

San Francisco Film Society

Oral History Project

Interview with Claude Jarman
Conducted by Margarita Landazuri
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MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Let's talk a little about your life before the Festival. You had a career as a child, an acting career, but you later abandoned that. Why was that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, let's see. I was ten years old when I was picked to play in **The Yearling**. I was at MGM for five years, back in the old days when you had a contract, which were really the golden years of MGM. When that ended, I moved back to Tennessee and went to high school, continued to work in the summer. That's when I made **Rio Grande**, the John Wayne/John Ford movie, **Hangman's Knot** with Randolph Scott, and worked in the summertime. Then I went to college, and I got involved in other things. In those days, you had to go into the army for two years, or you had some service you had to do, and I went into the navy and was a naval officer for three years. By that time, I was married and had a child, and pretty much had moved away from acting. At that period, television was just wreaking havoc on the movie business, and there was no more studio system and the people that I knew were all— I don't know where. I just thought I would move on to something else. I went to Alabama for two years, working for an advertising agency. At that point, I was invited to move to San Francisco, in 1963, to become the director of public relations for an insurance company—the John Hancock Insurance Company—and never left. So I have been in California since that time, and I've been in San Francisco. I never left the Bay Area. That got me involved in a business career, and that led me, basically, to the Film Festival, because the man I was working for was the president of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. I followed the Film Festival when Bud Levin was running it, and it was becoming more of a [civic] event than it was a Metro Theater event. I think it had kind of gotten beyond his capabilities at that point. So I started putting together some things that I had come up with—an idea for maybe moving the Festival into a bigger venue, a bigger city event. The Chamber actually put together a committee, and that's when the Chamber brought in people from all walks— Paine Knickerbocker, film critic at the Chronicle; Patty Costello, who was the Junior League president; and Barnaby Conrad, who was a good friend of mine. I don't know if you know Barnaby.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, sure.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Fabulous person, still a very close friend of mine. I think we had gone out for dinner at that point, and we were just talking about expanding the Festival and doing the tributes, and the Chamber said, "OK, we'll try it for three years."

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And this was 1965.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. They appointed Mel Swig, of the Swig family, that owned the Fairmont, as the general chairman. I still had my job at John Hancock, and they appointed a staff person named Bill Boyd as the executive director.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was he paid?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes he was. He was part of the Chamber. And he took it on. That was the first year. Shirley [Temple Black] got involved at that point. She was very helpful. She used a lot of her contacts. We were going to get people to do these tributes. This was Albert [Johnson]'s idea, to do these tributes, which he had been doing over in Berkeley. She was very helpful in getting John Ford, for example.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, you must have been helpful there as well.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, yes. We both were. San Francisco had a unique opportunity because there really wasn't a lot of competition for a film festival. There was the Cannes Festival, the New York Festival, and the Berlin Festival. In a minor sense there was the Chicago Festival. So, we had the pick of the litter at that point. I mean, back then there wasn't Telluride, there wasn't Mill Valley, there wasn't L.A. There weren't a lot of people doing this.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, you kind of invented the American film festival.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well I don't know if we invented it, but we really capitalized on a vacuum that was there. We had a pattern in the fall that was perfect timing; films would come to New York, and we were trying to get a lot of the same films. When we look at all the people that we were able to get for these tributes, it's amazing. That was what all this was about. I can remember the first one we did; it was Mervyn LeRoy, at the Masonic Auditorium, and there were about a hundred people. It took a while to really build that up. And that first year, we had one every day: Mervyn LeRoy, John Ford, Busby

Berkeley, William Wellman, John Frankenheimer, Lewis Milestone, Leo McCarey, King Vidor, Gene Kelly and Hal Roach.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you attend all of those?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh yes, of course. There were maybe 500 people there at the John Ford, and during the weekends. It was just beginning to take off. Those were the focal points. When you look back at the films, we had some good films that year, but it was hard to get Opening Night films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Why?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Studios were afraid of festivals. The studio system was still running and still distributing, and so they were very afraid of them. They still are.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Why were they afraid?

CLAUDE JARMAN: They had their own way of distributing and they always wanted a big film in the Festival that was going to open up the next day, to capitalize on it, because they realized they only get the reviews once. So if you have a film in the Festival, and then the film's going out three months later—it really doesn't fit into their marketing plans. But anyway, that was our first year, and I thought it went very well.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you still have studio contacts at this point?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Somewhat. We ended up dealing mostly with a lot of PR firms down south. There were contacts that we would use to go through these things. I can't remember what films we had though.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That first year?

CLAUDE JARMAN: But I know we decided to use the Masonic Auditorium because we wanted a place where you could bring the Festival into the heart of town. And the hotels wanted the Opening Night

party at the Fairmont. We got a lot of volunteers, other people, to pick up people at the airport. We didn't have a lot of money.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was this why the president of the Junior League was involved, to help get volunteers?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, Patty was more involved just trying to spread the tentacles out a little bit, more than anything. We had a volunteer staff, but they weren't a bunch of socialites. As for films, we got **Rapture** for Opening Night, which was OK—that was a film with Dean Stockwell, from Twentieth Century Fox—Shirley got that film. Later in the Festival, we showed **The Shop on Main Street**, which was a great film, a fabulous film, one of the great Czech films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who did the selection? Was there a selection committee?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, we did have a selection committee, and it was myself, Barney Conrad, Herb Gold, Niven Busch—we tried to use people who had some background in film—Marshall Naify, who was president of the United Artists theaters. That was our committee.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What about Albert Johnson? Was he—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Albert was more involved in the tributes at that point. We were all getting acquainted with each other, more than anything. And some of the interesting films—**Passages from Finnegans Wake** for example, was a very interesting film that never went anywhere.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was **Crazy Quilt** that year?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes it was John Korty's film. Also, **Saragossa Manuscript** was a classic that hung around for a long time. Also, **Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors**, which is still a classic Russian film. So to begin with, I thought we had some very good films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How did you find them? Did you go to festivals around the world?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. We found a lot of these films and people also went to Cannes. Albert knew a lot of these films. You just kept your eyes open as much as you could. Anyway, the Festival ended, and I think it was successful. The Chamber of Commerce was pretty happy with it. They were always nervous about whether it would lose money or not. Their budget was pretty low and I thought it went off very well for the first time.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Opening night was memorable, wasn't it, with Shirley Temple as the host? Could you talk a little about that night?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, I don't remember that much about it. We probably blocked off 1000 seats and did not use the upstairs and the side seats. So, that was alright. The Opening Night film was OK, but, to me, the main thrust of the Festival was the tributes and the other films that we had. Opening Night was always kind of a throwaway. That's why we turned it into more of a party night, more than anything.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, talk about that, because in those early years, the party element was a big part.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes it was, because we wanted to make it more of an exciting, black-tie event— Let's turn out and do something different. You have to realize that in the fall, you're competing with the opera and the symphony. It was hard to push your way into that venue.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But it really became part of that circuit, didn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, it did. It took a while to do that, but we achieved it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Let's talk about the organization. You said it was in the Chamber. It was mostly volunteer run? How many people were actually on staff and paid?

CLAUDE JARMAN: There was Bill Boyd, and there were a couple of staff people—Ernie Beyl for press relations. Then there were mostly volunteers from that point on. Our events director was Charlotte Smith, now Charlotte Schultz. That’s when Charlotte first got involved. Charlotte and I both came to San Francisco at exactly the same time. We had something we set up called the Festival Guild, which was all the young people trying to get involved. The Guild had parties and a younger crowd that would do things. Charlotte and I were involved in that aspect of it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, there were some amazing parties. I read about one on a plane, and one on a ferryboat.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, it was really kind of big—it was amazing how it took off as quickly as it did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Do you think that helped raise the visibility of the Festival?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think so. I think it became more of a civic event.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did Bud Levin leave on his own? Was he forced out? How did that happen?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don’t think he wanted to continue it. I think he realized that it had become a bigger event than he was able to do. The man owned a theater. He wasn’t going to spend all his time doing this. I think he realized that what he did was fine, but that it was going to move on to another plateau—and he recognized this.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And it wasn’t acrimonious?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don’t think so, no. In later years, I certainly always invited him, and we always recognized him throughout the years as the person who was instrumental in starting things up.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What kind of a budget did it have?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, you've got to remember, that in those days, inflation took care of a lot of things. I think the budget was maybe \$120, 000 to \$150,000. Tickets were \$3.50, so it was a reasonable budget. The Chamber was very cautious. They just saw this big money pit, this hole that all this money was going to go down, so they were very concerned about that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Your official title at this point, I think, was something like Public Relations, wasn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, and I was on the selection committee.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now what did Bill Boyd do as the head?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was more of an executive director. That was his role, managing day to day. He did what I ended up doing.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He was there for how many years?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Only for two years. The budget got out of hand, and the Chamber asked if I would take it over.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How did you feel about that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, let's get into that after the third year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. Let's see, what else? We had the volunteers, the social component. Tell me some of the most memorable parties. Were there any that stand out?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, not that I can recall. I think the Opening Night pre-party was at the Fairmont, and Mel Swig hosted about a hundred people. And that was really wonderful, because then you walked right across the street to the Masonic.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was it black-tie?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh yes, definitely. Opening Night was black-tie. It was always black-tie. And it was quite fun. This was kind of like moving on into something else.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How much of the cost of the Festival did the box office pay for?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I really can't answer that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: It wasn't expected to take up the bulk of the cost, though.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, it wasn't. I can't recall if we got city money. We went to the Hotel Tax Fund, and I think we may have received \$15,000 from the Hotel Tax Fund. It was always hard to get that money.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So how did you make up the deficit?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had some program advertising. If you look at it, there's some in there. We had—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Patrons.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had patrons. It ended up pretty much paying for itself. The Chamber was quite happy the first year. They felt the Festival had worked out OK.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was a competition at the beginning, in the first year or the earlier years. But in 1965 the Festival decided to do away with the competition. Why was that, do you know?

CLAUDE JARMAN: You couldn't get films. No one wanted to compete. No one wanted to bring a film and have it lose the competition. If you are going to make a film, we said, acceptance in the Festival is

an award in itself. It really freed us up to go after films. Otherwise, why do we want to compete? The “winner” of the San Francisco Film Festival—what about the losers? It just didn’t work.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So it was going back to the same reasoning behind dealing with the distributors.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Exactly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did that help you attract better quality films as well?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh yes, definitely. It was never going to work being that competitive, so we just said, “Let’s do away with that.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. The Goldwyn Awards were controversial. There was a Selznick award too, which I didn’t—

CLAUDE JARMAN: I remember most things, but I do not remember—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You see in these newspaper articles, they mention the awards, but they don’t say anything about them. And I know the Selznick one, I didn’t see anything more about, ever. There was one, the David O. Selznick Award mentioned in a newspaper wrap-up. There was nothing else about it.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don’t know.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. The Goldwyn Awards were sponsored by the Goldwyn Company, Sam Goldwyn, to the best American film of the year. And there was a selection committee for that. And the first year—or whatever year it was that I asked about it—it was **Funny Girl**, so that must have been 1967. And that was the film selected. And it was controversial because Wyler was getting a tribute, and they said, “Oh, this is just a hype for the film.”

CLAUDE JARMAN: You know, it's interesting because we go back to one of the reasons why we made a big change in the Festival and that was the press, they were all over Bud Levin, because I guess there was one film where they couldn't find the first reel of the film, and they showed the second reel—No, they had the director get up and say what happened in the first reel, and then they showed the second reel. And then they found it at the end, and they put on the first reel. And the local press just said, "Oh, this thing's kind of mickey-mouse and needs help," so I think that's when Bud just said, "I don't want to do this anymore. I've been beaten up enough." (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: A little later on, but at this time as well, a lot of the board members were civic leaders without any particular expertise in film. What role did they play?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No major role other than just offering support, buying tickets. They were never really involved in the events of the Festival, as far as the selection. That was pretty well controlled by the selection committee and the people who were more involved in films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And they didn't interfere or ask to—

CLAUDE JARMAN: No.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You talked a little about the retrospectives, and it certainly got off with a big bang in '65, with all these fabulous directors. How did those develop? Was any other festival doing them?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, not that I know of. We totally relied on Albert Johnson. Albert and I were always fighting, because he always made them so long. It started a war. I mean, at five hours, he couldn't cut the time down. He just was incapable of doing that. They would go on and on and on and on. But people loved the films and just ate it up. It was, to me, the really unique part of the Festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I miss them.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, I can't knock what's going on today, because they do the best they can. If they have one or two people, they're happy. When you turned up for one of our events it was a case of, who didn't we have?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, there were some that you wanted to get that you never managed to.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well there were two that I really wanted. I never could get Orson Welles. And there was another one.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Katharine Hepburn.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Hepburn, yes. There was one other person.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. So was it Albert Johnson who developed the retrospectives?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Sure.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he kind of invent the form?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I give Albert full credit for it. He was an encyclopedia of film. He would spend lots of time with the projectionists, selecting the prints and knowing what he wanted and—Oh, Bing Crosby was the other.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Really? And he was local.

