

ALTERNATIVE PROJECTIONS

Experimental film in Los Angeles, 1945 - 1980

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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INTERVIEW SUBJECT: Louis Hock

Biography:

Louis Hock was born in Los Angeles in 1948 and raised in Nogales and Tucson, Arizona. He began making films when he was studying psychology and poetry at the University of Arizona, graduating with a BA in Psychology in 1970. In 1973 he received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He joined the University of California, San Diego in 1977 and works as a professor the Visual Arts Department.

Hock's artwork - films, video tapes, installations and public media events- have been exhibited in solo shows at numerous national and international art institutions including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. He has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants including the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Film Institute, the Rockefeller Foundation, and California Arts Council (2002).

Upcoming exhibitions include a permanent video installation at the Tom Bradley International Terminal of the LAX and a video installation based on the 1979 cinemural, Southern California, at the Getty Center as part of "Pacific Standard Time" in 2011.

Filmography:

Light Traps (1975, 16mm, 00:10:00)
Pacific Time (1978)
Silent Reversal (1972, 16mm, color, silent, 00:12:00)
Zebra (1973, 16mm, 00:18:00)
Still Lives (1975, 16mm, 00:19:00)
Studies in Chronovision (1975, 16mm, 00:21:30)
Mississippi Rolls (1976?, 16mm 3-projector piece, 00:25:00)
Southern California (1979, 16mm 3-projector piece, 01:08:00)

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Interview date: April 18, 2010
Interviewer: Stephanie Sapienza
Cameraperson: Amy Halpern
Transcript Reviewer: Louis Hock, Elizabeth Hesik

Tape 2: Pages 23 - 42

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Interviewer: Stephanie Sapienza
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Interviewer: Stephanie Sapienza
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Transcript Reviewer: Louis Hock, Elizabeth Hesik

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Transcript Reviewer: Louis Hock, Elizabeth Hesik

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Interviewer: Stephanie Sapienza
Cameraperson: Amy Halpern
Transcript Reviewer: Louis Hock, Elizabeth Hesik

TAPE: 1 LOUIS HOCK

00:01:06

LOUIS HOCK

I was born in Los Angeles in 1948 and my father was in the-- had a dress manufacturing company with his family and my mother was a buyer for a place called Haggerty's which is a large department store. And his family was Sicilian and my mother married my father. And then when I was four, she left him, and came to Nogales, Arizona where my family, most of my family was.

00:01:41

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Then when I was six, I moved to go to school in Tucson with my mother and my grandmother. And after my mother went to Nogales my brother was born there and the two of us went to Tucson. It was interesting because in the town of Nogales I had a bunch of my family move-- well my family, the Taylors moved to Nogales from Indiana because my grandfather had tuberculosis.

00:02:17

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

They also suffered a rather severe financial disaster before coming to Nogales. And so it ended up all, you know these Irish, English people ended up in Nogales. And it was a very multicultural city. Some of them married people from this side of the line, some people married people from the other side of the line, married Lebanese and married Mexican, married...

00:02:47

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So it became a really multicultural family very quickly. And when I went to Tucson I had a pretty usual childhood. I went to public schools and I had no idea what I wanted to do. I mean I did a lot of stuff, I mean, poetry, I read. But I had no designs on any particular kind of career.

00:03:14

LOUIS HOCK

In high school I-- we didn't have a lot of money so I went to the local college, I went to the University of Arizona. And I started off in International Finance and then I careened over into poetry and then I went over into psychology. And then in my last year I started to pick up filmmaking. And it turned out that I had the most units in-- the closest path to my graduation was in psychology.

00:03:54

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I got a degree in psychology. It could have-- actually it would have been more logical to be in writing, in poetry. But it didn't work out that way numerically. So I took-- there was a course being offered. I was figuring out that, you know, what I wanted to do and I realized once I got thrown out of a fraternity I realized I was hopeless in terms of pursuing a regular career with a business suit.

00:04:29

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And making money and I didn't like those people. I didn't like their aims and I wasn't interested in their sense of humor and I wasn't interested in that. And so I started hanging with the poetry crowd in college. And they were much more interesting. And I was doing pretty well with poetry and I was writing and things you know, they were getting shown around and I was getting-- and actually it turned out the class was pretty high caliber, where a lot of the people went on to be practicing poets.

00:05:00

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

There was a guy by the name of Robert Shelton of the Ruth Stephan Poetry Center. And it was-- to me it was a really intellectually charged place. And I felt comfortable in writing the poetry because it was the first sort of accolades I got for doing something artistic. But it was wonderful because they had travelling poets. And they had Kenneth Wagoner, Galway Kinnell, Allen Ginsberg, and I think maybe even Denise Levertov maybe, came through and they stayed and gave a poetry reading in the poetry class.

00:05:40

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I was a sophomore, junior, most of these people were graduate students and seniors and they read your poetry and talked to you about it. And it was really good because-- particularly Allen Ginsberg, I realized that-- I mean they were kind to me and my poetry and I could write reasonable poetry but I realized when I talked to these people that they thought in words.

00:06:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I didn't think in words, I thought in images and I translated into words. And I realized that I could never-- I could always become a mediocre poet but I would never really become a good poet because I was always in active translation. So I thought well maybe I should start playing with the idea of what I was good at, start playing with images.

00:06:24 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And so I decided that I was going to make films. For no-- I mean I went to films like everybody else, and I went to independent films, but I was not a film nut. But I decided for some reason I decided films, just like a light bulb going off, films were going to be it. And so there was this guy named Martin, I've forgotten his last name. But Martin [Nordlof] was great.

00:06:47 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

He was a drummer, I think he was a drummer for the Spiders, a group who had been in Phoenix which had turned into some famous band [Hock note: Alice Cooper]. But he was walking out of a Country Joe and a Fish concert with a camera. And I said oh great you've got a camera, lets make movies. He said, I can't I just bought this camera and I did a test roll I don't have any money.

00:07:10 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I say well I'll get some money we'll make films. So we started making films. We made a whole bunch of short, all odd kinds of films you know. He was really interested-- he's like, you know in college he'd written a manual on drumming, he was an interesting guy. And we did a lot of stuff with double exposures. It was a Bolex you know so you could do double exposures. And matting stuff out and there were sorts of narrative sorts of things. And we did maybe three or four films.

00:07:46 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

I want to stop you just there, I want to talk more about those films especially. But I want to go back a little bit. I just wanted you to talk a little bit more about your family a little bit, your mother and your brother maybe and also the aspect you mentioned about your family splintering off into several different, a multicultural family very quickly. Whether that, you were able to witness any cultural artistic threads that you wouldn't have normally been exposed to by that.

00:08:11 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA (CONTINUED)**

And just in general what kind of culture and arts you were exposed to through high school that you know maybe informed anything that you studied in your years toward in college.

00:08:25 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well in Nogales there were-- it was a pretty wild bunch I mean, my cousin-- my great aunt Helen wrote jingles, and if I'm not mistaken she may have done the Snap, Crackle, Pop, but that kind of stuff. She would win all these enormous prizes, I was always jealous when I would go down there because her son had all these, you know plastic big cars he could drive around, his motor cars.

00:08:59 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And they'd won this stuff and her husband was always crazed because she'd get like 2,000 boxes of Tide and he had to pay income tax on it. But she was a very creative kind of person and she would play, and she was a bit wacky but kind of wonderful, she played the piano. And then my second cousins Peter and Dickie [Saldamando] were very musical. I don't know if you know there was a group called Bud and Travis?

00:09:21 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It was a very, it predated the Kingston Trio

00:09:37 **LOUIS HOCK**

Anyway, it was very early and they were the first people to actually sing in Spanish in popular-- and English, because they were more kind of cultured. And they-- and a lot of my family hung out with that kind of crowd, it was a very musical kind of crowd.

00:10:01 **LOUIS HOCK**

Another one of my cousins you know like sang you know professionally, and so there was, a lot of, particularly with music along the border, in singing in both languages, and sort of cross cultural. So it was a rich environment in that. I remember always going down there. Of course, my grandmother was the most staid of all the sisters, the three sisters, four sisters actually from, the three sisters and a brother from, in Nogales.

00:10:28 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And so she was the most staid, all the other ones were sort of very affected by the sort of the border and the Latin culture, whereas she had too much memory from coming from Indiana where she was more, you know, not as-- much more staid compared to the rest of the family. So it was always a wild time going to Nogales because we always knew there was always going to be tamales and singing and you know a very energetic kind of crowd.

00:10:57 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And we used to go down there regularly, it was only, it's only an hour, now it's an hour, but sixty miles at the time it took longer. We'd go to Nogales very frequently, and visit. To me it was like an alternative universe. And it was something so-- you realize where I am now I mean here I am living in Encinitas and again I'm still you know next to the border.

00:11:23 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I mean about the same distance from the border that Tucson was from the border. So I've always lived with some proximity to the border my whole life. And so...

00:11:33

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

What, you said your mother [Hock note: grandmother] was of Irish descent, is she, what was she...

00:11:34

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

No, Irish-English descent, you know they were, they had come out from Indiana. And they came out here for economic and health reasons, my great grandfather, and they settled. They came from a very-- I mean my grandmother talks about getting, you know-- her father owned a haberdashery and getting very fine shoes from New York when her father would go to New York on a shopping trip and bring them back to Indiana, he was very-- talked about family crystal and China, all that kind of stuff.

00:12:04

LOUIS HOCK

And then when they went to Nogales it was very you know, it ended up that he had like a trash collection business, so it was very much changed. And she and her older brother remembered that era. And then of course all the younger siblings, the three other, two other sisters and brother don't remember any of that at all. And so it was, you know, she wanted to be a school teacher, my grandmother, [Maria Taylor] and so she went to [Hock note: what is now] Northern Arizona [University] and became a school teacher, because it was a teaching college [Hock note: at the time].

00:12:40

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then she married my grandfather [Remegius] Hock, who was German. And then, and he and his family owned a Ford sales company [Hock note: dealership]. And then eventually when those two split up my mother ended up going back to Nogales and that's where, why my mother went from LA back to Nogales because her mother was there.

00:13:10

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So your last name is your mother's surname.

00:13:14

LOUIS HOCK

Yes, I don't have my father's Italian name.

00:13:14

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

What was your father's Italian name, just curious?

00:13:16

LOUIS HOCK

He was actually, he was an actor too. He's actually in the screen guild records so...

00:13:21

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:13:21 **LOUIS HOCK**
His name is Louis Frank Gallina.

00:13:33 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
What was your mother like?

00:13:39 **LOUIS HOCK**
She's alive.

00:13:39 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
Tell me about your mother is the classic question.

00:13:38 **LOUIS HOCK**
Well, my mom she's still kicking. She's, my family is pretty long lived. My father died a few years ago he was 95. My mother's 87, she's still alive. My grandmother died at 95, so I'm hopeful. [laugh] But she went to school teaching because she had two sons and it was clear that her life as a high end designer and buyer in LA was not going to happen, and she went to school and I mean she went back and got the courses, took the course that she needed to get [Hock note: updated to be able to teach].

00:14:16 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**
She actually had a degree in teaching. And she went to the University of Arizona as well. And so she began to teach, first in Nogales and then she taught in Tucson. Both my mother and my grandmother were school teachers. And she—after awhile she got a bit bored with school teaching and then she became a person who would go around and teach music in various classrooms on special days when the music teacher would come in, she's come in with the auto harp and teach singing.

00:14:46 **LOUIS HOCK**
And she'd play the piano. And so I lived in a background where we had you know books of culture in the house although nobody was-- and we would occasionally go to art events. You know odd stuff, nothing systematic. I mean my mother was like a nut on Jose Greco [Hock note: a flamenco dancer] so every Jose time-- every year Jose Greco would stomp his way through Tucson we'd go there and listen to Jose Greco.

00:15:14 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**
So, certain things that they interested in I would participate in. And in school you know I can't remember liking art class any more than any other kid liking art class but I certainly did enjoy that kind of stuff. I mean I liked, you know stuff you'd do you know with the clay and drawing. I was never much of a drawer, I couldn't draw worth beans.

00:15:36 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**
But I liked that activity. Like thinking about that kind of activity.

00:15:42

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

What kinds of films were you exposed to from even through high school, what did you watch, if you watched any?

00:15:47

LOUIS HOCK

Well, in Tucson, in high school I don't think I watched anything different than anybody else.

00:15:53

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm.

00:15:57

LOUIS HOCK

And in college I watched-- they had a place called the Loft in Tucson which was an alternative cinema, it showed some Godard and stuff like that.

00:16:07

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:16:07

LOUIS HOCK

And it showed Norwegian blue films and stuff like that.

00:16:12

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:16:12

LOUIS HOCK

And I don't think there was anything particular in-- my school was pretty, a pretty usual, you know high school.

00:16:21

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So feature films that were...

00:16:23

LOUIS HOCK

Regular feature films, and TV. And it was really-- until I figured something out later it was really, plumbing that myself, it was a really sort of ordinary kind of film history in high school. And even in college I was watching things that were, you know I think I was a little more adventurous than some of my friends. But it was, I was not a film nut.

00:16:42

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm.

00:16:46

LOUIS HOCK

But then once I started making the films in college it was like a match on gasoline. It was, you know, it went. I was really lucky in that I started making films with Martin. It just so happens that summer there was a woman by the name of Shirley Pasternak and a woman by the name of Carol Rowe who I think was active on the East Coast, in university circles.

00:17:15

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I think she taught there. They were Godard nuts. And they hired this guy who was a Mexican cinematographer but he had been working in Germany [Hock note: Carlos Bustamante]. And this was about 1968 or something like that...69 maybe. And they had in a Jewish Film [Hock note: Jewish Community Center, not Film) Center a summer film class and they had this guy teaching how to make films and showing films. And in the summer here you are in Tucson and you're looking at something like *WAVELENGTH* with a soundtrack played on a Nagra in an auditorium.

00:17:55

LOUIS HOCK

And you're listening to you know-- and you're looking at Godard films, and it was and that's the same era that Warhol's making his *OUTRAGE* film that-- all that stuff's happening at once. It was like kaboom, you know, and Tucson-- you know stuff that was all these players and all this stuff-- because they were, I think that probably Godard would have a really bad memory of these women following him around and stalking him.

00:18:23

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So they showed all this stuff all of a sudden with a combination of cinematographer and work. I remember seeing *WAVELENGTH* and it was like [makes noise like pow]. And then Warhol films [Hock note: *EMPIRE*]? It was like, it was odd bunch of stuff, and I don't know how they got this stuff but they were, and it was all of a sudden like kaboom. And it was a very interesting mix of a very nonnarrative, very unusual kind of film.

00:18:44

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And I remember being with Martin you know, seeing a film, like a *WAVELENGTH* film and it was startling in that I thought it was wonderful and he thought it was not-- he couldn't you know-- it was pretty interesting. I'm almost sure I got the *WAVELENGTH* thing, I know there was a Warhol film, I think I have, I think that was the time that I saw the Wavelength. What the year was *WAVELENGTH* made? [Hock note: 1967]

00:19:13

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

It's I think 69?

00:19:15

AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)

I'm thinking 68 is my guess.

00:19:16

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah something I think that I'm right with that. I think that, but there was a series of films that were shown that were really shocking in terms of I'd never seen, Godard films I'd seen, but that were really shocking [Hock note: and the filming of *OUTRAGE* by Warhol and its controversy in Tucson]. And that was really sort of, really tripped the switch and made me realize that I really wanted-- oh that's what I was going to do for the rest of my life. You know I was going to do, like make films. And so at that point, I still couldn't figure out why.

00:19:46

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It was like, it was all of a sudden like a, like a turned over car. I could never quite figure out why I started making films. Really, it was like, all of a sudden it was like a complete-- I couldn't see in my background the causation for it. And then I made a film, the first film I made I jumped on a-- in college-- I jumped on a Mexican fishing boat, a shrimp boat. And I went out and I made a film.

00:20:19

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I spent a day and a night out there and I had just gotten my camera and I went out and I shot that. And the next film was, [Hock note: the first film] was called *LOS BARCOS*. And it was just sort of an ironic documentary. I mean it had Beethoven music and it was kind of, sort of funny elements but it was mostly a pretty straightforward documentary. And then I made an experimental-- I can't remember the name of it-- I made a rather [Hock note: non-narrative film about paranoia] experimental film.

00:20:40

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And I couldn't quite, still, I mean I think that came out of the stuff I was seeing from that center and it was only, it was actually only maybe 20 years later, I realized what the triggered had been. When I was in Nogales my mother, my grandmother was the head of, principle of school. My mother was teaching school. And so they would take me to school to babysit me. And Manuel, who was the janitor, was also the projectionist. And to keep me entertained during the school year that I was down there, all these documentaries that they had in the school to show, all these documentaries they would screen for me in the basement.

00:21:17

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So when they had things to do you just put on a film and leave me. So all during that time and I was talking about you know, like five years old, you know when I was four and five years old. I'd watch all these films and I'd watch you know, and, I had a strange psychological thing where I would, I don't remember anything before the age of about eight. I don't remember that much at all, I just wiped clean due to some tension between being shuttled back and forth between parents.

00:21:54

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But I wiped the slate clean. They thought I was retarded because when I went to go into fourth grade I couldn't read, I couldn't write, I had no knowledge, that was like tabula rasa. So I don't remember any of those years. So I don't remember the basement stuff at all. I still don't. I've seen the seen the school, outside of the school since then but I have no memory of it. But that's why you know that film was sort of inculcated into my system at an early age.

00:22:21

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And so when I began making films it wasn't as if I was starting from the very beginning, it wasn't as if I was starting from zero. I'd actually had a whole history of watching film. [laugh] For two years the child in a basement of an elementary school. So that explains why I was able, all of a sudden when I began making films it was so forceful because it was an extension of that early childhood kind of momentum and knowledge.

00:22:48

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then it made sense. But it didn't make sense until years later when I was talking to my mother and grandmother and, oh yeah, we used to...[laugh] baby sit you, it was funny so...

00:23:01

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So were they mostly documentaries or were they sponsored films, industrials?

00:23:02

LOUIS HOCK

It was all the films you would show to elementary school. Primarily it was you know I remember seeing them later in junior high. It was you know Shell Oil stuff and it was Disney stuff. And there was, I'm sure there was cartoons, and all the stuff you would, you know they, schools largely got films because they were sponsored. I mean they didn't buy them, they were given to them for some reason or other.

00:23:21 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And so those were, and they may have bought the cartoons or Disney stuff but mostly it was a lot of documentaries. And so then when I jump into work and I sort of make myself move toward documentary work it's as if, you know it's an interesting story there, sparked by, and sort of the [sounds like] determination child. [laugh]

00:23:39 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

It's a great story. [laugh]

00:23:45 **LOUIS HOCK**

So anyway, so that so...

00:23:45 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

All those films you just described, sorry, were they with Martin, the ones that ended in the one experimental film? Were those...

00:23:49 **LOUIS HOCK**

No I made those alone. Martin and I sort of made a whole bunch of films which were sort of untitled and it was, it was a bunch of crazy experiences. We were just sort of figuring out what film meant. I mean things like, in the summer, Tucson, 110 degrees, film jam. Me in, duck taped into a trunk of a car. Trying to change the roll of film sweat dripping off my, [laugh] you know it was like, a lot of stuff you were just trying to figure stuff out.

00:24:14 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

We made some pretty interesting films but most they were not, I don't think particularly memorable films but they were, you know we were, we both of us were just trying to figure it out, plus a lot of the mechanics you know—you've got to realize that, when I went to the University of Arizona there were no film courses. They had the first film course when I was a senior.

00:24:35 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And by that time, the time you know I'd started to pick up film, I realized, I went to this summer film workshop and I realized I was in a complete barren landscape in terms of culture. So I went to the library and I didn't know, so I just started with the PNs [Editor's note: Most books about film and film studies are shelved in the "PN" section], and I read everything from one end of the PN to the other end of the PN in the library. I just read everything. And of course later [laugh] I thought I'd seen the films, then when I saw the films and I realized that criticism in common with the film really was a very personal reflection. In a lot of ways I expected to, I sort of thought that would understand the films from reading about them.

