck that my uncle told her because I could not after grammar school you know, that was typical you know we're

talking 1951. You know, there was still bicycle in Italy, very few cars, you know. I loved my heritage, I love Italy, I love the art, I love the food, you know the passion, I do not like when me and my family and friends lose temper because we lose temper very easier, like the Irish, you know, because I had a Irish boyfriend and I know that experience so, I now called my prayer is to be not over react to problem to particular is a business problem, personal problem which we don't have as a husband and wife. And to be calm, patient (unintelligible) that is my new mantra. But this is the DNA to fire up. Get upset after so it's okay. But meanwhile they have software's and the people around, and specially the American very sensitive. My second husband with English descends. He everytime we were with my family and we'll have a discussion about something he would be terrified but for us was not so different in culture. Metra felt that I felt that when I will see the different culture but I, you know, I love both culture. I think I learn, I learn like, in Italy if you say, "How are you? *Come estai?*" They tell about the little problem, the throat problem. I remember the first time it just a magnet. I would meet somebody going in the elevator, and they would ask me, "How are you?" I say, "Oh. (Unintelligible)" And if they ask you just say, "Hi." That's it. It's the same thing but in Italy, you go on and on and on. Now I don't. I really do not appreciate what people in Italy tell me all about their problems because I'm so used here because people don't say. Only close friends talk about problems. So there is two different definitely. There is a difference and the first two year was very difficult for me to adjust. Also, if I had been in America many times, but when you come as a tourist, or now our case as business people and living here is different.

BY: So when do you feel Italian and when do you feel American?

MM: You know, when I count, I count in Italian. *Uno. Due. Tre.* I cannot count in English. It's incredible. Why am I counting in Italian? When I'm passionate about... when entertain, I'm very Italian. When I do business, I'm very American. And when I teach my assistant or people ask me an advice, I'm very American. But when I entertain, and when I'm with my opera friends, I am very Italian because it doesn't matter if they're Russian or French or English, they all know Italian because 90, 80 percent of opera, it's Italian opera. So they all sing Italian. They all speak Italian.

BY: Are there any traditions from your Italian childhood and upbringing the (unintelligible) today? Whether is with food or...

MM: Definitely with food. Like I love soup like I did today. Especially in winter time in the evening because we always had pasta and main course and lunch and soup and main course at dinner. So for me soup is paramount in my diet. And also, when I came here I could not find Bassong. I could not find (unintelligible) I could not find many things. I miss those things now especially California we had and I have a vegetable garden where I grow everything. So I brought the seeds from Italy so... but today in the last ten-fifteen-twenty years, the food, the vegetable, the clothing, everything has become such good quality here in America, in every city of America, especially in the big area. We are very

contentious about organic food, about fresh food. There is nothing in my refrigerator and very little in my freezers, some piece of chicken. Everything is fresh.

BY: Maybe we can shift and talk a little bit more about your lives together. How that has unfolded?

MM: Yeah. We, Jan and I, work on the calendar at least every two weeks. We have these little calendars. Of course, I book everything, but I need to tell him so he knows what's going, and he wants to know what's going on. And the beautiful thing again, that's why we decided to get married because, first of all, we're very international, both of us have traveled the world over many times, and so this is good because they have been very few places he has not been and very few places I have not been. And we like food, we like wine, we like music, we like art and we...I love people. And now, he likes people too. And you know, the only difference that there is, he was so used to go to bed at 9:30 that when we are at dinner table and I am next to him to (unintelligible) and he start closing his eye. And I say, "As soon as you feel that, go to the toilet and put some water." Because people think he's bored to dead. But it's only because he has this habit. We melted together pretty well, you know, he's very calm and kind. I'm very (unintelligible). You know, so I need I am working on myself to temper my explosion. I don't like. But it you know and well funded the bomb and eventually my... Also, my father and mother would yell at each other all the time, so matter of fact when I talked my sister on the phone, I talk to them often. Now, I feel unsightly in there because I have worked out my anxiety of I've become... Oh, by the way, in between... when I got burnt-out in the business and my divorce and I was so upset, I became very close to Buddhism. Buddhism really helped me tremendously. So we continue. And now, Jan's getting involved with me because Buddhism is the philosophies not a religion. We like it. And Buddhism has helped me to calm down a lot. I meditate. I forced myself to meditate to two months of the month and things like that because our goal, which is my goal is for the next few years that we have left in this life because it was a normal two to really start to be less hideous and be light hearted. That is one of my goals. I am really determined because I do not like... That is the only thing that I like about my background, the volatility. We are all like that. Small little thing (makes explosion sound).

BY: So do both of you remain connected with family?

MM: I am. He is not. I am in Italy. Matter fact, we are leaving the fifth, not the eight. You know at the home of my sister we happen to be a have a niece is getting close so we we're getting together. I decided to long time ago also their philosophy and their way of see life is completely different to mine. Their family, that's one thing then out to sea and my American friends don't talk to their sisters many of them. I decided... Also, if I could have done that because that time may have been nasty and they've been very generous and I think their family and the upsets the pulp and political team with blood and I have a very small family. Jan is not in contact, only with a brother in Los Angeles, but maybe two or three times a year. Yes either. Thank you thank you

BY: Two questions. What are you most proud of?

MM: You know, now, before I always...OK. Let me say this. Once in a while I do this to myself because, my God, I came in this country with two thousand dollar, I have been helping my family and you know. And really one of things I'm proud of that we can be, I can be and we can be to create philanthropists. I believe in giving back because I got so much by working hard. Nobody gave me a thing. No family no friends. I remember the father or my husband give loan us eight hundred dollars when we bought the first house and he thought he would not see it again. Eight months later I gave the money back because I didn't like the I don't like that, but I'm very proud of what I have achieved and most of all the kind of friends that I have.

JS: The average person is the same. I am very happy of the way life has turned out and especially very happy that I am with Maria.

MM: We had a very exciting life, very exciting. If you look at our calendar is sold by Buckingham Palace which are Prince Charles Lane over the years.

JS: Do you see the picture of Prince Charles?

MM: Yeah, yeah. Because I have been benefactor of the prince and with fondness for the last ten years and in the last year we will do a donation for it. It was Princeton only school and he's now become royalty to leave school. And the royal academy was 70, 85. There's only a school of design in that time to decrease. OK to have something. And so we know when he came down from the podium mouse in the tick I was there and he kissed me because... And after dinner or sitting down next to him. No we have a very, very, very, very exciting life.

BY: And finally what does it mean to be American?

MM: For me it's free of expression, freedom to do really anything you want to do and to the spectacle of others I think I am super proud to be American. And I always will defend America to (unintelligible) and America's given me so much. Italy's given my background, my birth, and the art, and the head beats. Besides blowing up, that is the only thing I don't like, but you know I love both country but America has done so much for me that I feel very super proud.

JS: I can say the same, I am very, very proud of having... of becoming an American

MM: You could've been a French citizen because you lived so long in Paris.

JS: But already since the age of 16, I had come to America. I went to high school here. I went to college. So America remained in my bones. I'm very proud to say that it's the land of opportunity and I was able to take advantage of that part.

BY: Is there anything you'd like to add?

MM: I think again I would like for the next generation of American people that become American to realize that again with patient, hard work and determination because you only make it in the sky.

JS: which is what you're doing.

BY: Well, thank you very much.