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was local. Barney Conrad and I had lunch with him. He really downplayed his role as an actor. His comment was, "Nobody wants to see those little things that I used to do." He wouldn't do it. He just said he didn't want to. Couldn't get him. Anyway, that's another—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He came to the Festival, though, didn't he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He showed up occasionally, but we could not get him on the stage. He just wouldn't. He felt, he would be ridiculed in some ways by many, that he wasn't that great an actor. But that was it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I remember seeing him once walking around without his toupee. He wasn't recognizable then. Let's talk a little before we leave 1965 about some of these retrospectives. Were there any that were particularly memorable, like John Ford, for example, whom you'd worked with?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think mainly what was memorable about it was actually having John Ford there, because he was never one of those people who would do that. And Shirley actually was very helpful in getting him. She and I pretty much herded him along. Obviously Gene Kelly was great. He was just—to me, this was Albert's input; he loved the music—the Busby Berkeleys and the Kellys. So when we had the musicals they were really special.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How important do you think these were in the kind of renewed interest in the films and the directors and the filmmakers?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, I think they were important, but I think if you went back and did these today, you would have people standing on their heads to get in. We had to practically shout, "Come on out, come up and see King Vidor, or come in the afternoon and I'll give you a ticket." We were just embarrassed about not getting enough people in there. It was the afternoon. It was a Wednesday afternoon, 1:00. Who can take the time to do that?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Especially for as long as they were.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Exactly. So it was a sales job that we had to do. We did not utilize a lot of people, let's put it that way, who I wish we'd had three or four years later.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who were the audiences in those years?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Just people who had the time to attend.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: A lot of film students, young people.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, exactly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And also, journalists noted that the Festival was attracting younger crowds. You think the retrospectives were a part of that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was part of it, I think. It was '65, '66; and there was a lot of turmoil around the country. Vietnam, student unrest at Berkeley, it got to be a very big boiling pot, and San Francisco was right in the heart of it, so there was a lot going on in those days. A lot of anger—it was interesting. When you get into some of the movies that, for example, Clint Eastwood did, people didn't want to see anything to do with violence on the street. Over 15 years, it went through several cycles.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How was this kind of—

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't think we were mindful of it, but I don't think it affected how we went about our business. Let's get into the second year, the tenth Festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. This is the tenth. There were, again, some great retrospectives that year. Why don't you talk a little about some of your favorites.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, let's see. What happened in the second year, we had a new general chairman. Mel Swig was one year, and then we had Dave Sacks, who was the general manager of KGO. We still had Bill Boyd. We had Albert on the payroll at that point; I don't think he was the first year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He did it as a volunteer?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think that first year—Maybe he got some money. During the first year we had Lorena Cantrell coming in.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What was her role?

CLAUDE JARMAN: That year she was head of the competition. Went on becoming the number two— She was the executive secretary. Lorena was unusual.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Is she still around?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. She died a couple years ago. A wonderful, dedicated person. But we had a Festival board, a lot of the same people.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This was Shirley Temple's resignation year, wasn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, and then they had the selection committee. That's when we had the *Night Games* controversy.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What was that about? Can you talk about that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: When we decided to show the film, we had a meeting at the Chamber. Shirley just said, "I don't think we should show the film," and we had a discussion—Barney, myself, Herb Gold and—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Niven Busch, you said.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Probably Niven. And we just said, "We're going to show the film." And she said, "If you guys show the film, I'm going to quit."

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You supported showing the film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Definitely. I went to Dave Sacks and I said, "Look, we've got this issue we're dealing with. We just can't allow somebody to say we can't show a film because it's provocative. And

frankly, I don't find it that offensive." But it did create a lot of controversy, and she did quit. And she did run for Congress two years later. So—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You think that had something to do with it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think that had something to do with it. And oh, God, the mail we received was unbelievable!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Pro or con?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, con. I mean, Shirley Temple, how dare we show these filthy, nasty films in the Festival, and—(LAUGHS) It was pretty gruesome.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think one newspaper article that I read from the time said she almost had to, for her image.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I guess, maybe. But I think it's one of those things that, if she hadn't done it, I don't think it would have created a big problem in the Festival. It did create great interest in the film at that point. So we went through it, and I think there was a lot of concern from the Chamber that they were sponsoring films of this type. I'm sure they got a lot of heat from the business community about it, "What are you doing? Why is the Chamber doing this?" So it created a lot of problems.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Even though nobody had seen the film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well it created a lot of problems within—but Dave Sacks, God bless him, said, "Hey, you know, we can't bow to censorship on this scale. We're showing the film." And the Opening Night film was with Peter Ustinov as the MC. He was terrific. We had **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum**, which was a great Opening Night film. Zero Mostel, Phil Silvers and Michael Crawford were there. And after the film, they came down and sat in a circle and talked about the film. It was a great Opening Night, much better than it was before.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What makes a great Opening Night film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: An entertaining film. You don't want anything really provocative. The only thing that we had—Was this Jack Warner night? I think we had—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was a tribute to him, yes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Anyway, he was there on Opening Night, and he got up, and I think he had had quite a few drinks. And he wouldn't get off. He started talking about all these commies and communists. I mean, here we are, we've got a large Russian delegation in the crowd. (LAUGHS) We had people saying, "Sit down! Shut up!" I mean, it was like—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The staid Opening Night audience?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I can remember Mortimer Fleishhacker as one of the attendees, "Sit down, shut up!" Then he said, "Oh, somebody's trying to goose me to get off. I guess I'm getting goosed." It was hilarious! To me, it was just a very fun part of the Festival, really. I mean, people went away shaking their heads. But it was a great Opening Night film. It was fun. It was light, and the fact that we had the stars there, it was good. We had **Night Games**, which just wasn't that—Mai Zetterling was there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Fists in the Pocket** was one.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, Shirley Clarke, that was an interesting—was it a tribute to her?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. I think she was one of the new directors. **Incubus**, with William Shatner. It was in Esperanto, the whole film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Really?

CLAUDE JARMAN: (LAUGHS) This was the first feature film that was made entirely in Esperanto. There were English subtitles. And somebody said, “God, it was the best film ever made in Esperanto.” Only at a film festival could you show that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Years before Mel Gibson.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What else?

CLAUDE JARMAN: What were the great films that year? We had films from George Cukor, Jack Warner. **The Shop on Main Street** was one. Mark Robeson—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Talk about that, because you had worked with him, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I was actually in his first—I guess he made one other film before. He wasn’t George Cukor. He wasn’t somebody who had that history, although at that time he was still a very able director. He was doing some interesting things. Roman Polanski, Arthur Freed, Fred Astaire—Who actually got up and did a dance with Albert. I mean, it was one of the great tributes of all time. It was fabulous. We also had—who was I going to tell you? Oh, I think Walt Disney came up that year, because we showed—was it **Snow White**?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I’m not sure. I don’t have that in my notes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think we showed **Snow White**. Barney Conrad went down to pick him up, and I guess the film hadn’t shown up. And Barney went down and said, “Mr. Disney,” and he got in the car and he said, “Where’s the goddamn film?” He was like, “Oh my God, we found the film,” but it was like—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Don’t piss off Walt Disney. (LAUGHS)

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, man! Barney still— you should talk to Barney.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, I would love to, yeah.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I could give you his phone number. He lives down in Santa Barbara. He remembers all this stuff.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And he's such a great storyteller.

CLAUDE JARMAN: He's got some great stories on this.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This is great. If you have anybody else that you think might be a good interview, we'd love to interview them— maybe Charlotte Maillard, or Charlotte Shultz.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, from her side of it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The party circuit.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Party circuit. And later on, our Opening Night party, when we moved to the Palace, and then our parties at the Hyatt—the people who were running our party were Kay Woods and Nancy Pelosi.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Really?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, Nancy. She and Kay were co-chairs of our Opening Night party every year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's amazing. So I want to hear more about this Fred Astaire tribute, because he was one of my idols.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, it was just special. I think what happened is someone like Fred Astaire felt comfortable with Albert, because Albert understood him. Albert knew what clips to show, and he could

say, “Mr. Astaire, when you did this scene in here, what were you—?” So, it wasn’t like, “Tell us, Fred, what’s it like to be a dancer?” It was more personal. And he was able to bring it out. So it was much more of a—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, he had such enthusiasm.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. And he was really able to—because he knew. And Arthur Freed, the same. He knew all the musicals: **Meet Me in St. Louis**, **An American in Paris**. And the audience was beginning to pick up, and there were beginning to be more and more people. So it was more interesting.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, the other thing about Opening Night, of course, was the revealing gowns.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, was that Jayne Mansfield and Carroll Baker who showed up?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What were their gowns like?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I can’t remember, but obviously they were—We were beginning to get more of a Hollywood touch. It was kind of becoming a time when people wanted to be seen, and they could be seen up here. So, it was good. Part of the result of—let’s see, the selection committee—myself, Niven Busch, Ernest Callenbach, Conrad, Herb Gold and Marshall Naify. So we were the people who were—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Ernest Callenbach was **Film Quarterly**, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. And so we were the ones who were up against—we were the evil, Shirley was the good.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you ever make it up with her?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Absolutely. We moved on. She moved on.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did she attend the Festival in subsequent years?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, I don't think so. But she never was around that much. She went to Washington. She was an ambassador in Czechoslovakia and in Africa. Her life moved on to different things.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Do you think she would be willing to talk about the Festival for the archival interviews?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Maybe.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I know that she doesn't do press interviews, that kind of thing—or very rarely—but this is something for the archives. I'm hoping that maybe she would be able to.

CLAUDE JARMAN: She's very elusive.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, yes she is. Oh, Roman Polanski, what about his tribute?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't remember that much about it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK.

CLAUDE JARMAN: At that point, he hadn't achieved all the notoriety that he went on to achieve.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: George Cukor must have been memorable. He's a great storyteller.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, this was a Herb Caen story about [Shirley Temple] calling him on the telephone—I don't know—maybe to ask him to take part, and he wouldn't believe it was her.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, you know what? I think that is true. I think she did say that— I remember that. She said, “This is Shirley,” and he says, “You gotta be kidding.” I think she called him; he was in South America somewhere. That is absolutely true. Like, “What kind of a joke is this?” (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I’m surprised they didn’t ask her to sing.

CLAUDE JARMAN: The nice thing about Shirley was she was able to laugh about it. She thought it was very funny.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. Anything else on 1966?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Now what happened after ’66 was that the Festival did not do well financially, as far as I can tell; I wasn’t that privy to it. But anyway, they decided to make a change with Bill Boyd. That’s when they asked me if I would come in and run it for the third year of their commitment. I said, “I will, but I’m not going to quit my other job.” I said, “I’ll come over at five in the afternoon, and I’ll start the job then,” which I did. So I kept my other job, and then at five I would go over and take on this responsibility.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Were you paid?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, I was paid. And the week that the Festival was going to open, the executive director of the Chamber, Bill Dauer, who I got to know pretty well, came in and shut the door. And he said, “OK.” I said, “I wanna know how much money we’re going to lose this year?” I said, “Well, as I look at it right now, we have a budget of \$120,000. I don’t see us losing a dime.” And he said, “You’re kidding.” I said, “No.” I said, “In fact, I will make a deal for any amount of money that we make over \$120,000. I want you to give me half.” And he said “OK.” I ended up making about \$10,000. This was my first year. It was also the first year I met George Gund. George Gund came into the office one day and said, “I’m interested in the Film Festival. I’d like to make a \$1,000 contribution.” And I said, “That’s great. What can we do for you?” “Nothing. I just believe in the Festival.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And he was not involved in filmmaking at all. He was just an enthusiast, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right. I had no idea who he was. And that was his introduction to the Festival. We can talk about him later, of course, because there wouldn't be a Film Festival without George Gund. Without George this thing would have been gone a long time ago, because he was the godfather, and may still be, I don't know. But he sure as hell was back then.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, yeah. He was there, and he was introduced on Closing Night. Were you there this year?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. I went to the Awards night.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Closing Night they showed a trailer leading up to next year. And there were several pictures of you.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, really?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, just a little montage of photos of the 50 years. So, you were talking about all these cost saving measure—a change in ticket sales, marketing to big corporations?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think we tried to expand and tried to keep our costs down. And this was—who was the chairman—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Is that Mosk? Stanley Mosk. A California Supreme Court Justice.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. He was our general chairman that year. He was a great guy. I loved him. For the selection committee, we brought in Alan Drury.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The novelist.

CLAUDE JARMAN: That's right. And I don't know if you looked at the program, but they each wrote stories about their experience with filmmaking. Jessica Mitford wrote a story. Niven Busch wrote a story. And Alan wrote a story about dealing with Otto Preminger on—what was that?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Advise and Consent?**

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. It's a hilarious story. He does it all in German dialect. It's very funny.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was this a moneymaking thing? I understand that those were to be sold at newsstands, the programs with these—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Maybe so. Maybe they did. But we usually tried to have unique posters at that time. There was a fellow named Bruce Wolfe, who is a very fine sculptor now, who was an advertising exec. And he would do the poster. And he did the one of the cable car tracks; I don't know whether you saw this. (HOLDS UP COVER OF THE 10th SFIFF PROGRAM GUIDE WITH AN IMAGE OF PAINTED CABLE CAR TRACKS) We were always trying to do something unique.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, yeah, that's great!

CLAUDE JARMAN: Isn't that great? They're going up the hill to the Masonic. They had it all painted. It was a lot of money. We ended up paying \$3000 to get this thing done, which for us was a lot of money. Anyway, this was the last year of the Chamber's commitment.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you know at the time already that the Chamber was going to back off?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. We didn't know.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you weren't already planning for the future.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. We did not know what was going on. We had—Michael Crawford again, and we had Peter Jennings as the MC. The film was **How I Won the War**. And that was the week they had all sorts of problems over in Berkeley—there were a lot of protests and a real raucous crowd. And we had a mixture that night of black tie people and people from Berkeley, because they wanted to see this movie. So it was a very interesting evening.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Also an unusual choice of Opening Night film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, but it fit in with the times.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And what was the response to the film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think it was pretty good. Though I didn't think the film was that great.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah. I didn't like it.