00:25:11 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And generally when I saw the films and I had a very different understanding of them. But I read all the PNs in the library, and then they offered a film course. And so I went and took the film course and of course by that time I knew more than the instructor, some guy from theater you know that worked in some film and he was going to teach a film course. It was going to, you know and so he taught it and we actually made films, but I knew, by that time I knew more history than he did.

00:25:37 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I knew how to make films more than, I mean, I know how to splice films and all that, the *LOS BARCOS* film that I described I made because I used to, I got, I don't know how I got into it-- I know how I got into it, Martin worked at a TV station and he had to edit 16 millimeter films down to fit the slot when they were broadcast. And you know you would turn off the projector and they would roll the advertisement and you'd turn back on the projector.

00:26:00 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

You know, he would roll the film and of course we would project you know he had to kind of cut it down sort of fit the duration. And we took great delight in cutting out scenes that we thought were the most critical that would really make a completely surrealist work out of it. I remember something like *Mutiny on the Bounty* and cutting out, particularly the love scenes and fight scenes and [laugh] completely turned the film into something that was a way different intention than certainly the original.

00:26:28 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

But sort of, and in doing you know like fitting two fingers in front of the camera [Hock note: camera projector]. You know so you could signal and say look at 10 o'clock and you do like the little bird in front of the, in front of the lens. And you could see it in your tv that there was a little flash of a rabbit.

00:26:41 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Yeah.

00:26:41 **LOUIS HOCK**

Anyway but, as part of that, I don't know why because we did that, but somehow I got a job-- there was a cameraman, there is a television station called Channel 9. Called KGUN, Tucson.

00:26:52 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:26:52

LOUIS HOCK

And the guy who worked for the news, actually had the name of Doug Nine. So there was a cameraman who drank too much. So sometimes they would call me to help out because the cameraman was drunk. And they were shooting 16 millimeter black and white film. And I remember particularly, going to shoot some stuff in like Bisbee Arizona which was a mining town, which, at the time had the biggest man-made hole in the earth.

00:27:18

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And going there and shooting film. So but they let me use their splicer. Because before I was putting it together with scotch tape. So the splicer was a real move up. [laugh] They let me use a splicer there so I could assemble my films just over you know a viewer. It was really crude, the viewer and I could use a hot splicer and splice my films together.

00:27:33

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I was able to do *LOS BARCOS* using their splicer which was, and then I think I finished the other film in the class where they actually had a hot splicer on the table. It was you know, equipment was all in their hands, I mean you didn't, it wasn't available. You know you had to either be a news organization or there was no real film school in there at the time, so the school had somehow acquired a hot splicer that was like the-- a couple of 16 cameras and a hot splicer became you know really critical things that no one else had.

00:28:01

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So that was important to the education.

00:28:04

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So when you say *LOS BARCOS* [1969], you talking about-- that was when you started making films by yourself, or that was with Martin?

00:28:10

LOUIS HOCK

That's a film I made by myself. [Hock note: The film with Martin were earlier.]

00:28:09

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

This film, the one you described as an experimental...

00:28:13

LOUIS HOCK

No, that was a documentary. And then I made a second one, I could probably look up the title [Hock note: *LAST MAN*, 1970]. But that was a second film, which was less interesting. But it was...

00:28:29

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Can you describe it a little bit? If you can remember.

00:28:28

LOUIS HOCK

I took psychology because it was the closest path to graduation. And then I realized that graduate courses were a lot easier than undergraduate courses, because they only met once a week. And so I insinuated myself into these graduate classes of one professor, which let me into this whole graduate student apparatus. Which was great because you'd just read books and write papers and you really didn't have to go to school.

00:28:57

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I was interested in a lot of drugs and stuff so, it was better. [laugh] And so they had a thing called an anechoic chamber. Which is a room which has this sort of heavy sort of foam extrusions all over the room and a piece of fence across the ground with the, on the bottom and when you're in the room it's pitch black and you cannot hear anything or see anything. And it turned out that they had built this room for a professor in psychology, who-- I guess his grant moved him someplace else-- never came.

00:29:28

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So they had this wonderful room. And so I got to play around in it. So I used the anechoic chamber as a place to film in. And it was, used some local actor and it was sort of this psychological sci-fi kind of film. And so I used that space and shot it. And the other film was very, you know it's a very much-- I mean at the time I didn't have any idea about you know the films of someone like Grierson, say.

00:30:00

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But it's kind of Grierson-esque in the guys, they go on the boat and they catch fish [Hock note: in trawling nets]. And there's birds and they come back in {Hock note: with its haul} and so, all with Beethoven Symphony Pastoral over, so, short little film, you know, 10 minutes or something.

00:30:14

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

What years are you doing these?

00:30:16

LOUIS HOCK

Was in the-- well I graduated from college in 1970. So it was between 68 and 1970.

00:30:27

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And when you got the job where you had to take over for the cameraman it was around that time as well?

00:30:32

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah it was all in that period, I mean it's kind of a muddle now that I think back about it but all of the, working with Martin, the summer film program with Shirley Pasternak, and the German cinematographer, the Mexican cinematographer, and then working for the TV station and all of that, it all took place in that period. And then when I graduated, I decided-- I had the opportunity to work, I don't know quite how it came up but I guess I, I think I didn't know what I wanted to do or-- I don't know quite why I didn't go directly to film school or something like that

00:31:14

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I think I wanted to travel for a year. But I didn't have any money so I got a job working for the University of Arizona and filmed football. And I filmed football and then a tv PBS program called it was called *LAS CHICITINTAS*, which was like a Sesame Street in Spanish. So that, and then a lot of sports. You know so there would be time you would film an offensive camera, a defensive camera, each in black and white.

00:31:43

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And they would have the game camera which would be in color. So you'd go with a crew and you'd sit up in the top and you'd film these games. And there was a guy there who was a very--Alex Hankosi who was a wonderful guy who was an escapee from Hungary after the communists crushed the revolution there. He was a wonderful, he wanted to teach you how to do stuff. And so you know I'd say you know hey, this is a new camera, I've never seen this before.

00:32:13

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And he said well this is a such and such kind of camera, and I'd say well let's use this camera, he goes well, you got all the magazines loaded up for the football game but, sure let's change them. So he'd change all the magazines and then do it, and you know and so he was a great guy. And he would you know-- he was a wacky guy. He would like say well you know it's 11 o'clock at night.

00:32:33

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

You're going to fall asleep when you process,-- you had to process film-- you're going to fall asleep, so he'd put clothes pins in the processor, so all of a sudden the things, bells would go off and whistles, you had to go figure out where it's jammed, you know because he didn't want you falling asleep. So he was a, you know-- he was a film producer himself, inside. He did a lot of pornography with students too, he was a kind of interesting guy.

00:32:53

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But he was most interesting-- I remember they asked him to go shoot protestors during the Vietnam War. And they sent me out and I was a protestor myself but they said you have to shoot protestors. And I said OK. So I shot all the protestors but I only shot their feet. I didn't shoot any protestors and I shot the cops. And the cops were like, you know like putting their hand out like you can't shoot [puts hand to block face].

00:33:19

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then we were summoned to the vice, to the president's office, with the vice president who was the guy who commissioned this. And we showed the film. Of course that he was just, the president was just outraged, you know he wanted to have pictures of protestors in it versus, you know, nobody had seen it, I processed it. So nobody had seen it before it showed. And it was great, Alex had a great moment.

00:33:43

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because he said I came from the Hungarian revolution and you're asking me to do police work and I had a bad feeling about this from the beginning. And don't ever ask me to do this again. Get the cops to do it. And so it was nice. Because I could have been fired. You know I could have lost my job, but I was not going to film the people but on the other hand, it was great to see Alex sort of stand up.

00:34:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And so, he came up, it was great because vice president and president and they just like, you know it was like, it was to me, I did it-- I thought it was a lark, I could lose my job but I'm not going to film the people. They're people I know, right? How am I, you know so, it was a good education because then I applied to graduate schools. And then I had a clearer idea of what I wanted to do.

00:34:29

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So that was, I didn't really during that time I don't think I really made many films. I only worked there I think for maybe five, six months, and then I left and went to Europe. Applied for graduate school and went to Europe.

00:34:42

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

To Europe?

00:34:42

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah.

00:34:43

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

What year was that?

00:34:43

LOUIS HOCK

1970, well in 1970 I worked through 1970, 71 I worked, yeah.

00:34:52

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And what happened in Europe?

00:34:55

LOUIS HOCK

I sort of was wondering what schools I was going to get into and I just bummed around. You know, just flew a cheap flight into Luxembourg and ended up in North Africa and you know went to Italy. Moved around a lot. You know I wasn't with anybody I just sort of...

00:35:18

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

When the...

00:35:19

LOUIS HOCK

Ironically though there was sense of irony though, because I stopped at a place [Hock note: at Rutgers], there's this guy that I knew who said he knew somebody in Paris. I was leaving from New York. And he said give this guy a joint from me, and you can stay at his place, he's a great guy. And I end up in Europe and I go to the address. And I get in and I'm walking up the stairs and I can hear at the very bottom these little sounds and it's like a little fight going on, the tone is going up.

00:35:52

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

The sound is-- this is like a movie fight, you know, you hear, flying dishes, turning over tables and books, you know, real cacophony of sounds. I'm going up and I'm thinking, oh man, I can tell... and I got up to the room and the door I was supposed to be at. It was right in that door it was like, boom, crash, screaming, yelling, you know. And I knock, I tell my story, I didn't know this guy.

00:36:11

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And he said, well you know you really can't stay here tonight, [laugh] we're having some problems. So he drove me around he dropped me at a place called Shakespeare and Company. Which I, which was a place-- it was an earlier version of that, Sylvia Beach place that published a lot of important European books. And I stayed there. And the choice I had was between Peter Orlovsky's bed, Jack Kerouac's bed, or Allen Ginsberg's bed. And it was interesting because, again I'm back to poetry right?

00:36:50 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So, I said, I looked around and I said which one has the least bugs, and this is the Kerouac bed. [laugh] And so I stayed in the Kerouac bed. And of course it had Yeats above it too. So, "I long to lay down lay down, at the foot of the ladder to bone and rag shop of your heart"? I think that's probably been paraphrased but anyway it was very funny you know kind of returning to this [Hock note: poetry].

00:37:14 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

But anyway so I just bummed around Europe. You know, Paris is cold. Bummed around for a while. And then mostly it was just you know, I was from Tucson, I'd been to LA. I had never been-- I went to the beach during the summer when I lived, you know I went to Redondo Beach in the summer. You know and I visited my father in my very early youth. And you know I'd been to [Hock note: the state of] Washington.

00:37:39 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I'd been to Washington to visit Lake Chelan. But you know I'd been in Mexico, you know northern Mexico but that was it. You know Tucson was a more rural place. I was, you know a hick. You know, when I arrived in New York and stuff it was like [makes noise like phew] you know it was a [laugh] whole other world. You know I was, you know I mean I had Navajos living at the end of my street.

00:38:02 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

You know [laugh], in high school, during rodeo days, they rode horses to school. You know it was like, it was you know...

00:38:15 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

So how...

00:38:12 **LOUIS HOCK**

More Ampitheater High School than my high school, but still it was you know, people-- it was not-- I was a hick.

00:38:21 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Mm-hmm.

00:38:21 **LOUIS HOCK**

I didn't think of myself as a hick. But you know.

00:38:24 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

You realize later...

00:38:22 **LOUIS HOCK**

Yeah, I was really a hick. [laugh]

00:38:25 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
So how long were you in Europe?

00:38:29 **LOUIS HOCK**
I think I was in there, I think I went it... was cold so I think I went like in January or February. I came back I think late Spring, because I went, that and I went to, interviewed at NYU and Northwestern and the San Francisco Art Institute, The Art Institute of Chicago. And so I went and talked to them and figured out which school I was going to go to.

00:39:00 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
And were you planning to study film or writing.

00:39:03 **LOUIS HOCK**
No, no it was film, I had applied to film school.

00:39:05 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
OK.

00:39:05 **LOUIS HOCK**
And so I didn't want to be on the west coast. I had already gone to-- I went I thought about going to CalArts. I remember this guy named Alexander Mackendrick.

00:39:16 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
Mm-hmm.

00:39:16 **LOUIS HOCK**
Who, before CalArts had moved, and I went-- they had this mansion. And I think that was where they shot *THE LOVED ONE* or something? It's a, anyway that's where they were. And that...

00:39:27 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
[unintelligible]

00:39:29 **LOUIS HOCK**
Yeah, anyway it had a beautiful marble bathroom, but I went in there and I was interested in going there, and I don't think I got in and I went to argue it or something, I don't remember exactly. But I went and we had a nice—we had a long conversation. And he kept talking about scripts. And I finally got angry with him, I said listen, there's no script for this film, because it's a 10 minute film. If you can't remember a ten minute script, what kind of person are you, you're an idiot. [laugh] You know and there's no actors, you don't need a script.

00:40:10

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So it kind of ended really-- but then I think I did get admitted, but I didn't get any money so I couldn't go. So it was, and then I think the subsequent year I applied to other schools. I knew I couldn't afford to go to USC. I didn't know about UCLA. I don't know why, but I didn't even think about it. And I went to the Art Institute, it turned out to be the right school.

00:40:34

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But it's a school that also gave me money. And NYU seemed kind of interesting until I went there. And I talked to the people and they said well, we'll start you out in black and white still photography. And they said you know you may be pretty bored because you're already making films. And I said not only will I be bored but I don't understand why you start with still photography, still photography doesn't have anything to do with motion pictures.

00:40:57

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So then we got into, but I still was admitted [laugh] but I decided not to go to NYU. But The Art Institute of Chicago, I went there.

end of tape 1

TAPE: 2 LOUIS HOCK

00:00:16

LOUIS HOCK

I was going to jump back a little bit, talking about that summer film course at the Jewish Community Center in Tucson. I remember being struck-- they were showing a long Warhol film, may have been *EMPIRE*-- but I was so struck with the idea that it was so long you had to obviously get up and pee, that you'd go out and have a cigarette, you could go get a burger, you come back and the film's still going. In a way it was really a very interesting idea of film.

00:00:45

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

You know versus going to a theater, get your popcorn and you sit down and watch it, you leave. It was very interesting to think about the whole structural apparatus of film watching and how it was so bound up with habit and how it was really wild with different kind of possibility and film didn't have to be-- independent, odd ball, experimental film-- didn't have to be like a commercial film. It could be something else.

00:01:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And obviously Warhol was somebody who was dealing with that. So that to me was very, very striking, so...

00:01:15

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

I see, there's always that question in these histories, when was it that you had a realization that film was more than narrative. It's always an interesting thing to explore.

00:01:28

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah.

00:01:30

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Okay, so we were talking about the Art Institute in Chicago? So can you talk a little bit about your time there?

00:01:34

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah I went for a visit there and there was a...

00:01:45

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

"There" - can you, [laugh] ...

00:01:46

LOUIS HOCK

I went to the Art Institute of Chicago to pay a visit and this was before I went to go to school there, I was trying to figure out where I was going to go to school. And I went there and, I was the first film student at the Art Institute of Chicago. And so they had just-- Stan Brakhage had been lecturing there, and he came in once a week to give a lecture. And there's a filmmaker by the name of John Scofield, now Luther. And there was a guy by the name of Owen Land, [laugh] who was George Landow at that time.

00:02:17

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I remember going there and having lunch at the Art Institute, of the Museum and sitting down with Stan Brakhage, and John and they were trying to woo me, and it was pretty interesting. So I really, I think I may had seen some Brakhage before then, and I'd certainly read about Brakhage. But it was interesting to actually sit down and trying to get me to come there. We had a nice conversation.

00:02:51

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I do remember the first conversation, looking at him, and of course I had only seen pictures of him, you know and he and Jane, and all these pictures and I was looking at him, and I say, you know you're not as thin as you used to be, which was [laugh] like, he said [makes grumbling noise]. So that was the beginning of our conversation you know. And then I went to the house where John and George lived, with some other people. And it was kind of a hippie crash pad of sorts and, but I was impressed.

00:03:26

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And they offered me money to go to school, to sort of teach/technician kind of job, and that was great. To me it was a totally exotic environment. I mean you had lots of black people around you, mixed ethnicities, people, Poles, and Italians, it was a real urban experience, I mean you know it was something that very, I mean I thought it was the most urbane experience in the world. I couldn't understand why they didn't call it the East, why the Midwest, it's so much further east then where I lived, you know. [laugh]

00:04:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So it was, and it was great, they had Picassos and Chagalls, and it was like you know public art, it was like, it was a big city. It was also cold, it was really cold I remember very distinctly. I mean in Arizona as a child you go to the school yard in the morning. It would be cold and you would move from the-- you wouldn't stand in the shade, you'd stand in the sun because it would be warm.

00:04:30

LOUIS HOCK

And you'd stand out in the sun, and you get warm. And then that's how you did it and I remember when I first experienced cold in Chicago, stepping from the shade into the sun and realizing you could step back and forth in the shade and the sun - the same temperature. [laugh] It didn't make any difference. It was going to be cold in Chicago. It was, to me it was a wonderfully rich environment.

00:04:54

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I was really happy to be there, I thought it was really someplace different after being someplace for a long time and having been to Europe it really, inflected that experience in a way, which I think contextualized it much more than it could if I'd come straight from Tucson. And so the courses were very, very-- it was kind of formless.

00:05:28

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because I was the first graduate student, and John thought we needed an optical printer. And so he, John Scofield had a Ph.D. in Nuclear Engineering, and so he was an engineer and so he-- we designed this optical printer. Which was you know he did most of the designing and I did most of the building. we built an optical printer. And so I got paid for that. And also I think I was teaching too.

00:05:55

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And I got paid for doing some teaching. And I-- it was not a terribly critical environment. Brakhage came I think once every two weeks and gave a lecture, stayed in a hotel and we went out to lunch sometimes. And people were you know making films. And then other filmmakers came in. In the second year more filmmakers came in.

00:06:23

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, Bill Brand, Saul Levine, other people, Margie Keller.

00:06:28

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:06:28

LOUIS HOCK

And it was a real laissez-faire-- I mean I built a machine, I taught some people. I remember I didn't like the cold and I had a small class and we watched some films. And was able-- I had a small class budget and I used it for conference calls so we could watch the films during the week and then we could stay in bed and have our class in bed in Chicago because it was so cold. [laugh] It was great.

00:06:54 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And video was just becoming important. Nam Jun Paik was there (as a visitor) when I first came. It was great because there was this whole video versus film thing and of course I felt kind of, I was the only filmmaker in this wad of students, and of course it was great because Nam Jun Paik says well I'm making a film, so I felt better at it. [Hock note: I think he was working with Jud Yalkut to make a garden piece.]

00:07:15 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And he was there I think for a semester or something, but it was great. You know he was an interesting guy. And later on when I did some installations at the same time he did in the same museum, I saw him again [Hock note: at the Walker's Mississippi exhibition]. But it was reassuring, the guy was an interesting guy. So it was, quite wonderful.

00:07:33 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And actually, that appearance of him got sort of more important as life went on, and can now understand more the context he was coming from.

00:08:04 **LOUIS HOCK**

And I ended up being-- the first time I went, the first semester I went there, there was a guy from Tucson that was going to the University of Chicago studying History, Religion, and Iliadi [Hock note: who was my housemate]. And he-- we came back for Christmas break the first year [Hock note: semester] I was there and he, with great influence of some drugs, he decided that he could not go back to Chicago and so he said you know send my books back, I'm not going back.

00:08:28 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

But, so from then on I became a roommate [Hock note: housemate] of John's in two locations, one the far house outside and then one in the city. And so you know I ended up having a lot of discourse with John. And George was a very peculiar, continually peculiar character. Interesting guy, really smart, but he was like, you know a leprechaun, or an elf, he'd just sort of appear and disappear.

00:09:05 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

He had-- he was always you know he was a guy that you know was really trying to work things you know in a way. And trying to say well you go down town-- well you're going to go to town this week, well listen I have a typewriter that is repaired and needs to be picked up and I was wondering if you could pick up the typewriter?

00:09:17

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I said George this is a full size IBM. I'm on the the elevated. You want me to go where with this typewriter? George was an interesting guy and actually I shot a film for him. It's not What's Wrong with This Picture, but some title that, has some kinship, a title that's like that. But George was, you know he would-- I liked George because he thought very peculiarly. And so it was always good to sort of see what George thought about things.

