

San Francisco Film Society

Oral History Project

Interview with Jeannette Etheredge and Jeannette Shaheen

Conducted by Sheila Cadigan

With Miguel Pendás and Pamela Gentile

Tosca Café, San Francisco, CA

October 14, 2006

SHEILA CADIGAN: This is Sheila Cadigan. The date is October 14, 2006. I am privileged today to be conducting an oral history interview with the two Jeannettes—Jeannette Etheredge and Jeannette Shaheen. In the famous Tosca Restaurant—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No. It's called Tosca Cafe, but it's not a cafe, it's a bar.

SHEILA CADIGAN: No coffee, except with booze in it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, there's coffee. Those are espresso machines.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Not too many people drink just coffee in Tosca.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It's in the North Beach neighborhood of San Francisco. This project is for the San Francisco International Film Festival, 50th Anniversary oral history project. Sitting with the three of us is Miguel Pendás, Creative Director of the San Francisco Film Society. First, I just want to ask you both a few questions about your family backgrounds. Why don't we start with you, Jeannette Shaheen. Where were you born and raised?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Flint, Michigan.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What did your family do?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: My father worked within management for General Motors.

SHEILA CADIGAN: And your mom?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: My mom was a stay-at-home mom, a housewife.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Did you have a big family?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, Christ! Does she have a big family!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Four sisters. There were five girls. No boys. Lebanese American.

SHEILA CADIGAN: How did you end up in the Bay Area?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Two of my sisters lived here, and I used to come and visit them. I loved the Bay Area. It obviously had a lot more to offer than Flint and I was ready to move on, so I moved out here in '81.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Were the arts, or going to film, a significant part of your family routine or your own routine? Growing up, were you interested in film?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We watched a lot of movies on TV. In those days, in the afternoons after school there were always special movies on, old movies. We'd go to the theater a lot to watch movies. I especially loved old musicals. My sister was in musical theater, and my parents loved music. So, yeah, it was a big part. I didn't have a vast knowledge of it, but I really enjoyed it, especially old musicals. But I didn't have much of a sense of foreign films.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Your family background is Lebanese. Was that your parents? First generation? Second generation?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: My parents were first generation. So all the grandparents are from Lebanon.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Were there films from the Middle East? Was that part of your background?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No.

SHEILA CADIGAN: There probably weren't a lot coming around.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No, not at all. And really, most of it was just watching movies on TV at the time or going to the movie theater.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What did you want to be when you grew up?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: You know, I never knew. I really just kind of went with the flow. I was not very focused or driven. I was one of the only girls in the family that wasn't. I didn't go to college.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You certainly are now!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I wanted to travel. So I really didn't have a big focus, and I just kind of landed different places, and it's continued through my whole life. I've just had really great experiences, the Festival being one of them.

SHEILA CADIGAN: How did you get your first job at the Festival?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I saw an ad in the paper. I was working in a law firm at the time and I saw an ad in the paper for volunteers needed. I'd actually attended a festival screening too, maybe the year before, and I thought, "That would be really fun. Meet new people. Be involved in the film community." So I think I volunteered for one thing and then I had an accident on my motor scooter and had to cancel the rest of my slotted schedule. So then I happened to get a card probably four months later from their office. They had a big mailing and they were probably really desperate trying to find people to help on a weekend to do a mailing, so I thought, "Sure, I'll go."

It was at the home of someone involved in the Festival—I can't remember who—and we were sitting there just talking and chatting, stuffing envelopes, and somebody said, "Did you find a secretary?" They said, "No, we're still looking." I was really kind of shy, I didn't know anybody, and I said, "Oh, what are you looking for?" They said, "We're looking for somebody to come and work in the office, I guess a secretary, and help us with administrative duties." I said, "I'd really be interested. Can I give my résumé to somebody?" So that's how it started. They were looking for somebody part-time and I obviously needed a full-time job, but I made arrangements with the law firm I was at to be able to work there part-time and work at the Festival part-time.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Who was your boss when you first started?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Shelley Alexander. She was the executive director at the time. Peter Scarlet was head of programming. There was a woman, Pat Marshall, who was in administration—she was kind of in sponsorship, parties. At the time, people wore a lot of hats. Shelley was my main boss and then Pat after her.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: What year?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was in '85.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Sounds like you were progressively promoted through the years.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes. I mean, very quickly thereafter they realized they really needed somebody full-time.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Was that the office—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: On California Street.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No kidding!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, in Laurel Village.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: When did we move to Geary and Fillmore?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's a very good question. Maybe a year or so later. Because Shelley left very, very quickly. They were having some special programming at the time. I remember I was there for that. She was there for that. And then she left shortly thereafter, and I think she moved to Los Angeles. Linda Cohen was on the board.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: There was no director, so they put her.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She was really involved, and I think really wanted to do it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, Linda Cohen was from KQED. And so she knew. She had a background.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She had a background, yes. So she became the executive director and she was the director for the first film Festival, which was in '86—mine. And hers. I just don't remember when we moved to Fillmore, and obviously I had to play a big part in that, in getting that space together.

SHEILA CADIGAN: The early '80s were a period of turmoil for the Festival—the hiccup that missed a year. It switched from fall to the spring. They had financial problems. But then, coming into the '80s—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was when I was there.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: [LAUGHS] We were just talking about that. When you first started, they were in huge, huge trouble.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But you were part of the reconstituting of the Festival management team and so forth?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes. There was a big rebuilding that had to happen at that time, when Linda came on and we started trying to build up the membership, and shortly after that time we became the Film Society. I'd have to check the dates on that, but I know it was very shortly thereafter, maybe the next year. We really needed an umbrella organization because it was much easier to have fundraising throughout the year and not just be so concentrated on the Festival. Even though that was the main event we were producing, we still needed to be more of a year-round organization, and to do that you really needed a title that would be recognized as such. I think they kind of used New York as a bit of a model for that, with the Film Society of Lincoln Center putting on the New York Film Festival and having a membership and having year-round activities. It was just a better marketing tool.

SHEILA CADIGAN: They'd started some of that in '81, '82. They'd founded and named the Film Society in '81 but then missed a year. I saw a mailing from Saul Zaentz—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And it said "Film Society"?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Yes.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I thought it started later, but maybe not.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: When did you say it was?

SHEILA CADIGAN: It was 1981-82.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, it was later.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Patricia De Larios is the most recent oral history, and she was involved in the beginnings of when it was named the Film Society, and they did mailings.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Maybe we officially and legally became the Film Society when Linda came on board, and that they were using that name. You had to go through a big legal process to become a nonprofit and to have your 501 status for nonprofit. So maybe that's how it happened. They started that process, and then it really became official right after that, in '86 or something.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So in '86, '87 you're moving into full-time.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I moved into full-time after a few months. When Linda started, I started full-time.

SHEILA CADIGAN: You were an operations person?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, I mean, I wasn't as involved in the operations at that time. The structure was not as solid. We just gradually became more and more solid as the years went on. Like I said, everybody wore a lot of hats, basically. Taking care of membership, but in the sense

of processing memberships. I wasn't really made a part of "How do we build on this membership?" right away. That came maybe six months later. So it was really a lot of administrative things that I was doing. Kind of secretarial, office management, things like that. And at the same time, because you're a skeletal staff, you're a nonprofit, you fill in wherever. If you need to work the door at a party, you work the door at a party. If you need to manage an RSVP list, you manage an RSVP list. There was no complete structure to someone's duties, in that way. Especially mine.

SHEILA CADIGAN: To enable the logistics of pulling all these people into the city and holding all these events. It must have been overwhelming for that skeletal staff. Do you have memories of that?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes, it was, but that first Festival really is a little bit of a blur to me. It was overwhelming. I didn't know what to expect. We were trying to find our footing. We had a new director. Trying to just have a successful festival and we had a lot of people that we brought in to help during that festival, because you've got your core staff through the year, but what really puts it all together is the people you hire freelance to come in and get you through that festival and take care of all the other parts of producing it. And the volunteers and such. So I didn't have such a big role. It really grew for me more after that festival.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: How many full-time people were there at that time?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: There was Peter, Laura, Pat, myself, Linda. I want to say maybe five, because I think even at the time Stephen Horowitz was doing the Golden Gate Awards, and I don't think he was full-time when that was over. I think he would come in periodically but I don't think he was really considered full-time. So there were maybe four or five.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Jeannette, why don't we pull you in. Why don't we talk about your family background. You were born here?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, God!