CLAUDE JARMAN: That was when we first started dealing with United Artists, and they were owned by Transamerica at that time. We had some outstanding films that year—**Closely Watched Trains**, **Elvira Madigan**—I don't know if you saw that, the Bo Widerberg film, beautiful.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, sure. Did you have the director of **Closely Watched Trains**? Was he able to come? It was Czechoslovakia that was—

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Jiri Menzel, was that who?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He did not come. But we had Bo Widerberg. We had seen his film in Cannes, and I thought that was just a wonderful film. Cinema 5, run by Don Rugoff, was a big distributing company out of New York. He was the biggest, best foreign film distributor in New York at that time. We also

had Z, on of his films, a couple years later. We had really good Yugoslavian and good Eastern European films. We had another John Korty film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Jacques Demy?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Special programs, **Bambi**—maybe that was the year we had Walt Disney.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Let's go back, because there's a quote from you about controversy, probably to do with **How I Won the War**, and you said, "Controversy is nothing new to the Festival. We don't expect protests. We're not in politics, and we're not taking any stands." What were some of the controversies of that year?

CLAUDE JARMAN: If you sit back and think about '67, '68, it just seemed that everything was controversy. You were going to find people on both sides of the fence. So anything you did was controversy. If you had Henry Fonda, "Well, why do you have some old actor? Why don't you have somebody like Jack Nicholson, or somebody else?" So we always tried to have a certain mixture of people that managed to provoke and antagonize everyone. (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But it certainly was an odd choice to have something like **How I Won the War**. Was that intentional?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think it was just something that we wanted to do. It went with the times. We also had this film, **Festival**, which was based on the Newport Folk Festival with Bob Dylan. It was a midnight showing. We had a lot of people there for that. We tried to have continuous activity. We always felt very strongly about trying to keep everything in one place. And I still believed in the movie star image. We still needed to encourage people to come. We weren't competing with the Pacific Film Archive. There was a lot of people who wanted us to have a Tom Luddy-type festival, where you had many varieties of films, and who cares whether people came or not? We had to care because the event had to be paid for. One year we announced that the Festival had actually ended up with a surplus of \$8,000 to \$10,000. The next year, the Hotel Tax Fund cut \$10,000, because they said we didn't need it. And I said, "We will never, ever make money again," because supporters like to feel that they're giving

money to organizations that need it. So we were punished for doing a good job. Rather than being able to use the money the next year, they cut \$10,000. OK — We had Robert Aldrich, Melvin Van Peebles — that was an interesting thing —

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now, he had a connection to San Francisco, didn't he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, he did. He was an interesting guy. He was just starting out making films at that point. And then Jacques Demy, which was —

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You had trouble getting films for the Festival. That reminded me: Why was that problem coming up again?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't recall. I can't really say why it was a particularly difficult year. In terms of the tributes, we had Henry Fonda. He was one of my idols. I think he was a fantastic actor.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How was he as a Festival guest?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was very, very nice. He was here with his wife, Shirley. He was a delightful guy. I heard he was a difficult person though. I used to hear horror stories of him and John Ford working together, particularly as Ford got older and more cranky. It was bad. We also had William Holden, also one of my favorite actors. It was a great tribute because he had great roles, between **Sunset Boulevard** and **Stalag 17, Picnic**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he have good stories?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yeah. He was very quiet. I think he'd quit drinking at that point. He was very subdued. And they had the Judy Garland tribute which was Albert's tour de force.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She wasn't there.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, she wasn't.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What makes a great festival guest, a good retrospective?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Somebody who's made great films. Somebody who's had a variety of films, somebody you can show the different things that show their craft. Alec Guinness is still one of my favorites.

That was the last year of the Chamber. The Chamber had had a meeting and just decided they were not going to continue it anymore. At that point, it was all up in the air. No one knew where this thing was going to go. Fortunately it was also the time when Joe Alioto was elected mayor. I asked him about it, and he said, "Of course there's going to be a Film Festival. I don't know how we're going to do it, but there will be a Film Festival. And I want you to continue." The mayor brought in Ray Syufy from Cinema 21 Theaters, and Joe's cousin, Frank Alioto, agreed to underwrite a loan for \$25,000. That was the amount of money we needed to keep operating. We had to find an office, and we had to move out of the Chamber. So we had to start all over again. We still had the same group of people—Lorena, Albert, Barney. We had a nucleus of the people that had been involved.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Syufy's no longer alive, is he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He died maybe seven, eight years ago, but his son runs the company. Anyway, we started operating again, and it seemed to be working. This was the year when we had our pie throwing.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, yeah. That was in '69, wasn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, so I'm a year ahead. '68, that's right. We had **The Sergeant**; we had Rod Steiger, which was OK, but not great. But he was there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Gene Kelly is the host.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, great. I'd forgotten. We were always trying to get someone with a name to be a host.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So did you ever quit your day job?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I did. I think I did it after that year. I couldn't keep it going. Well, that was the year we had **The Fireman's Ball**, and that's when we had Milos Forman there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he get a retrospective?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. It was a wonderful movie though; it was a really wonderful movie. We had John Cassavetes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now that was a memorable retrospective, from what I understand.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had **The Long Weekend**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You had [Michelangelo] Antonioni, too. That was—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Antonioni. There was **Marketa Lazarova**. I don't know if you ever saw that movie, but that was a classic movie. That was George Gund's all-time favorite movie—and mine. I mean, it was just this—we were known as the Marketa Boys, because we loved it so (LAUGHS)— It was an amazing, amazing movie.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who was the director?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Vlácil.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was George Gund, at this point, involved more?

CLAUDE JARMAN: George was involved. In fact, George at this point was contributing more and more to the Festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Financially, or—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Financially and in other ways. Antonioni was a huge crowd puller. It was probably the best-attended tribute of the Festivals. Everyone was—particularly all the students—they wanted to be there for him. John Huston. Edward G. Robinson, Kirk Douglas, William Wyler. A pretty good lineup, wouldn't you say?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Great lineup. And John Huston made news when he attacked American film critics.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't remember that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, Lillian Gish—now, I understand that she wanted to put together her own program.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Possibly. That I don't remember either. It's too bad Albert's not around to talk to.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, I know.

CLAUDE JARMAN: But we had some very interesting midnight films. We had **Yellow Submarine**—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Lonesome Cowboys**—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Andy Warhol's film. He was here with Viva. I mean, it was a crazy year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS) Who smoked dope with John Wasserman.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was a crazy year. Mai Zetterling was here. I mean, it was probably the year with the most variety of things going on that we'd ever had.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What was your criteria for midnight movies?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Something that would bring the younger people out. And they sure came out. It was mobs, big crowds.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There's an interesting story, a funny story, about Albert Johnson kind of admonishing the audience for Antonioni.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, really?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, he said something about, "Don't ask stupid questions. Show some respect." He tended to be that way.

CLAUDE JARMAN: He protected his people. If he had someone on there, he wanted them to be treated the way they should be treated. And making the transition from the Chamber worked. We were able to bring it off and still be able to get that— We received \$25,000 from the Hotel Tax Fund. That helped us. I can't remember what George's contribution was, but it was more than \$1,000. So he was getting more and more involved in doing that. And, now the 13th—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now you said at the year-end press conference for '68 that the Festival closed in the black.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well that's probably when our outside financing got cut the next year. You never saw that again, did you? (LAUGHS) You never saw that again.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: One of the wrap-up articles said, "It has flair, diversity, and best of all, sound organization."

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well I think we did. We had a team that worked together, and Mark Chase was involved with part of that. I think he came on later, but he was like a—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, he was great. I had some—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Did you know Mark?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Just dealings with him. I worked in television, and we did an interview with Jeanne Moreau, that he helped with.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, he was a super guy.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He's gone, isn't he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, he's gone—He and Lorena and Albert. The three mainstays who I worked with, they're all gone.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Another wrap-up of the Festival says, "It's something for everybody."

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, I think that, you look at it and that was probably true.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK, '69.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We're still at the Masonic.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But there was some question as to whether it would be available.

CLAUDE JARMAN: All right. So here's the deal: At the end of '68, after we had the pie-throwing and—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: No, '69 was the pie throwing.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, OK. At the end of '68, I think as a result of the Chamber not being involved, and of the Shirley Temple event, the Masonic wanted to get rid of us. They had said, at the end of '68, "That's it. You cannot come back." So we went to the mayor and said, "They kicked us out. We don't

have a place to go.” And he said, “All right, let’s figure this out,” because they got a new — what would you call them, Grand Dragon. They had a top gun from Orange County who said, “Get ’em out of there.” And we had worked very well with the people at the Masonic. It was a wonderful place to have the Festival. I said, “We’ve got the dates, we’ve got everything set. You can’t do this.” And he said, “You’re out.” So, we went to Alioto, and he said, “OK, let’s—” I think we had a contract that continued on. Alioto went to the head guy and said, “Here’s what we want to do: we need to come to the Masonic one more year, and then we’ll leave, but you have to let us have it for one more year.” And the top gun said, “OK, one more year, and you’re out.” And [Alioto] had in the back of his mind what was going to happen at the Palace of Fine Arts, and he went to an architect named Vince Raney, who did all the Cinema 21 theaters for Syufy. He said, “We have a million dollars from the a foundation for a theater, and you have to have it ready in a year. I want 1,000 seats, and I want it ready in a year.” And they immediately went to work on it, and it was ready in a year. I mean, the guy did it, amazing. He used the same formula that he did at the Cinema 21. So, anyway, we were set for another year at the Masonic.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Why did the Masonic want you out?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Too controversial.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The dirty hippies?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. The crowd that was showing up there—the hippie crowd, it was getting to be a different crowd, and it wasn’t just a little event anymore; there were people pouring in and out of that place all the time. It was a big event. And they didn’t want to deal with us.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So the pie fight—

CLAUDE JARMAN: And then we had the pie fight! (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That’s such a great story. How did that happen?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We really got blindsided, absolutely. And I never knew— It was basically the group that ran The Committee. And we had Anthony Quinn and **The Secret of Santa Vittoria**. We had Victor Borge as our opening night MC. We had a party across the street at someone’s house, and I had a call during that party that said, “We got a real problem over here. You’d better get over here.” I went over there, and the pie thing was all going on. I mean, it was—I’m stunned. And they were arresting people. The police chief, Captain Scott, was there with stuff all over his uniform. The rep from United Artists, Buddy Young, was just shaking his head, and he says, “Boy, you really know how to do that, don’t you?” (LAUGHS) So, I sent a message back to the mayor—“Don’t come over here. Do not come over here.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, he hadn’t arrived yet.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. I said, “You cannot come over here now. Don’t bring Anthony Quinn. Don’t bring anybody.” So, as the paddy wagon was pulling out with some of those guys, I said, “I’ll catch you guys; I’ll get you guys.” They said, “Oh, relax, Claude. Don’t worry about it,” as it took off. And the place was just a shambles, absolute shambles.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Inside it as well?

CLAUDE JARMAN: A little bit inside. And I guess somebody got pushed through one of the glass windows or something. No one really got hurt. But we took the group in by the side door. Then we got on stage, and Victor Borge came out. And his first comment was, “I’m so delighted to see that we’ve taken violence off the screen and put it back into the street where it belongs.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS) That’s great!

CLAUDE JARMAN: Isn’t that a great line?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, perfect.

CLAUDE JARMAN: “Put it back in the street where it belongs.” And that just started it. They loved the film. All the Italians got into it, and Anthony Quinn, and they moved on from there, and it was fine. But all over the country was all this—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What did the pie throwers want?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don’t think they wanted anything. It was just kind of a—Let’s do something that’s—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Guerilla theater.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. Let’s do something unique. I knew Scott Beach real well. I never really talked to Scott about this incident, but I’m sure he was involved in it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, I know Peter Adair, who was a filmmaker, who actually had had a film in the Festival a year or two earlier, was one of those people. And they wanted to make a film that would be shown at the Festival, of the event. And was it ever?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, no. And I remember the next day, I called the mayor. He was still fuming over this. He was really angry. I said, “Well Mr. Mayor, they called me and said that you could come onstage at The Committee and hit so-and-so in the face with a pie,” and he said, “Only if I could hit him with my fist.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You’re amused by it now. Were you then?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, yes, in a way. What can you do? What can you do? I mean, it could have been worse. They could have shut us down. Anyway, it went on, and we had a great film. We had **Z** that year, which was a huge success. Don Rugoff was the exhibition and was ecstatic. He went back and doubled his budget for advertising, and it was a huge success. And it’s from the reception that the Festival had for **Z**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was this a U.S. premiere?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. And then it disappeared. We never found the film, the print.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, it was stolen.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We never found it. I have no idea where it is.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So what did you get? You got another print, or—

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, we'd shown it, and that was it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, I see.

CLAUDE JARMAN: He called and said, "Where's my film?" "I don't know." We had guys from the underground trying to find it, and paid some guy \$200 if he could— We never knew where it went.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That was part of guerilla theater, too.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: One that got away that year was Laurence Olivier. And Albert Johnson went to London to try to get him?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Could be, yes. I don't know if he was— Was he well at that point? I don't remember.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, maybe not.