00:09:41

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Brakhage was good because he didn't really teach any courses except for this lecture but there were often these informal kinds of lunches. And he's a, Brakhage is a pretty feisty character. And I must have been a totally obnoxious guy at that time. Maybe I still am, [laugh] but I would argue with him all the time. And so, you know, it was really great, but it was a tremendous moment in independent film though. Because it was a moment when I first started there and started talking to Stan.

00:10:21

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

This is in like 1970 [Hock note: 1971, actually]. Stan's on top of his game. Stan is writing. You know he's connected to Anthology [Anthology Film Archive]. He's teaching at the Art Institute. You know Stan is-- has it both ways. He's both historically important but he's also like "the man". And a couple of times, I'm sure once, but I think twice, Hollis [Frampton] was a friend of his and came and talked. And it was really interesting that, as I remember, there were two meals or beers at a place called Bergoff's.

00:10:50

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

After he would stay and talk. And the first was very interesting because in the first meeting, Stan was a lot of largesse, benevolence, and you know and Hollis he doesn't make films like I make films, but he's an important guy, and it's a different alternative and dah, dah, dah. And then I think it was almost a year, year and a half later, there was a second meal.

00:11:17

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And by this time, you know, structuralist independent film had become more- - it became the stuff that was written about. It became the stuff that was shown. It became the direction that younger filmmakers were working. And so in some way all of a sudden Stan found himself-- the meal was very different because it was a much more sort of adversarial meal. It was about all of a sudden he had been usurped by Hollis and what Hollis represented.

00:11:42 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So it was a very different, kind of interesting time. That sort of movement, which I think culminated in an interview with Stan, his wife, and Hollis and Art Forum, which I haven't read it a really long time, but that's kind of an interview, it seems to me that it was a real sort of real Rosetta stone for the sort of terminal relationship between those two.

00:12:06 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Do you have an idea of what year that was by chance? [Hock note: 1973, "Stan and Jane Brakhage, Talking." *ARTFORUM*, 11, (January). 72-79.]

00:12:07 **LOUIS HOCK**

No I don't, but you could easily look it up. I'm sure that, Annette Michelson was probably the editor at that time. But it was a great-- I mean I remember having graduated, I made a film. I think I made *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION* and I sent it to Stan and he said, well I don't know, the film has some interesting shots. but I'd edit it a different way.

00:12:32 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And I sent it back to him and I said go ahead. It's intended to be re-edited. That's the point of film. That's why it's called Studies. And then he sent it back and said, no I don't think so. But he wrote me a really great letter of recommendation. I thought I would ask him for a letter of recommendation, because George [Ladow] wrote me a letter of recommendation that said "Louis Hock can make films as good as anyone I know."

00:12:50 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Which is you know like you can take that [laugh] however you want to take it, right, one line, right. But almost as good as the one letter of recommendation somebody wrote for James Benning which I witnessed at one time that said "he's got no flies on him." [laugh] But Stan wrote a really you know nice letter. And it was a letter that was really respectful and I guess I was saying some things that were intelligent.

00:13:24 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Because it sort of seemed like I was holding up my end of the argument from all that, so that was good.

00:13:29 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:13:29

LOUIS HOCK

And you know, I met-- I went out to Stan's place and went through all that stuff and visited him and the like, it wasn't just the school, but still. So the graduate school, I was, in terms of the city and everything it was a good school. And I think the personalities there are really wonderful. And I say I really learned a lot there, because I had never been in an environment like that before.

00:14:01

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

The downfall of the school is it really didn't have any criticality to it - at all. I mean the Brakhage stuff when he was lecturing he would talk of these historical lectures but if you've ever read any of Stan's history it's a pretty loopy version of history. I mean he does take some facts and other facts. And he sort of spins a yarn, a myth around various, whether it be, you know Buster Keaton or Charlie Chaplin or whoever.

00:14:23

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:14:23

LOUIS HOCK

And so in a way it wasn't, it was much more mythological than critical. And there was no critical component there. I mean I would make work there would be no sort of armature for it. And I knew what criticism was, because I had read all the PNs in the library and I wasn't getting any of that. I was cold and I sort of thought that I was going to get as much out of the school as I was going to get.

00:14:51

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So the second year I managed to do something, I don't know I guess it was by design. I managed to build a machine and decided to teach. But I did both in the same quarters [Hock note: semesters]. So I said you have to pay me, [Hock note: for both jobs] another quarter and they agreed and I got them to put it in writing. They were going to pay me for this one quarter Hock note: semester, twice].

00:15:16

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then they enacted this thing at the Art Institute called outside education or external credit I think it was called or something. You'd go away for a semester and come back with the work you did and get credit for the semester. So my light went on I said, heck I can put these two together. I went to Mexico in the middle of the [laugh] winter in Chicago. Then of course I was-- would send these postcards of you know palms and beaches and to please send the check to this American Express in this city in Mexico.

00:15:41 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I didn't get any, make any real friends doing that but it was great. And I made, I made film so it was wonderful. But I came back and I had made, I think I had made *SILENT REVERSAL* and I had made *ZEBRA* and I had made one other film.

00:16:24 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:16:24 **LOUIS HOCK**

Until later, but anyway, [laugh] but it was-- but even I remember the people coming would give this lot of money away at the end of the year to seniors. And I remember being the person responsible for projecting the films. And hearing them come in and talking about how film was really not art. These are people from New York, critics and the like, you know talking about, sitting down and, you know, and so they came in and I remember them looking at about half of the films and starting to walk out.

00:16:57 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I remember being, I must have been a real jerk, I said you don't, these films aren't shown, you get back there and sit down. We've got another 45 minutes worth of film and you're going to watch them all, you can't them any awards but you're going to watch them. [laugh] I remember being, awful, and you know these are you know New York, kind of, maybe even LA, probably New York art critics you know.

00:17:17 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So they watched them. But so the-- film was kind of even-- because there was the incipient moment in academia, and even art, that film actually entered in there [Hock note: to the art world].

00:17:40 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

John and George were really not writers. Stan wrote about work in an odd way. There was no critical function at that school for writing and criticism. When I graduated I just showed the films. I said look, I have enough films to graduate. Graduate me.

00:18:02 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And as I recollect I may have even hired a projectionist and not even gone to my own review because what was the point, there was never any dialogue before the review, why would there be dialogue after the review.

00:18:11 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:18:11

LOUIS HOCK

So I showed the films and I got the degree. So in some ways it was, I mean it was a wonderful school from my point of view coming from zero. But it didn't ever make the jump to criticality that I hoped that film would do based on the kind of reading that I'd done around film.

00:18:26

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Can you say what your films that you created during that time period were? *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION* you mentioned was one. [Hock note: This is wrong, *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION* was completed afterward but using some of the film shot during my SA IC funded Mexico trip.]

00:18:31

LOUIS HOCK

I made *ZEBRA* which was a film which I think they still have there and I think it's in the Filmmakers' Co-op. Which is an optically printed film, black and white. It was based on, sort of the you know the idea of the extermination of the zebra. I had had a couple of friends that died in prison, you know it was this sort of a mourning film you know about incarceration.

00:19:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It was the first sort of work that I did on optical print. And it was not too long but I did a lot of high contrast filming.

00:19:19

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And how'd you connect a zebra to prison is that something that's common? As far as a...

00:19:25

LOUIS HOCK

Well I'd had a-- I bought a junk machine at some surplus and it had these wonderful military ID photos, they looked like prison, I think they were maybe postal workers, but they looked like they might have been some kind of incarcerated people. They were kind of the people were kind of they looked very serious and hard in the photos. And so I had those photos.

00:19:46

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then I had, I went and shot pictures of the zebra and it was at Brookfield Zoo. And then there was a guy who I connected with because, a guy in Tucson I knew who's father was the world's most famous bat man. The second most famous bat man was at the Field Museum in Chicago. And he went and told me about going to seeing this guy, in the Field Museum, and it turns out that they had all these wonderful collection of zebra skins.

00:20:17 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Because at the time when the Field Museum was operating in its first years they did two things. One, anthropologically they would always go to these societies and say what's the most wonderful thing you have in your society, and they say oh this great totem has been here as long as we remember, and said great we'll take it. And they all carted it away.

00:20:32 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Another thing they would do is if they thought things were going to be extinct they would go out and they would kill it and they would stuff it and they would put it there so you'd have it preserved before it disappeared. Well they sent Teddy Roosevelt. And they sent a specific list to shoot and put on the boat at this time of year and they would maintain cold in the hold of the boat.

00:20:49 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And they would-- then they would put it on a train, when it left the hold of the boat, to Chicago, and they would be able to preserve these animals. Well Teddy just ignored them and continued shooting through the summer and they kept ending up with these boxes of slop, you know, that, unusable he just kept shooting. But in the process he killed lots and lots of zebras, and one of them was the Quagga, which became extinct.

00:21:09 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I put like planks between two by fours and dragged the Quagga skins and shot from down, you know Quagga skins underneath and shot as it moved underneath. And then I used those as beginnings for optical printing. But so it was a graduate student film. And I also I did installations there too, I did an installation with film like running all the way around a room.

00:21:32 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:21:30 **LOUIS HOCK**

You know and I projected, projected a film and you were in the film, and then you know and it was, so you actually even then I started doing installations. I don't know why I started installations. But somehow began to do it. So the projectors was on its side and it ran all the way around the room played in, played in a loop.

00:21:50 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Wow.

00:21:50 **LOUIS HOCK**

And so it was sort of about mirroring because I think you saw the film, an image of film with an image of film. And then you saw yourself in the film. On the film.

00:22:03

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:22:03

LOUIS HOCK

It was, and so I made that. And I made a film called Silent Reversal. Which I think is really probably the most important film from that era because it was a-- I had seen the Cornell film and I had seen the Brakhage film, Wonder Ring. And it also was from meeting up with Hollis and talking about Palindrome. And I figured they never really got it. You know so I was going to do it, I was going to make the perfect palindrome.

00:22:35

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Which I did. What I did is, or an anagram actually [Hock note: actually a palindrome]. What I did is I took a roll of regular 8 film which is just like 16 millimeter except it has an extra perforation in between [Hock note: the 16mm sprocket holes]. And shot in the 16 camera. I shot the Elevated, in Chicago, and then I turned around the film and shot it back the other way. One time I shot it on one set of sprocket holes and then on another set of sprocket holes.

00:22:59

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, what you have is two films. So what happened is that the projectionist would show the film and it had little Xs [Hock note: on the film leader showing] where to put the X in the gate and they would show it, and then rather than rewind it they would simply take the feed and take up reel in reverse them and then play it back the other direction.

00:23:23

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Of course you'd have half a field off and so it would show a different film. Not only that but it had to be a silent film. I was always struck with the sort of blinding light that came out of the Elevated, when they make these sparks, [Hock note: and loud squeals] and these flashes of light. I shot it [Hock note: matted] so that it was, I mean probably almost like a 16:9 kind of format with black in between [Hock note: on the screen].

00:23:50

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Which was where the overlap would be, so you don't have any overlap in the double exposure. But in that black area I took a splicer and made a series of almost musical notations with a scraper, which has, if you scratch film it tends to leave a blue kind of residue.

00:24:05

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm.

00:24:05

LOUIS HOCK

And so you had this film, these kind of jazzing underneath [motions with hands], so it would be black and then you would have this motion underneath which would be sort of like a visual version of an acoustic phenomena, this screeching of the Elevated.

00:24:18

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:24:16

LOUIS HOCK

So but it struck me—it was always interesting to me because when I, you know, during that time you did a lot of dog and pony shows, a lot of talking, and show your films and talk, especially if you made short films. And so it was great that you could show the film, and you could say right now I'm going to show you the same film again. And then you could turn the projectionist into a performer. You could say right now we have a performance artist.

00:24:43

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I don't think I would have used the words performance artist, but we have somebody performing for you, in the projection booth. They're taking-- I explain the process of switching reels and they're going show you back the same film. So it made a lot of [laugh] very kind of a quiet nebbish projectionists, very nervous and all of a sudden everybody turns around and shares a look in the booth window. But then they'd project it back the other way.

00:25:03

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It's visually pretty interesting and I think it's wonderful because it's like it's a holiday and there's American flags you can see through a window in the Elevated so it's not like claustrophobic like the Chicago subway. You could actually see the window and you could see down, and A main Street. Chicago has flags down it, it's a very, it's a very-- I mean at the time I think you know it was influenced by painting.

00:25:31

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It has the colors [Hock note: and shape] of *THE NIGHT HAWKS*. The [Hock note: Edward Hopper] painting *THE NIGHT HAWKS*.

00:25:35

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:25:35

LOUIS HOCK

Which I walked passed every day when I went into Chicago. And of course if you went through the museum it was warmer. And so you'd drift your way through the museum, going to school so you didn't have to walk outside where the wind would be coming off the lake. Anyway, but it has that kind of green kind of coloration and then it's a very long, it's long like a bar. And so, anyway so that was another film. And then...

00:26:03

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION? You'd mentioned that...

00:26:06

LOUIS HOCK

I started that, *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION*, in when-- when I was shooting in Mexico, I didn't finish it then. I finished it after I was out of school.

00:26:17

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Oh.

00:26:17

LOUIS HOCK

But I started shooting, because I finished that film in 1975 I think. So I was out of school.

00:26:22

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Okay.

00:26:24

LOUIS HOCK

I finished it in New York.

00:26:27

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So you had *ZEBRA*, *SOUND REVERSAL* and what else during that time at the Art Institute?

00:26:32

LOUIS HOCK

There was another film I don't remember the name. It's probably best forgotten. [laugh]

00:26:34

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Okay. And you graduated then in what year?

00:26:45

LOUIS HOCK

Um let's see I went to school in 71 so I finished in 73.

00:26:48

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Okay. So between 1973 and 1975 when you made *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION* were there any other films that you completed? That I'm not remembering or having them here?

00:27:07

LOUIS HOCK

I was working on a lot of films. I finished I think a film called *LIGHT TRAPS*. And I finished this and *CHRONOVISION* and a couple of other films, because when I left school, even at that time I was spending a lot of time in Mexico. I got a job in Texas, University of Texas, Arlington. I started the film program there. And then I went and got a grant and I lived in New York.

00:27:51

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And took some time off to New York. And I think it was on Rivington Street I think I was working, I finished a lot of work when I was there. I worked a lot. And it was a rich period for me because I think that year, '75 I put out a lot of films. And then I went back to Texas and I think I taught one more semester and then I quit.

00:28:21

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And what led you to quit at Texas?

00:28:23

LOUIS HOCK

They promised me that they would move me into some higher level and then I came back and they didn't do it, so I quit.

00:28:34

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And so your films that you completed in 1975, *LIGHT TRAPS*, *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION*, *STILL LIVES*, and was *PACIFIC TIME* also that year?

00:28:44

LOUIS HOCK

Oh no, *PACIFIC TIME* was much later. *PACIFIC TIME*, let's see if I can look down here [looks down] is '76, I have it here as '76 but I don't think it is '76 because I made it when I was here. [Hock note: 1978]

00:28:57

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm. So can you talk about *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION* a little?

00:28:55

LOUIS HOCK

Well I started, I had a real fascination with Mayan culture. I mean I went, went all the, on all the extant ruins and looked at stuff. And I read all the books at the time and I was really fascinated with the idea that, that time itself was a deity. It wasn't something like God, in western culture, you know, time is an extension of God, it isn't God, it's an extension of that.

00:29:34

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And even when you start looking at Genesis and what time was and all this stuff. And that it, time itself was not a deity. And I was struck with the Mayans because time was something that you had to move forward by, through sacrifice or whatever you had to in fact move time forward. If the time didn't move forward the world would stall and die.

00:29:52

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

At least you know according to their readings at that time. And I was really struck with this idea of time being in the foreground. And time being something more important than space, because you look at space and the Mayan people lived, the average life span was about 25 years. And people went through life very quickly you know, you had to keep time going. And time was really-- it was-- and rotting in the jungle.

00:30:18

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Time, the manifestation of time was so you know palpable that time was really something you could see from you know the way that things would fall apart, the ways that people come to live and die. This idea, and I thought in terms of doing time lapse in some ways really sanctified the idea of time as being something that moved in the foreground.

00:30:43

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And with time lapse you have time in the foreground. The space image is important but time really creates what's spatially meaningful. And so to me that was interesting. And so I thought I would just sort of play around with some experiments. And so stuff I shot was everything [Hock note: shot everywhere], I think the last thing I shot was in my brother's back yard in Tucson, with the rust on a frying pan. The sun going over it.

00:31:10

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then, but I shot stuff, I remember in Mexico being outside in a chair at night with the moon setting or rising and having some kid periodically bring me out a coffee. You know we just worked through the night. And most all of it was manual, it wasn't a machine. Later on I got a machine that would do it, but I would just manually click things. Because it wasn't so regular I was very irregular doing it.

00:31:33

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I mean everything from-- I used the observatory at Kitt Peak to-- and stuff was all over the place I mean studies from all over. And I was mostly interested in just sort of it in the formal exercise but also this idea of time being the fundamental essence of making an image. And I also was interested in being studies in a way that, I mean the one thing that's interesting about studies is when you actually look at studies of artists, there are loose, often loose sheaves of paper and you can move them around.

00:32:04 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Or you know if you look at them in a gallery in your studies you can, but with film you know you're stuck with a kind of linearity. Which, so in the film, in between each it has a kind of signage which I think was probably was influenced by the kind of symbols and signs that were made by, or at least to me indecipherable by the Mayans. It sort of allowed you an opportunity to reassemble the film in a different order.

00:32:28 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So you take and assemble it by color or you could reassemble it [Hock note: by other criteria]. You know so there was, so there was sort of certain affinities were given symbolically in each of those [Hock note: interscene sections] and you could reorder if you wanted to. The idea was if you'd buy it not rent it you could take it and cut it up and put it in a different kind of order, have a different kind of meaning, so that was the idea.

00:32:47 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So and it was a you know, it's a 22 minute film. To me it was an interesting beginning. And then I made a series of films in which I set up cameras for a year. Three different years I set up cameras in different places for three years. Some I think resulted in films and some did not. I did set up one camera in a shopping strip mall in Arlington, Texas.

00:33:11 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Another-- and these are 35 millimeter animation cameras-- another one in Sears Tower. And another one in a forest area outside of Santa Fe, New Mexico. And the first one resulted in *STILL LIVES*. The second resulted in, I have to look at the name of the film, of the Chicago, I don't remember the name of the film [Hock note: *PICTURE WINDOW* (1976)], and then a third I don't think I ever made a film of it.

00:33:34 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

The most ambitious one was the *STILL LIVES* because it actually was optically printed as well.

00:33:44 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And which of the, sorry which of the three was that, which location?

00:33:47 **LOUIS HOCK**

That was Arlington, Texas, in the strip mall.

00:33:50 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Oh, the strip mall ok.

00:33:51

LOUIS HOCK

What I did is I took the film and there was a church and there was the office of the monsignor or the priest or the pastor. And I set a camera in the window and it took a picture every minute for 24 hours. It took a picture an hour. And so every day was a second. And then, it was a standard strip mall. And then the second portion of the film was, it flickered obviously. Light, and dark, light, and dark.

00:34:29

LOUIS HOCK

And so I made an optical, with a series of venetian blinds in which you had the day on part but offset by half a day. So you know you did blinds with light and dark. But it wasn't as flickery. But you could still see and there were blinds in the room, I just took the-- I wasn't shooting through them. So it was like stepping back.

00:34:50

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And the third part to me was the most interesting. The blind part was interesting but the third part was I thought really much better. And I took a since it was 35 millimeter, I took, I made a pan across, a close up pan across the 35 millimeter image that took six minutes. It's very close up and very grainy.

00:35:13

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But it started from the right hand side I think it went across to the left hand side for six minutes. And what I did is I took the weather patterns and made a series of musical chords, and that way the days that had the same weather would have the same chords. And it was the same, I think I did temperature, humidity and visibility. Maybe another one. And so you heard the sound track every day had a chord [Hock note: a day that sounded the same looked the same, less the human activity].

00:35:42

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And I had help from a guy by the name of Frederic Rzewski.