SHEILA CADIGAN: You were born here in San Francisco?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: In China.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In China?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. So that's why it's too complicated. I came here when I was nine years old—eight or nine—and grew up here. What do you want to know?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Your family was Armenian? They left Armenia during the last war?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No. My grandparents. During the Turkish Massacre, I don't know if you're allowed to say that?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But it's the truth, and it's history.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Not according to the Turks it isn't.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I don't think anybody's going to check. Where were your parents born?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: My parents were born in Manchuria.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Of Armenian parents.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes

SHEILA CADIGAN: They migrated there.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. And then my grandparents came here right after the war, and then my father and mother stayed. They didn't come out to the States until '52. They came out when the Communists threw us out of China.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What are your early memories of China?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Not a helluva lot.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What was your first language?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: My first language was Russian. Chinese. Japanese. And then I learned to speak English when I was, I guess, about eight.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Here in the U.S.?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. We came here. My grandparents had already come. They'd come to San Francisco, so that's why we came here, and I grew up here. And now I speak English.

SHEILA CADIGAN: There's a large Armenian community where I live in the Sunset.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah. Well, there are all those churches out there. My mother had a restaurant, a pretty terrific restaurant.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: What was it called?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was called Bali's because our last name was Valiance, before I got married to Etheredge. So, she had a restaurant and it was kind of like the Russian Tearoom in New York. Do you know it?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Hmmm.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And she had a lot of artists and people like that coming to her restaurant. I remember meeting George Gund at the restaurant. He had brought two busloads of Georgian folk dancers who were performing in Berkeley. He brought them all to my mother's restaurant at, like, 11:30 at night, after they finished performing. I just remember everybody moving tables out so that after they finished eating, they could dance. My mother knew the Coppolas—they had come here to San Francisco—and a lot of those filmmakers—Phil Kaufman

and his wife, Tom Luddy and Monique. Everybody hung out at the restaurant. So that's how everyone knew each other.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Where was it?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: My mother's restaurant? First it was on Sansome Street, Sansome and Jackson. I remember my mother giving a dinner for Rouben Mamoulian and Sergei Bondarchuk at the restaurant—great photos. Dreamy, the way I look at it. Then she moved her restaurant. I guess it was early, no maybe it was mid-'70s, she moved the restaurant to Pacific and Battery. George had come to the other restaurant. And Francis. I remember my mother making a big suckling pig for Francis after **The Godfather**. Big celebration. Then she bought this building and moved the restaurant, and the parties continued. My mother gave great parties.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: When you say “this building,” you mean?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: The building at Pacific and Battery. When she got the building, my mother decided to have an opening party for this building and the restaurant, and so Rudolf Nureyev changed his schedule to be there for the opening of the restaurant. Francis and Ellie were there, and George Lucas; George was married to Marcia then. And the Kaufmans. I mean, it was just this incredible block party. And Devin and Peter were like this big and they were leaning over the roof of the building throwing rose petals down to everybody.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Tell us who Devin and Peter are.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Devin's my son and Peter's my nephew. Devin—cut to 30 years later, I go to the Film Festival, he's standing in the rush line, trying to buy a ticket, and I said, “Excuse me. Why didn't you tell me you wanted to see this film? I could have gotten you tickets.” From all those people, that's how I got pulled into the Film Festival. Because in those days, I guess, all those people were involved in the Festival. Albert Johnson was spending money like it was water.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In the '70s?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. See, I don't remember. I'm not really good on dates, so I'm very bad for who did what when.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Albert became involved in '65, playing a really big role, and worked through '73 and after that he left. He came back later, but he—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He came back later, but wasn't he always involved in it? I mean, he was the one that started the tributes.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: He went in and out of doing some tributes.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And then he would come back to do tributes.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yes. Occasional tributes.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He would interview filmmakers.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: But up through '73 he was playing a key role in programming the Festival as a whole, as well.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Right. But I wasn't on the board then. I went to things and I went to films and I went to parties.

SHEILA CADIGAN: You were a student here in San Francisco in the 1960s, right?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, I went to the Art Institute.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It was a very prestigious school at the time, so you must have formed a certain sensibility for the arts?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah. I always liked it. My major was art history. Well, actually I kind of went around to everything. Whatever class made me feel good.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It was very difficult to get in there in the '60s, though.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It's true. I loved it. One year, I was a sculpture major. One year, I was taking photography with Dorothea Lange. One semester, I was doing painting.

SHEILA CADIGAN: And in the evenings there was your mother's restaurant and the artists.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And my mother's restaurant and all these people hung out there.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Nureyev. Baryshnikov.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, Baryshnikov later. Nureyev defected in '63, and then Misha defected in '74. See, those dates I remember. Isn't that funny. Natasha defected in '70 and Sasha Godunov defected in '76. But those are the only dates I remember.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Were you interested in becoming an artist yourself in some way? A ballet dancer? A sculptor?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Are you kidding? No. Do you know how much discipline it takes? Christ! I mean, the same as painting. It's very solitary, and I'm not that kind of person.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But it seems the language of the arts sits easily in your mouth.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I grew up with it. My mother took us to the opera. She took us to the ballet. She exposed us to all of that. And also, having the restaurant with all these people, she just had this great way of putting people together. She'd have these parties, and one minute you'd be talking to a guy who was a busboy at a Chinese restaurant and the next you'd be talking to Jimmy Caan, who'd just finished doing **The Godfather**.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But you're the same way. You have that same knack of hooking people together.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, I got that from her.

SHEILA CADIGAN: There's actually a concept—it was in **The Tipping Point**, that book by Malcolm Gladwell. It's about how social trends become viral and how there are certain key people, whom he calls “connectors,” that everybody seems to know. They create this small—world mentality. Actually, there are very few people on this planet—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It's called six degrees.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Six degrees, exactly.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Then you are the capital.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know. I don't know how that happens. It's so weird.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Do you have a recollection, your first Film Festival impression? Did you go to a screening? Did you meet somebody who worked for the Festival? Somebody who'd been?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was George. It was Phil. Tom Luddy. You got to remember, that time was also very big because Eastern European films were not available and all that stuff was coming out of there. The Russians, you know, and the connection. My first, I guess, would be Bondarchuk.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: So we're talking early '70s here?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: When did you open Tosca?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I didn't open it. Tosca's been here for 90 years, almost. But Tosca was a place that everybody came to. People, when we were going to the Art Institute, would come here. I got proposed to in that booth. I told Etheredge I was going to have a kid in this booth. We also decided to get divorced in this bar. All of that before I had any idea I was going to own it. I bought this in 1980, and only because I was sitting here one night talking to the

owner and he told me he was going to retire and he was going to close the bar and tear it down. And I said, “Why are you doing that? Don’t you want to sell it?” And he said, “I won’t sell it to anybody because it’s been in my family.” His father had started this bar, and he didn’t want to sell it to anybody that was going to change it. So he just said, “I’m closing.”

I remember telling my mother that Tosca was going to close, and my mother said to me, “You should buy it.” And I said, “And do what with it?” She said, “It’ll be great,” because she had her restaurant and I think basically what she was trying to do for me was to give me my own identity. She said, “You should have something that is yours,” you know, and not associated with her and the restaurant. So I came back and I talked to Al, and I said, “Would you sell it to me if I wanted to buy it?” and he said he would because he knew my parents. Because, when I had told my mother that he was going to close, my mother said, “You have to buy it because it’s the first bar I came to when we came to America.”

And that’s the thing about this bar: It’s like a neighborhood bar, except the city is the neighborhood. Everybody hung out here. My brother and I used to hang out in front while my parents came in for the cappuccinos on Sunday night after we had dinner in North Beach. You know? So it’s the kind of place that everyone came to. I knew enough about the restaurant business from my mother. So I bought the bar. My mother likes to say that—because once in an interview I said that I was very proud of the fact that I was able to pay her back what I paid for this bar in two years. And I overheard my mother sitting at the bar one night talking to somebody, and she said, “She can never pay me back!” Such a typical mother thing, you know!

SHEILA CADIGAN: “Two days I was in labor with her and . . .!”

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Hmmm, yeah. “She can never pay me back.” The rest of my life to suffer! So I bought the bar. I remember the night that I’d taken over, it was in April and it was Francis Coppola’s birthday and it was also Jerry Brown’s birthday. Jerry Brown and Francis share the same birthday. We head off to Tommaso’s for dinner, because Francis loved going there because he used to make pizzas. So after dinner, I said, “Let’s all go to the Tosca!” And Francis said, “I can’t go to the Tosca—the guy doesn’t like me.” And I said, “Well, you know, it’s a special night. Let’s go. And try.” I didn’t tell anybody that I had bought the bar. So we come in, and somebody at the end says, “Congratulations.” I said, “Thank you,” and kept

walking. We get down here, somebody else says “Congratulations.” And Francis turned around and looked at me and said, “Why are they congratulating you? It’s my birthday.” I said, “You know, I have a surprise for you. You can come here any time you like. I bought the bar.” Well! He said, “How could you do a thing like that? I love this bar. We could’ve been partners.”