CLAUDE JARMAN: But we had the Bo Widerberg film, we had Eric Rohmer's film, we had good movies that year. We were really beginning to get well known in Europe. People loved to come to San Francisco. So it was a good example.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You had one of the great tributes with Bette Davis.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, memorable. We also had a film called **Popcorn**, which was sold like it was going to be the Rolling Stones, and people hated it. It was a midnight showing.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was it a music film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. And people started, I remember—Who was the guy who died, over in France? Who was the rock star?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, Jim Morrison.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, that's right. He was there, and he came out. I remember him throwing something against the wall. "I thought that guy was a big fraud, and I hated that movie." So there you go.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Wow! I never even heard of it, so it must have been bad. (LAUGHS)

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well it had the Bee Gees, Otis Redding, Jimi Hendrix. And then the John Schlesinger tribute—that was a good one.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What was his film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, his was a tribute. We also had tributes for Frank Perry, Mike Nichols and then Bette Davis. And this was when Albert didn't know when to cut it. I mean, it was like he'd start these tributes at ten in the morning, and they wouldn't come off until five in the afternoon.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And what did that do to your schedule?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, we didn't have anything else going on, but—people would say, “When is this going to end?” This was when they were free and people were lining up. They would be coming in and people were leaving because they were tired of it. It just got to be very difficult to manage. But Bette Davis was still at the Masonic.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, the last year there.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I guess we were still OK up at the Masonic. It was when we got to the Palace, where we only had 1000 seats, we were cut down to half our seating capacity. But with New Directors, we had Susan Sontag, Haskell Wexler, Gordon Parks—all these people at four in the afternoon.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This year in an interview, you said you wanted to expand the concept of retrospectives and do more on the craft of film and more emphasis on contemporary filmmakers. Did you and Albert Johnson agree on this?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, we agreed because we were running out of the old guard. We needed to expand it,

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you had more contemporary filmmakers at this point.

CLAUDE JARMAN: That's right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So, admission was still free at this point to the retrospectives, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, because we wanted the audience. We were still building an audience. But we really didn't get into customers paying until we got to the Palace. People would show up and they couldn't get in, and they said, “Well, we'll pay to come in.” And then once we sold the tickets, that was it. If you didn't have a ticket, you didn't get in. It wasn't about the money as much as it was crowd

control, because it wasn't fair. I mean, it was a dollar. Come on! People couldn't spend a dollar to come to this thing, if you had to have a ticket?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah. Oh, this was the year that the, the second year of the Goldwyn Awards, and the last. And this was because the jury chose **Midnight Cowboy** to get the award, and the Goldwyn organization rejected it.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't remember that much about it. All I know is we didn't pay a whole lot of attention to it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was the Palace ready in time for the 1970 Festival?

CLAUDE JARMAN: For the most part. It had a few kinks. And there was no Exploratorium down there. So we decided to take advantage of the fact that we have all this space; we'll have the Opening Night party there also. The Opening Night film was **The Great White Hope**. It was also a rainy night. Anyway, we had a flood; the toilets overflowed, and I'm out there mopping things up 30 minutes before the opening.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You yourself?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Absolutely. Because we had to clean the place up. And it worked. The transition, I think, worked out pretty well. It took a year to finally figure out a little bit more about how to make it better.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was something about the walls weren't built or something, and there were just curtains. Is that—?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was a makeshift deal. But everything else has a growing period, so I thought to move that in a year and to make it happen was, by and large, pretty successful.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you face any opposition from any of the board members about moving?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We didn't have any choice. There wasn't a board. It was a board with just Ray Syufy. In fact, they were all Alioto's guys. These were people who had signed the note. So there really wasn't a board.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, OK, because there was some sort of press thing that said that three of the board members were opposed to the move.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, I don't know who that was, but they obviously didn't know what the story was, because we had no choice.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How did the audiences like the place?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I thought they liked it fine. It was comfortable. We only had 1000 seats, and we had come from the big, huge Masonic. The tributes were still getting longer and longer and longer. We had Paul Newman. We had a pretty outstanding group: David Lean, Rosalind Russell and Satyajit Ray.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There were protesters at the David Lean tribute. What was that about?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I have no idea. I don't remember. Why would anyone protest David Lean?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I know. Well, I think it was some of the younger people that thought he was, I don't know, passé or something. I'm not sure—just something in the press about protesters.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Hmmm. There were a lot of people who were passé. That was the whole idea. (LAUGHS) They weren't new directors.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: One of the most riveting of all the tributes was Cassavetes that year. He was just so intense, wasn't he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was. He had his own crowd. The New Directors series was interesting. We had Barbara Loden, who was there with Elia Kazan. I had a chance to spend some time with him.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Really?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. We never could get him to do anything, but he's still one of my favorite directors. But he was there to support her.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She got quite a reception, didn't she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes and it was well received. The whole idea was trying to feature new directors. Also, Jerry Schatzberg, who was involved with Faye Dunaway.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: They were involved somehow. **Puzzle of a Downfall Child**, was that the film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, which was not a great film by any means, but it was OK.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Pretty to look at. Nice to look at.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was a festival film. Let me see the other films that year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, Truffaut's **The Wild Child**, Buñuel's **Tristana**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I know we had the Chabrol film, **Le Bouchet**, which was pretty good.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was he there that year? That was another year, wasn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, he wasn't there that year. **Tristana** was a Buñuel film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Right. Oh, Pasolini's **Medea**, which evidently some of the press didn't like; I don't know about the audiences.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I thought the program went very well; not one of our greater years, but obviously we had Paul Newman.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This was the first year that there was a charge for the tributes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And remember, the reason for the charge was not for the money, but for crowd control.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How so?

CLAUDE JARMAN: These tributes would run from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. — some people would get there and leave, or there were people who had already given up and gone, and it was chaos. I felt, everyone has to have a ticket to get in, and that's the whole key to it. Of course, Albert treated that as anti-student who couldn't afford a dollar. It was a dollar and a half, or something crazy. But you need a ticket to get in, and that's the way it works. And I think that because we had reduced the size from 2,200 to 1,000, that's the only way we could do it. We had lines all the way out to the street. The other film which was great was the original **War and Peace** film from—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, Bondarchuk.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Bondarchuk, which we showed at the Coronet Theater, because it had the big screen. And I think we showed it in two parts. It was a great film, it really was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Is that '70 or '71? That may have been '71.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Really? OK. Let's see—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There's a funny story about Bondarchuk, because he was there in person, and you couldn't find him. Could you tell that story?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was with me and George Gund up at his ranch in Nevada. We flew up to Elko, Nevada and visited his ranch and had lunch.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, OK, because according to Mark Chase, he was off buying jeans.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, not that day. Well he may have been one other day, but that day we were up in Nevada.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The Cassavetes film that played at the Festival was **Husbands**. How was that received?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think it was received OK. We showed it at midnight.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: According to what I read, the tribute to him went on until 3:00 a.m.

CLAUDE JARMAN: To me, Cassavetes could have used a good editor. His films were much too long. He really just belabored it. I think it was at midnight. And I think he was unhappy in that people were tired at three in the morning! (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think he seemed a little defensive, too. He said something like, "Good or bad, I made the film I wanted to make."

CLAUDE JARMAN: Anyway, it was at midnight, so it was too late, frankly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Albert Johnson at one point—and this was 1970, the first year that you charged—threatened to quit over this policy.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't know where Albert was going to go. Where could he go? He wasn't going to quit. Albert always had a great sense of the dramatic. He loved it. He and I used to have these battles every year about what he was going to do, and his pay, and all this. And we'd just laugh about it, and say, "Albert's not going to go anywhere. He'll go around, and then he'll take off in the fall after the Festival, and he'll be treated around the world as the program director of San Francisco, and then come time to go to the Cannes Festival, he'll show up. And—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And he did.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And he did, he always did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I know you said that in the earlier years he was doing just the retrospectives, but by now he was more in—

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was more in film selection, because he would see a lot of films. And we would see a lot of films that would come in. And so we would finally sit down—and I think Mark and Lorena were involved at that point—we'd all sit down and make a selection. We compromised. He would want certain films and I would want certain films, and it always worked out pretty well.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So it was a fairly loose structure of who selected the films. It wasn't a committee or anything like that.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not at that point. We did not have a committee.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now this was after the severance from the Chamber. Did you have offices?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Where was it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We were downtown. At that point we were down on California Street, and we had a couple offices. And then we eventually moved out to Laurel Village. And then we moved down to Bush and Polk Street.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was it a year-round office?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you had some year-round staff.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, Lorena was year round, and Mark was, too. We had the office and the phone, and we had the continuity. They weren't lavish offices by any means, but they served the purpose.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But you still depended quite a bit on volunteers, of course.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, as far as manning the ushers and that type of thing.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now in 1971, Opening Night was a tie-in to British Week. And you had to change the date to fit in with that. Did that cause any problems?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't think so. We changed the date because of British Week. And we wanted to tie it in. That's when we had Rex Harrison. And we featured British films. We had **The Go-Between**, which was a British film—Joseph Losey and Julie Christie. And we had Princess Alexandra. She and her husband were there for Opening Night. It was different. It was fun. It was a change.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There's a great newspaper picture of you dancing with Princess Alexandra.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, really?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah. There were also some of the tributes, and Rex Harrison was the MC.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was he difficult?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. I didn't find him difficult. He was a pretty gracious guy. All these people were—I can't think of anyone who was not honored, to be honored. They enjoyed that opportunity to see themselves on film; I mean, we had great people that year, when you get right down to it. We had some wonderful films: the de Sica film, **Garden of the Finzi-Continis**, **Uncle Vanya**, **Sunday Bloody Sunday**—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Murmur of the Heart**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: **Murmur of the Heart**, right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You had Merle Oberon.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, that was a very interesting story.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, good. Tell.

CLAUDE JARMAN: That was a very, very interesting story. She had made a film with Robert Walters, who was married to—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Audrey Hepburn.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Correct. I got a call from the mayor, and he said, “Merle Oberon's got this film”—I don't know how he got involved—“that she wants to show on Opening Night. She thinks it would be a great Opening-Night film.” I said, “OK, We'll go down and take a look at it.” And we went

down and took a look at it, and it wasn't an Opening-Night film. I mean, it's a very difficult situation because she wants it on Opening Night. We were getting pressure from the mayor for it for Opening Night. Finally, I said, "If I turn it down, she's going to be angry, but if I show it and it's really panned, then she's going to be hurt and angry, and I don't want to do that to her. I don't think we should show it." So we did not show it. But we did do a tribute to her, which she came to, and she was a very nice woman. She really was very nice.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you didn't show the film at all, not even within the tribute?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We did not. We just couldn't show it. And I don't think it ever got distributed.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I don't think so either.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't even remember the name of it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Interval.**

CLAUDE JARMAN: **Interval.** I mean, it was—(LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I didn't know that story. That's interesting. Well of course you had an out, because you had British Week, so—

CLAUDE JARMAN: And we used it. But it really wasn't easy. She came to Opening Night and was a very elegant person, then the waiter spilled red wine on her dress.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS)

CLAUDE JARMAN: I mean, it was like, oh my God! The next day the mayor called, and we took the dress and tried to get the stains out, but I don't think it we were successful. I'm sure it was a hugely expensive dress.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So she came to Opening Night even though her film was not—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, she was there. Anyway, it was one of those things that was a very delicate situation. I liked her, but I still think we saved her a lot of grief by not showing the movie. Let's talk about Clint Eastwood. You know, this was a period when people were very anti-violence. Any movie with violence, the audience just couldn't stand it. They were violent about violence. And Clint Eastwood was somebody they didn't want to deal with. They just thought he was the worst because he was doing all this stuff. It was all the Berkeley young crowd that really didn't want anything to do with him. In fact, when we had his tribute, Albert did not interview him; Lorena interviewed him, because they just didn't want anything to do with him. And Clint had always come up to our Opening Nights, too. He would drive up in his pickup truck, with his wife. He was big friends with the Syufy family, too. So I felt bad about what was going on, because I thought he was getting a bum rap. Later it turned out people started to see what kind of a talent he had. We also had a film that Peter Bogdanovich had made called **Directed by John Ford**. And I called John Ford: "You know, we're showing this film. Do you want to come up for it?" "No, I don't want to come up for it." I said, "Well, anything you want me to tell the audience?" And he said, "Yeah, tell them it was *not* directed by John Ford." (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Crusty and cantankerous to the last, huh?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Wasn't part of the controversy over Eastwood the fact that he was being kind of honored as a director, and **Play Misty for Me** was his first film as a director?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Like he hadn't earned his spurs yet, and it was kind of a first thing, and it was more of a throwing something in and—we were honoring violence and all this stuff. I don't know—things were still going on in the world. There was a lot of turmoil. They were more interested in Frank Capra and that type of thing. But we had Arthur Penn. Duh! **Bonnie and Clyde**? Talk about violence, huh? That seemed to be OK, but Eastwood just really was a red flag for some reason.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Antifeminist too, because of the theme of the film, **Play Misty For Me**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Exactly. And because at that point his films were still **A Fistful of Dollars** and **The Good, the Bad and the Ugly**— and, of course we had Minnelli as a finale—which was a tour de force of things that we could do.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What about Capra? He had ties to San Francisco, didn't he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think so, yes. A lot of those guys did. Mervyn LeRoy used to sell papers in Union Square. But Capra was a legendary guy. And I think we had a retrospective to popular British cinema, so we had **Blithe Spirit**, **King Solomon's Mines**, **Pygmalion**. Each day at 11:00 a.m. we were showing British films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Were those free?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you still had free films.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We did have some free films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Just not the retrospectives.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This was the longest Festival ever, and with the most films—or up to that point, anyway. How did that work out?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I just think we had a lot of things, a lot of films. We did not have restrictions when we moved to the Palace, as opposed to the Masonic. If we wanted to stretch it out a day, we could do that. We had the John and Yoko film at midnight.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: They weren't here, though.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. They said, "If we come, you'll be the first and the last to know."

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS)

CLAUDE JARMAN: They didn't attend. It was just as well, frankly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Because you moved the Festival, did you have any conflicts with the New York Film Festival, which was about the same time?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, we never overlapped with them. We always set our dates. There was a lot of films that came there that we wanted in San Francisco, and so we never competed with them.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did the tie-in to this marketing thing of British Week help?