00:35:46

AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)

Rzewski? Yeah.

00:35:49

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah, he was a Marxist composer. By then he'd gone to Columbia. But he helped me and gave me some advice on not using notes, using chords and stuff. So that was very helpful. So anyway so that to me that was an interesting portion, but the first one that, out of the three parts those were the two more interesting parts. I thought the middle part less successful. But those two I felt were interesting parts.

00:36:15

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Cool. Well, I need to see that. I think that, is that one of the ones that you have that you're going to possibly deposit at the Academy?

00:36:24

LOUIS HOCK

I'll probably deposit everything I've got. And all those films I'm talking about are still at the Filmmaker's Co-op.

00:36:30

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Oh I see.

00:36:31

LOUIS HOCK

I think they have, the Light Traps was a film, a very optical film based on the gas in neon bulbs. And so it was just, very close up neons, and sometimes the whole screen was filled with, close up the whole screen was filled with the neon bulb and sometimes it was several. And it wasn't like, it wasn't neon that was coated glass, it was neon with actual, so all you saw was the gas. It was enclosed by the glass.

00:36:57

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It was a very formal musical type of film play.

00:37:05

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So 1975, big year. [laugh]

00:37:07

LOUIS HOCK

I finished those, I'd been working on a lot of films.

00:37:10

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Ok.

00:37:10

LOUIS HOCK

And so and I had some NEA grants and I had time off. And so I finished a lot of films.

00:37:18

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Ok.

00:37:21

LOUIS HOCK

And I kept, I, it was an advantage that NEA was really helpful for me. Because I didn't earn a lot of money. And I could apply for grants to make films and I could take time off and I could finish films.

00:37:32

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm.

00:37:32

LOUIS HOCK

And so I worked a lot.

00:37:35 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
So you received NEA grants in the 70s.

00:37:36 **LOUIS HOCK**
A lot of NEA grants for the filming, I guess.

00:37:41 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
Wow.

00:37:41 **LOUIS HOCK**
That was very helpful to me.

00:37:44 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**
Yeah. So what about *MISSISSIPPI ROLLS*? Can you talk a little bit about that?

00:37:47 **LOUIS HOCK**
Well *MISSISSIPPI ROLLS*, Melinda Ward was a curator, and she commissioned that for the Walker Art Center, and actually it was a big show on the Mississippi River. And actually Nam Jun Paik's work was in the next gallery. And that's when I actually reconnected with him. And where he had, there was like a river garden and he had all these monitors on the floor, you know. I think he had the sound track of really slowed down [Hock note: "Old Man River" sung very slowly]. [laugh]

00:38:32 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**
And I think the guard was actually bonkers by the end of the show. But I made this [Hock note: M.R.]-- I went there, I don't know how many times I went but I went a series of times. When I went I was struck, I did a lot of work that was time around the Mississippi river. And there were these guys, I want to say Golob [Hock note: Globus, actually], but I'm not sure that's their name.

00:38:49 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**
Brothers who had this film strip where they had a boat that went down the Mississippi river and it was like one continuous 35 millimeter strip. And it was like you sat there and watched the whole Mississippi river. But I was struck with making, you know that stretch of the Mississippi, tangible in terms of a installation, so what I did is I put three stacked projectors and one film ran through each of the three projectors. And you could see, and it was a room was a shoe box shape.

00:39:20

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And so in the end they were projected. And I actually, the film, I was really conscious of the film so I, you see the actual, it wasn't sprock holes that it was projected on but it was the sprock holes of the film, so you could see the sprock holes in the corners in the film, so you could see the film on the wall. So it was like three [Hock note: film] frames that were on the wall.

00:39:38

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then of course the wall, the floor was dark and polished so you could see, like on the river you could see the reflection of the light on there. And it had a lot of, I mean a lot of the images were like the barges are like the best dolly ever because they're just incredibly smooth. Each barge holds I think ten box cars full of material.

00:39:58

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So you sit on the front, on, going down the river, with a camera on the front, it's like smooth, there's not a bump. And so I would, do, I could open the shutter and zoom one way and then close the shutter. So you had all these lights so you're moving down the river at a time, lights streaming by you.

00:40:13

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then you know the towers for General Mills or Pillsbury I don't know which it was, but you know the towers of the light, they were not towers they were silos, but with the light rolling over them all day long. You know and so a lot of filming of that place in terms of commemorating it. The thing that struck me most about how I wanted to deal with that was, there were these rolls...

00:40:50

CAMERA WOMAN

[non-interview dialogue]

00:40:50

LOUIS HOCK

Well the thing that struck me most were these rolls. There's only one surviving, it was in St. Louis, where they would take a section of the Mississippi river and put it on canvas and put it on two spools on a wagon and rolling around and give talks about, you know about the Mississippi. And so that was sort of like a mural, like a rolling mural and so it struck me and so I took that as sort of a tone.

00:41:12

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And so, I did I think I did General Mills and I did the river at night going down and closing, opening with the shutter. There's a whole series of images that are around the Minneapolis area and, water lines, water moving. But all of the you know sort of the images and using time lapse and flowing down...

end of tape 2

TAPE: 3 LOUIS HOCK

00:00:16

LOUIS HOCK

Well, the piece actually ended up being a pretty wonderful piece but I learned a horrible lesson, I mean, it relied on people that I didn't know for technology. And I didn't quite figure out until later but the guy that was projectionist there was terrified of electricity, but he really had to trust in engineering. So he suggested we tie the machines together with gears, rather than slo syn motors. It was a horrible mistake because he didn't really know gears that well..

00:00:53

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And I mean like the attendants would turn off the projector and would throw it through the wall. Nam June Paik made me feel better by saying the first installation he did he almost-- he started a fire in the gallery. But still, it was later on when I showed it, I showed it with motors, where the things were electronically set. But somehow the guy wanted to do it. It turned out to be really troublesome, you know for keeping the thing running.

00:01:14

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I just learned a lesson that I should have more control over the technology or know somebody that I trust that would. I was really devastated, it was really-- it just wouldn't work, and it wouldn't work and it wouldn't work. And finally it worked for the opening and it worked intermittingly during the time but I was really frustrated. Because I thought the piece was really nice. And I really felt stupid and not sort of-- but I didn't have anybody to turn to.

00:01:42

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I didn't know anybody. He seemed like, and they all thought that he was the cat's pajamas at the museum but, turns out it was a bad move.

00:01:49

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:01:49

LOUIS HOCK

And it was very easy to go the other way. He just was, didn't understand how that worked. And as soon as I got to San Diego, you know I met somebody said oh you've got to do it this way. It was very simple, and that's the same technology I used in *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA*. But, and also when I showed that film around, you know I only showed it a few places but when I showed *MISSISSIPPI ROLLS* I used the same, you know the electronic technology. But the film itself was interesting though.

00:02:16 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It was a very frustrating experience at the time because the mechanics of it was really problematic.

00:02:22 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm. So we're in 1976 roughly, what else was going on at that time, I have down *THE PICTURE WINDOW*. Was there any other films that you can remember that you've completed that next year?

00:02:38 **LOUIS HOCK**

I don't know what else I was doing. I was working on film, I had an NEA grant, I had quit the job. I was living in my brother's garage in Tucson. And I was out looking for little Airstream trailers and a pickup truck. Because I figured I had enough money to finish the film in time if I could go, it wasn't summer yet in Tucson I could go and live in this trailer and finish the film.

00:03:04 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Somebody had some land with a septic on it and stuff like that, I could go and do that. And then I got a call that they wanted me to come here, a call from Standish Lawder...

00:03:16 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Here being?

00:03:21 **LOUIS HOCK**

He called and it wasn't really clear that it was a job offer to come to the University of California San Diego. He said, "Would you like to come?" And I said yes, sure. And I thought it was a visiting artist gig. And then he says for ten weeks, and I said it's like a workshop. Well I didn't know the quarter system. I couldn't imagine anything so, I didn't quite-- and finally he said well you know we'd like you to come, actually it's a term.

00:03:39 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I could come for a term and teach. So I came and taught here. And I guess I was the first person that they ever hired that they didn't know. So you know they only knew my work and that's it. They hired me.

00:03:57 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

What year?

00:03:57 **LOUIS HOCK**

'77.

00:03:58 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And what were you teaching? Filmmaking or...

00:03:58

LOUIS HOCK

16 millimeter film primarily, I taught I think introduction to media. It's a broad course, it's open to a lot of different kinds of majors. Lots of fundamentals, it had a conceptual part and a practical part. I'm sure I sought a little bit of film history, or history of experimental film, stuff like that. Standish Lawder was the other person that was teaching in there but he was chair, so I sort of took up the slack.

00:04:28

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I think that as the idea between my being hired is I was teaching the course that he had in fact begun to teach. There was a guy named Stanton Kaye who had preceded him. When I came they had just hired Jean Pierre [Gorin]. Because two years before he and Jean-Luc Godard came through, and then Manny Farber was there, Manny taught film history, Manny suggested they hire Jean Pierre.

00:04:51

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So there was Jean Pierre lecturing, Manny lecturing, and so I taught, I taught the more practical course. Except for experimental film, which, I mean Manny could have taught it, and perhaps he did teach, but I taught history of experimental film ultimately. So, and then you know I just, they eventually hired me permanently.

00:05:11

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm. And how long was it before they hired you permanently?

00:05:13

LOUIS HOCK

I came in January of 1977. And I was tenured in July of 1985, I think it was 1985.

00:05:35

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Can I ask what you taught in your intro to experimental film course? [Hock note: Misunderstood question to be about intro to media course, not history of experimental film, which I also taught.]

00:05:39

LOUIS HOCK

Well, it was intro to media, and so we taught about, well at the time you taught about film, you'd taught about video. And they made some, I think it started off, and I didn't think it was video, I think they started making 8 millimeter films. That was when I first got there we made, you know 8 millimeter films, and they had them processed and they would edit them together and that was it.

00:06:04 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And then there was sort of some film theory that went along with it. And then, there must have been some video as well, so it was the idea of-- it was a real broad base educational, education in media. So you had hands on experience and then you had some writing whether it be critical theory, I mean so you saw everything from little bit of-- it wasn't a survey course but everything you know about Lumiere to more contemporary films.

00:06:32 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

You know you set up the idea of the notion of genre, set up some framework for history although you didn't go too much into it, sort of the different periods of history and the kind of examples. It was a broad based course around media and media production. I mean I taught it and then Tony Conrad came and taught it for I don't know, a couple of quarters.

00:06:54 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:06:55 **LOUIS HOCK**

And a variety of people have taught that course. Yeah.

00:06:59 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

So but didn't you say you taught a history of experimental film?

00:07:01 **LOUIS HOCK**

I taught that from time to time.

00:07:03 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Ok, I'm interested to hear what you taught, as part of that course.

00:07:05 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well, you know in the course the students had seen so little I'd tend to show the standard whether it be Frampton, and Brakhage and Sharits, I mean I showed you know essentially everything out of a Sitney book plus more west coast stuff because he didn't write about the west coast you know unless it was San Francisco.

00:07:31 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And what did you write about on the west coast, what filmmaker and films?

00:07:34 **LOUIS HOCK**

You know, Pat O'Neill.

00:07:37 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Mm-hmm.

00:07:37

LOUIS HOCK

You know, people like that. Those kinds of filmmakers that were you know operating. I don't have a very clear idea of exactly what I taught. But I mean it was you know a lot of it, obviously Kenneth Anger, I mean the whole-- I mean it was ten meetings of course. What can you teach in ten meetings, ten three hour meetings. I didn't have a discussion so I showed an hour and a half of films and talked for an hour and a half.

00:07:59

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So it was lively, it was interesting that very early on people were much more receptive to it, it was sort of the moment, and then later it became more historical. It became more difficult, particularly the idea of things not having narrative. And the idea of film works that were not commercial in nature. It became more difficult.

00:08:20

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Now it's actually come back again, it's more interesting because it's seen as an alternative. So but the middle period was seen as something that was terribly antiquated. [laugh]

00:08:30

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm. There's something else about your teaching I was going to ask. Were you still making films while you were teaching?

00:08:40

LOUIS HOCK

Oh yeah.

00:08:40

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah.

00:08:39

LOUIS HOCK

Because I made the, *PACIFIC TIME*.

00:08:50

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm.

00:08:50

LOUIS HOCK

When I first, I think, I don't know what date is on that, 78 or 77? And it was, I don't know how I got fascinated with Plato. But somehow, but I had David Antin playing Plato and Allan Kaprow playing Aristotle. And the time lapse thing I was just getting a little bored with waiting around for the cameras for a year and cleaning out spider webs that kept trying to get in front of lenses and stuff like that.

00:09:22 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So I went the other direction, the whole film was made, the camera shooting a thousand frames per second. And I was shooting sound synch, so I made a film, it was about-- and so when you see Allan and David and they're on a bus, and they exit the bus. And you know so it's mostly about, you know and I-- it was, it had Greek subtitles.

00:09:53 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And it was really about watching, sort of making it as distant from the actual experience of real time and really, you know, understood, and again mostly, completely opaque except for what you were looking at. So it became, even though you had all the character of a traditional sort of narrative film with having subtitles and two characters and the like, it really ended up being watching images move very, very slowly.

00:10:19 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Of course David Antin, I don't know if you know David Antin, he's a guy who has, I can't remember the name of the disease but he has no hair on him, on his body. So when he speaks he's very interesting to look at. And of course, Allan Kaprow is an interesting speaker but he's very opposite, he's very bearded you know.

00:10:33 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And much more modest sized guy so the two are very interesting in the exchange as they're riding down the city street in a bus having a discourse with a blue window behind them so, it was a lot about you know using a different take on—I was still interested in, heavily in time but very different kind of-- filming things very quickly I thought they could make things evident that were almost very different than the time lapse, which is very quick.

00:11:03 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

But they would both use time as a topic, so that time became the substance of the film more than the actual images. But the passage of time became the content of the film.

00:11:13 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And what kind of high speed camera did you find to do this?

00:11:15 **LOUIS HOCK**

I don't know, it was something I rented out of Hollywood, it was something they'd kind of use in scientific experiments.

00:11:22 **AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)**

Fast X?

00:11:23 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Yeah.

00:11:23

LOUIS HOCK

But, something I shredded the last ten feet of film, you know it would just be in confetti. So it went through it very quickly, I don't know, the takes were very, be actually four hundred feet and it was like really really fast.

00:11:34

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm. And how long was *PACIFIC TIME*, roughly.

00:11:40

LOUIS HOCK

I don't know it was a film in which I think I originally intended it as a single screen film and then I showed it side by side, so, it was a two screen film. So that there were two, so the time, and they were asynchronous projectors, so they started off in synch and then they were out of synch. And I think I governed it a bit so that the synch never was perfect but it never got too far out, so the two were side by side.

00:12:03

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So you were always repairing the slow motion. It was moving slowly enough you know that, you know when people are moving like this [motions with hands], the two became almost like bad stereo. [laugh] It did the time...

00:12:10

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:12:10

LOUIS HOCK

So, I don't know how long it was I think it must have been around twenty minutes or so, something like that. [Hock note: 55 minutes, actually]

00:12:20

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

My God, that's a lot of film.

00:12:18

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah, it's a lot of film.

00:12:26

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So I guess when they're having a dialogue you're not hearing it necessarily...

00:12:28

LOUIS HOCK

You were hearing it but it's not intelligible.

00:12:28

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

I see.

00:12:28

LOUIS HOCK

I mean you hear it it's like very, [makes rumbling noise] you know, like the old man river kind of thing. [laugh]

00:12:31

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:12:31

LOUIS HOCK

So much, much, less, I mean you couldn't make anything out of it, it was just low rumble.

00:12:40

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And tell me about *PICTURE WINDOW*?

00:12:41

LOUIS HOCK

PICTURE WINDOW...

00:12:44

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Is that going back now? A little bit?

00:12:44

LOUIS HOCK

A bit, because I somehow managed to insinuate myself into the Sears Tower and be able to set up a camera there for a year.

00:12:56

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

That was one of your time lapse. Ok.

00:12:57

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah, and I set it up and the thing, two-- one that was most striking they had an art collection. And I remember the guy who was-- somehow I got put in charge. The guy who did art is a guy that showed me around. And we went into the, I mean they had these massive floors. Actually during the time I met the guy, I think his name was Hardy Velon, maybe I'm mistaken. But had a dinner by one, a fellow, a student, at the Art Institute.

00:13:26

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I went to dinner and he delivered toilet paper. Once a month he pulled up with a semi of toilet paper at the Sears tower. And that gives you a sense of scale. [laugh] Big building right?

00:13:36

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah.

00:13:36

LOUIS HOCK

Once a month, semi. So anyway, but it was a huge building and I mean the floor spaces were amazing. And they had like robots that went around to the cubicles and stop for mail. And it was like big spaces and, I was able to secure the small space to be able to set up my camera. And I remember setting up the camera. In the process the guy somehow this became part of art, that became, I became pigeonholed.

00:14:00

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And so the art guy showed me around and they had this massive room and it was like the art place because everybody got to pick art, and like all the management got to pick art. So you go and you have, they said like Warhol and there'd be all these stacks against the wall, Rothko and there's be like two or three maybe, so you'd go in a room and there'd be all these really famous artists and they'd just be stacked up. You know, like a warehouse..

00:14:22

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And people would come and pick out, so, [laugh], anyway it was like a backside, it was like a storage room for a museum except it was more like a store than an archive. So I set it up for a year and I shot camera, I was shooting more often. I think I was shooting a picture every, I think it was every 20 minutes, I think I shot a picture every 20 minutes.

00:14:47

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:14:47

LOUIS HOCK

And I just shot out. I do remember when I set it up that I turned around these guys, these three guys in black suits, I was like ah, fuck me, I'm ready to go with this thing and these guys look like trouble. And the guys say, what are you, you're taking a picture, and asked some questions, and I think like how can I make sure I give the right answer so they don't nix this thing.

00:15:02

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because they weren't like the archive they were like, and they said well you know, we're trying to figure if we can use this because this thing moves in the wind. And we're trying to figure out if we can use this footage to be able to figure out how much it moves in the wind, and I said, "You don't know?" [laugh] But anyway and so they wanted a copy of the film when I was finished but, to see how it moved over time.

00:15:30

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:15:28

LOUIS HOCK

Because of the fixed camera and still shot. So I shot the film. And it was, it was interesting to me, because the negative of the film held so much information you could actually, you'd have a night version of it. And you could see all the lights and everything and then you'd have a day version of it.

00:15:41 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Where you could see all the light. But depending on how you printed the negative would be dependent on you know what information you got out of the negatives. The record was much more vast than the print you made out of it, the negative, it held much more of an archive than the result which came out of it when you actually made a print.

00:15:57 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So I made that. And then I followed up with a time lapse in Santa Fe where I set a camera up in an A frame over these pine forests, and I shot a video there. And it wasn't so interesting. By that time I had sort of lost interest, you know sort of it felt like the-- my energy was in the Chronovision and I did the first one in Texas and then it became less interesting to me, I mean it became, I guess I'd felt like I had sort of conceptually worked through.

00:16:30 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Also you know I really, and this is an element of risk, I mean unless I can, unless I'm not sure what will happen, unless I'm not sure I can do it, I really, I lose interest, it's like after I did, almost every I mean a couple of art works, you know like I did *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* mural, and it was really great, dah, dah, and I was going to make another one.

00:16:45 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I couldn't do it.

00:16:48 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:16:48 **LOUIS HOCK**

I mean I just knew it was going to work I just had to figure out how what kind of image to put in, and if the system worked, it would work. And I knew the results I was going to get, so it was about filling it with a topic, but I, or a content in a way, and I, once I, the concept had been kind of gobbled up by my curiosity. I was no longer interested in it.

00:17:05 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So I think at that time, my interest in that kind of long scale time lapse kind of petered out. I was no longer interested in it, so...

00:17:13 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:17:16 **AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)**

Do you remember the film stock that you shot the Sears Tower movie in that held both, could hold dark and white like that?

00:17:21

LOUIS HOCK

I think it was, at the time they didn't have that many variations. It was, even though it was 35. It was a stock which, I probably chose a stock that would be, that had the most latitude and exposed for daylight. That's probably what I did. And then I probably did it so that the exposure, I pushed, fudged the exposure toward one way. So I'd be able to attempt to be able to get night...