I think the thing was that Francis and the guy didn’t get along because the guy didn’t like the fact that Francis had made **The Godfather** and he was Italian, and there was all that anti-Italian Defamation League at the time. Remember? They didn’t like the way the Italians were portrayed in the film. So that’s why I said to him, “You can come here any time you like. Now I own the bar.” And it’s because of them—all of them—that the bar became a success.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Now, this is a few years later, right?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. When Peter Scarlet was already at the Festival, in the ’80s.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was when I started, but I don’t know how many years he was there.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: As far as I know, Peter first became involved in 1984.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Okay, well from that time. But before that, it was Phil Kaufman, it was Francis, it was Sam Shepard, Tom Luddy. All those people that turned people onto this bar.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Would you say that there was a transfer of people going to Bali’s and then coming over here?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: They did that too, yes. I don’t remember the year. Remember when Truffaut was honored? That was later.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was 1980, right?

SHEILA CADIGAN: It was ’80.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Okay, well, my mother had a dinner for them, for Deneuve and Truffaut. And then the screening was at the Palace of Fine Arts. Because I remember they had a huge fight, Truffaut and Deneuve. She cold-cocked him. George and I were standing backstage, and they got into some argument. It was in French so who the hell knows. I just remember them getting into this huge fight, and then two seconds later she was being introduced and she just turned right around and went on stage like nothing had happened. You know? And he was like rubbing his jaw.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I heard her purse spilled out all over the place.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah! Everything. It was just a big disaster. Then they came back here after, and I don't remember.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And wasn't Truffaut's daughter, Laura, with him?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I have no idea. I don't remember. I don't think so. She was going to school here, in Berkeley. So maybe she was, I don't know, it was just a lot of people.

SHEILA CADIGAN: The next year, 1981, was the year that the film that you were in was featured in the Festival.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It's called **She Dances Alone**. It was a docudrama on Nijinsky's daughter, Kira.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So you did have a stint as an actress.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Excuse me, what actress?

SHEILA CADIGAN: You were playing yourself?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, I'm always playing myself.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So it wasn't fictionalized? You were just interviewed?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You know what, I don't even remember. No, it wasn't an interview. It was, I don't know, they shot a scene in here and I was in here. That's it.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Your interest in Russian ballet must have somehow gotten into your involvement with the film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Actually, it was Rudolf who got me involved in that film because Rudolph was friends with the director and he was coming here to do this film on Kira Nijinsky, who happened to be living here. Kira was friends with my mother. I helped him get things working. That's when I met... what's his name, that cinematographer?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Néstor Almendros.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, I met Néstor with the Koko film, the gorilla, and Barbet.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Barbet Schroeder.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. That was quite something. That was before the Nijinsky film? Maybe it was after.

SHEILA CADIGAN: The Nijinsky film was in the Festival in '81. Was it in Russian?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, no, no. It was in English and it was Patrick Dupond playing Nijinsky. Patrick Dupond was a dancer with the Paris Ballet. Bud Cort was in it, and Kira. It was basically a documentary about this woman. You know, I don't remember the film. I just know that every time they needed a piece of equipment or a street to shoot on, I would be the one making the arrangements. Who was mayor then? It was after George Moscone. It was Dianne Feinstein. That's when Robin Eichmann came into the Film Commission Office.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But you went on the board in 1981.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I guess. Is that when they have me down for?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Yes, that's when they have you down for.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I was there earlier, but maybe it's because of all the involvement with everybody. Tom Luddy and Peter Buchanan at the time, and Mel Novikoff. I remember they were trying to figure out a way to raise money. There was a woman who worked for Ann Getty, and I asked her if she would come and organize the gala, and of course she rented the ballroom at the Fairmont and started this whole big thing. And then we had a bigger debt! It was just a disaster. Everything was a disaster in those days!

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Right after Claude Jarman left—Claude's last year was '79—and then in '80 and '81, there was just a lot of financial problems, a lot of improvising.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He walked away, basically, leaving them with this huge debt. I don't know if you can blame him, because at that time they were bringing in all these people, and putting them up and spending a lot of money. Then good old George Gund, you know, came to the rescue.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So you knew George Gund from your mother's restaurant?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh yeah, from before.

SHEILA CADIGAN: And he was interested in European film?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Eastern European, Iron Curtain filmmakers?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You interviewed him, right?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Not me.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Who did? Somebody did.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Margarita Landazuri interviewed him.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know who that is, but whoever told me said that George was just fantastic the way he remembered everything.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: He had some great stories.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He has some great stories, yes.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: He has an incredible mind for detail.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He does.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But he sort of rode to the rescue, financially?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I think, to the Festival, yes. And then just after that, every time there was a crisis, he stepped up to the plate.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What's the Gund family name's history? Is that Eastern Russian? Eastern European?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: They're German.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: It was in these years that Albert Johnson came back to the Festival. Do you have any personal recollections of working with him directly?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I loved him. He just made you so excited about seeing these films. I think that's kind of the purpose of the director: to excite you, to make you want to go to see these films that maybe you'll never see again.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He had a very large personality too.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Huge! Huge! And he loved it so much that it was just infectious. You just wanted to be a part of it. And when all this financial stuff was happening, I remember going to friends of mine who were wealthy and asking them to contribute to the Festival. I remember bringing him these checks that I had collected, and the next thing I know he's off to Cannes. I don't know if the money ever got recorded in the financials of the Festival, but I think Albert had a grand old time in Europe. But that's OK and maybe we shouldn't put that in there.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Albert in his diary wrote about his problems with the Festival extensively, and one of them was that he was not being recompensed for the money that he was spending when he was asked to travel and to go to Festivals and see things.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know. I think somehow he was. If anybody would know it would be Peter Buchanan, because Peter was there at that time trying to sort out the financials.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Those were difficult years—'80 and '81—and still they showed great films. But the financial position is what made people think they had to do something unusual because they didn't think they could have another Festival. So then they got into this deal with Filmex. There was no Festival in '82—Do you remember that?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. Oh, wait! Eighty-one, the opening was **Raggedy Man**. And it was at the Palace of Fine Arts. I'll never forget it. It was gloom and doom, this movie. And Sam was in it, Sam Shepard. They had decided that the party was going to be at the Palace of Fine Arts, right after the film. Well, the film ends, everybody's sitting there, balloons are coming down into the theater. Okay! The party's starting! And it was like, who wants to party? They'd just seen this movie, and it's like devastating, and now they're partying. I mean, it was like they couldn't get it right yet. You know? I mean, Opening Night—the film and party. It never worked. Was that the year that Spike Lee was there?

SHEILA CADIGAN: That was '86.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: OK that was later. George and I were backstage for that one too. And there was a blackout. Peter Scarlet and Spike Lee; it was his first film. Packed. And now

there's a blackout. Spike and Peter, with flashlights, came on stage and did standup for 45 minutes to keep the audience there.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: From what I heard, no one left.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No one left. I think one woman left, but she left before the blackout. I guess she was offended.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Back in those days we didn't have cell phones or anything like that. We were across town in the Mission at the Frieda film, which was packed—a thousand people. And we didn't hear until we all met up at the end of the night that there was a blackout.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, because it was in the Marina.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Here you're not communicating because there's no way to communicate. Somebody may have called the Mission theater to try and get in touch with us, but all this is going on. Well, that just wouldn't happen today. It's funny. We were also working off of one computer in those days. We all shared a computer.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So how would you characterize the '80s, let's say? There was this period of upheaval and then sort of a healing process began in the mid-'80s.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know. What does "healing process" mean?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Continuing festivals into the—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You know what? They'll always have Festivals, not because of the board and not because of the executive director and not because of the higher-ups. It's because the people who work there and the volunteers and the people all around are the people that keep that thing going. Because they're the ones who are passionate. And it's always going to happen, regardless of what goes on up top. Half the time, the board doesn't know shit about what's going on in the office. And it's the people who work there—the staff and the volunteers—that make that Festival. I don't care who the director is, or was. But it's true.