CLAUDE JARMAN: You mean attendance? I think it was all pretty much the same. People didn't care about British Week so much as they cared about what the films were. We were doing well during those days. We had a lot of interest.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Getting back to the Eastwood thing, how did he react to all this?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He never said anything. I don't think there was any reaction.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: After that 1971 Festival there were rumors that you were going to retire. Were you considering it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: After '71—no, I don't think so. I mean, at that point I was pretty well entrenched in the Festival. We had good relationships. I had a good relationship with George Gund, and George was very supportive.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He was becoming more of a force within the Festival, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. He and I would end up in Cannes every year. And that would be our time. I would always have a meeting with him. Setting a meeting with George was like nothing you've ever done. I mean, he was always late, always late. I don't mean late; I mean like three hours late. He would say, "I'll meet you at noon," well, at 3:00 he'd show up. But the best thing about George was, when he'd show up at 3:00, he probably had another meeting set for three, but that meeting probably didn't start until six, because he would spend all the time necessary, whatever time it took. And then he could never say no to anything. But if he didn't say yes, he'd mean no, but he'd never *say* no. And I learned that. He'd say yes. I'd say, "OK, that's all I wanna know." But if he said, "Let me think about it," that was no. A lot of people, they never figured that out until—they'd get all frustrated. And we would travel. In '72 we went to Moscow together. I met him in Stockholm and we flew into Moscow on Aeroflot. And there was no such thing as security. People had bags in the aisle. And he had this fishing rod. I said, "What are you doing with a fishing rod?" He said, "Don't you remember when I took Bondarchuk fishing up in my ranch? I figured maybe he might take us fishing in Moscow." And I said, "You don't go fishing in Moscow. First of all, the guy's the president of the jury; he's gonna take an afternoon and take you out fishing?" "Well, you know, I don't know, maybe."

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS) And did he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, but it was so George. And then, in those days, the festival was in the Hotel Russia, which is a 5,000-room hotel. It's a huge hotel. They had the theater there, they had everything. It was still very communist—there wasn't freedom going on there. Each night, they would have a table: for example, the Hungarians would have a table, the Czechs would have a table, strictly Eastern European. And George had been up in Sweden with his brother. He had this smoked salmon, which he would bring back to the Hungarian group. And God, it's like these people devouring this smoked salmon, and, "George, George!" A lot of our films, he was our contact, because he loved the Czech films; he loved the Eastern European films. He knew all those people. So he was a great asset in obtaining films from that particular area. But to go with George to any of those places—and I went with him to Karlovy Vary in Czechoslovakia—same deal. He was like the king. They just absolutely love the guy.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Where did that come from in him?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He just loved Eastern European film. He would spend a lot of time in Prague and all these other places, and knew all the people. We would travel to some of these places. We went to the Berlin Festival together. He and I, over the years, established a real rapport. He was just incredibly fun to travel with. I mean, I would tell my staff, “I only know two things. I know I’m leaving here on July 3rd and I’m coming back on July 20th. I have no idea where I’m going to be during that period, because I’m going to be with George. But I do know I’m leaving that date, and I’m coming back that date.” And we’d be in Moscow, and I relaxed and enjoyed myself, because I knew it didn’t matter. One day moved into the next, and we would just have this wonderful time meeting people. It was one of the highlights of my time with the Festival, to be able to travel with him and do these things. It was just a laugh a minute, it really was. We were over in Cannes, and he borrows my car one day. And I go to get it the next day; it had been towed. I said, “Where’s my car, George?” He said, “Well I left it out there on the street last night.” I said, “Well it’s gone.” And in Europe, I guess—or in Cannes, wherever it is—it took me a day to get the car. It wasn’t like you go over here and pick it up. I had to go the police station. I had to go up in the hills to where they towed cars, or whatever. It cost me like \$500 to get it out. I came back and I told Margie, his secretary, “He’s gonna pay this bill. I’m not gonna pay it.” Oh, too much.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He didn’t care about details, huh?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He didn’t care.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, it sounds like so much fun! Let’s go on to 1972. That was an important year. You went from a two-week festival scaled back to ten days again. Why?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had a lot of the same audience, and I believed in having a more concise, action-packed ten, eleven days. And it seemed to work out. We had some good films that year. We had Truffaut that year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who was he with that year? That was **Two English Girls** he had that year.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, that's right. Was he here that year?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: No, I think the tribute was—

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, he was here later, that's right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Fellini's Roma** was the Opening.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was there a Felliniesque party?

CLAUDE JARMAN: At some point we moved the party back downtown to the Hyatt Regency, and I don't remember whether that was that year. It was too hard to give a party in the Palace. Plus, they were building the Exploratorium. I can't remember whether this was the year that Nancy Pelosi and Kay Woods started running them. They were co-chairs of the party.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, I don't know.

CLAUDE JARMAN: For three or four years, they were in charge of it. And the host was Karl Malden.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was that when they were filming **The Streets of San Francisco** in town?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, on and off.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Rita Hayworth was at Opening Night, and Coppola.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Let's see—Rita Hayworth, **Chloe in the Afternoon**—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **The Seduction of Mimi**, the Wertmüller.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And she was here.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She was something of a Festival discovery, wasn't she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, she was. She loved coming here—they loved the film. I don't know if you saw the film, but it was a lot of fun. We had **Dirty Little Billy**. People were booing because it was very violent. I don't know if you ever saw that movie or not.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was it with Michael J. Pollard?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, oh yeah.

CLAUDE JARMAN: They would boo, because they hated violence during that period. And then we had Paul Morrissey. We had a real interesting group of people here during that period. (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That was **Heat**, wasn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That got Mr. Syufy all upset, didn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It could have been.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think this whole thing that happened that year with the firing of Albert Johnson.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Is this the year that Albert—?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah. And then Syfy gave an interview about how, “Albert never ran the thing, never was the programmer; I always supervised him,” and I thought, wait a minute.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, that wasn’t true.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: No, I didn’t think so. And that **Heat** was an embarrassment; he told him not to program it.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, the problem was that Albert thought that he could get support from the mayor, and it wasn’t going to happen. I was his best friend, but I don’t think he realized that until it was too late. Back to Rita Hayworth. There were people hanging on the walls because they wanted to see her. She was still very glamorous. It was very interesting because she was drinking on the day when she had her tribute. And when it came time, she was right out there on stage. I think she was going through a hard time during that period. But she brought it off—she was a movie star, you know, a real movie star. And people loved her.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: It was one of the longer tributes, too, wasn’t it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh God, yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Nearly eight hours, is what it said in one of the press reports. Howard Hawks was about seven hours. That was another one that kind of threw the whole schedule off, didn’t it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, yes, because you run into a 7:00 screening. If it starts at one and runs eight hours, then everything else gets set back. So a lot of that stuff was kind of out of hand during that period.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And that led to a showdown.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, it led to the showdown. And I saw Albert at a press conference. What did he say? “Tomorrow, Mr. Syufy, I’m going to call the mayor, if he’s available, and if I cannot reach a satisfactory conclusion, I shall resign.” I said, “Albert, you might as well resign, because that ain’t gonna happen.” (LAUGHS) And as you say, by that point, with **Heat** and everything, they were ready to fire him anyway, so it was like, too bad, but—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was he surprised?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think he was. He was living in a dream world, anyway. He was a sweetheart but it was time for a change. It really was. He thought he was the Festival. And I’m the guy who’s there all year round while he’s out running around the world. So we just said, “OK. We’ll move on.” I called Tom Luddy: “Tom, you’re Albert’s friend.” And I said, “Do you want to come and work and take over, because I know you’re friends.” He said, “I couldn’t do that to Albert.” So I said, “OK. We’ll have to move on.” Then we went back to New York to a film archivist named Marty Rubin and hired him to do the tributes. Then we asked Scott Beach to moderate the tributes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Mark Chase did a lot of them.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Mark did them after—we used Scott one year, and then we felt Mark could do them. Mark spoke fluent French and was a very sharp guy.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And he had the knowledge, too.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And he had the knowledge.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So he would translate simultaneously if—

CLAUDE JARMAN: If he had someone like Truffaut, yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Before we leave 1972 let's talk about some of the films. **Two English Girls** was Truffaut's film; **Chloe in the Afternoon**; a Godard film. Was there any feedback from the audiences about these films?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, probably the most popular films out of Europe were the French films during those days, with Chabrol and Louis Malle, Truffaut—they were just very, very popular. They were making some good films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you were optimistic about the future. Syfy also gave a press conference; he was pessimistic. He said other sponsors might resign because of the deficit.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't believe we had that big of a deficit. I don't know where Ray was getting his information. No underwriter ever had to come up with any money.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He claimed there was a \$50,000 deficit.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't think so. We may have had \$25,000, but we didn't have \$50,000.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What steps did you take to deal with that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We were soliciting some of the film companies that were shooting. Quinn Martin, producer of **The Streets of San Francisco**. He gave us \$25,000 a year, which was very helpful. Later on, when Clint Eastwood was making a film here, he contributed \$15,000. So that was an extra source. And later on we moved to the Castro.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That was '77.

CLAUDE JARMAN: OK. Anyway, in '73 we had **Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams**; Gil Cates.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That was the year George Gund took over as chairman.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, Ray Syufy moved on, and then we asked George to take over. That was good timing because Albert was gone, and we wanted to keep George's involvement. That was a natural transition.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who did the programming then, after Albert left?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Mark, Lorena and myself. And we brought Marty Rubin in, and he did the tributes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You had a reduced budget that year, so did you cut back on programming or increase ticket prices or anything like that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We may have increased ticket prices a little bit. Tickets were still about \$3.50. Opening Night went up to \$100, which included the party. And the party was wine and drinks unlimited. That was it, which was a pretty good bargain, frankly, for people.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Of course by this time it wasn't the big society event it had been in past years, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not really. I never thought it was a big society event. I always considered "society" was the opera and the symphony. A lot of people who supported those two endeavors were never really that into [the Film Festival]. It was kind of a cross-section of people. We got some business support, we had Transamerica, who was always a supporter; we would sell tables for the Opening Night, and that worked out. We made money on Opening Night, which helped support the rest of the time.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This was the year of the Truffaut retrospective.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, and we had Ruth Gordon.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well you definitely had Mark Chase doing Truffaut.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had Mark. Joanne Woodward was terrific. The tributes at that time became two hours, two-and-a-half hours.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Including film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. We just cut them back. And Ruth Gordon was terrific. **The Paper Chase** was a good film that people enjoyed. Robert Altman was a very interesting tribute, and people liked him. I still like him. Let's see what else we had. **Day for Night**—Truffaut was here, and he was dating Jacqueline Bisset. The Truffaut tribute was in the evening. To me, he was *the* director in Europe. He made films that people still see. They still see **400 Blows** and **Jules and Jim**. He was great. His English wasn't that good, and [Mark] was translating for him. It was a great night.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Why did you decide to have it in the evening?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Just thought it would be a bigger event that deserved an evening as opposed to an afternoon and that people would come. And the night before we had **Day for Night**, so it was just a good tie-in.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What do you recall about him and Jacqueline Bisset when they came? What were they like?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was all fast and furious. She's gorgeous. She really was. And there was kind of a flutter because they were an item. She towered over him. She was bigger than he was, taller. But it was really one of our better evenings. Shirley MacLaine was there too and it was a very fun event.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She had some interesting comments, looking back on her films. She said something about being kind of embarrassed by some of them because they were so anti-woman or so antifeminist.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Like **The Apartment**? She was a very interesting woman. Had a lot to say.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, you had **Lucía**. Was that the first time you had a Cuban film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I believe it was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Were there any problems getting it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. We also had **Mean Streets** that year. And Scorsese was here.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: One of his first films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He must have loved the Festival, because he's such a film nut.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, he did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did people like him and Truffaut and various filmmakers go to see other films? Were they interested?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Usually they didn't stay. Usually they came for that day. And Truffaut was going on to Los Angeles. Warner Brothers was coordinating it. And I don't think he spent too much time at the event. Some did later on, like Jeanne Moreau. She came and spent a week. And Yves Montand spent a lot of time here. We encouraged them to. We said, "Come and stay. We'd love to have you. Enjoy the city and enjoy what you're doing." OK, now I remember, '74 was the first year that Nancy Pelosi and Kay Woods did the Opening Night party.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. What kind of impact did a film like **Mean Streets** have? Was this something that audiences went, "Oh ho!"

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. It wasn't that—I didn't think it was one of Scorsese's better films, but it was an interesting film and showed a lot of talent, and obviously he confirmed that later on.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So this year you stayed on schedule with the retrospectives.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We stayed on schedule, exactly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was there any complaint about having to pay for the retrospectives?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think people were relieved. They knew they were going to get in, so once we sell the tickets, that's it. You can't get in. It's sold out. And that worked.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What about the Palace itself? Were there problems with being there as far as no restaurants and that sort of thing?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We did have some sort of a snack stand that we set up for people to buy sandwiches. A lot of people stayed for both films; come at 7:00 and then another film at 9:45. I think you buy a drink and whatever. And back in the early '70s, people were smoking. We finally had to say, "That's it." And they weren't just smoking cigarettes, either. So we finally just said, "No smoking, period." I think that went over well, once people realized that that was the way it was going to be.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: '74—

CLAUDE JARMAN: **Lacombe Lucien** was a really good Louis Malle film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, that was a wonderful film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: James Wong Howe.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, yeah, let's talk about him, because this was the first time that anybody had honored a cinematographer.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think he was very honored by it, and it went very well. It was one of our better afternoons.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he have some good stories to tell?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes he did. It was very low-key and it went very well. We had Bergman's film, **Scenes From a Marriage. 25 Fireman's Street**—the source for that was George Gund. We had Truman Capote.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And that was also a first, wasn't it, for a screenwriter?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes it was. He was very moved, he really was. We showed **Trilogy** in its entirety, which was his autobiographical project.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, based on the trilogy of short stories including "A Christmas Memory"?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. And it was the first tribute to a screenwriter that we had done. He was a real character. We showed **Trilogy** at 11:00 and his tribute was at 1:00. I didn't know he wrote **Beat the Devil**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, yeah. He had some great stories to tell about the making of that film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Let's see what else we had.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, you had the Jeanne Moreau tribute that year.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, yes. She loved coming to San Francisco. She just absolutely had a ball. She had a suite at the Mark, and I think she spent four or five days. She said it was great.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There's a letter on file from her in which she kind of specifies, "These are the clips I want." She was very much the director, wasn't she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't remember that, but I'm sure if that's what she wanted, we did it. We had Sam Peckinpah. That was one that, again, they were still anti-violence, so it wasn't sold out. Shelley Winters—I'm not sure she came. One year, she didn't come.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think that was the year she didn't come. She came some years later, same year as Natalie Wood.