00:17:47

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:17:47

LOUIS HOCK

You know, so that even though it was too much light for a daylight exposure I could bring it down and have a normal looking image. But then it would also give me a lot more advantage of shooting the night stuff.

00:18:05

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

I wanted to ask you a little bit now about, we'll return to some of the more, some more films, but I wanted to ask you about your experiences with Doug Edwards and going up to LA, dealing with Doug, Theater Vanguard, all that, the scene in LA, what you experienced of it, and maybe the screening that you did there in '77.

00:18:29

LOUIS HOCK

Well I did a screening there in '76 actually. At Vanguard and then I did another one in '78. I mean I had-- I was living in my brother's garage. I'd had a Cineprobe [Hock note: MOMA] in New York City and I had gotten some press in New York in the *VILLAGE VOICE*. Jonas [Mekas] had written about stuff and the like, so you know I had some cards to lay on the table.

00:19:03

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I think when moving to Tucson I was in proximity to the west coast but not the east, I decided to take advantage of that. So in this period of time between 1976 and I think 1979 I showed, I think I showed films twice at the Pasadena [Hock note: at the Film Forum]. I think I showed Oasis, Encounter, and then at LAICA [Hock note: I showed at Oasis/LAICA, Encounter, and Vanguard too]. You know all within that short window.

00:19:46

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Hmm.

00:19:46

LOUIS HOCK

And that was a, pretty rich showing period, and then the same time that was when there was a lot of west coast press. Doug Edwards did a lot of curation behind Vanguard and he was with something earlier, I knew but I didn't know the program. [Sound like] I and something or other. And they did Vanguard, and then he did, Encounter I think. Was it Encounter, I think so.

00:20:05

AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)

Mm-hmm. I think he did.

00:20:07

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah he did Encounter Cinema, I think that was, came out of UCLA I think that was UCLA. You know he was a guy who was really interested in independent film. And like he always said I show these films so I, otherwise I'll never be able to see them. And that was you know, it was not, and he really you know had a real love of showing those kinds of films and really saw himself as, making, doing, operating in an arena that was totally overwhelmed by the industry.

00:20:32

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Totally overwhelmed by commercial film, totally overwhelmed by people who couldn't understand what in hell he was doing. And of course the art scene in LA was not that built up either at that period of time. You know it was not that, it was relatively rough terrain. So he was really critically important in having those films shown and he was like the most knowledgeable person about that and he was old enough that he saw the connection with the, he didn't, I mean he wasn't the vintage of Kenneth Anger.

00:21:02

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But he could sort of expand Kenneth Anger. And I don't think he probably knew Maya Daren, but maybe, the Maya Daren era. And then you know he dealt with all the contemporary film making. And then there was Mitch Tuchman who wrote about films in the *LA TIMES*. And that was important because *LA TIMES* was a big paper. And it was you know, it wasn't like a little marginal note, it was you know some of their front page things in the *ARTS CALENDAR*.

00:21:35

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So people paid attention, also Tuchman also wrote for *FILM COMMENT*, so LA films made their way into a national magazine. And so in a way there was this flow of information from stuff that had been shown in LA and LA filmmakers into a national forum or an international forum and that was important. And people like Jonathan Rosenbaum also wrote about west coast stuff.

00:22:01 LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

When I first came to teach in San Diego he and I were roommates [Hock note: housemates]. Actually Jonathan Rosenbaum and what's his name, blanking on it but he was a famous European Freudian critic [Hock note: Ray Durgnate]. His name will come to me. But he, three of us were roommates [Hock note: housemates. And so Jonathan wrote a lot on the west coast about a lot of stuff.

00:22:22 LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And he came in contact and he had been sort of bounced around Europe and finally come here and taught. He was a wonderful guy but he didn't last too long at UCSD. His text book for the first lecture course was Infinity's Rainbow-- *GRAVITY'S RAINBOW* which is this thick but for an undergraduate course you know [laugh] he wilted them in no time at all.

00:22:45 LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But he was a really nice guy, Jonathan, smart guy, he is still writing in Chicago.

00:22:50 WOMAN IN BACKGROUND

Question about the LAICA show, that was an Oasis show was it not, or was it, LAICA separate? We, Oasis screened at LAICA for years.

00:22:57 LOUIS HOCK

Yes. Though I had...

00:23:01 WOMAN IN BACKGROUND

But they also...

00:23:01 LOUIS HOCK

I had a film showing at Oasis. And I don't remember where it was, but then LAICA sponsored the first screening of *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* in which I set up a semi-truck outside of there. And then a flat bed holding the projectors outside and it was timed to be, I think there was some art opening so I wasn't this only person but this thing happened so it was a crowd that was out in the street.

00:23:28 LOUIS HOCK

And so they, so LAICA sponsored the first projection. And I think I also did an Oasis screening of the films as well.

00:23:35 STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Mm-hmm.

00:23:35 **LOUIS HOCK**

And mostly you know at the time I mean I was coming to LA before I went to San Diego and then after I went to San Diego I was going to LA. Then when I was shooting *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* I was up there all the time because most of the stuff was shot in LA and around LA. I mean like, that one thing with the, you know the turning restaurant [Hock's note: Angel's Flight] and all that stuff was shot in LA. And the orange groves.

00:23:55 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

In Irvine or someplace like that. But most of that, you know, all that stuff was, mostly shot in the Los Angeles area.

00:24:02 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And so how did you perceive the Los Angeles scene of experimental film, curating, programming, as different or and how did you compare it at all if there is a comparison between that and down in San Diego?

00:24:17 **LOUIS HOCK**

There wasn't any in San Diego.

00:24:16 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

There was none at all, not even at like the Unicorn?

00:24:18 **LOUIS HOCK**

It was all it was no-- I mean Unicorn showed more independent films, they were like an alternative kind of place. But their stuff is not extraordinarily radical as I recollect.

00:24:32 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:24:32 **LOUIS HOCK**

The most interesting things came out of the University where Manny and Jean Pierre were teaching. I remember sitting down in a 500 seat auditorium there, and it was Jean Pierre, Patricia Patterson, Manny Farber, and me, all in 500 seats, it was the only place you could show 35 on campus. Looking at *JEANNE DIELMAN* right? [laugh] You know and it was like it was great.

00:25:02 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

when I was there, early on he was still writing film criticism. So all the first stuff would come and we'd look at it. So a lot of stuff came through the University rather than through it [Hock note: the Unicorn] -- and it was interesting because at the time it was really was, the UCSD art department, really was a substation of New York.

00:25:21 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Everybody was one from New York pretty much, I mean Allan Kaprow wasn't from New York, I mean, at that time, but mostly people were New Yorkers or ex New Yorkers with the probable exception of someone like Jean Pierre, who was obviously from France. But it was a really east coast, and people came from there it was really you know a hub and they hired people to come teach from New York.

00:25:39 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It was not connected to LA, it was connected to New York, it was very I mean conceptually and all that stuff it was really just connected to...

00:25:49 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:25:49 **LOUIS HOCK**

And so the film scene, you know even Jean Pierre would be back to Europe and be back to LA. Same thing with Manny Farber. It was in all that direction. Now Standish came from Yale, so his connection is all east coast too. So, you know there was not a real connection [Hock note: to San Diego]. What did, made the connection was the students.

00:26:03 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Both graduate students and undergraduate students were coming from there that you know either through they had screenings or they got work there or whatever, really initiated a lot of the discourse. The first film I made that was actually grounded, in and obviously I used the David Anton and Allan Kaprow and I shot it in San Diego. But the first real film I made was *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* that could actually you know bit into the local culture in a way, that was, took it up to the top, rather than just the background.

00:26:35 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Or a setting. And so that was the first one where I really attempted to sort of deal with where I am.

00:26:42 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Hmm.

00:26:42 **LOUIS HOCK**

Before that I treated myself just like most of the other people there who used UCSD as a studio to produce work which they would show again in New York or Europe or wherever else. And not necessarily, like there was no consideration. It was a production house. And it was not a place that really ever imagined having an audience.

00:27:05

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

So speaking of the...

00:27:05

LOUIS HOCK

There's also, that also was cultivated by academic criteria too, I mean if you have a show in New York it's worth something. In San Diego it's not worth anything. So, why spend the energy doing it.

00:27:16

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah. So speaking of looking more critically at a scene or even a filmmaker in an actual scene, scene, or a scene as like a canon idea. How did you see like the culture of experimental filmmaking and curatorship in Los Angeles with Doug Edwards. What kinds of people came, what was the atmosphere like, was it very academic, was it very grass roots? How did it feel to you?

00:27:45

LOUIS HOCK

Well I was friends with some filmmakers like Morgan Fisher, Pat O'Neill and you know I would talk to them and they often would come to screenings and I would go to people screenings in LA. People would come to my screenings. And so I mean I would go back and forth, so I spent some time in LA looking at stuff.

00:28:06

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

You know a lot of it, you know one of the reasons I moved from, into doing *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* is that I would spend a long time making a film and then I would make these films and, I remember going to the Museum of Modern Art I think it was the second time, and there was filmmakers, the wanna-be filmmakers, the critics, the wanna-be critics, and a couple of old ladies that always come to those shows for god knows what reason and asked the wacky questions. [laugh]

00:28:41

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And I decided that I really was not you know that it was really a very insulated and it was very cloistered you know this filmmaking process. And it bothered me you know considering I would spend so much time and so much money and there would be actually it would be too masturbatory, you know that I would be making films for my pleasure. But the audience really wasn't, and people would write about it you know that was good.

00:29:12

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But there wasn't a kind of massive audience. And it, I got less of it when I would go to like Millennium in New York. And other places where you actually had a lot of people, but there's still even when you go to Anthology. Anthology had probably a broader base but you know there was a lot of people who worked in the arts when I first started out that would come to film screening in a broad way.

00:29:32

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But it ended up and particularly films became more severe and structural they often became, the audience became thinner and thinner, and it became much more about the, it was really like, really modern music, in which you know unless you're a musician you don't understand what the hell is going on. You can't, you can listen to it, but you don't understand what's going on unless you're a sophisticated musician.

00:29:51

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I felt the same thing was true with films. I mean not that the films were unaccessible, but I thought that in a way, either through the way that they were written about or the way they were shown, or just the fact that the culture was moving in a different way I felt isolated, I felt as an artist. And I didn't want to become some kind of you know Gauguin in Shaky Town.

00:30:11

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

You know I wanted to have an audience and maybe it's vanity or maybe it's just sense of economy, maybe it's politics, but I wanted to produce work. So and the LA scene it was a good scene and it was live and it was nice to have a place to show. It wasn't as rich as the New York scene. But it was better than, I mean it was kind of the caliber-- San Francisco was a rich scene and LA I thought was a pretty rich scene.

00:30:35

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

New York was, and places up here to show things, different kinds of audiences, and the like. So I decided I'd been studying, with some of it I'd just been looking at a lot of murals in Mexico and Mexican sort of you know grand muralist. And was thinking about the function of murals and how murals had a didactic kind of function with people and they had an engagement. But it was with everybody, it didn't have to be a painter, murals were appreciated.

00:31:02

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I spent hundreds of-- I looked at every mural you could find in Mexico City of any consequence. And thought about the idea of murals, not unlike when I was talking about the film that I did at the Walker. I mean I was fascinated with the kind of the rolling text and image that appeared on canvas that they used to roll around the towns that tell people about the Mississippi as a phenomenon and a development.

00:31:28

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I studied these a lot and I thought you know I maybe I should make a film mural because then I, and could put it in a public place. So I'd make a film mural. My idea was that I would never, not, except once I think I never showed it in a theater. I always showed it outside of a theater. And I would show it never once but multiple screenings and I would show it over several days.

00:31:56

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Never, rarely one day, it would be over a series of days so that people could see it and then tell somebody to come back. And so and my idea was in some ways at that time my first feeling is to sort of escape from that. And it was good, I mean, coincidentally I mean it was good because by the time I sort of had escaped from that environment I mean all the NEA funding collapsed and so those environments just dried up.

00:32:19

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

They were gone. So you know I would have had no place to show my films anyway had I, you know there are places around there now but like there's one in LA, one in San Francisco, couple in New York and that's it. But you know you, that's you know if you're going to make work it's a pretty thin environment to sort of operate in. I mean you have to seek other kinds of things like the internet. Or some other kind of distribution.

00:32:39

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

To be able, to make work. So at the time you know I thought it was, I felt very fortunate in that people you know respected my work, paid attention to what I did. And wrote about it and showed the work. And I was really, and the mural, I showed outside of LAICA, they sponsored it, and I think I don't know quite where the funding came from,

00:33:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

but I think it was through them. I showed it outside, that one night [Hock note: FOR THE OPENING on a semi-truck trailer] and then I showed it for a series of nights at the Santa Monica Pier. On an RV, I paid for an RV. The image was not too big, it was like 30 feet long and eight feet high. On an RV, and then I did a wall in Venice. And then I think it was the RV when I showed it, some people came up and asked if they said they play car parts and they asked if they could play along with it.

00:33:35

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Said sure. And it was great, you know. And they played there and they played in Venice. And it was, they did, you know this group of people they just started playing this, banging on grills and hub caps and stuff, and it was perfect for that, for the piece you know. And so and later of course it became really meaningful when I showed it at the Getty I mean you know it was really an important thing [Hock note: component].

00:33:54

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because when I was showing the mural there you have a flat bed truck. You have me and a reel of seventy minutes worth of film, a seventy minute piece it'd roll through and then I would take off the reel and sit there and splice on the new one and put it up on the take-up and take the other one off, you know, put one on the feed and take the one off, take up, and then it'd continue playing so there was this whole performance every seventy minutes.

00:34:18

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And then I would sit there and rewind it and then it would go on. So I was there and the reels were there and you could hear the machinery grinding away you know and seeing me doing it and sometimes they had a generator you know going so it was really the sound of film. And so the sound of them playing was great because it added a sound track but then when I did it at the Getty and I had transferred it to video, to project through Rani Singh you know.

00:34:46

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

With the big, and it was a wonderful, they made, created a special night, occasion for it (and stuff like that). And it was really great because the video projectors have such, a more powerful luminance than 16 millimeter film projectors that I could actually, you know it fit very nicely in the architecture and so powerful they could overcome the sort of yellow tint of the [Hock note: travertine] stone walls.

00:35:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But it was dead because it was video. It just played, it was like this machines [Hock note: the video projector]. they just went, so it was just an image. And so they [Hock note: the Getty] very nicely allowed me to find some local musicians that would play car parts. And so they had the car parts. And the car parts became the performative part of it which [Hock note: otherwise] would have been way too chilly, [Hock note: the event would) it'd have been much more like a drive-in theater.

00:35:24 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Yet, it was clearly not a drive in theater. It was just too antiseptic and too chilly and it didn't have a sense of vitality in a kind of way that was happening at the moment. It was like it was canned but the music brought much more back the sense that it was you know happening in the moment, anything can happen, which is what I liked all about it, about it from the beginning.

00:35:45 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Mm-hmm.

00:35:45 **LOUIS HOCK**

And so that, musicians really played an important part in being able to do that. So, so the *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* stuff was the first piece that I made that was really about indigenous topics. And *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* was also the first real sort of public art piece that I did. And then I sort of, moving in that direction, with something like *THE MEXICAN TAPES*, which ended up being on-- both intended to show in art house but also on public television. I saw that as a kind of direction.

00:36:21 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And then the public art works which were media events, you know.

00:36:25 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Mm-hmm.

00:36:25 **LOUIS HOCK**

But all those, you know but all, the *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* was really, the impetus behind that though was really the test. And then I did other kinds of projections. Often using search lights and reflective materials and things like that. But *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* was the film that to me was sort of the change up film where I learned a lot of stuff. And it changed directions.

00:36:46 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

But the LA scene before that you know, was the various places to show it was, you know I really enjoyed you know hanging out with Pat O'Neill I learned a lot from him. He, when I had technical questions he's the guy, you know I went to. Because he knew about that stuff. He knew more about, especially when I started moving to the 35 realm, that was like, mystery to me. So he helped me.

00:37:08 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

He may have actually done some work for me, in my films when I was doing the time stuff. And I feel Morgan Fisher would get into conversation you know, like, but, other people you know I mean I don't have a very clear recollection of exactly who I was hanging with. [Hock note: Later, students and colleagues would come up from San Diego] But it was always, there was always, tended to be not enormous audiences. But there was always some audience. In New York you either got a lot of audience or nobody. [laugh] You know.

00:37:41 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So there was always a modest audience it seemed to me.

00:37:46 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And how were the conversations and dialogues, besides the two that you had with Pat and Morgan, were people talking a lot after the films, was it pretty casual? Like the atmosphere?

00:37:56 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well you showed the film and then people always had questions, and some you know your friends always asked you the hardest questions. And then there were always questions of people who, you're not sure whether why they were there. But it was, tended to usually be a rich conversation afterwards, because you usually weren't showing several films you know so you were showing two or three films and they were different.

00:38:18 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And people, often they'd want to know how you did stuff in a technical kind of way. Or why you did stuff. You know in an aesthetic kind of way. And mostly you know you sometimes you could talk for quite a while.

00:38:35 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

So what did you perceive is the difference between some of these organizations, something like Vanguard, maybe something like Oasis whose itinerant, and then something like Pasadena Film Forum. Do you see differences that you think are distinct between those?

00:38:47 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well a lot of the times you'd have the same kinds of audiences. I mean the same people would pop in depending on where it was, I mean those kinds of films were being shown and they would seek them out.

00:38:55 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Mm-hmm.

00:38:55

LOUIS HOCK

So I think, the place I mean the people were happy to have the place to see the films, but I don't think that, like in New York it was different people would hang out at Millennium, whether they'd hang out at Anthology and there would sort of be these cliques and sometimes there was production associated with these film screening places, and there was kinds of films and there was a whole kind of stratification.

00:39:14

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But in LA it didn't seem that way to me. It seemed to me that wherever the films were shown it was around the films and the people rather than around the institutions themselves. The writing about the films, it was written about in places like *ART WEEK*, it was written about in the *LA TIMES*, it was written about I think it was in the *EXAMINER* at the time.

00:39:35

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It was, and all those kinds of places did a lot of writing about films. So the stuff is well publicized. And people, and a lot of those articles, same people, those articles would often end up also writing an article for some kind of national publication. So you know it was, it was known about in a way that today I think when you show those films, it's, one there's a lot of different stuff [Hock note: activity] going on now.

00:40:01

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So it's very cluttered. I mean it's not, there's a lot more stuff going on, but it doesn't have the kind of, I mean those kinds of films are never going to make the front page of, of the *LA TIMES* culture section. It's not going to happen you know. But it did, at that time, it did, so...

end of tape 3

TAPE: 4 LOUIS HOCK

00:00:33

LOUIS HOCK

Well, *THE MEXICAN TAPES* was-- I kind of backed into that. It wasn't as if it was a project which I had intended to do. I had to teach a course which had heavier investment in video than I had taught before. And I had never really made a videotape before. So, I thought okay, I'd already been living in these apartments for a year and a half [Hock note: in 1978]. I moved in there because it was really cheap. It was a block off the beach. And, it was great, it was unlike other kinds of places in North County in that it was inexpensive, but also it's largely Mexican neighbors.

00:01:11

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, it was a place that had been built for jockeys, you know so it had a laundry room, sort of self contained, four garages. So I lived on the second floor up there. And I lived there for a year and a half and then Elizabeth Sisco moved in with me. I started filming because I wanted to make a six minute videotape because in the local newspaper they said it was going to turn into a Best Western Motel, and these are pretty ramshackle places.

00:01:46

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, I thought this was a good opportunity. It'd be, you know there's a natural drama here. You know, so I started filming. Well, it didn't happen. In fact, those places are still there. It's hard to believe having, going back and visiting them. It's actually an uncanny experience because when I moved out in the-- I moved in 1978 and I moved out in the mid '80s. And, when I moved out they refurbished them. And, what's happened is the amount of time between the time they refurbished them in contemporary times when I went and visited it's about the same amount of age.