SHEILA CADIGAN: The San Francisco is the first North American festival. What do you think was distinctive about it in the '80s, '90s? The Iron Curtain was still in place at the time and was almost getting ready to fall. Your mom was speaking Russian. Jeannette told me that you were a resource for a lot of those people when they came—not necessarily voluntarily.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, my God! Everybody had some problem. There were always problems.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Were you an interpreter at times for the Russians?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: They had interpreters. I never got up in front of an audience and translated.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But you were the communicator outside of that stage with a lot of them. I distinctly remember one guy's mother-in-law needed a leg.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was a Bosnian guy. Remember, it was a hip replacement. I got him a hip replacement. I can't remember his name.

SHEILA CADIGAN: From Sarajevo. I read this article. They were saying a filmmaker from Sarajevo needed a hip replacement for his mother-in-law.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Herb Caen did a piece on it.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But you got it from your mother's surgeon or something?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, I called my mother's doctor and I said, "You've got to help me. I've got to get this hip replacement." How many sizes? What's the size?

SHEILA CADIGAN: He took it on the plane with him?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah. That's right, he took it with him. And then, who was it that couldn't get a visa coming out of Iran? Who was it? I remember making those phone calls, getting the visas. Oh yeah, it was always something.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Honestly, you were the most involved board member of anybody on that board. There were a couple of others that really—and this is not a bashing of the board, I think it's indicative of boards in general—there are some people you will never meet that sit on a board, some are more active than others. But Jeannette, for us, was a sense of real support. I mean, she would be in the office if we needed her to be in there. We could talk to her about things that we needed to get done. We could confide in her about things, because it's very difficult to put on an event like that, in a city like this, with very limited resources. It does happen on the backs of several people that are giving their life to it. Because they're passionate about it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I just loved all those people. I didn't have a problem doing anything for anybody.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Who were your favorite people on staff other than Jeannette at that time?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, gosh, all those people. Laura Thielen. Marie-Pierre Macia.

SHEILA CADIGAN: You knew us more because we were year-round. So we were spending time together the whole year. You didn't know the others as well.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Rachel Rosen. All those people. Miguel, I have to tell you that I loved the staff more than I loved the board, and I don't have a problem with that, at all. All through the years.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Well, they've all graduated to very prestigious jobs.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: How great is that? That's got to tell you something about this organization.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Laura Thielen is in Aspen. Peter Scarlet is in New York. Rachel Rosen is—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Is in L.A. One of the reasons that I left was because I was told to stop bitching and complaining by two board members. It was right after Peter had left, so they were looking for the artistic director, I guess is what the title is. I remember being in a board meeting and suggesting that Rachel Rosen should be made artistic director. And I was totally shot down by the director at that time. I'm sure it's in the minutes. She said that Rachel Rosen was not ready to be artistic director, implying that she didn't have the chops, she didn't have the experience, I don't know what she was implying, but she made it very clear to the board that Rachel was not ready. At that time, Rachel had called me and she said, "I don't think I can stay here. I'm going to go and interview in L.A." And I said, "Good. Go interview."

She went down there. When she came back, she called and we talked and she said that she was going to take this job. I can't tell you how much pleasure it gave me, because right after that board meeting, dealing with those people, I left. I just said, "That's it. I'm done. Maybe it's true. Maybe it's time for me to stop bitching." So, I left. About three or four months later, there was an article in the **L.A. Times** and it had a picture of Rachel, and the headline said "So far, so great". So I cut that article out, I put a Post-it on it, and I said, "This is the person that was not ready to be artistic director," and I faxed it to them. Never heard anything! The thing is, you have to appreciate the people who work for you.

SHEILA CADIGAN: There's a whole school of—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, and all those people are so great. Brian, Laura, Rachel, Peter, Marie-Pierre. Doug is with Rachel down in L.A.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But they made their chops here in San Francisco.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That's right. Also, they were all very supportive of each other.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Do you think there's a San Francisco approach to curating and organizing now? The School of Becoming a Film Festival Director?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You know? They're like their own little club. Regardless of who's paying the bills.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: But we've jumped way ahead in time here. That was 2001. Maybe we could talk some more about, say, '86, '87. Because, now at this point, the two of you are involved.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I'm on the board, she's working for the Festival, and we're just rock 'n' roll, having a great time.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Ronald Reagan is president. The music's good. It was the cocaine years, I understand! That's what one of the other oral history people said, "Well, you have to remember, those were the cocaine years."

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Who was that?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Trish Delarius. She said, "Well, I was here in the '80s." She said, "We couldn't afford it but it was just sort of around."

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't think people were doing that here.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In the world.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: In the world. But I always thought we were different than everybody else. And we are. It's that whole thing, you know: San Francisco, opposite to Los Angeles. I mean, the biggest thing about that Festival which has changed—which inevitably it will because you have to get bigger—was the intimacy about it. What year did you tell me you started, again?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I was a volunteer in '90 and '91, and then I came on staff in '93.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: When did it become a big business?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: In the later '90s, it was becoming very much more of a business. It was much bigger and much more ambitious. I would say my first seven years there—maybe eight years there—it was a very, very intimate Festival. Now, I'm not saying there were only ten films showing. It was still very ambitious. We expanded. But people were very well taken care of. The filmmakers were taken care of and given very personal attention, and I don't know if that exists today.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That's true, because when I said earlier that Peter made this happen here, it was because when these people arrived in town, they were given lists of places to hang out, and everybody knew to come here after the screenings at night, and every night during the Festival people were connecting with each other here, and socializing. I remember a couple of guys telling me that they didn't see that in New York, they didn't see it at other festivals. There wasn't like one gathering place. Later on, I remember Sean Penn was so excited. He happened to be here one night and it was during the Festival, and he didn't even know the Festival was going on. He had just moved here. He was in the bar, and in the kitchen I introduced him to Peter, and then Peter introduced him to all these filmmakers who were so excited to meet him. That's the kind of place this is. You never know from one night to the other who's gonna be here. And how they connect.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But it's not just from film. It's from politics and—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, but that's separate. We're talking about the Film Festival.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But at some point you've gone to the city for funding.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, nobody finer than Willie Brown. That was later, too. When Willie became mayor, that's nine years ago. And I'd asked Willie, "Please come to the opening," to get the letter for the program guide. And then getting money from the general fund.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Have they been able to do that? From the Hotel Tax Fund or something.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: The Hotel Tax Fund is one thing. General fund is different. But Willie was so fantastic. See, Willie loved film. That was the other reason that it was exciting.

The first year he was there, he came to the opening—and I remember Marie-Pierre took him into the theater—and when they got him on stage, she introduced him and he came on and started telling the audience about the film they were going to see: “It’s very exciting.” We had four or three different screenings at that time, on Opening Night. It wasn’t just one film. It was in the Kabuki and it was different houses. She moved him from one theater to another and on the way she would explain to him what the film was, and he’s such a quick study, that he would get up in front of each theater and tell them about the film. And people would say, “Oh, he already saw the film.”

SHEILA CADIGAN: And before him it was Art Agnos, and he had absolutely no interest in film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No interest at all.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: One time we got him to come to Opening Night. I don’t remember if he spoke. But there really was not a lot of support from the city, and what we got mostly was from Jeannette’s influence. We did have funding. We worked hard on that in the ’80s, on getting the Hotel grant, and so forth. But in terms of real support from political figures here, it was pretty much nonexistent during those years.

SHEILA CADIGAN: The city of San Francisco, as opposed to other cities, doesn’t have a big tradition of supporting its own arts community, because there’s a philanthropic community here that has a lot of means, and there’s an expectation that, people with means here should be supporting this institution.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But a big goal of the Festival—of the Film Society, I should say—is for it to be looked at as an educational experience to get that support, rather than, “Oh, it’s two weeks of a lot of films and glitz, and so forth.” Remember how hard we worked reaching out to present it as educational?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Once again, it’s the staff. It always comes back to the staff.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Was there anyone you liked on the board, during all those years?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: George Gund. Maurice Kanbar. I loved Maurice. Who else? Who else was on that board?

SHEILA CADIGAN: In terms of who was good with check-writing when there's a breach, Maurice has been that, and George obviously has been that.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, but I didn't like them because of that.