CLAUDE JARMAN: She called and said, "I'm so sick, I'm so sick. I can't come, I can't come. What do you want me to do?" And I wasn't going to say, "Get on a plane and come." So I said, "OK, we'll try you again in another year." "Oh, thank you, ohhh."

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS) Yeah, that's that whiny thing.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was so pathetic, it was like, oh my God! It's so funny because when I went to the Academy Awards—probably five years ago, or whatever—every five years, when they bring the people on stage—and I'm sitting there with my wife. And behind me I here these people say, "Look at her, look at her. Oh my God, look at Madonna. Can you believe how she looks? Blah, blah, blah." And I'm sitting there thinking, "God, will she just shut up? Who is that?" And I turn around, and it was Shelley Winters and Estelle Parsons. It reminded me of that scene in **Bonnie and Clyde**, Warren Beatty turns around, and says, "Just shut the fuck up." (LAUGHS) Oh, that was so funny. It was just like, that immediately went to my mind. But anyway, Shelley did not come. I don't know what we did that day. But Peckinpah—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Peckinpah—

CLAUDE JARMAN: — was wonderful, he really was. He just was so sure of what he was doing, loved the films, loved the city, “Whatever you want me to do,” not rushing in and out of town. OK, the next year was '75.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Wait. Let me make sure I've got everything for '74 here. Let's talk about a couple of the documentaries that year: **Hearts and Minds** and **Attica**. Now I saw something, and I wasn't very clear on it, that said that this may have been the last time that **Hearts and Minds** was shown. There was some sort of, I don't know, legal issues or something.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't know.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Those were very important political documentaries. Were the documentaries becoming more of a force in the Festival?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, there were more being made, because you're still dealing with Vietnam and a lot of unrest, and there were a lot of features in that area. So, yes, I think it probably was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you go looking for documentaries?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, but we were always aware of them. And **Attica** was a huge story during that time. And, I mean, that's perfect festival fare.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was an interview published, I think, in **California Living** or something with you; kind of a profile of you that year. You talked about some of the people you invited for retrospectives year after year. Do you remember who those were?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Always Orson Welles and he always turned us down every year. I told you about the letter that I wrote to him and delivered?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: No, I don't think so.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I heard he was staying at the Beverly Hills Hotel. I wrote a letter and delivered it. I was down there and delivered it to the hotel. And, before I got back, there was a message on the machine, “This is Orson Welles. I cannot come to lunch today, or ever. I cannot come to lunch today, or ever.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, that’s funny.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I said, “OK, I give up.” And then, of course, that’s when we tried to get—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Joan Crawford?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Crawford and Ginger Rogers and Bing Crosby. I told you—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, you told me Bing Crosby. Oh, Alfred Hitchcock was another one that you—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Hitchcock, right. They just weren’t interested, or didn’t know how to do it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: One other notable film from 1974 was **Spirit of the Beehive**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Who was that?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That was Carlos Saura.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And **Lancelot du Lac**, the Bresson film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Frankly, I don’t remember.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **Phantom of the Liberty** was shown, a Buñuel film again. OK, let’s go on to ’75. We talked a little about this already: creative ways to bring down the deficit, such as hitting up

some of the people who were filming in town. There was also, you offered a UC Extension course in Eastern European Film Today. Did that bring in more audiences or bring in a new audience?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not really. We still pretty much had our audience. By this time I think people were really hooked on the Festival, and there were a lot of people who didn't really care about Opening Night; they wanted to know what was going on after that. The Opening Nights were kind for the people who [were] in for the party, and if you could get a good film, that would be great, but you were never going to waste a great film on Opening Night. It wouldn't be appreciated. People look at their watches, ready to go have a drink or something. I remember **Hearts of the West**, which was the Opening Night Film, with Jeff Bridges and Andy Griffith.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I was thinking Bogdanovich, but that was **Nickelodeon**. It was the same kind of silent film. I can't remember who directed that, **Hearts of the West**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was Howard Zieff, starring Jeff Bridges, Andy Griffith, Blythe Danner and Alan Arkin.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Not a memorable one, huh?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not a memorable one. Then we had Jack Lemmon the next day.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How was he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was great. He was such a neat person.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you hang out with him at all?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not really.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, you had Jane Fonda. Now, there was a little controversy surrounding her.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Let's talk about that later. We had Steven Spielberg in the afternoon as a new director. He had just made **Jaws**, which I just saw 30 minutes of last night. My twelve-year-old daughter loves Hitchcock. She loves **Psycho**. And finally I said, "OK, you're twelve; I'll show you **Jaws**." And my other daughter won't watch it. It was her birthday yesterday, so I said, "OK, we'll watch a half hour of it." Such a great film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, yeah.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, man, it's such a good film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he bring some of the film to show you, because it hadn't been released yet, had it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He showed some of it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What impressed you about him?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Just a casual, nice guy. He had just made one other film, **The Sugarland Express**, right? And of course, **Jaws** was just putting him on the map. It was pretty amazing, pretty amazing.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you know that was going to happen, or did you suspect? Is that why you had him?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, I think he was a new person that we wanted to feature, because he was somebody who, like Coppola, was coming up. We had Michael Caine and his Indian-born wife, Shakira. And was that Jack Nicholson that year?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think that was later. Yeah, '76 was Nicholson.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, anyway, Michael Caine. Normally during the Festival, Ernie's Restaurant would always host one dinner in their wine cellar for about 20 people. And we would select who it was going to be. We had a dinner for Michael Caine. He was a delightful guy. In fact, I saw him at the Academy Awards three years ago—a very open, friendly guy, very unpretentious, funny. And Joe Mankiewicz was also here in '75—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh right. He had a lot to say, didn't he, about the new Hollywood and—

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was a good one.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Gene Hackman—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Did we have Hackman that year?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, and Louis Malle.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Louis Malle, yeah. Had to have our French delegation there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So tell me about the death threats for Jane Fonda.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't remember that. I just remember it was a very lively session. She was still Hanoi Jane at that point. And there was a lot of yelling back and forth. I forget who the moderator was. It might have been Scott Beach that year. He said, "Don't, be quiet," and Jane said, "No, no, I can take it." So she provoked it. It was one of our more interesting afternoons. I don't know about the death threat. I don't know anything more.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There were some rumors of an assassination attempt.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, really?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And a psychic prediction, or something like that.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We probably had a few. And there was Stanley Donen. It's funny; I was in the DVD store the other day, and I just bought **Two For the Road**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I love that movie.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Such a good movie.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he have that movie in '75? No, that was earlier; that was from the '60s, wasn't it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think I remember this retrospective, and he talked about how they did that shot in **Royal Wedding**, with Fred Astaire dancing on the ceiling. I think so, yeah.

CLAUDE JARMAN: **Anchors Aweigh**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he do that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He had first worked as a choreographer.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Right. He danced on Broadway in **Pal Joey**. That's how he knew Gene Kelly. OK. Visconti's film, **Conversation Piece**, was booted. Do you remember anything about that film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I just know it wasn't a very good film. People would let you know if it wasn't very good.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, there was a dustup about the **Bay Guardian** that year. The **Bay Guardian** had published a critical article or something, and then got all incensed because they were banned from the Festival. Do you remember any of that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I do. In '74, I had taken a position as the managing director of the War Memorial, which operates the Opera House and the Veterans Building, mainly because the Festival was not year-round. And they wrote a big story about how I was taking money from the Film Festival and at the same time, having another job. And so they wrote that piece. The thrust of the story was not accurate. I mean, the Festival was not part of the city; it was a totally different thing. And everyone knew what I was doing, so it wasn't like I was trying to get away with something. Anyway, it created a real problem. And I think I said, "Take away their badge." "No, you can't do that, you can't do that." Anyway, after the Festival, Judy Stone wrote a big story in the **Chronicle** about it. And then John Wasserman wrote a rebuttal to that. It was kind of a cause célèbre. In actuality, the War Memorial job was taking too much time, so I decided to make a choice and stay with the Festival. So then it went away at that point. But that was the story. I was at the War Memorial for two years, '74 to '76.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK, '76. I didn't write down any of the great films that year.

CLAUDE JARMAN: This was the year we had Carol Shorenstein working for us.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was she a publicist?

CLAUDE JARMAN: She organized special events. Her father called me and was trying to get something for her to do. And she was only there one year. I said to her later, "Carol, what you want is my job, and I'm not about to quit, so you've got to find something else to do." So it was a one-year deal. She went and became a successful theater producer. (LAUGHS) So that was very strange. And then we had a new crowd. We had Frances Moffatt, who used to be at the **Chronicle**, and she was great, and a new mayor, George Moscone. The word was that when the mayor came in, that they were going to bring Albert back and fire me, and there was all sorts of things going on. Moscone was friends with Coppola, and Coppola said, "I don't have any plans to do anything." It turned out, I had a great rapport with George Moscone. He called me every other week. He loved movies. He called me every other week and

said, “Let’s go to lunch,” and he was very supportive about what everybody was trying to do. And Opening Night was one of the great ones. We had Merv Griffin as the Opening Night MC. It turned out that Tony Bennett was at the Fairmont. Merv talked him into doing something special. Merv came out on Opening Night, and he had a piano onstage. And he said, “It’s so great to be back in San Francisco. It’s a lovely place. He said, “I’ve always wanted to sing ‘I Left My Heart in San Francisco.’” And he started into it. And behind the screen, Tony Bennett starts singing it. It was just a great coup, it really was. It was so much fun.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, that’s great.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And it came off beautifully. And we showed our first Australian entry on Opening Night—I really was interested in the Australian films at that point. I thought **Caddie** was a good film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I agree. I saw it. I was there Opening Night.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It was a very good film. And I think they were really coming along, you could see it was going to be a film community that was beginning to make some noise.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You were ahead of the wave on that one, weren’t you?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think so, I think so.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Where did you find that film? Had it played elsewhere?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think it was just submitted to us. And we took a look at it and said, “Hey, neat film.”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, it was also the 20th anniversary of the Festival. What did you do to celebrate?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I’m not sure we did anything, frankly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, there were some free screenings of films that had been Festival hits.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right, yes Let's see—we had Dyan Cannon, we showed **Caddie** again for people who were not going to pay to come for the opening, but we thought it was a film that we could show twice for people who paid \$3.50 who would come and see it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's the one I saw, not Opening Night. I did see it at the Festival.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had Burt Lancaster. Jeanne Moreau came back again.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This was the year of her film as a director, right? **Lumiere**?

CLAUDE JARMAN: You're right. We had Jack Nicholson.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was this kind of a joint thing with Robert Evans?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, they came up together. We had Evans, who is an interesting guy. He's still a very interesting person.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think from the accounts I read of that retrospective, too, that he had some of the same stories that he had in his book.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Really? (POINTS AT 1976 FESTIVAL PROGRAM GUIDE) Oh, here's a story by Paine Knickerbocker on the 20th anniversary. (READING FROM PROGRAM GUIDE) "Johnson was determined the programs remained free, so Johnson tried to resign. His resignation was promptly accepted. George Gund was chairman. This one continues to grow." (STOPS READING) OK. This is a whole story on Bud Levin and the whole thing.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think I have that, yeah. Who was making the programming decisions at this time? I think by this time there was a group of people, including George Gund, who were making the—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, George always had his input if he wanted to.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: When he became board chairman, did he take a more active part, or was he always active from the start?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He was always active. Nancy Pelosi was still doing the Opening Night party, for years.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You had your first People's Republic of China film, **Panda**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: **Panda**? OK.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Were there problems and obstacles in getting that film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not really. Oh, here we go. Festival Retrospective. We showed daily at 10:00— (READING FROM PROGRAM GUIDE) **Black Orpheus, Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors, Elvira Madigan, Closely Watched Trains, Weekend**. (STOPS READING) So we showed some highlights of films from the previous 20 years.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was a major change in the retrospectives this year. It was called a Festival Forum, so it wasn't so much a look back at people's careers, but also people mid-career.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right. That was because we were running out of people that were available to us, or that we hadn't already done something with. This was the year that we had Natalie Wood. Roger Vadim.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And Shelley Winters.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And Shelley. (LAUGHS) Shelley was on a Sunday evening.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She was great interview, wasn't she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yeah, she was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Tell me about Natalie Wood.