00:02:26

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, the aging of the apartments is identical to when I moved out. So, it was just like it was in many ways. And, they painted it the same color and everything. There's some differences, but it was very strange to go back and actually find the place that looks identical the way that you taped it [Hock note: 30 years later]. But, this place, you know it was-- I didn't realize quite how-- it was a place where-- it was largely undocumented people. Most all from specific areas of Mexico. And, at the first everybody said that they were legal, had papers.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, as it worked out they didn't, and I just began taping, with inexpensive equipment. And I just taped on weekends, you know whenever the equipment I'd bring it home and I just tape and we started taping and taping and taping. And I taped for, well total about almost five years. Not all of it was in the apartments. But, this place called the Analos Apartments and we just, I -- it was for me I mean it was like where I grew up.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I mean, it was a bicultural place. And I spoke able, but kind of grotesque Spanish. And they just told me about their lives. They in a way saw the tape as a repository for telling me about them [Hock note: themselves, teaching me about the culture], and it worked well. Well, it changed character when they really began to raid-- the immigration began to come in. Because the tape became a mechanism for, you know almost like a plea for help in some kind of way, you know.

00:04:13

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And the people were very trusting. I mean there was when I finished the tape it was four one hour tapes. It took me a long while to edit it. When I finished it and I was going to show it everybody moved out of the Analos that was in the tape. And, then some people moved back, so I [laugh] had to move them back out again for the screening because I was afraid that they would be arrested. But, it didn't happen, so that was good.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

The people on the tape, they really were partners in a lot of way of helping me make the tape. And I first made a version of the tape when I wasn't in it. You know it was all-- but because of our relationship it was clear that I wasn't just an interviewer. It was clear, I mean I was a neighbor, I was a friend, you know I was somebody that you know moved their children illicitly across the border. It was clear that I knew their families. It was clear that I visited their parents' home. It was clear, you know that I-- and I couldn't remove myself from the story.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So I put myself back in which made it in a rhetorical kind of way much better, but also allowed me to be a vehicle between the audience and the Mexican population. So, I became inside [Hock note: an operator both] and outside the narrative, it worked well for the tape. That became the body of it because I was both part of the content in terms of being documented. But, I also could stand back and talk about my experience from a more distanced perspective. It was really widely shown. I mean it was, it had a good-- it was an important moment in immigration. And, I was able to show it. I was really disturbed with the local [Hock note: PBS] station. I took it to a local station.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, they told me how they would take the four hours and shrink it down and add some maps and be co-producer. I just, you know said no. So, then I then I showed it to the L.A. [Hock note: KCET Latino Consortium]. And a funny thing happened because it was a studio area which was a water tank not unlike the Central Cultural de La Raza near Balboa Park which is the water tank. It was divided like a pie that had studios and had Manny Farber and Harold Cohen and Newton Helen Harrison and Italo Scanga. Standish Lawder had studios in there.

00:06:42

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, there was a fire when Manny left something on a hot plate in Patricia [Patterson]'s studio. And, most of the damage was in Patricia's studio. But, there was a heavy smoke, so I finally finished the videotape to my liking. And, I went and I was taking the three quarter inch tapes because I had made dubs and dubs and dubs. So, I finally finished the three quarter inch tapes and was going to-- sorting them out to transfer the tapes to one inch. [Hock note: lateral idea, thread continued two graphs below]. So, half way through I realized that I could get a better camera. Because my equipment was really cruddy.

00:07:23

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But then I'd be limited to absolute chronology to have the before and after tapes. So, I stuck with it in sort of cruddy format which is partially like a three quarter inch deck with a Beta kind of camera little-- it's like Beta versus VHS not like a BETACAM [laugh] And, so I was going to transfer it and do the editing on one inch, it would save me allow me to a lot manipulations much more possible than any kind of three quarter inch editing.]

So, I wanted to transfer to one inch to pick out the stuff I was going to move to one inch and I put in one tape, the tape jammed and wouldn't play.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I put in another tape, put in another tape. And, I realized that my tapes, none of my tapes were going to play because, except for the ones that were in the clamshell cases, because they had a patina of tar on them from the fire. So, after having worked on this for about five years or so I was freaked out a bit. So, I decided that-- I went home, you know I had a bottle of whiskey, ate six tacos. I immediately left the space, I knew would I put a TV or something through the wall. I went home and I just put myself down, as fast as I could, you know so like you just you know you're going do something really irrational, or just go down.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, I went down. I put myself out. Self medicate right? I wake up in the morning and it's a Latino Consortium from L.A. and they say oh, we love the tapes we'll show, we have half hour formats. We'll take-- you can do the rest of the season, four more programs. You can just take all four whatever you want to do. Of course, I said sure. And, then I called up a guy by the name of Sherman George who worked here at the University who is a, he's a real genius.

00:09:02

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I mean he's a, you know came here from Indiana and worked in the shipyards and then helped student with projects. And, then he helped at the University and then he went to Hollywood and worked motion control and stuff. But, he came back to the University and he's a real mechanical, real science I mean a guy who really knows-- he can take apart your watch, your car except he doesn't like to get his hands greasy or whatever. But, next call was I call Sherman George and I say Sherman what in the fuck am I going to do?

00:09:31

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Which turns out there are four places in the nation that handle these machines that clean the surface of videotapes. And, one of them happens to be a local bought by Kodak called Spin Physics. And, they still to this day cannot figure out why oxide drops off tape. It's largely the better tape. It's tapes that have a better percentage no dropouts. And, the worse tape has more dropouts and I can't figure out why. I mean that's how they grade the tape. So, they were trying to figure it out.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, they had one of these machines. So, I sat down with all my, you know I had shot hours and hours and hours, hundreds of hours of tape. So, I sat there and I just had to fast forward through them, [Hock note: a razor skimming the tape's surface] and then scrape the Q-tip. you know --- it'd be like cleaning your ears ---off the top of the, off of the razor blade. And, it was not one drop out or anything. I spent weeks there cleaning those tapes. And, then I was able to put it together. I spent a long time.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I mean I felt really lucky that things went my way. And then I was able to take the tape and when I showed it, the local place would not show it, but then because the Latino Consortium had shown it nationally ---- they gave me enough money to finish the other two hours. I said simply took the first hour and the third hour and cut them in half and used those for the half hours --- the national PBS would not show it because it already had a national presence.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, then I actually I made a lot more money. But, I then showed it in New York and I showed it in Chicago, Denver, you know and all these other places individually. Minneapolis... by just simply bicycling it around to the various stations and showing them. So, that worked out fine in terms of I got most of the markets with Latin populations were able to have the tape. And, it you know it's a good tape [Hock note: it continues to be an accurate tape of the undocumented] in that not much has changed in terms of the immigrants lives in the United States.

00:11:37

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It's crossing the border that has changed enormously in terms of it being really much more fatal to many people than it really being much more dangerous and affecting and being much more expensive and the like. So, but the actual living in the United States, that much is the same. So, that tape was to me you know it was a really, a very different direction. I mean I in some ways it was kind curious it was very much more in a documentary mode which I had not touched on since I made the *LOS BARCOS*. You know it was very much in that and very much kind of like the tapes that I was watching in the [Hock note: Nogales] basement.

00:12:10

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, it wasn't as if it was uncharted territory, but for my practice having come out of making, you know experimental films. A lot of people felt very betrayed because I had sort of gone this other direction, you know? At the time I, I just started doing and the six minute didn't happen I just kept taping and taping and taping. I was doing other projects and other things. I was doing installations and other kind of work. And, a lot of installations during that period of time actually. And, then you know once I shot the stuff I felt an utter responsibility to make the tape. I mean people had given me these stuff. And, I felt oh, I'm going to make this really kind of clever one hour tape of stuff.

00:12:49

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I have a lot of great material and then it'll be one. Then I, because there's a lot of people that are going to tapes that was a film I think called *EL NORTE* which is-- *EL NORTE* which is a very bad sort of representation of border crossing and experience. And, I thought, there's going to be a lot more stuff. And, then, but of course there wasn't that much stuff that came out. So, then I felt really compelled to include all the things that nobody talked about in it. So, then it ended up being four hours. [laugh]

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, I made it and I felt I had to do the tape you know no matter what, you know it wasn't a matter of some kind of aesthetic choice. And, I really benefited by the fact that it was a very hot topic, because I could deal-- because a film is very quirky and I could make a tape that was quirky because the topic was hot. If I'd done a tape on Polish immigrants forget it man nobody would have looked at that thing. But, the fact it was very topical people would show it in spite of its peculiarities. But, in fact those were the things that, you know made it most interesting for me as well as the topic.

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LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, and that was in some ways a direction that had a certain kind of anomaly. I made another film called *LA MERA FRONTERA* [1997] which was about the last battle between the United States and Mexico which took place in Nogales. Which in 1918 they just got on the tops of the town and started shooting each other. And, a bunch of people were killed and, so I was interested because there was some people alive that still remember it. You know it was sort of dealing with time in a different way. I was dealing with time relative to memory. And, so I was going around, I interviewed all these elderly people including my grandmother.

00:14:31

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

About that particular time and that particular moment in history. And, of course everybody I talked to gave me very different accounts. And even the newspapers at the time-- there was a Mexican newspaper there was the US-- all the accounts were, none of the accounts actually added up. So, it was interesting to me to make that film about memory. And, I thought when I first started the film that I would have all these contentious memories and then get all the people in a room and we'd talk and that would be the sort of battle of the memory.

00:14:58

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It turns out that I guess when people get that age that they're satisfied with the fact that there's a constellation of memories because they're actually dealing with people in their lives that have different memories. There's a constellation of memories that constitute a truth or a constitute a history, or a constitute a document. And, this constellation of a sort of takes opinions of memories actually form a constituent, you know, event. It's not one singular notion that has to be an umbrella over all them, or have control over all of them.

00:15:26

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, they were very, very satisfied to have very different kinds of opinions described even though they could sit next to somebody who described the event very differently at the exact same moment of time that happened 80 years early. So, it was an interesting film. It was the film I actually made for my grandmother and my grandmother would have liked it. She didn't live long enough to see me finish it, but she would have liked it and the people from Nogales liked it. I showed it in a great-- I showed it in the courthouse. It was a nice screening.

00:15:55

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

People who liked Mexican history liked it, but it's a very-- it's not really a very publically accessible film in a way. I mean there's sometimes, you know you don't really so aware of that. I mean even if you watch something like Baldwin's Tribulation if you don't have a grasp on Latin American history you lose a lot in that film. I mean having that last and knowing which stuff is true and which stuff is fiction is really it makes a much more interesting film. I think --- and this is not Baldwin's film ---- but I think in some ways there's a knowledge of knowing about Obregon_ and the history of Nogales and the like that makes the film much more interesting to me. That would not have been otherwise.

00:16:34

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I was happy with a lot of parts of it. And, the--a woman Yareli Arizmendi who was one of the sisters in *LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE*. She also made *A DAY WITHOUT A MEXICAN*. She was the actress and she was great. She came and we filmed for a few days. Then like *THE MEXICAN TAPES* I was in there all the time. I thought, you know, I don't want to put myself in this. I already did this, let's try something else. And, if I'm going to add a voice. A voice is always fiction, so why not add a character to take the fictional voice [laugh] So, I brought her back as somebody who'd been killed in the battle and unaccounted for.

00:17:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, I had her come back and question the people that were there and introduce themselves. There are some interesting moments like when I was doing a take and she introduced herself to this one guy and then I-- the cameraman when—I shot everything myself except for when we were, I was directing her doing the interviews-- and the cameraman said you know I think I may have run out of film on that last take. So we reload and we went back in. But, in the meantime she had been inside talking to the guy that I was going to interview.

00:17:33

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

She said, you know she introduces herself [Hock note: during the first take] and she describes who she is and he said well, you know actually ironically he asked if there's a woman with a very similar name that's a rock star? And asks if she's her, and she's, "no, no, no that's not her." Actually, not a rock star, but an author [Hock note: Laura Esquivel]. And, so she goes inside and talks to him and then when she comes back out we do the take again and he goes do you remember, you know, her? And, she goes oh, well I remember her she was.... she had told the tale to him. So, he was acting out the tale that she had told him. [laugh] So, it was a really wonderful kind of moments in it.

00:18:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And working with the elderly people was fun. I mean they were interesting and cagey and they're very cooperative. So, it was great. But, that's and in terms of and then I haven't in that sort of mode of, you know producing authenticity documentary I haven't picked up until lately. And, then I began following up on the lives of the people in *THE MEXICAN TAPES*. I mean the kids asked for copies of the tape to show to their kids how they grew up and how their grandparents to their kids looked.

00:18:42

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, so then I began taping some more and I've been taping for the last few years. So I'm going to do a follow up of *THE MEXICAN TAPES* showing these people in contemporary times. You know and how their lives have evolved which in some way works very much against the sort of rabid screaming of the undocumented aliens and how foreign they are to us. Very different kinds of people now. I mean the very children you see in the tape that were, you know children of undocumented are so heinously described in the news are now doing taxes for Hollywood stars. [laugh] CPAs you know, so you know it's hard to imagine such kind of radical changes in one generation.

00:19:22

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, it certainly has happened, so and it's just interesting talking to the people again too. I mean it's nice to connect with people. They're interesting and follow up with another videotape that-- because I always thought that and again if you look at it with a fascination with time and you think about making the tape after five years. And, it isn't *7-UP*, you know Micheal Apted does these tapes, but they're so chilling and so analytic and people finally just don't like to work with him anymore, you know? [laugh]

00:19:53

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, you know I think in a way the tapes are very different than the Apted films in that I'm more involved in it certainly than he was in his taping. But, that you know it has that durational period. And, now it spans 25, 30 years then it's also introduces time. It's a very different kind of time that I was doing with time lapse and very different with the high speed. But, still I mean in an unconscious way it's dealing with the sort of fascination of time actually becoming content with like the 25 year span. So, to me that's, you know I mean I don't necessarily the way I justify it, but I do it seems there's a linkage there and my continuing activity in this way.

00:20:31

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Even though it's very, I mean that kind of work is very different than say *STUDIES IN CHRONOVISION*.

00:20:39

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

That's really interesting. You've answered my question about your concentration on time and how it's changed throughout the whole interview, but very organically so that's great. What about any of the other installations or pieces that you've done after *LA MERA FRONTERA*?

00:20:59

LOUIS HOCK

Well, during the period when I came to California right after I started doing the *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* it was a real watershed. I mean at one that took me toward a public art and the other it's also took me toward installation, back to installation that I had done some earlier. And, during being a graduate student. I was fascinated when I did the mural that people would say well, what's for sale? Because, it wasn't bronze, it wasn't marble and you know they didn't recognize it as art. And, then would look at it for a while and they would grasp what it was.

00:21:37

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I thought well that's an immediate reaction whenever you see something that's not recognizable as art that uses light or sound, they're going to say what's for sale? And, that's like, what is it? It's been like a billboard, what's for sale? So, I was fascinated that out at the road when you take the interstate into San Diego there was a Secretary of Interior named James Watt who was ready to sell off national parks [and land]. And, so there is a park out there and I thought well, this is kind of interesting. You know people say what's for sale? [Hock note: Illuminated Landscape – 1983]

00:22:10

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, I bought from surplus these large sheets of orange and white highway sign reflective material and I created this sign that was like two thirds the size of the Hollywood sign. I made tiger stripes kind of out of it because I didn't have enough of one or the other [laugh] so I made tiger stripes and I spelled the word NATURE. And, I put them up on the side of the hill on a, you know a large valley that the road goes through. And, on the other side which is ironic because the spotlight was in a prison parking lot. [laugh]

00:22:44

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I put a search light the way that prisons and search lights always get --- you know fixed with this prisoner and search lights --- as being connected. But, I put a spotlight there and I ran the spotlight across the top of the freeway, so from a distance you could see the blue light as you're driving, then for about 15, 20 seconds when you're right on that --- you know that the way the highway reflective material tends to reflect back exactly at the angle --- you see it, you could see the words NATURE.

00:23:11

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, I did that on a holiday night, so I had it on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday nights out there. And, all my, you know when it got dark to late at night with the search light. And, it was a big, it wasn't like a small [Hock note: quad], it was a serious you know World War II kind of search light run by a guy by the name of Sparky. So, it was great to me because then I went down to as many of the local restaurants, that is places where people might pull off, like service stations and say, what if when people asked you about this thing was up the road?

00:23:40

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, they'd say oh, yeah, we saw the nature thing I wonder what's for sale? It's federal land, what's for sale? So, I thought you know I really had done, you know had done that. In a lot of ways, it had extended out of *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* it sort of took the question that was spawned by that. And, it also you know it still used light and it wasn't moving pictures, but still it was a more sculptural use of light and reflection. So, and then I began, I did a whole series like at Langton in San Francisco and places here.

00:24:13

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I did a series of some White Columns in New York. A series of installations that were some of them are film based. I mean the one that I did, I think it was White Columns where they're asking for projects that were unrealized. And, so I took and put I had these little hand cranked projectors that I had bought surplus. I guess they were like sort of like a cheap person's film strips. And, you could crank them. And I put the camera on a pole and I had the film run down on a pole with a loop on the bottom so you could have a short loop and crank it and it would sit on a concrete pedestal.

00:24:53

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I had a picture of Hoover Dam in which and it was, you know it was drawn it had reflective material. But, the idea was was that I always wanted thought it would be a great place to do a projected mural kind of thing on the dam. So, you could stand there and crank the projector and the image would be on the dam itself. And it was in a gallery like that. And then I did a whole series where, you know where you where I created these got these reflectant screens that would cause the light to pretty much come back at the same angle you look at it.

00:25:26

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So when you're doing the cranking in a normally or modestly dark room that, you know I mean lit normally. It's not as bright as it would be for art maybe the way that art is light sensitive would be lit. But, you'd crank it and you could see and there's a whole series of these sculptures around the room which you walk around the stations and you'd crank and there'd be these looped images and they would be a series of each one would be sort of topical. And, it would be like a whole room of these kinds of images you know? Like one's about violence where you would, I mean these very violent images, but of course if you're cranking it you're making your own violent images. [Hock note: DETECTIVE SERIES, 1983]

00:26:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

The more you watch there is an implication between the idea of violent images being something that was not passive that actually you had to do the cranking to create the violent images. And, there were other images that used vintage film with a variety of kind of things and big layouts of sculptural character. So a lot of the energy went from the cinemural mural into-- and the galleries have much greater visitation. It had a much greater audience in it [Hock note: than the film screenings]. And, in a gallery the openings were much bigger and the people would come through much more often. Plus, it wasn't one night, you know it actually would be there and it would stay for a long time.

00:26:39

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I did some [Hock note: installations] with movies and then I began to do some with video. And, so a lot of energies went toward that and I still continue to do that kind of installation. The other part of *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA* was this idea of public art. And, then and in some ways *THE MEXICAN TAPES* became a kind of public art because it went on a public television. And, then with *THE MEXICAN TAPES* I connected up with David Avalos with Elizabeth Sisco, Sisco being my wife. But, I don't think we were married at that time we were lovers at that time, eventually married.

00:27:21

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because *THE MEXICAN TAPES* I had done and photography that Liz had done around immigration both at the Analos Apartments and outside the Analos and because of David Avalos' work with the, as a founder of Border Arts Workshop and his work with union organizing we sort of had some common bases and we decided to do a project around San Diego and undocumented workers. We did Welcome to America's Finest Tourist Plantation which we bought half the city's buses and put posters on them that acknowledged this during Super Bowl which was a really exciting moment for San Diego, because, it was the moment that San Diego was going to become a city.

00:28:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It was going to become a city when there was going to be a Republic Convention here. It was Nixon's lucky city. And, then just as they were about to bite onto the cookie it got yanked out and they took it to Florida. One, because of a scandal, I think it was Arnholdt Smith, but also because there are a lot, a lot of political protestors here. And they thought that it would not be a good place to have a convention. So, they moved it to Florida. So, this was their second chance of becoming a real city, in 1988.

00:28:33

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So we put up the poster and they were all, you know so it didn't take much I mean it was like we just, you know it was like a gorilla and a mouse, we were the mouse and they just jumped in the air [laugh] when they saw the poster. So, it was a piece that was intended to operate in the media and it was not, you know the poster was really not the art it was the catalytic thing. It was very much about a performance. And it in very much operated in the TV and the news, TV news and radio news. And, it was a public art piece and worked in that way.