SHEILA CADIGAN: No, but their value to the organization as far as its survival, I mean beyond the need to sell tickets and to create a base of support. They were godfathers and angels.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Right, but really there were not a lot on boards and, as I said, there's probably a lot of boards that exist that have the same problem. You have people that lend their name to it because it will give you more exposure.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Mona Skager too, George was totally hands-on with staff, and he loved the staff just as much. He and I started a tradition where, Closing Night, we made breakfast for the staff.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Oh, yes! Tell us about that. How did that start? When did that start?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, God.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Eighty-seven?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, before that, probably maybe a couple years after I started. I think George had taken everybody out on the boat. He had a boat. He still has a boat. He took staff out on it for a cruise after the Festival was over as a little thank-you. And I think we did it, at the same time. Then had this Closing Night party. I mean, Crunchy and Greg were little kids, they were in their early teens, Crunchy was 13.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Who's Crunchy?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: His son.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: What I remember is coming here every night.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, every night, every night.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No question about it. Every night we came here, stayed until three in the morning probably.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Four. Five.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Got up like three hours later. I could never do that now, but running on adrenalin for two weeks. But the last night, we all came here. The filmmakers came here. Legally the bar was supposed to close at 2:00 am, so you'd usher everybody into the pool room and lock the door. George would get here on his motorbike.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Go into the kitchen and start scrambling eggs.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: You'd send us to Green Street to pick up the fresh bread at two in the morning, and we would sit here and have breakfast, it really was like the ultimate end to that, for different reasons.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So George Gund and Jeannette Etheredge were making breakfast.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Making breakfast, and George tended bar.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Tending bar. It was lawless.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was just out of control.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Lawless year after year, and it was so much fun.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Out of control.

SHEILA CADIGAN: With this multi-millionaire serving?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It's not about that. You know, he was the chairman.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: When you're with George, you forget that he's one of the wealthiest people in the world, because he's so normal. Okay, he's not so normal, but he's still normal in the way that he's very down to earth.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He'll love hearing that!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He's just one of us.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Do you remember? His birthday happens to be the very first week of May, and our Festival is April to May. So we decided to have a birthday party for him, Closing Night. Were you here for that, when I had the cake made?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: No.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I had the cake made in the shape of a shark with the hockey stick.

SHEILA CADIGAN: George Gund being head of the San Jose Sharks.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I mean, how great was that? That photo ended up being on the cover of the magazine section of the Sunday paper.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I don't think I was here anymore when you did it. I don't remember that.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, no. We had a great big cake. And then the following year, Closing Night again was his birthday, and I was in New York. I remember organizing everything, he cooked, all of that, and I get this phone call and I'm in New York, and it's from

him. I said, “Where are you?” And he said, “I’m in your office and I’m just wondering when you’re coming down.” I said, “George, I’m in New York!” And he’s talking and talking, and he’s just rambling, and then he says, “There’s a bunch of presents on the safe.” I said, “Those are yours.” And he said, “All for me?” He’s like a little kid, you know? He is so wonderful.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He’s so used to everybody asking him for everything. Him dishing out, paying for everything.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, wait! Do you remember the picnic in Golden Gate Park? It was hilarious. There was a picnic, remember, we had that guy who did all the catering.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Michael. He was a caterer. He was Peter’s friend.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Michael Goldstein?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes. He used to cater.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We started doing these picnics out in Golden Gate Park for the staff.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, and even the extended staff.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was the same thing. What board members came?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: None.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: George and I were at this thing, and they were having a baseball game and grilling burgers and stuff, and off in the distance was some guy standing there. And it was in this meadow, and the guy is far away from the picnic and he’s in a suit and tie, and he’s just standing there. It’s almost kind of eerie, you know. It’s like he’s lurking. I mean, if he had a trench coat on, he’d be suspicious. I remember asking somebody, I said, “What’s going on with this guy? Who is this guy?” And nobody seemed to know. I said to George, “This guy, he’s been standing there for the longest time just watching us.” It comes from running a bar. You see

everything. You know? Somebody doesn't notice that person, but I did because I'm used to that. So George mumbled something. I decided I couldn't stand this any more. I walked over to him. I said, "Excuse me," I said, "Are you a part of the Film Festival, because we're having our staff picnic." The guy had flown out here from Washington DC, from the Smithsonian, because he had an appointment with George to meet with him to talk about some kind of money issue.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember that!

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And he couldn't pin him down, so he followed him to the picnic. That's how desperate people were to get to George, to ask for money or whatever.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Because he was known to be generous.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But the closing of the Festival, it was very emotional. We'd worked so hard for six months and it was nonstop. For me, it was incredibly emotional, I think I cried every Closing Night.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And that was the night that everybody blew it out, and just had a good time. As it went on, it got bigger and bigger because people started knowing that this is where—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Then it became a velvet rope thing, and you had to tell people they couldn't come in.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Do you remember when Peter jumped on the bar?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Oh, yeah. Her nephew jumped from the floor to the bar.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: From behind the bar onto the bar.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He manages the bar. It was lawless, out of control.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, and it was after two o'clock.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He made people leave. I just ushered people in the back.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He got up and he said, "Everybody get the fuck out! Right now!"

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It got a little crazy later.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, my God! And everybody went. You never saw anything like it. Do you remember when the body was found out in front, and the cops were here that night, Eddie and those guys?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No. We weren't part of that one.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Apparently, there was a shooting in the club downstairs; there's a disco below us in the basement, the entrance is on the other side. And I guess they didn't want to call the cops until they removed the body. Well, they managed to remove it and put it in front of our window.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And prop it up like he'd just had a few too many of Tosca's famous cocktails!

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Laura and George were leaving, and they said goodbye, and then they came back in and said, "There's a body lying out there." And I've got four drunken off-duty cops sitting here at the bar. As soon as they heard that—they can hardly move—and I said, "You stay where you are." I called the station.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: What year was that?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I want to say it was like '92, maybe. Yeah, I remember it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And people were leaving and stepping over the body.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember on Fillmore Street in our office, it was a Sunday and it was crunch time with proofing. We literally worked 24 hours—like pulled a lot of all-nighters. We were just beyond exhausted. And there was a bus stop right outside the window. We were in the old bank building, right on the corner. At the time, **Love Shack** was really a huge hit and we had the radio on in there and it came on, and we blasted it. And me, Laura, Marie-Pierre, Brian—I don't think Peter was there—we were like wildly dancing. Did you ever come into the Fillmore Street office?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Sure.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: You know how you'd walk into that corridor. We had to have a release and the song ended, and we look up and there's a busload of people sitting right outside the window looking at us like, "What is going on in there?" You had to have little releases like that. It was very, very intense.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We had a thing that night, remember—not that night, but . . .

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was after the Piper-Heidsieck award in '92 or '93.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We had a limo.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yep, Jeannette had a driver.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I had a car and driver, and we had this limo, and it was Jeannette and George and Pamela.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: George wasn't. Do you mean Laura's George?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, no, no, no. George Gund.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He wasn't in the limo with us. It was you, me, Pamela, Peter, Laura and Marie-Pierre.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I thought George was there.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He wasn't there. It was the middle of the night and we started shouting from the rooftop.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Peter Scarlet. And we had the radio on in the limo. And then we got on top of the roof of the limo and started dancing.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was three in the morning. "Mustang Sally" was on. Jeannette had high heels on, and she and I were on top.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Pamela has photos.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And the limo driver was on the street dancing. You've got photos of that?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I've seen them.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And Peter and Marie-Pierre and Laura were on the street dancing.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You and I were on the roof of the car.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We were on the roof and everybody else was dancing on the street. And all of a sudden, the loudspeaker. The cops. They said, "Get inside or get to jail!" Peter and Laura and Marie-Pierre were trying to open the door, like, "We're not dancing. We're trying to get into our office right now." I would have killed somebody if I were trying to sleep and heard that outside. Even the limo driver was on the street dancing!

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was a piece of work, this woman! She used to drive me, so I got her into the Festival to drive people.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: You're talking about the limo driver?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes, Paula. She was dancing on the street, too.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was the best. So she said, “Okay, I’ll drive people for you. I won’t charge the Festival.” We were having the tribute for Danny Glover, and everybody’s waiting for him in the hotel. We’re waiting and waiting. She ran out of gas with Danny Glover in the car! They’re in a gas station. They get out of the car; she locks the car with the keys in the car. I mean, he was like an hour late for his tribute because Paula was driving him. She’d drive these people and then she would hand me her camera—or Jeannette or anybody that happened to be there—to have them take a picture of her with the celebrity.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: The first year we had the Piper-Heidsieck awards—which was ’91, I think—the first year Anjelica Huston was our recipient.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, God! David Thomson did the interview.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was probably the middle of the night.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It was ’91.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Ninety-one. Thank you. It was maybe 11 or 12 at night. We were going to press. Everything’s been proofed, it’s going to the printer. Peter gets a call from her publicist. She’s making **The Addams Family**, the first one, at the time. “You know, she’s really tired, she’s not going to do it.” He said, “What do you mean, she’s not going to do it? We have offered to give her this award, honor her, all the publicity is out, we’ve had our press conference, we’re going to print. What do you mean, she’s not going to do it?” “She’s not going to do it. I’m sorry. She’s tired.”