CLAUDE JARMAN: She was a very fragile, nice person. I always said that she and Elizabeth Taylor were the only two actresses who ever made the great transition from a child actor, the only two out of anybody.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think you're absolutely right.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I mean, who were big stars. And she was a child star. In fact, I remember her from when I was at MGM and she was at RKO, and her little pigtails.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She was a San Francisco girl, wasn't she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: She was. It was very sad when she died.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She was very moved by her tribute, wasn't she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Mm-hmm. There was a lot of stuff because there were a lot of films that brought back memories: **Miracle on 34th Street**, **Splendor In the Grass** and **West Side Story**. It had to have some impact.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Anything you would have done differently? Anything you regret?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I regret that we had that falling out with Albert. That was unfortunate that we couldn't get along, because I know the Festival meant an awful lot to him. I regret that he didn't come around to seeing things that we felt were necessary and that were important to the survival of the Festival. I had to make some hard decisions financially that I probably would have preferred not to have had to make, being frugal in certain aspects, and say, "Hey, we can't afford it." There was a lot of criticism that the Festival was too commercial, that we didn't show enough experimental films, but we could never survive by doing that. It just wasn't going to happen. The city could not support it. So I think we put together an event where every evening was an event, and not just spread out all over the city. I do see that the Festival now has got a tremendous amount of wide-ranging support, which I think is great. More power to them; I wish we had been able to do that. We tried to not be more ambitious than we could handle.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How do you think the Festival has changed for the better or for the worse since your day?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I really don't know because I don't attend it that much. I know they're having the same problems they've always had— The problem of getting good films. I usually go to the Peter Owens Awards because Peter was personally a very close friend of mine. But I don't know. They seem to be thriving. I guess maybe because I just have so many other irons in the fire that it's really hard for me to say what goes on because I don't have the opportunity to attend that many events. No way would I knock what they're doing. I think they're doing what they see as best. They've got a good board of directors. But it doesn't have—particularly on the tribute side—it doesn't have the depth that we had. You look back and we had four, five, six people every year, and they were stars, and they were proven stars in their own right. And that's just hard to do right now, I believe.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well the nature of the business has changed, too.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Exactly. So they've changed with it, as probably they've had to.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And of course there was only one Albert Johnson.

CLAUDE JARMAN: There was only one Albert. And I think we went through most of those people. I don't know who else, particularly people who have legendary resumes, but I don't know who's out there that we didn't have.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Elizabeth Taylor, maybe.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Elizabeth Taylor.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But not many others.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. I can't think of anyone at this point.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: [You had] **Hollywood on Trial** about blacklisting, and you had a forum with various blacklisted—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Could you talk about that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, we were fortunate in that several of the people who were blacklisted lived in the Bay Area, and we were able to get them there. It was a most interesting, provocative session that people were very, very interested in.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who were the people from the Bay Area, and what were they doing at that point?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, Alvah Bessie was one.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Lester Cole, I believe.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Lester Cole, too.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Were they working at all?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Alvah Bessie was writing. I don't think he was doing anything at that time, but he was pretty famous here in San Francisco. So it was just a good, different variety.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How did those people react to what had happened to them? How did they share that with the audience?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well I think they were pretty proud of what they did. I don't think they had any regrets. They were obviously a little bitter that it did harm their careers, and they had to go underground in order to do anything. It was Dalton Trumbo who worked under another name. There was no question it hurt their careers. They talked about that, but still they felt they had made the right decision.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Do you remember any of that, or were you too young, from when you were in Hollywood?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't remember any of it, I sure don't.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Something unique that happened at this Festival was the Directors Conference—the conference of directors of various film festivals.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, right.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Could you talk a little about how that came about?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I had always wanted to do something like that. I just felt that we all had a lot in common. I thought it gave more stature to San Francisco than had been here. And it did increase the awareness of San Francisco from the dialogue that we had with the other festivals. They loved San Francisco. We had a lot of activities. We had a couple of people that had a big yacht, and we took them out on an afternoon tour around the Bay, and we really sort of turned on the schmoozing with them. It

paved the way. When we would go to Cannes, there was no question we had much more entrée than we would have had, because we had the director here and we had established a good relationship.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you get any ideas from them about operating a festival, or they from you, that you were able to incorporate?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not really, because it was so different. I mean, Cannes was just such a different animal. New York was more like what we do. We all had the same issues. In Cannes, you didn't have to raise any money. It was all supported by the government. So money was not an issue. Money was always an issue with the festivals in this country. But it was interesting to get their thoughts. I think it really elevated the stature of our Festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you keep up the dialogue?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Definitely. I went to Cannes and I spent a lot of time with the director, and we were always invited to lots of different activities. I never went to the New York Festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Really?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, because we were always, at that point, really deep in preparation for our event, because it was always two weeks afterwards. So I never went there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was there any rivalry—for example, with New York, and later, Los Angeles?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think Los Angeles, but I don't think there ever was with New York. I mean, there was the fact that we came after their event, we didn't say, "Give us a film, and don't give it to New York." And they never said, "Give it to us, but don't give it to San Francisco." That was never an issue. And of course Cannes was always in May, and that was kind of the kickoff. From there, we sort of fell in line. I never understood exactly why San Francisco changed that pattern.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You mean, of when to have it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, why it moved to April. I've never understood that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well somebody else probably does understand.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, I don't know. Maybe you can find out. I'm always interested as to why it comes before the Cannes Festival, because a lot of films, if they're going to Cannes, they're not going to show in San Francisco before they go.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You alluded to the fact that maybe there was some sort of rivalry with the Los Angeles Film Festival.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Because they were starting out, and they usually finished right after ours. And Filmex—I think they considered us a rival more than we considered them a rival. Gary Essert, who was the director, was always up at the Festival. And we gave him carte blanche and didn't try to say, "Don't do this, don't do that," but then he never said, "Give us the film and don't give it to San Francisco,"—I think they were trying to build their event, but we already had our event, so I think they were working a little harder to create a rivalry. But we never considered them a big rival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Let's move on to 1977. The Opening Night film, **Bobby Deerfield**: How was that, and how did you end up using that film? There was a problem with the film you originally had, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We originally had? I don't remember.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The new Lina Wertmüller, **Night Full of Rain**.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Was that going to be our Opening Night?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And it fell through at the last minute.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It may just have been the distributor; it might have fallen through. Did we show it at all?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I don't think that year. Maybe it wasn't ready, because she was a big favorite here in San Francisco.

CLAUDE JARMAN: She certainly was. There again, we were trying to get an English-speaking film. I thought it was an OK film. It wasn't a great film. I think it was well received because of Al Pacino.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: It's kind of downbeat for an Opening Night film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, it was. But we had Sidney Pollack here. And he was a very well received director.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You mentioned some of the great films, the films that went over really well on Opening Night, like **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum**. What was the worst Opening Night film during the years you were with the Festival?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think the best received film we had was **The Secret of Santa Vittoria**—it was funny, it was fun—and **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum**. Probably those two were the best received.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Crowd pleasers.

CLAUDE JARMAN: I'd have to go back and look through these things.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OK. I think you said **The Sergeant** wasn't very well received, and **How I Won the War** was not well received.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Correct, but at least that was a more provocative film. **The Sergeant** was not a good film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now this was the first year that you went to the Castro as well as the Palace. What brought that about?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We just felt that it would get more out into the community. We had a hard time selling the distributors that we wanted to show the film twice, because they felt that we were taking box office away from them. But we were able to convince them that it showed more exposure to the film. It also increased our revenue, our box office. We didn't feel like we lost our audience; we gained audience. One didn't cannibalize the other.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So every film that was shown at the Castro had been shown before at the Palace?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Correct.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That didn't go on that way, did it? I mean, you did have some premieres at the Castro?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We did. We had some that we switched over. But if you look at most the films, we would show like Friday at 7:00 at the Palace, and then Saturday, the next day, at 7:00.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And did you have two Opening Nights?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. We only had one Opening Night.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Why did you decide to go back—actually, that year you had Opening Night at the Masonic again.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We were interested in just doing a change, being back up on the hill. We were able to get back into the Masonic. And it was just different.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was some confusion among Castro audiences who were used to the Castro double bills, wasn't there, about admission prices?

CLAUDE JARMAN: How do you mean?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That they didn't realize that they had to pay for each individual film, and they weren't going to get a double bill, or something like that.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, I don't know. But they obviously are gonna have to. (LAUGHS) Let's see—that was the year we had Mel Brooks.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was he on the whole time?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, he was. He came up to me and said, "I get ten percent of the house." Very funny guy. He's just a very funny man.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So it was just kind of like a standup routine the whole—

CLAUDE JARMAN: The whole time. That's just the way he is. In fact, I saw him when I was backstage at the Academy Awards. He was with Anne Bancroft. And we were laughing about the movie **To Be or Not to Be**—Did you ever see that movie?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, that was funny.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We were just laughing at that, the scene when he was onstage and Anne Bancroft was having an affair with this soldier, and midway through it, he'd get up and go—(LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah. That was quite a tribute, too, to one of his favorite films, the original Lubitsch film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: And the film **Don's Party**. That caught so much heat. Of course we wanted to show that film, and the critics hated it. They just thought, oh, not a really good film. It was Bruce Beresford's first film. And he came to the Festival. It was his first film that was shown in this country. And of course he went on to become a very, very top director. So we were very proud of the fact that we stuck to our guns. It was a pretty interesting movie.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I saw it.

CLAUDE JARMAN: It got bad reviews. And I don't know—It was just funny that he turned out to be a very successful director.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How did he feel about the reception the film got?

CLAUDE JARMAN: He didn't care. He was fine. He moved on to New York. He knew he was going somewhere. Lauren Bacall, she was great, too.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Had she written her book then? Was that why she was—

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, I don't think so.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who was doing the interviews at this point, do you remember?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think Mark Chase was doing the interviews.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And who else did you have? Claude Lelouch?

CLAUDE JARMAN: We did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, you were hoping to get **1900** as a Closing Night film.

CLAUDE JARMAN: That was United Artists. They were reluctant to show the film, at least in a festival. Films that were going to be big box office potential, the distributors were always concerned about getting a bad review before a film came out. They liked to control the release of the film. And if it was a big film—well, you see that in all these festivals; they're very reluctant to expose themselves to that, because a bad review can really hurt you, no question.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now the Festival asks to hold reviews of certain films that haven't been released yet.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, the films we wanted, I don't think the critics would have done that. I think they just felt, "Hey, we're not going to go along with that." I'm surprised if they did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This year, the critics complained that there were seven French films, but none from Latin America or Africa, and few from Asia. How do you respond to that kind of—

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think that this was just the height of the French film industry. The best films were coming out of France, and we tried to show the best films. There weren't that many films coming out of Senegal or India, for example. If we only were going to show 20 films—not like they do today, where they show 100 films—we tried to show the best films that we could find. And the French were making them. Between Louis Malle and Chabrol and Godard, Truffaut—I mean, what am I missing here? (LAUGHS)

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This was the year that you were hoping you would finally get Katharine Hepburn. What were your efforts in that regard?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, I think we just tried and finally gave up. She was too reclusive— I think she was probably afraid we were going to ask her about Spencer Tracy.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Which was not yet public knowledge.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, it was. I'm sure it would have come up, and I think she just didn't want to do that. And we respected that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The New Directors Forum was dropped in '77. Why was that?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I can't tell you, other than that we just hadn't researched enough to find enough new directors. And every other night, we were going to the Castro and just decided not to do it that year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And you had fewer retros, also—four.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had four?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: If it was four, it meant we couldn't get other people that we wanted. I'm sure if we had been able to get someone, we would have added to it, but if we only had four, we wanted the best.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was it also a financial issue?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, not at all.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Again this year, 15 U.S. premieres, ten of them by directors whose work had never been seen before in the U.S. In your wrap-up press conference you said that this was probably the most difficult year. What was the reason for that? Was it the locations, the logistics, adding the Castro?

CLAUDE JARMAN: They were all difficult. (LAUGHS) They all had their own challenges, let's put it that way.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The box office was up, thanks to adding the Castro, but you still had a deficit, right?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Correct. As I mentioned, we always had a deficit.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS) You made sure you did.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, we always said we had one. We didn't want to get into that situation again.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who were some of the staff people involved at this point? Was it still pretty much the same team?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yeah. This was '77? We had George Gund, we had Lorena Cantrell, Mark Chase, Marty Rubin, and Frances Moffatt did all our activities. And she was great, she really was. She was a no-nonsense person, because she was the Society writer at the *Chronicle* for a long time. But she had a very sharp tongue. You'd call her on the phone—she was almost like a newspaper person still. She'd ask you a question and you'd give the answer, and she wouldn't say thank you or whatever; she'd just hang up. (LAUGHS) You'd say, "Where's Frances?" "She's gone." Oh, she was great.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So anything else stand out for you about 1977?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Let's see.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Claude Lelouch also had a tribute.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes. We used to laugh because Lelouch would make so many films, they'd call it "Lelouch du jour." That's what the critics would say.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: (LAUGHS) OK. Let's go on to '78. Money problems—the papers said there was a 50 percent budget reduction in the wake of Prop. 13. What did Prop. 13 have to do with it?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Maybe the city cut us back a little bit. But, it should not have affected our regular sales. I don't know. The Hotel Tax Fund and Wells Fargo. The sponsors were good—Mark Hopkins, Quinn Martin. Some of the same group.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You did raise prices on Opening Night. That was one way that you dealt with it. Any other ways that you tried to make up the money that was lost?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well, we still had the Palace of Fine Arts and the Castro, so were still doing pretty well. Did we say we lost a lot of money that year?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Just that your budget was cut. [You used the Pacific Film Archive] for New Cinema of Eastern Europe. This was a series of daytime programs. Why did you decide to add PFA?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think we were still trying to broaden our horizons somewhat, at the Castro and then the East Bay. We probably had plenty of films that year that we weren't going to be able to show at the Palace, so we tried to move them around, and it worked. We had some good films that year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The press reports refer to a strained history with the Pacific Film Archive and the Festival. What was that all about?