00:29:03

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

It's very interesting all of the sudden being on the other side of the video camera [laugh] -- subject of the video rather than in fact shooting the video. I worked with David and Liz on that and then I worked on David and Liz on 'Art Rebate/Arte Reembolso' which is a subsequent public art piece [Hock note: 1993]. But, then also there were pieces I did with many other collaborators that often involved-- always involved Liz, often involved David, but not always. Deborah Small, Scott Kessler, Cheryl Linley, and so it was-- and we did a series of public art projects some of which it ended up in showing in MOCA in L.A. where they sponsored a piece. [Hock note: Friendly Fire 1996]

00:29:41

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

We did a project here and opened a store here and made vests here and sold vests here. Then they eventually were exhibited in, at MOCA. So, I was struck I mean we did that piece was interesting because it was a time when we started, had been doing these public art pieces and the public art kept very heavily coming under fire where there was funded by national funds or whatever, but art had become very much delegitimized in terms of having a political public voice. And, so it was interesting and we decided to open a store because we decided the business always had a legitimate voice.

00:30:27

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And if we used business as a voice we'd have a better chance of being listened to. So, and I realized when I was buying fabric in L.A. at the fabric store and that I mean and it was really funny I had this whole déjà vu in the exact area of where I walked around as a kid because that's where the [Hock note: my father's family dress shop] factory was right? So, and there was a sign said I think that if I recollect it said, a little plane, a little banners that said "no warning" [makes noise bzzzz] there's a plane and another plane goes and comes by and says "no mercy" through the street you know down there and then it goes [makes noise bzzzz] "no L.A." And I thought it's a movie, it's Independence Day right?

00:31:10

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, I think how is an artist going to do that? They'd arrest me. They would arrest me if they think if I did that. So, you know in business you can do anything. Of course when we mailed out these replica bullets which were sculptures. They were solid brass, but they looked-- when we mailed out those out to every Republican delegate and alternative and they got it -- and, all the alarms went off and everything. Today, we'd be in jail for our lives. [laugh] But, they went off and you know and we could you know the Secret Service would call up, or the Treasury Department, "What are these doing in? and "What are you?," "No, no, no we're not artists, we're business people that's advertisement." "Oh, okay."

00:31:44

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So you know it's kind of a way that all of a sudden that business, anything business that's legitimate, but artists are always circumspect and so it was a great, it was great being able to do that. So, that, so there was a triangulation between art, politics and money. And the store was about politic, politics and business and then when we did in L.A. the gallery became a showroom for the vest. And, we sold the vest in the bookstore because, who was it said that the bookstore, the museum of the future is the bookstore?

00:32:15

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So that the bookstore became- all of a sudden it became a triang--part of the triangulation between sort of art and money, rather than and so it was and because it had two locations it had two different kind of characters. But, we had a bunch of public art projects almost all operated in the media. One around the killings in San Diego and "NHI" - No Humans Involved - almost got killed, you know 50 some women in San Diego and the police were heavily implicated [Hock note: in the unsolved crimes]. And, so we did a billboard, we did a gallery, Carla Kirkwood did a play, we did a panel, all sorts of stuff, to sort of bring that to life in a way.

00:32:58

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, so I did, and I'm still doing public art work, I'm still talking to David and Liz, but you now we have some money on doing a piece. You know and we haven't done a piece. We've done a lot of, a lot of the pieces we've done have had a lot of legs historically, so we've created installations that have made those more manifest in a gallery situation.

00:33:22

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Uh, huh.

00:33:22

LOUIS HOCK

The first one was actually we did with LACE. The title of the show was 'This Is Not a Museum'. And, so it's supposed to be against museums. Some people tore holes in the wall and the like. But, we brought a, did the bus poster and became clear that the bus poster was not a piece that would happen in a museum. And, then we have done a number of representations in gallery situations. Actually, and with some interest we're going to do a version of the Rebate Art/Reembolsa piece we did with, in Mexico City in the Museo de Bellas Artes with Sigueiros, Orozco, and Rivera [laugh] they're all-- it's called the art of protest in Latin America [Hock note: crisisss...America Latina, arte y confrontacion 1910-2010] , so it's very interesting. [laugh]

00:34:09

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I'm back to the mural you know by having the piece that I did with David Avalos and Sisco you know side by side on a wall with those guys. So, it's kind of-- it's exciting.

00:34:19

CAMERA WOMAN

When is that?

00:34:20

LOUIS HOCK

I think it's January 11th . [Hock note: change of date, March 12, 2011] So I did a public art and then I've been doing regularly doing kinds of installations. But, in all of this you know starting-- and I always see it as not, I mean a lot of times, you know people move from one thing to another. But, to me it always seemed like almost like a some kind of evolving gestalt or something where I, you know I, things I pick up I drop for a while either because due to circumstance or boredom or whatever else. But they come back, so I've been thinking like it's kind of fun to make a film, you know? [laugh]

00:35:06

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, you know in some kind of way I mean the installation stuff which I started in graduate school I picked up later, stuff with you know the idea of the public picks up and takes on a different kind of character. But, I always had kind of tend to, working lately in kind of a public situation or making installations or doing some kind of straight one screen video. And, you know sometimes they meld. I mean I did a thing called 'Feral' [1994] which is an installation which Ann Bray sponsored at MOCA for a week or something like that [Hock note: through LAFreewaves].

00:35:47 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And then I did it [Hock note: FERAL] again at Montalvo, but then it's had a single channel version of that circulated all over the place. So a lot of times the video and the installations come together the way the public art and installations often come together. And, as stuff gets mixed up and I mean I don't even think about in that kind of way. I mean it's usually the utility or the audience or the circumstance that makes me creative.

00:36:16 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So, I guess you wanted to talk...

00:36:22 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

I'm curious just to finish that point out, you know you just said kind of you didn't think about it, but maybe talking about will yield something right now. You've, how do, what do you think about the distinction between the avant-garde as something that's rigorously studied aesthetically or close studied and something ephemeral like an installation or a public art piece? And, do you see your work crossing those boundaries or chose one over the other in some way, or can you talk just more generally about the difference between those two ways of looking at avant-garde?

00:36:57 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well, I don't see avant-garde films as ephemeral.

00:37:00 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

It's not, but a public performance in a mural setting could be seen as one.

00:37:05 **LOUIS HOCK**

It could be, I mean I think I mean it's not as if the work, only by it's sparseness of exhibition, makes it into something that has the kind of fleeting character to it. It's not as if it doesn't exist. It's just that the opportunities for exhibiting it make it much less visible. I mean I think that if you, you know it's like books of poetry, you know? There are many small journals, small books of poetry which are really hard to find but they exist. And, you can read them if you want, and the same thing is true with a lot of these works.

00:37:54 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Some of these works you can't, they are really, really buried because there's no I mean they're prints and there's no way to actually, they're old prints, or there's no way to get to them and authors have died. But, they're not necessarily disappeared they're just not on the surface of things which makes them seem like they're ephemeral or of a moment simply because nobody's had enough interest to bring them to the surface again or make them evident. So, I think with, in terms of my work, the public art work is so documenting that it exists.

00:38:25

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

I mean I have I've hours of TV news, I have pages... We have books of all the articles and op eds and all that stuff. We have videotapes of all of the stuff. We have a news program. And, then you know and so there's lots of that stuff that's tangible. [Hock note: The initial collaborative performances of the group were catalysts intended to engage the media. Their representations began a dialog. That subsequent public dialog was the more defining performance aspect of the projects and often operated in print or video.] In terms of installation that exists I mean I've put up old installations and we take it down. But, I mean I have those. The films I have I mean you can buy all my films that mostly we've been talking about you can go to the Filmmaker's Co-op in New York and rent them.

00:38:57

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So the stuff is around, but I mean the Filmmaker's Co-op in those films, I mean I always startle myself I go and I look at my name when I lazy when I try to figure out what I've been doing lately I look at my name online. And, I say oh, yeah *LIGHT TRAPS* showed last month in Australia, how nice? [laugh] You know, stuff does surface it's just that you know there aren't very many opportunities for it to do so.

00:39:21

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah. What's funny is I feel that the way you answered the question was actually incredibly interesting and what appeals to me as someone's whose an archivist and a scholar, but I think maybe I misspoke or misstated the question which was more I guess, and you kind of answered it as well. But, about the fact that say performance with someone playing on a, you know the documentation of it, but that's ephemeral, the experience of seeing that is ephemeral in that it's not the same as a finite film that is always the same, well not always same, but I think that ephemerality is subjective. But...

00:39:55

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah, there's-- when you start to move into, when you have performative character to it and I think some of it is when you talk about moving from seeing a video version of a film you lose part of the performative character because there is-- a gate is not as steady in 16 millimeter. You do have a kind of booth in situations. It's a film kind of screen which is very different than having a projector. I mean there's the whole performative character of film is lost when you transfer it to video in some ways. Whether it be lost or not and then that some are just more performative like the music with the *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA*, or even like with *MAREY'S GATE* you have a little clip, you know in a viewer which exists in *MAREY'S GATE*.

00:40:34

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, when you came out of the [Hock note: Bing at LACMA, 1980?] theater and someone handed you one [Hock note: a viewer] that was a representative, you know which essentially gave away the film one frame at a time, so then the number of people depending on, made how long the film was, that was the kind of thing you couldn't described in words. But, the actually social aspect of that and people looking at the, and comparing the difference between the two, you can't really recreate unless you actually recreate. So, there is some, with the performance stuff becomes a film.

00:40:59

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, the stuff that's actually you can see if you are able to project it on film in a kind of a context that was already, you know like small rooms, you know uncomfortable seating and like you can actually see it like it was.

[END OF TAPE 4]

TAPE 5 LOUIS HOCK

00:00:28

LOUIS HOCK

Well, I was interested... I think it's a funny piece. I mean I was interested in those little viewers that allow you to see one frame at a time. They're usually there for souvenirs or key chains and you can just buy them at souvenir shops when you travel. And, I was interested in taking a video, I mean a film frame, and putting it into these viewers and then, yeah exactly [editor's note: interviewer hands Louis a small object] yeah like one of these exactly one of these. The one I have is a little smaller and this is a little bigger. I think mine was actually about that size [shows dimensions] for the screen.

00:01:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But allowed a 16 millimeter frame to be seen and I was interested and I shot a film and then I cut up the film one frame at a time. And, or it may have been a couple of frames and I put them in the viewer. And, then as people exited the viewing and I don't know if it was my films, or someone else's films, but I suspect it was probably mine, then I handed them out.

00:01:24

AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)

It was you.

00:01:24

LOUIS HOCK

I handed out these viewers so the people could get a piece of my film several frames at a time. And, the duration of the film was dependent upon how many people took the frame and then it was about, you know about a performative character. I mean it was about turning the film into something which was, you know operated as much as a meta medium rather than a medium itself. And, I see some kinship with some of the Tony Conrad stuff, but it's you know treated film, a pickled film or whatever.

00:02:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, so the film actually became-- mine is actually more connected to the actual idea, is more of a metaphor as a people being that motion of the film with that idea of it's something which is more to be thought about. I mean you were only going to see the film, your only piece of the film [laugh] one little bit at a time and you weren't going to see it in motion. But, you can conceptualize the whole film based on that. And, that was interesting to me.

00:02:27

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

And, can you explain the connection to Marey?

00:02:30

LOUIS HOCK

Well, Marey was a-- I was always fascinated with Marey because Muybridge is the guy that everybody uses when it comes to thinking about the origins of cinema and his motion studies. And, particularly the stuff that was done not only with the horses, but then later it was done I think it was Philadelphia with the books that were done. Is the guy's name Eaton [Hock note: Thomas Eakins] I forgot the guy's name. But, the guy who was a painter I believe that was an artist.

00:03:02

AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)

Ealing is it Ealing? E-A-L, E-A-L-I-N-G?

00:03:09

LOUIS HOCK

I don't know, but Muybridge was really interested in the pictorial representation of motion and what it would reveal through looking at things that were broken up in time, in this, in pictures, to reveal how you could sort of quantify with a grid and how you could quantify motion in terms of looking at it based on a pictorial basis. And, to me Marey was more interesting, the French guy, because he wasn't interested in representing images pictorially, but symbolically. So, he would like have people dress up like you know in those kind of Halloween skeleton suits almost with white paint and black, you know, black the rest of the cloth around them.

00:03:55

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, then have them fence, or you know jump around, or have tips on a bird's wings white and would so he was more interested in watching the patterns that the body would make. And, the patterns the wings would make. And, this sort of forms that were generated by motion. So, it was much more interesting to me kind of the way that the idea of motion became abstracted and what was created out of that became was more interesting to me. Marey's also the guy that invented the French train schedule which is the kind you see now with time one way and the schedule the other. That was Marey, you know?

00:04:30

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

The idea of figuring out systems of motion like a French train and then figuring out a pattern that you could contain that kind of motion symbolically. And, to me that was interesting and so that was why I was particularly interested in Marey. I mean, obviously the thing has when you look at it looks much more like a Muybridge than a Marey. Because I'm running the pictures of me jogging against a fence that's like an equestrian fence which has the white and the cross bar. So, I look kind of like more like a Muybridge kind of image.

00:05:02 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

But, I was more interested in the people making the jump to the conceptual which I was making with the in and out of the, them rather than, dwelling on simply on my picture, but more interested in symbolically getting into the idea of it being a metaphor for film, being passed out to them. And, in fact being the projector as they got the little device and held their eye and the next person got the device and held their eye and they were just acting like the film with moving through a projector except it was one which was, you know corporal rather than mechanic, so.

00:05:33 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

And, what about Photo Grammatry studies in 1977 right? [Hock note: PHOTOGRAMMETRY SERIES, 1977]

00:05:38 **LOUIS HOCK**

That was a film I really had a lot of fun making, but I don't think it really went anywhere. I mean I showed it a bit, but I, it was struck to me I took a, I took the gym in San Diego and I was able to get it and take a piece of roll of 100 foot roll of film and roll it out maybe more than a 100 feet, but roll out a whole length of film. And, then I on top of that film I put a piece of kind of burly twine on top of the film.

00:06:12 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, then I turned the lights on and off. And, then I rolled back up the film and had it processed. [laugh] So, it was interested, I mean there was some connection to Marey yeah I was interested and when you're looking at the twine you're looking at the twine going through the screen, you know at 24 frames a second. So, if your projector if the projector first the projector claw were really a foot and not merely a modest little, you know thing it would claw its way along the projector being like the camera claw its way around along there.

00:06:39 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It was a metaphor at the time, but it would for you to actually look at it. So, that's the idea. So, it was just a short film. And, it was fun because you see it. And, you're looking at the twine and its really passing through...that's the...

00:06:53 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

It's great almost...

00:06:53 **LOUIS HOCK**

[overlapping] It was just a curious film.

00:06:54 **STEPHANIE SAPIENZA**

Yeah.

00:06:56

LOUIS HOCK

You know?

00:06:58

AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)

I have a question.

00:06:58

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah, you're up.

00:06:59

FEMALE ONE

Okay, thank you. My question is to return to the subject of the vests that you were about to describe to me and what they really were and you referred to them, but you didn't really describe them.

00:07:09

LOUIS HOCK

Well, Julie Lazar commissioned the group to make a work at MOCA. But, we didn't want to make it only at MOCA, but we thought it was okay to do an exhibit at MOCA. So, we had always had worked and all the public art work I've done with the exception of one work, I did at Banff which was a little bit different. I, we worked locally because we knew where we were and we knew we weren't parachuted in, we were not foreigners, it was our turf.

00:07:44

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, MOCA and Julie agreed that we could do part of the funding would be down here and the exhibit would have a leg up there. What we did here was opened a store. Literally, made a store out of an artist studio and then we manufactured faux bullet proof vests. And, the people we used in the store were the people that made costumes for the theater. So, they're very theatrical. They'd just never found something else on the stage. So, they were wonderful. So, they both talked about the vests, but they also made the vests.

00:08:19

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, in when you go to the garment area of L.A. there's the showrooms, the showrooms aren't where the fabric is. The showrooms are upstairs where you can hear the sewing machines going [makes noise] you know that's the showroom is the work room. So, it's those kind of switch reference there. But, we had our showroom and our display room together in one place, so you could actually see people making the vests. And we sent out a catalog to all the Republican Convention delegates and alternatives [Hock note: alternates] that were going to come to San Diego.

00:08:52 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, so then we made these vests and people came by and bought vests. And, you know it was intended for the news media and then we had a lot of conversations with a lot of interesting people who got the bullets in the mail because it was the flyer and a bullet. And, so we mailed them all out. And, then the vests were just all kinds of vests. There was like a Roe v. Wade vest which was apples, and it was really nice. All the backs of the vests were targets. You know they're classic sort of police target, black with white circles except for one which was the I think it was the future vest and had moons like it was like a moon, Saturn, Jupiter and stuff.

00:09:35 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It was sad, we had like little school vests with little chalkboard things, you know with kids and then the week after we did it there were a bunch school kids that were shot, so it [laugh] here are the kids' vests with the target back on it. It was really, you know like it was too true to be good. And, then there was a, you know we had a border vest. It had a nice barbed wire you know, barbed wire it has great fabric barbed wire you know?

00:10:00 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, then we had the, I think it was called gay vest which is a rainbow vest, you know? It was really nice and then we had the dress gay vest which was black satin with a pink satin triangle on it. And, we had, you know so basically it was all about the issues the politicians didn't want to talk about it. It was all issues, but the real issues that nobody wanted to address. And, so we thought that we would create a form for those issues whether it be Democratic or Republican, you know didn't want to talk about it.

00:10:31 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

So, we thought we would in fact insert ourselves into this narrative by making these vests. And, so that was our intention. And, then in L.A. like I mentioned before there was a gallery which had the vests and had videotapes from the event and then they sold them in the store. And, that also in both incidents the vests were sold on line. And, they were not sold, they weren't so expensive, so.

00:10:55 **AMY HALPERN (CAMERA PERSON)**

Thanks I, the other question I had was approaching again how the cross between making work that's beautiful and inspiring and full of ideas and dense, directions to think differently and literal, political work where you wrote explicitly trying to get people to think differently.

00:11:16

LOUIS HOCK

Well, whenever, I mean when we did public art work we never tried to do work that was didactic. I mean it had a didactic function, but the opt--terms it operated was not intentionally didactic. Like when we gave rebated ten dollars to undocumented Mexicans you know we framed it by a news release. We framed it by what, how we talked about it. We framed it in a lot of ways, but it operated on its own terms about how people read it and made it. Because we were always with those works never intending to be activists.

00:12:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, I mean I argue with David about this and we have. I never intend to be an activists. Activists were people like Act Up. They had an agenda and they had and they wanted it. I always saw the function of art is to take it and make art a pedestal to raise something high enough into, so it encountered a specific narrative and encounter the public consciousness it became a point for discussion. So, it really wasn't about telling people how to think, but to think. You know and so in a lot of ways a lot of it was pieces were very provocative. And, then there was always some acts of improvisation that would happen.

00:12:45

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Whether we do a bus poster or a billboard they'd be a moment and it would be in the news media. They would, you know take it a certain way and then either through op eds in newspaper, or a radio talk shows, or interviews we would in fact you know work in a improvisational way how it entered in the news media. And, a lot of times to use David Avalos' metaphor, you know it was a lot of times it was like an ant on a 800 pound gorilla when you try to determine what the news is going to do.

00:13:09

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, you do still have a greater control, a lot control over steering things to some degree. And, so that was our intent. So, it never was intentionally, so the beauty of it was is that they do these conceptual things like when we handed out the bills it was really great because we were able to, all three of us sign these bills in pencil, and the bills were given out to people and we asked the people to imagine this, you know how they might circulate. You know they circulate.

00:13:36 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, it was great they had a radio talk show with somehow like Pat Buchanan and you say well, Pat you should you know you should look in your wallet and see if you have a \$10 bill and maybe those Mexicans are a little more intimate with you then you might expect. You know and so it was great. And it was also great when we signed with the pencil when the Secret Service called they say, you know and you say no, no, no, no, no. [laugh] We didn't permanently deface those. [laugh]

00:13:57 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

Anybody knows pencil is not a permanent mark. So, you can't, don't call us. [laugh] So, and they did, but we didn't call them back, so. Yeah, it was you know it was a conceptual piece in that way. And, also and so the audience always had to sort of complete the work with their own reasoning. There was never a way to telling people how to think, it only raised the issue. And, often the work we raised was often very contentious, you know? And, it created a dialog, or a debate and that was intention.