Peter hangs up and comes out and it’s like, “Oh, my God! I cannot believe what just happened!” So, we’re trying to brainstorm what to do, scrambling, making calls. Somebody had her home number, and I said, “You’ve got to call her.” We knew she was shooting. “You’ve got to kiss her ass left and right and tell her that the world will stop turning if she does not make it to this. You’ve got to do it. It’s the only hope we have.” It’s 12:00 midnight. This is Peter, Mr. “I travel

the world and I know everything about film”. He’s in his stockinged feet and he was walking through the office on Fillmore Street with a bottle of whisky. It was like one of those moments behind the scenes, “What are we going to do?” And he was chugging that whisky that he had in his desk drawer—which we’d never known about—and he is calling her.

He can tell you better, but I know he said something like, “I know you’re working and you’re exhausted and I’m probably the last person you want to hear from, but you don’t understand what this means to all of us.” And the next day, Susan Geller, her publicist, calls him and said, “I don’t know what you said to her, but she changed her mind.” And she came and that was one of the biggest celebrity moments.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was great, but you know what? She was really pissed off. Because afterwards, when we walking to the car, she said to me, “Can you imagine him asking me how old I am?” On stage, David Thomson started about her age or something, and about “older actresses.” She was so pissed off.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But that’s when we started bringing celebrities back. You then brought another audience there because people are very excited to see stars.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: How about Harvey Keitel?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Why don’t we go through the years? I actually have written down the honored celebrities that were invited. In 1980, it was Goldie Hawn. Do you guys have any recollections of her?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Jeannette might. That was before my time.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don’t know. I just remember her being here. I don’t think there was anything outstanding.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Okay. Nineteen eighty-one was the dramatic year of the Truffaut fight and things, but it was also the year that Jacqueline Bisset and Candice Bergen were here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Was George Cukor with them?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And Cukor was here, yeah.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And Candice Bergen, right?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And we had a party at the Coppola's house on Broadway. It was quite fun.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Which Coppola?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Francis. Yeah, on Broadway. The thing I remember about Cukor was that I just got to sit with him and listen to his stories about Hollywood in the old days. Because he made all those old movies.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Sit with him where?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: At the Coppola's. There was a party there for him and for Jacqueline Bisset and Candice Bergen.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Was that before the film or after?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I think it was just a party to host them. But I don't think we went anywhere. Because I remember somebody was driving up the driveway and almost hit him, and he was like 90 at the time!

SHEILA CADIGAN: In 1983, Zeffirelli was here.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yes. That was a lot of fun. And Placido Domingo. It was the movie **La Traviata**.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And Placido's girlfriend.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: One of the ladies-in-waiting for Imelda Marcos. But you can't say that.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Carol Burnett.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, Carol Burnett was here, yeah, but nobody knew about that.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Carol Burnett, the comedian?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. But you know what, Placido was such a rake. The party was at the Hyatt Regency on the Embarcadero. It had just opened so the after-party was there, and it was a wonderful, wonderful party. I remember dancing with Placido, and while we were dancing he says to me, "Jeannette, you didn't tell me you were divorced. Why didn't you tell me you got divorced? I had to hear it from your mother." My mother was there. She's friends with Zeffirelli. And the whole time we were dancing, it was all about, "How come you didn't tell me you got divorced since the last time I saw you?"

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Uh-oh.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was quite a glamorous party.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Nineteen eight-four, Cassavetes.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Ah.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And Gena Rowlands.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And Gena.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What were they representing? What film?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I think they did have a film there, possibly **Opening Night**. But there was an onstage tribute, I believe.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, it was a tribute, so it's not like they were promoting a film.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: There might have been a film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I'm sure there was. That was the same year as **Swann in Love**, Volker Schlöndorff. And that was at the Opera House. For me, it was wonderful. Whosoever idea it was to show it at the Opera House was brilliant, because Volker has an opera background. He directs operas as well as films. After they screened the film, he came on stage and everybody applauded, and he thanked everybody for being there and how much they loved the film, and he said, "I don't know about you, but I'm on my way to Tosca—not the opera, the bar." We were in the Opera House. I said, "Volker, how could you do that?" He said, "It's good for business."

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Did Jeremy Irons come over?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You know, if he did, I don't remember because it was a pretty packed house.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: So they held a movie screening in the Opera House? That's an enormous place.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know. Thirty-seven hundred seats.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Was it filled up?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That's incredible! I never knew that.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: [LOOKING THROUGH BOOK] It's '84, right, so it's got to be in here. Here, Gena Rowlands, John Cassavetes and Ginger Rogers at the Castro.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In '84?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, the day before. Saturday the 21st was Ginger Rogers. Sunday the 22nd was Gena Rowlands and John Cassavetes. I have a picture of me and Ginger in the lobby of the Castro. On the wall in there. Boy, Ginger was . . .

SHEILA CADIGAN: Sauced?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah. She was rough. I mean, she's such a right-wing Republican and for her to be at the Castro! I just remember there were some sparks.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: What happened?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know. She made some remarks about gay people. Yeah. The one at the Castro that was hilarious was Tuesday Weld. Do you have her on the thing?

SHEILA CADIGAN: No.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Tuesday Weld, she was the year that Bobby Duvall and Gene Hackman—**Tender Mercies**. Eighty-five? Maybe it was '85.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It could have been earlier.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Earlier was Bob Mitchum. Oh, that was fun. He held court here in this booth for three days.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I didn't even know he was honored.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. Robert Mitchum. Tuesday Weld was hilarious because Lenny Michaels—he's a writer—lived in Berkeley, had the biggest crush on Tuesday Weld. Here, tribute to Tuesday Weld, 1983. That was the year of Duvall and Hackman—oh, how much fun did we have!

SHEILA CADIGAN: How much fun DID you have? That's what we're here for.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: A lot of fun! So Tom Luddy talked them into letting Lenny Michaels do the on-stage interview with Tuesday Weld.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Who is Lenny Michaels?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Lenny Michaels is a writer, lived in Berkeley. I haven't seen him in years. Ask Tom, he's great friends with Tom. So they get him to do this on-stage interview, and she's very, very shy, and she has a really hard time with crowds. She called me as soon as she arrived. I didn't know her, but we had a mutual friend—Jessica Lange—so Jessica had given her my phone number and said, "Call Jeannette, she'll take care of you." She was frightened like a rabbit, you know? Scared.

Well, it turned out she had a stalker. Because when we got into the car from the Castro to go have dinner, this stalker jumped into the car and started ranting and raving. Then security at the Castro pulled him out and we left, and then she told me about this guy who apparently was like sitting on her doorstep in New York. So I said, "Not to worry." I have all these friends who are cops, so we came straight here, and the rest of the night she had two cops the whole time she was here. Friends of mine were bodyguarding her.