CLAUDE JARMAN: That was primarily because of the relationship they had with Albert. Tom Luddy and Albert were very close. So I think that was pretty much what the situation was there. But I always got along with Tom Luddy, so I never had a real problem with him.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Opening Night was **Who's Killing the Great Chefs of Europe?**

CLAUDE JARMAN: That was kind of a fun film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Robert Morley was here for that.

CLAUDE JARMAN: OK.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He was quite a character, wasn't he?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, he was.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: OJ Simpson was here Opening Night.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, this was the first year that you had a Castro Opening Night, a second Opening Night—kind of a “people's” Opening Night.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had Yves Montand.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes.

CLAUDE JARMAN: At the Castro. It was a big crowd, a big crowd. He was very well received. He just had a great time, just loved being around.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he come alone, or with Simone Signoret?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, he came alone.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: One of the people you wanted for a tribute—and it was very disappointing—was Buñuel, because you did have the tribute, but there was—

CLAUDE JARMAN: I don't think he ever went to the Festival, if I can recall. But he would have been great. We went ahead with his films anyway.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But you had hoped to get him, and there was some possibility that you would?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes, because the word in Europe was, go to San Francisco, that it was a great place to go, so said Truffaut and all the people who came here, and the reception they received. Plus, in Europe, San Francisco is a very desirable city to visit. We were very open with them, gave them a lot of time to come and stay and enjoy. It was good.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Chabrol was here that year, too.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes and Montand. We really went through the French, didn't we? Who'd we miss?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Not many.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not many.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Signoret, maybe.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Or did she have a tribute? I'm trying to remember.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, we never had one.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What were the hits and the bombs and the controversial films of that year, do you remember?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Let me look. [GLANCES AT 1978 PROGRAM GUIDE]

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was an Ettore Scola film called **Ugly, Dirty and Bad** that was quite controversial, I believe.

CLAUDE JARMAN: [REFERENCING PROGRAM GUIDE] **Rockers** screened? I don't remember that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, that was the first Jamaican film in the Festival. OK, let's go to your final year, which was '79. You had decided that it would be your last year, and you had announced it before the Festival. What led you to that decision?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well at that point I had an opportunity to go to work for Shaklee Corporation full time. And I said I would do that after the Festival ended. That was a full time position. And I didn't want to become an old film festival director. I just thought there would be more to life than doing that. And the time to get out was then. We brought Albert back. I felt, well, if I'm going to leave, how can we best keep it going in the same manner as it was before? And between Tom Luddy, and then there was Peter Buchanan, who was also tied in with Tom—I told Peter, “This is going to be my last year. If you guys want to come in and take it over, I'm going to leave you with no deficit. You're not going to owe any money to anybody. And you're on your own. Don't come back to me, and I don't want to read in the press that I left you owing money. You are not going to owe anybody any money.” And it was true. I mean, I said, “I'll be sure every bill is paid. When the Festival ends, good luck. And I don't want to read that you lost money because I left it in bad shape; it will not be in bad shape.” And it wasn't. I was very pleased that I was able to do that. I had determined that that last year, if there was anything I was going to do, I was going to get Alec Guinness. And finally—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Had you tried before?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, yes. We had tried before. And I was in London, and—I think it was May—coming back from Cannes. Somehow I got his address, and I wrote him a letter. Maybe it was even through his agent. And in the hotel in London, I got a phone call, and it was from him. He said, “I'd be happy to talk to you about this.” So we had lunch, and he said, “I'll do it.” I said, “OK, we got our Opening Night.” When he came, and he got off the plane, he said, “You almost lost me, because I've

really been sick.” It wasn’t like Shelley Winters’ “Oh, what am I gonna do?” He said, “I was determined to come here.” And I was thinking, “Thank God!” (LAUGHS) I mean, what are we going to do Opening Night without him? He was just a remarkable man. It was very interesting, because he was a very shy man. Because he’s a great stage actor, I thought, well, he can get up and talk to anyone. We had a lunch for him somewhere—I forget where it was—and he got up and he was just very unassuming, not theatrical at all. But he was very appreciative, and he brought his wife with him He was everything I wanted him to be, which was great. And he came on Monday, and he was ready to go, which really, he deserved what we did, which was to do an Opening Night for him.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was that risky?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think it was. It was different. But I mean, for someone like that— If it had been someone not as prestigious, it might have been, but how could you not want to have him? So, it was great. Of course, Albert’s back here now, and we’re doing Mary Pickford. (LAUGHS) Here we go again!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was there any residual bitterness with Albert?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Not really. I never had any bitterness toward Albert. I always respected Albert. I could handle his eccentric behavior. He was a prima donna. George Gund used to laugh because he said we’d be in Prague and he was at the airport, and Albert was demanding his car: “Where’s my car?” (LAUGHS) And here was George; he was getting a cab. We didn’t care. But we would just laugh about stuff like that. He was quite a character. I miss him. I was shocked when he died, absolutely shocked, because I just never even thought of him not being in good health or whatever, because I never thought of him as being a drinker or smoking; he was in pretty good health. I was just totally blown away when I read that he had passed away.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was he happy to be back at the Festival?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, of course. He was like in seventh heaven.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You kind of laughed and rolled your eyes when you said, “Here we go again with the Mary Pickford.” What was that about?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, I don’t know. It just was probably one of those five-hour tributes again. You couldn’t control that. There was just no way.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: She was already dead by then, wasn’t she?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Yes.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So what was the program?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Her husband was there, Buddy Rogers, so he was there to talk about her.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was it difficult to get permission to do this, to get the cooperation of the estate?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No. I think he controlled it. We invited him, and bring the films, so, from an historical point of view, it was a very, very interesting afternoon.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You mentioned Bertolucci. That was quite an interesting tribute. He got into it with Judy Stone.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Oh, really? I don’t remember.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He called her a stupid woman, or— I can’t remember, something. “You’re a stupid critic.” And she stood up and she said, “I’m that stupid woman at the **Chronicle**.” She was in the audience. (LAUGHS)

CLAUDE JARMAN: That’s funny.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But I guess he didn't like being criticized.

CLAUDE JARMAN: No, he probably didn't.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You also had the first time a Cuban director attended, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea. Was that difficult, to get permission for him to come out of Cuba to do this?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I'm not sure whether he had come to New York also, maybe. What was the film that he had the year before? **One Night in Hong Kong**, or something.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I don't know.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Anyway, it was a film by a publicist, Pierre Rissien, who used to come to the Festival all the time. He had this film that he had made, and he was determined to get it in the Festival. We knew it was just going to be badly, badly received. So we said, "Pierre, we're going to show the film"—back to Merle Oberon again—and we showed the film, and I think even the critics said, "The only way this film got in was because the guy had built up so much good will with the Festival that they had to let it in." (LAUGHS) And Pierre was probably the best publicist at Cannes every year. He would take films and—he represented Clint Eastwood, and Eastwood had a film in Cannes—and he was coming to the Festival every year, and paying his own way. And we showed that film, and it was a no win for everyone.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: In your years, what do you think was the worst or most badly received or biggest disaster of a film?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Well that incident is probably in the top two or three. **Incubus** in Esperanto. That was a joke. (LAUGHS) It was like, "Why are we doing this?"

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There was one by Paul Kohner's son, Pancho Kohner, too, that I think was kind of—

CLAUDE JARMAN: Was that an afternoon film?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, maybe it was. I think it was featured in the New Directors series or something like that. But the critics were spewing about that one.

CLAUDE JARMAN: We had quite a few films that would not qualify.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, that's what makes a festival.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Exactly. OK. The next year Peter Buchanan, Mel Novikoff and Tom Luddy took over.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you keep going to the Festival after this?

CLAUDE JARMAN: No.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The films in your last year, there was a good mix, a good balance between commercial and those that were interesting and maybe a little bit different. What did you think of your final year overall?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I was very pleased. We had a film from Cameroon. At that point, we were really able to have a variety of countries involved—Japan, Germany, Switzerland, France, Canada. I mean, if you look at it, it wasn't all French. So I was very pleased to do it and to walk away from it feeling that it had been an exciting time. I think when you look back at the history of the Festival, those years were the best, as far as getting people and—I think I'm repeating myself—you really didn't have as much competition as you have now. There wasn't Mill Valley and there wasn't Telluride; there was Chicago, but there wasn't Ann Arbor. It got to be so much that a lot of people—like the tributes—just said, “I don't want to deal with this.” So it's much more competitive now. We were very fortunate that it wasn't that competitive. We had our niche, and we had a good reputation. We took care of people, and we treated them with respect; we treated their films with respect. We never threw them into an event where there were like a hundred films. The film that we took, we nurtured so that it was going to get good

exposure and get a good response. And that's about all we did. We had press screenings for a lot of the films. I think that made the press feel a lot better. It was more professional to do that, rather than say, "Well, if you want to see the film, just go see it." A lot of the films, we were able to prescreen so that they could pick and choose what they wanted to do. It didn't wear them out, and they didn't say, "Well I'm missing this, or I missed that." We had a good pattern, and the pattern seemed to work for us and it seemed to work for everyone else. Going through these things, it brings back a lot of memories, a lot of people. It was kind of a golden age of the film festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: It was also a golden age of films.

CLAUDE JARMAN: Exactly, because after we took over from Bud Levin, it really took off; it took a few years, but then the event really took off. And when I left it was a pretty flourishing event.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What are you proudest of? What do you think you accomplished?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think what I accomplished was being a part of something that added a whole new dimension to the city. There was the opera, the symphony and the ballet, but film became an integral part of the city. The Festival really became a part of the cultural life of the city. And I think it helped San Francisco's reputation abroad. It certainly enhanced the city as a vibrant community for film and opera and symphony, and we just added another dimension to it. I don't think we set out to achieve that, but I think when you sit back and look at it and reflect, I think that you see that that's what it did achieve.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think you're right. What was your most memorable Festival experience?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I think the pie throwing at the Masonic—I still laugh about that. I mean, we got blindsided by that—we didn't see that coming. We didn't see that coming. And it certainly put the Festival on the front page.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: In a lot of places, not just the Bay Area. (LAUGHS)

CLAUDE JARMAN: (LAUGHS) It really put it on the front page! There are the pictures of Captain Scott, who later became the police chief, and he had pie all over him. And he said, “How could they miss me? I’m a big, slow-moving target.” (LAUGHS) And seeing the guy from United Artists shaking his head and saying, “Boy, you really know how to do it, don’t you?” He was just aghast. We all were just like, “What in the world is going on?” It was surreal. It was a very surreal moment.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Other than Alec Guinness, who do you think was the best Festival guest?

CLAUDE JARMAN: Jeanne Moreau, absolutely, because she just embraced the city and the whole idea. She didn’t come in, leave the next day; she hung around and just had a ball. She was just great. I thought she was terrific. Then I thought the afternoon with Jane Fonda was pretty electric, because she could give it as good as she could get it. So, that was a very interesting one. Antonioni was another weird thing, because he had the reputation. I don’t know. I think the real sadness I have is the fact that we used some of the great people first before it became a real event. I mean, having John Ford at the Masonic with 300 people was almost a travesty. He should have been five years later, and it would have been a much different event. We had to go out and scrounge people to come in so it would look like a representative audience in a theater that seats 3000 people. It was tough. And yet, those were just great moments—doing the Fred Astaire tribute with Albert dancing with him on the stage was something we’ll always remember. It’s hard to pick any one event. Each year, there was always something that would totally overwhelm us.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who was the worst guest, the biggest disappointment or the most demanding, or—

CLAUDE JARMAN: We never had any problems with anyone that we honored. It was just if they had someone representing them, that was always a problem. I remember we had one situation with Rita Hayworth where the guy she brought along was her publicist or her hairdresser or something, and he was demanding her rinsing tray. And I’m thinking, “What is a rin—? What are we—?” And someone on the staff had said, “No, we can’t do that,” and he was just raising hell. Finally I said, “How much does a rinsing tray cost?” He said, “Fifty bucks.” “Go buy the rinsing tray. Just quit it! Go do it!”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What, to rinse her hair?

CLAUDE JARMAN: I guess. I still don't know what a rinsing tray is, but the guy went out in the Mission somewhere. It was like it became a big cause célèbre for two days. Finally I said, "Go get it." But I cannot recall ever having a problem. Everyone, to me, was very honored to be a part of this and to see himself or herself on the screen, and to have an audience that obviously loved them. I thought the two people who were not appreciated, who I always regretted, were Clint Eastwood—who I thought got a bum rap—and Peckinpah. It was because of the times, when people were really against anything to do with violence. Lorena ended up doing the interview with Sam Peckinpah, because no one wanted to do it. He represented a certain part of the film industry that was a pretty vibrant part of the industry, and he had a lot to say. He was a very talented guy. But I don't think he was ever appreciated as much as perhaps he should have been.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What were the biggest challenges you faced in your years at the Festival?

CLAUDE JARMAN: The biggest challenge we faced was the transition from the Chamber of Commerce to the group that Mayor Alioto had put together, because there we had a totally different financial base. We didn't have the Chamber underwriting it, and it was uncertain as to how this was going to come about. I didn't know Ray Syufy. I had met him, but I didn't know him that well. I grew to really love the guy. We became very close friends. I was one of the pallbearers at his funeral about fifteen years ago. But at the outset, who am I dealing with? He didn't know me and I didn't know him. So, I think that was a challenge. I think that if it wasn't for George Gund, I don't know if the Film Festival would have survived. It was his support, his financial support, his believing in the Festival and putting his own money into it, it was extremely critical. And I don't know what's going on today, but I have a feeling George is in there somewhere.