00:14:30 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It didn't really tell people how to read it, but it asked people to think about it. So, that in that kind of way at least in my mind a conceptual way it had a lot of that kind of playfulness in terms of sort of cerebral character flow out of art making that I enjoy.

00:14:47 **AMY HALPERN**

And, the mechanics of that, how much did you end up giving out of these \$10 bills?

00:14:51 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well, we got a \$5,000 grant and then we gave \$4,500 away.

00:14:57 **AMY HALPERN**

That's substantial..

00:14:57 **LOUIS HOCK**

We gave...

00:14:58 **AMY HALPERN**

That's a better rate of return than most projects.

00:14:59 **LOUIS HOCK**

Well, we had to buy Xerox paper and make receipts. We had to buy gas to move us around. We, I don't know stuff like that. I mean \$500 worth of you know and then we had to you know just expenses were \$500, so that's... So, we gave them all out.

00:15:20

AMY HALPERN

And, where did you find did you post yourself in specific places unannounced or announced?

00:15:25

LOUIS HOCK

Well, the dilemma was is that when we first did it, we first did it and we just didn't do them randomly. I mean the first time we went out we went out in the *NEW YORK TIMES*, right? So, the problem was, is that the workers are very organized, so they stood in line. The problem was is that it looks like a dole line or hand out line. So, it gave the wrong kind of message. So, after that we went and did two or three people who were standing on the corners, two, three people at a time on the corner which took a long time.

00:16:03

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, handing out that much money was really a lot of work. [laugh] It was more work than you imagine. And, we stumbled on it was, you know and we're not really, we're not really good careerists about this. I mean we were given a grant by the Centro Cultural de la Raza and the Museum of Contemporary in San Diego as part of their Border Art show to do a public art piece. They gave us the money and they gave us carte blanche. Well, the show went up in La Jolla, the show came down in La Jolla.

00:16:41

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, we had been meeting every week having a cup of coffee and trying to figure out what we were going to do. Show goes up in Tijuana [Hock note: at the Cecut] and we realize how and we still have not figured out what we're going to do. So, let's go to Tijuana maybe it'll, maybe things will get clearer there. So, we walked around, had a meal in Tijuana and then we're walking along. And, as they do sometimes they glue a coin out in front of a store because you all of a sudden see a coin you stop a moment and pause in front of their store.

00:17:08

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Well, I saw it and I say hey, David look there's money. David flips a little bit and we laughed and he said well, one of us said oh, let's just give the money away. What in the fuck we have some money we have \$5,000 and let's just give it away. And, he said yeah, who will we give it away to? And, why don't we and so we started thinking and said yeah just give the money away. We just and, of course when we figured out if we gave them away to undocumented workers who, in fact pay taxes they just don't get any money back from taxes.

00:17:35 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

I mean they float the, I mean the amount of money they pay into social security is vast. And, then plus they don't get anything from taxes because they can't file for social security and they can't file for taxes. So, we thought this is it we'll just give the money away, you know? And, so we did and, of course tax, nobody wants to pay a taxpayer, but it's a very sacred category of people. You've got to be a real American to deal with taxes if you're actually undocumented then you don't pay taxes no matter what. You really don't pay taxes even though you pay taxes.

00:18:08 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, so it hit on a very tender topic by doing that and it became explosive. It also became a moment which we didn't intend, but it was also a moment where the refunding for the NEA and the NEA director were all being approved all at the same time it came up. Also, colliding with the proposition 187 becoming on the ballot. So, that when it all anti immigration fervor had all been on TV, all the politicians were like this state's going break, broke it's because of the undocumented. We can blame the undocumented. And, so all of a sudden when we did our piece, it collided with you know California anti immigrant primarily Pete Wilson kind of politics and collided with the NEA stuff and also it was like the perfect storm for news media and it became a big. It became such a powerful piece in terms of the media that it was complicated with all of those elements and all of those players.

00:19:01 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

It became very difficult, so that we actually turned down doing TV because we were on some programs and we realized in two minutes they couldn't get it right. And, the thing we were going to two minutes was going to get it wrong. And, they also, so we did op eds [Hock note: opinion editorials in news papers] things. We did a lot of radio, we did a lot, like it was on the front page of the *NEW YORK TIMES* twice, you know so we did a lot of media stuff with it.

00:19:24 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, so it was interesting in that it was the first piece that we actually did that you know we had attacks on the left, we had attacks on the right. It was the people it hit a lot of people's, you know funny bone. And, it was very educational. It was we thought it was, I thought it was an interesting piece in terms of it really you know putting the finger right in the right place at the right time to get a reaction and having people think about this.

00:19:50 **LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)**

And, it was about both in terms of art and in terms of undocumented. And, it was wildly provocative beyond what we had in the frame we had originally intended.

00:20:05

AMY HALPERN

And so elegant and minimal in what it is it's a dazzling and explosive design, it's brilliant.

00:20:09

LOUIS HOCK

Oh, yeah I mean there's a videotape that we use in the installation which actually has a little clip of *THE MEXICAN TAPES* in it because it talks about Cande saying this is the money I pay in and I can't get back, you know? But, it had all the news clips and of course the Canadians thought it was funny and the Mexicans thought it was funny. But, the United States did not think it was so funny. And, so the Mexicans were very thoughtful about the piece and they actually said some really great things on there, on the TV clips.

00:20:36

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

We have a 14 minute tape that sort of ties that piece together which we've used in installations which it sums it up well in terms of both getting people to discuss things, but also frames it.

00:20:49

AMY HALPERN

Could you spell Sisco's, Liz Sisco's name correctly and also David's?

00:20:54

LOUIS HOCK

It's D-A-V-I-D A-V-A-L-O-S and it's Elizabeth E-L-I-Z-A-B-E-T-H Sisco S-I-S-C-O.

00:21:07

AMY HALPERN

Thank you.

00:21:08

LOUIS HOCK

So.

00:21:10

AMY HALPERN

And, so my other question has to do with the original forgotten muse who is Manuel, the janitor.

00:21:16

LOUIS HOCK

Yes.

00:21:17

AMY HALPERN

You said earlier an amazing remark that you have no concrete memories before eight. But, this guy lodged himself deeply in your head and what he showed you.

00:21:26

LOUIS HOCK

Yeah.

00:21:25

AMY HALPERN

I just want to hear more about him. If you...

00:21:27

LOUIS HOCK

No, I don't remember anything about him, I only know that because you know some years later someone, you know I think it was my mother or my grandmother said you know don't you remember you were in the basement and you were always, you know and that's when you were down there and he was always showing you films down there. Because, that's when you went there, you know you were he was essentially your babysitter during school because we took you to school. And, so, you know I'd already been through the first grade a couple of times. And, so you know I didn't want to go you know I could read, write you know an educated kid and they just kept me in the basement just to, you know, I wasn't locked down there.

00:22:02

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

You know it's like they kept me in the basement because that's and I watched a lot of films. And, that you know is something that I had no, I mean I still have no recall--I don't have, I have no recollection of that. I mean my memory skipped from me being have a memory when I'm two years old and then I sort of remember well, everything else I remember. But, I don't remember what those people told me. And, then I remember starting when I'm about fourth grade.

00:22:26

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

My two year old memory is really great. I took two toothpicks and I put them in my mouth and then I put them in an AC outlet and I have a memory. I can remember the room. I can draw a picture of the room. I can draw my mother, my fath--my I was crying and my father was trying had a, I told this to my mother and she was amazed that I remembered it. Took a toothpick and tried to light it with a match like pretending that I was smoking a cigarette to make me do it. My mother got all angry with me about that.

00:22:54

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, then it eventually what stopped me crying was a purple lollipop. And, I remember I mean I could put actors in and I could redo that scene. And, then I jump up until I'm about eight years old. So, I don't have much memory from that at all between being two. But, it was kind of interesting that somehow in here Manuel is in there, you see? So, Manuel is lost even though the effect of Manuel is not, so.

00:23:21

AMY HALPERN

And, I also wanted to ask you to spell your father's name and describe him a little bit more.

00:23:25

LOUIS HOCK

It is, it's name is Louis like my name Frank Gallina, G-A-L-L-I-N-A which my mother changed her name when she went back to Nogales because she was not going to be Mrs. Chicken. And, in Italy they named people after animals, but in Mexican they do not. [laugh] So, I became Louis John Hock that's why name was changed. I don't know what else I can tell you. I mean there's a lot of installations I've done. But, you know that I've done a lot of them, like the Poinsettia has -- it's about Poinsett, the first Ambassador to Mexico, essentially importing, stealing poinsettias and bringing them into the United States.

00:24:17

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, because of the technology of the green houses which industrial revolution which had been coming to the United States they could grow poinsettias in the United States. And, they the poinsettias eventually made their way to the west coast and then they were sold by Ecke and realized it was a popular flower. And, then they - through grafting and the like - they reduced them in size, so they became mostly flower and they drove, did experiments about which ones would survive in a truck while driving around. So, they created the most hardy ones.

00:24:50

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, then after World War II airplanes and visqueen plastic became popular, so you could have green houses fairly cheap. And, so Ecke would not sell the plants he'd sell the, grow the sprouts from here and it would sent them all over and they controlled I think it was 88 percent of the poinsettia production in the world. So, whenever there was a poinsettia it was Ecke from here, which is about two miles that way. And, so even in Mexico when you get a poinsettia-- Mexicans don't realize that poinsettia that you buy in the pot, the grandfather is a poinsettia you see near Taxco, Mexico that's where they came from.

00:25:31

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, Poinsettia got thrown out of the country because he meddled in politics. And, was you know involved with the masons and stuff. So, he got thrown out of the country. And, then but the plants got named after him. In Mexico they still call them Nochebuena, but they're all over the world they've become poinsettia because Robert Poinsett was the ambassador. And, I put a green house inside of Mexico City inside of a chapel, inside of a Mexico City church, in which I grew poinsettias during the holiday season [Hock note: ExTeresa, 2000]. And, outside I had all these the native poinsettias Nochebuena hung upside down dried and they were all drying on the big wall and plants on these little wild blooms, but they were very long spindly plant outside the green house.

00:26:12

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, then inside where the plants go in and then on the screen I had there markers that marked the United States, Mexico boundary between Rio Grande and here and they were I mean some of them are big, the first round they made big ones and then they made a more sophisticated survey with these ones, these steel ones. And, every eight kilometers in city's they put more in, but there's all these boundaries that make, that were made by the United States and Mexican Commission. And, of course that bound--and of course Poinsettia proposed to Emperor Iturbide that the boundary of Mexican be essentially what the boundary is today. And, of course the Mexican head said forget it.

00:26:59

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But by pen and treachery that's what the boundary is today. So, that border is essentially what Poinsettia conceptualized when he was initially in Mexico. So, in some ways he, at least conceptually created the border. So, I was interested in using those markers which were on an old book, they took a picture when I put them up. So, I just turned the page of the book. And, so you have this and the green house in structure mirrored the interior of the chapel, so it has this arch.

00:27:24

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, when you stand on the outside you know looking at the chapel the arch of the chapel door mirrors the green house. And, so when you're on the outside you can see it. What happens is that the lights go on about every, I think it was about minute or so. And, so when you're looking at it you can see the projected clearly. And, then when you walk in you can see the green house and the flowers in there on the tables and the pots. And, then it goes dark again and you see these projected images.

00:27:53

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Then there's a text that described Poinsettia in the history of Poinsett and poinsettias, but you can't read all of it. You can read about halfway through and the lights go down. And, it comes back up again. So, you're always halfway between the flowers and the experience of the flowers and the hanging flowers and the history and the video, and so it was up I don't know for a couple of months in Mexico over a holiday. It was an interesting piece to do. But, again it involved media you know I mean almost all the installations involved some kind of media.

00:28:27

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

***THE NIGHTSCOPE SERIES* (2000-2006) are photographs taken from the border crossers. I chose particular ones from my work with *THE MEXICAN TAPES* and some a little bit later of the border patrol taking infrared film which is essentially Vietnam technology to spot heat in the jungle: bodies. And, then I used those images to make still photos and I made a suite of those photographs. But, they come from video.**

00:28:57

AMY HALPERN

And, other billboard art that you've done, the one that says the largest plantation in the United States.

00:29:02

LOUIS HOCK

Well, we did that after we did 'Welcome to America's Finest Tourist Plantation' and then they [Hock note: the City of San Diego] were going to name a big street after Martin Luther King and they decided to meet right in front of the Convention Center they decided maybe nobody would come if they named a street after a black guy. So, they decided to make this little island of [laugh] plants, call that Martin Luther Way, you know. And, so we used that same slogan and said you know Tourist Center and City and made a billboard around that, or several billboards around that. [Hock note: WELCOME TO AMERICA'S FINEST a) City b) Tourist Plantation c) Convention Center, 1989 (with D. Small, E. Sisco, D. Avalos)]

00:29:38

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, then NHI had a billboard had a picture of Donna Gentile and it said NHI. Donna was a informant for the police that was killed because after she had been screwing and hanging out with the police she was with gravel in her mouth, so she was one of the first women that were killed as part of this series of dead women in San Diego that all have many links to the police. NHI means 'No Humans Involved' it's a police term when they find somebody whether it be an undocumented worker, or a prostitute or somebody who like, they also call them misdemeanor murders.

00:30:14

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

You know they're really like you know it's not worth to spend an effort on it it's just somebody who they're dead, tough luck. And, so it was an interesting piece and people really supported that piece. I mean people gave us money to keep the show up longer and publish more and to publish more booklets to you know and lots of letters of support. And, it was the most it was a very invisible part of the community that became tangible because of the art work. And, the news media just loved it, they gobbled it up. I mean because there was no story or image-- I mean we noticed it because we were doing this piece we did for on buses, bus ads about the amount of killings that the police were doing in San Diego was radically disproportionate to the population, they were killing a lot of people

00:31:05

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

in terms of police and population. And, so in doing the research we kept coming up with these little paragraphs of you know a woman found in dumpster, woman found in rest area, woman found in-- that's all you'd find is these little clips. And, so we kept coming up with these when we'd do you know like you do searches for the police we'd type in, you know police, death, you know, but we kept coming up with this other information that didn't fit into the paradigm about police violence. But, it was about dead bodies.

00:31:32

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And we realized that there was-- then there was an article that was published by a woman in a San Diego publication [Hock note: *SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE*] that tied together as a sort of serial murders, nobody wanted to talk about it. So, then we did the art show and all the TV news and everything had an opportunity to talk about because they couldn't talk about it there was no, what do you do? You have a picture of a dumpster and so people all the TV news, and the radio and everything began to talk about it. So, it really sparked the public consciousness about this particularly dangerous and bad part [Hock note: aspect] of San Diego.

00:32:03

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because it wasn't NHI, it wasn't really NHI's it was people's wives and their sisters and you know Marine wives. It was just, you know it was a way of making the community feel safe by saying oh, it's just drug addicts and hookers it's not real women. It's just those NHI women. But, in fact when you look through the roster it wasn't true. So, in a lot of ways it became much more evident there really was a serious crime spree going on in San Diego which not really being attended to by the police.

00:32:29

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because the police had a lid on it because they were involved to some degree. Because a lot of people were, you know intimately connected with the police. And, so it was, so we did the billboard and it got publicity. We did the show, it got publicity and we did a panel, and it got publicity. And, we did the performance and it got publicity. So, it was like the news every station had stuff on it, you know and so every and this thing took place over about a month. So, every you know every few days it was some information on it which was made it a good way to have, you know introspective work in San Diego in terms of people looking at their own environment.

00:33:10

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

It also brings up an interesting questions about line between art and investigative journalism even because that's you know you're bringing to light something, you know in a way that usually an investigative journalist would, but in a way that's artistic.

00:33:23

LOUIS HOCK

Well, in fact people would ask these questions like what do you think the solution is you know? And, they said well you know we don't have enough of the facts. You know the police and like most cases they won't even tell us all the women who were killed. They won't release any of the pictures of all the women who were killed. They won't give any information out because they're so worried that in fact it would reveal how implicated the police are in this. That they won't-- they've so muddied the investigation that there really is no way to solve it. There is no legitimate answers. No at the very end they come up with some guy who's in prison and they say oh, he killed all these women, but right.

00:33:56

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

But, so in some way they wanted us to investigate the criminals and they wanted us to sort of figure it out. But, we didn't have the information to be able to figure it out. We were just trying to raise the issue that somebody should figure it out. But, it is happening and so you know that served that purpose.

00:34:14

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Anything else? [addressed to camera person]

00:34:15

AMY HALPERN

Just so elegant.

00:34:16

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah.

00:34:18

LOUIS HOCK

What [laugh]...

00:34:19

AMY HALPERN

No, the idea that really it's the thought that's the most important thing not the artifact.

00:34:26

LOUIS HOCK

Well, it was important for people in the community with NHI to realize that you know that there were that there were things going on in the city that they didn't know about that could affect their daily lives that was really nasty, it was really awful. And, that they were being fooled as citizens. You know and it was particularly relevant to women. Because, in the gallery you couldn't pictures of the women we had eight pictures we got from a reporter that were from DMV. The rest of the pictures we couldn't get.

00:34:54

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, as is often wonderfully happens in collaborations this guy Scott Kessler said we don't, we can't get the pictures we just-- it was Maureen O'Connor was the mayor—a woman-- he said you should just get Maureen O'Connor's picture and put it up there. And, all of a sudden everybody said that's it. He argued forever we should put Maureen O'Connor picture in there, everyone else realized that we should just have stand ins from the community. We had all the local women that were important give their pictures. And, some of them afraid so, they showed older pictures, but we had all of the women that so, eight of the 50 or so women were genuine pictures. All the rest of were all stand ins from the community.

00:35:35

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

So, it was you know it was a whole bunch you know people from the university, people from the city, people from health care workers, because everybody stood in. It was amazing because there were people who'd come in from the, that were victim's family like and they'd come to see this isn't my daughter, this isn't my sister. You know they'd just freaked out and we'd say look the reason we don't have it and then they would come in and they would give us a picture and we'd replace the picture of the stand in with the real one.

00:36:04

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

Because, we had all the ones that were stand ins in italics, but we'd replace the picture in place of the image. And, it happened a lot. And, then it was really sad forever. I mean there was no sense of closure these people just disappeared all forever people were bringing in flowers and family members would show up and begin like this really weird, wonderfully weird kind of closure with a sense of ending. Where they'd come in and do it. And, these two really weird little ladies who claimed to take care of children of women who were in prison, but there was some like they were like whole angels that came in that little booklet we had that we were selling for almost nothing.

00:36:45

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

They funded it. You know they fund the book again [Hock note: for another edition], it was like there was something like maybe they're all like ex-prostitutes, or there were some, there was something that was it was very, it was really gratifying. I mean we had more sense of people being thankful in that project than any other kind of project. And, it was nasty too. I mean there was, when you get answering machine messages called from Credence Clearwater's "Bad Moon Rising" on your answering machine [laugh] and stuff like that and cars parked out in front of your house.

00:37:21

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, they're like police cars. And, then in the gallery we hired a woman who was pretty tough and from Chicago to come and gallery sit. And the head of the police people was this guy named Dick [Hock note: head of the police unit investigating the murders] I don't remember his last name, came in and said, "Oh, I'm going to buy two of these. And, I already took one [Hock note: previous visit] and I'm just taking one now and I'm going to pay for two and I'm just going to take one now, you know honey, I wouldn't want to stiff you. I wouldn't want to stiff you."

00:37:50

LOUIS HOCK (CONTINUED)

And, then he left and she was totally freaked out. And, this was a guy you know who knew all where all the bodies were right? He knew both, you know and so she was really freaked out by that. You know it was like it was very it was you know unnerving to think that, you know that there was something going on that you didn't know about that was really not good for the city and certainly not good for the populace. And, you to just having just touched on it, you know enough to be able to make the police notice about it.

00:38:20

STEPHANIE SAPIENZA

Yeah.

[END OF TAPE 5]