But anyway, so they get on stage, Lenny and Tuesday. He is so enamored of her that he can't open his mouth. Now it's like a one-way interview, and the girl is petrified, and he's sitting here like a bump on a log and he can't say anything. It was a disaster! And she said, "Maybe there's some questions in the audience." She saved it. Because he was so enamored of her that he couldn't put a sentence together. It was very funny.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Sounds like '84 was a big year. In 1985 I have Vincent Price.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember. I was there.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh! Do you have the photo of him lying in the doorway here?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: We have some pictures of him when he came, but I don't remember that.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, find that photo! Who was the photographer then? Was it Pamela? Because they wanted to take a group photo, and he said, “Great, let’s do it in the doorway.” So everybody was standing in the doorway, and he decided to lie down. He lay down in the entryway of Tosca.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Like a corpse in one of his horror movies?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, with one hand on his head.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember him being here, but I hadn’t started yet. Okay, I think I’ve completely screwed this up.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was married to that woman Coral Browne, and she was here. We had that movie, with Coral Browne, **An Englishman Abroad**, and she was in that. We had that film. That was with Alan Bates.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: You know what, I think I had maybe just started. I remember now. He was lovely.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, he was darling. He was nothing like—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Coral. I had started. I’m so sorry, but it’s harder when you get older to remember. That’s what happened. I must have started. I remember the Opening Night film, **Camilla**.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: In 1985.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: In ’85, but I wasn’t so entrenched in the films.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: See, that’s just like not remembering when I was on the board, because it felt like I was already on the board.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It's 22 years now.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: More. Try 25.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So Vincent Price was lying in your doorway.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember Coral. This is the year I volunteered. That's what it was. I volunteered at Opening Night. That's why I remember **Camilla** and Vincent Price. Sorry.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Moving into '86, that was the Kurosawa year, wasn't it?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was Kurosawa. That was also Fred MacMurray. If you've seen the pictures, George Lucas is there a lot, obviously.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: The Coppolas gave a reception for Kurosawa at the Broadway house. I remember all I wanted was to meet Toshiro Mifune. He was here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But he was here later, remember? He came some years later.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. I got to have my picture taken with him. Can you believe it? I was having an orgasm a minute. Every time I turned around and looked into that face.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I've never seen you be so excited to meet somebody in your life.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I can't remember what year he came.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was the guy. Do you know why? Because when I was in high school, his picture was in my locker. Everybody else had Elvis Presley. I had Toshiro Mifune.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We didn't even have a film of his.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He came for the Cherry Blossom Festival.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's what it was. And he came to our Opening Night. There was a big group shot on the stage. She was 17 again.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, my God! I was obnoxious. I couldn't get enough of him. I was undone. Undone!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's why North Beach has that reputation, you know. Those golden doors, and Toshiro Mifune was standing in front of it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Forever, I have loved him. I was pregnant with my son. There was a movie theater on Union Street, it was called Toho Rio, and it was a little Japanese theater, and it was on the other side of Fillmore. In the afternoons, with the big belly, I would go to see all these samurai movies. And I'm convinced that the reason my son loves samurai movies so much is because for nine months, I went.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was marinating in them.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: All of them. I can't tell you. She was there, she knows. There are witnesses.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But '86 also was Fred MacMurray, this was another thing, a split. Kurosawa and Cukor were at the Palace of Fine Arts; Fred MacMurray . . . These are like hit and miss. You never know what's going to be successful and what's not. Fred MacMurray, you'd think, first of all, he had a most successful TV show, but he also starred in all these old, really great Hollywood movies.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Film noir.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Well, there we were in the Palace Theatre and maybe there're 300 people, and it holds a thousand.

SHEILA CADIGAN: **Double Indemnity**, was that him?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes. I was backstage with him and his daughter and his wife, June Haver, and they're the loveliest people in the world. I remember his daughter saying to me, "How do we look out there, do we have a full house?" I said, "Oh, it's great. So many people and they're so excited." I'm like, "Holy shit! It's going to look so empty when he goes out there." Because in a big venue like that, if it isn't packed . . . Your heart is breaking, and it was so new to me. I'm like, omigosh! I just feel mortified for this guy.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You can't judge what's gonna be a hit and what isn't.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: They were so, so nice. They were very nice people.

SHEILA CADIGAN: That year they started the award, right?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. This is when the Coppolas had this reception for Kurosawa, and they had asked—I think it was Alice Waters—to do the food. The Coppolas have this fantastic dining room that overlooked a garden on the back of the house. It was just beautiful. Alice went overboard, and it was all sushi and sashimi and fish. Every kind of fucking fish you want is there. I'm in the kitchen with Allie Coppola, Francis's wife. We're sitting at the kitchen table, and this party is going on, and Marsha Lucas was there too. Marsha was leaning against the door, next to the door. And it was a swinging door. Allie and I are sitting at the table, just gossiping, and the door swings open right onto Marsha, who is now behind the door, and it's Kurosawa and he's coming in the kitchen and he doesn't speak English, and he looks at us, and I guess he thinks we're the kitchen help and he says, "Hot dog. Hamburger." Because he was being feted everywhere, and everywhere was . . . you know, "The guy's Japanese so let's pull out the sushi." All he wanted was a hot dog or a hamburger!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But that was the year that launched it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And it was really something. I didn't meet him that year, because you had to be at venues, taking care of different places. I remember what a huge deal that was.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Somebody said he would only drive in a Japanese car, so it was hard to figure out who was going to drive him around.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I know his son was with him. And there were a couple of people that came with him.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And that translator, remember? What was her name?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Audie Bock.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Right. She ran for state senate, didn't she?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She was very, very educated in Asian culture and film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But also very protective of him. It was kind of that thing where, unless you were at the Coppolas' house or somewhere where—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Right. And if you remember, a few years later, he was given an honorary Oscar and George Lucas and Steven Spielberg were on stage with him. He was such a legend.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Because they helped—Francis and George were the ones who were instrumental in raising the money to have him. Is it **Kagemusha**? His film. Because the Japanese didn't want to have anything to do with him, and they helped finance his film.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And so we showed that and he came and they were on stage. That was 1980.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: So he came in '80?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Also. Yeah.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And they started that award in his honor.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Well, he influenced Francis' and George's work in the '70s so much.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: So that party at the Broadway house was '80, because they sold that house.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We honored him in '86.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know, but I'm saying that the reception was in '80 when he came for **Kagemusha** because of George and Francis. Because by '86, they had already sold that house.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But there's a very nice picture of you, Phil, George Lucas and maybe Peter. But that was for the Kurosawa. That must have been that time.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, that's when I'm goosing George. I had my arms around both of them, and I remember grabbing George under—

SHEILA CADIGAN: Under what?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: We're running that picture on our Web site.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You are? I had dark hair then.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Of course, the picture cuts off around here somewhere.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: So you didn't get to see the other side.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He was in '86. Danny Glover was also there, but he was there in '87 as well in the pictures with Juliette Binoche and Norman Mailer. These are just pictures that I'm drawing on.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Juliet Binoche came for a film with Leos Carax, and he was a very young Parisian filmmaker who, I don't think has done very much since then, and they were boyfriend and girlfriend, and she was starting to make **The Unbearable Lightness of Being**.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, I think she already made it.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She didn't speak much English.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was a doll. He was awful.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: She came over, she was in the kitchen over here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes. And that was the year we were back in the kitchen drinking pepper vodka out of coffee mugs. And pickled tomatoes. And something else.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We had Alexei German, the Russian director, sitting here in this booth.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: His translator was there with his pickles. It was the first time I ever had them. And Rose Kaufman was back there with us, and that was year we were drinking huge mugs of pepper vodka.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, straight shots.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But Danny Glover, I also want to say, we did an evening with him early on. He was the one—and he was a celebrity. Local here. Here it's like New York—you see a celebrity, people just leave them alone. But he would come to the Festival just to see films. On his own, and he would get the biggest bucket of popcorn you ever saw and a soda and just mind

his own business and go into the theater. It was really nice to see that. He did eventually become a board member too.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He lives here. I lived next door to him once in Buena Vista Park.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was a good friend of the Festival. He's a great actor, too.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Okay, 1988. I just saw pictures of a big party here in Tosca, and I could not identify anyone, but it looked like you had a lot of action here in '88. I couldn't find a specific celebrity that was dominant.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Who were they honoring in '88?

SHEILA CADIGAN: I couldn't find that, for some reason.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It would be in the program guide for '88.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Mostly, I was looking at pictures of you. You're pictured with most of these people. In the archives.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Was that Depardieu? No, he wasn't '88. We had Mickey Hargitay here. He's Jayne Mansfield's husband. He just died.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He just died? When?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: A month ago, I think.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, yeah. The film was **Mr. Universe**. He was so, so nice.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: The György Szomjas film?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Mariska Hargitay is the daughter.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah. We had a Bresson tribute that year. I'm just trying to think, because some of the notes I made to myself, I didn't necessarily have a year. The film **Anna**, I think, was in '88.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, my God! Was that Sally Kirkland?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That might have been '88. She came for that film and that was her big comeback. We showed it at the Palace of Fine Arts. It was packed, packed. Peter was introducing the film, and he had this system of how he would introduce the film and then bring the people from the film up later. Well, she is very, very, very crazy. She sat in the audience and she went, "Peter! Peter!" And she was screaming from her seat, waving her arms, and he was trying to introduce, and he was like, "Yes, Sally?" "Introduce me! Introduce me!" He said, "Well, I was getting to that." She was so crazy.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was out of control.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Out of control in that audience. He didn't even get a chance to do it because she was just screaming for him to meet her. She was here in '87, I believe.

SHEILA CADIGAN: So do you see any celebrated personages?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I'm looking here, and I'm not.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Maybe there weren't any and you just had a party.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was also the Spike Lee year, '86.

SHEILA CADIGAN: We're on '88. There's lots of pictures from here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We had **Wings of Desire** that year. Mel had died already, Wim Wenders couldn't come. It was at the Castro. And Solvang came, the star of the film, and his

girlfriend at the time. I remember she did a very beautiful heartfelt homage to Mel on the stage. She was quite something. Was that the **White Mischief** year? That was '88 then. I think we had a lot of filmmakers here.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You're looking at the wrong book, Jeannette.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But this has **Wings of Desire** in it, too. **White Mischief** was the Opening Night film from Britain. There might have just been a lot of parties. Some years were a little crazier than others.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Just no Hollywood presence, really, no particular person.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Not big that year. Robert Bresson was the tribute. Who got the Kurosawa Award that year?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was Bresson.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was Bresson and he obviously didn't come. And of course, there was the year when Satyajit Ray got it and he died. He wasn't going to come since he was too ill, but he died and Peter announced his death on opening night.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But he came. There's a great photo of him on the wall. That Pamela took.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: But not for the Festival. He never came to the Festival.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: There was a picture they sent us, I think. Remember, with the beautiful camera. We'll have to ask her about that.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Eighty-nine, Mankiewicz.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Oh, yeah! He was great.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And Peter Owens had this great party at his house. He lived in the same building my mom lived in up at 999 Green. Peter Owens gave this party, and I remember like nobody had done anything for Mankiewicz. I mean, there was a cocktail party at Peter Owens's apartment. I remember walking into Peter Owen's bedroom and I thought, "Oooh, this is one kinky guy." It was all leather. Lot of leather. I didn't see any whips and chains. But I went to Tiffany's and I bought a gift for his wife.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: For Mankiewicz's wife?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. I mean, it was kinda like nobody was doing stuff like that. And you want to kind of have them remember that they were here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was very, very eloquent on stage.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was great.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He made a statement about women that I wish I had written down, because it was one of the most beautiful things I've ever heard. I know we were all sitting around the floor going, "Oh, my God!" He got women. You just have to look at his films. It was a bit of a battle to get an American, it was like "We have to honor an American."

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, because at that time it was obviously the International Festival.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And it was for the Kurosawa Award. You had to keep the audience, and want people to know that you believe in the American film world as well as the international film world. So he was the first American that we honored.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: With the Kurosawa.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Whose idea was that? Was that Marie-Pierre? Because she was Stanley Donen. She came up with Stanley Donen.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was years later.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It might have been Peter, for Mankiewicz. Although they did have an advisory board that did talk about stuff like that.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Didn't his son work for Bobby Kennedy?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I was always trying to keep the two apart, like "Which Mankowitz is that?" because they're the same name.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, there's a lot of Mankiewiczes.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: In '89, we tributed Jackie Chan. I'll be honest, I didn't know who he was.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He must've been young then.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was a young guy and he was not well-known in this country yet. He was well-known in the city.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But you should talk to Pamela about Jackie Chan because she spent the day photographing him, and that's when she realized that he was such a big deal.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Coming through Chinatown, the people went crazy.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And the cable car. She took a picture of him on the cable car and they went wild.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He came to our office the day after the Festival ended. We were on Fillmore Street, and he came with his father and his manager, and maybe one other guy. They came in, and it was really weird, because they just wanted to see American culture, offices, everything. They walked all through the office. We took them upstairs. Remember? We had that funky upstairs. It was an old bank building where we had a huge, raw storage space, and we had a kitchen. He's just looking at everything like a wide-eyed child, and we took that group picture with him—which you ran in **Picture Talk** when I left the festival. I mean, now, you could never get near him like that. But at the time, most people didn't know who he was. They did here, because it's a huge Asian community, so it was perfect to bring him here. But that was before he did all the Hollywood films.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was great.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was in '89.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He's been a bad boy lately. He's been jumping around, I think he grabbed a microphone at a rock concert, when he was really drunk. This is like within the last month. Okay. Louis Malle was in 1990.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Louis Malle came with, what was it? **Au Revoir Les Enfants?**

MIGUEL PENDÁS: It was **May Fools**.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: **May Fools**. And the big discussion was Candice Bergen, because she had **Murphy Brown** at the time, which was the biggest hit on TV. She came with him.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We had the screening at the Herbst Theatre and the party was in the Rotunda of City Hall, and it was the year after the '89 quake. I remember Candice Bergen leaning over to me and saying, "What happened to this building?" because it was like plaster was off the walls. It was beams and construction going on. Was it '89? He wrote a very nice thing in my book.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was '89?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Well, it would've been right after Loma Prieta.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: October was when we had the earthquake, so that would have been in '90, because we would have had the Festival that spring.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, it was the Opera House—they were starting to do construction because City Hall was very badly damaged.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: So the party, you're talking about Opening Night? Was that the Opening Night film? **May Fools?**

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I don't think it was the Opening Night film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, it was. And we had the screening at Herbst and then we walked across the street to City Hall. I know, I was sitting with them. And then we all came back here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We were having it at the Pavilion and that burned down, right? So we had to have it at City Hall.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know where the Pavilion was.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was right where the old Jim Jones Temple was. Right there on Geary.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, we had it at City Hall. I know that.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We had to have an alternative place because our original one burned down. But it was all that time.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Ninety-one, Anjelica Huston was here and we talked about that. But also Peter Ustinov. I've seen a picture of him, too.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, how much fun was that!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Oh, yeah. For **Spartacus**. Remember, we went to dinner with him at Vic's. The man had amazing stories. Amazing!

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He did. Who can remember?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I can remember. It's just like you're sitting next to me.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It's like Robert Mitchum. He spent three days telling stories. Can't remember a single one, because you're so enamored of him. Why do you think my bathroom is full of Robert Mitchum.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Okay, 1982, Geena Davis.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was good.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We were excited about Geena.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, the one about... **Earth Girls Are Easy**.

SHEILA CADIGAN: That opened the film festival?!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, because we would always show something. Now at the time, we had this sponsor, Joseph Schmidt, who makes the chocolates. He's a really good chocolatier here. He started with Anjelica Huston. He was one of our sponsors for the Piper. And for the parties after the event, he made a big chocolate bowl and on the front of it was their face, carved in chocolate. And inside it was filled with chocolates. He did that every year for the recipient. As far as I remember.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. Until we lost him for some reason, who knows?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: The Schmidts are still generous. We get donations of chocolates from them.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Piper-Heidsieck just stopped doing awards.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You know, it was hard to get people to accept an award for champagne or liquor. Because I remember calling Meg Ryan, because they wanted her one year and I knew her. I called her, and she said that she would love to be honored, but she didn't want to be associated with anything that had to do with alcohol, because at that time Dennis was just starting rehab. It was hard to get people.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And you also had at the time Sundance. Piper was honoring people at Sundance.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We were the first to get Piper.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Exactly.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And then all of a sudden it sort of took off and everybody else started courting them, and then they thought maybe Cannes is better than San Francisco. Or Sundance.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It becomes more competitive. But the one year we had such a hard time, we had such a difficult time getting a recipient and we were in here one night with you. It was me and Rachel, and maybe Marie-Pierre and somebody else—Pamela. We were having a drink with you, and Nicolas Cage came into the bar because he's a friend of Jeannette's and he was in town and he came in, and he had been honored that year at Sundance. Jeannette called him over and she said, "Hey, Nic. Did you get a Piper-Heidsieck award this year?" And he said, "Yeah." And I said, "Do you want another one?" And he said . . . cause, you know, he was deserving of it. But he said, "Oh well, when is it?" And we said the date, April whatever. And he said, "You know, I can't that night." That's the day he married Patricia Arquette. I'll never forget it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Right here, the photo of them. I have the only photo of their wedding.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We ended up with Tim Roth that year. And Tim Roth was great.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But then we got Nic again.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: They got him later. But I remember we were like, “Would you like another one?” It was not easy.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In 1993, I see Kenneth Branagh in the pictures, and Robert Altman.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Altman was there for **The Player** for Opening Night.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That’s ’92, isn’t it? **The Player**. That wasn’t ’93.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Kenneth Branagh was here for the Shakespeare one.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: The one with Keanu Reeves and Denzel Washington.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: **Much Ado About Nothing**. Yeah, and he was married to Emma at the time, and she had won an Oscar that year.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I remember organizing a trip for them to Alcatraz, because he told me that the first movie he’d ever seen was **Escape from Alcatraz**. And he wanted to see Alcatraz. There was nothing else he wanted. You couldn’t do anything for him. He said, “Please get me to Alcatraz.” And I said, “Okay! Not a problem.”

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was exciting to have him here. It was fun to have him here. What was the year we had Depardieu?

SHEILA CADIGAN: That was the next year, ’94.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He, I've always said, was the most normal of all of them.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was the best. He was so great.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: So down to earth.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We went to Vic's for lunch. I hadn't asked Doug to come on the board yet. Because I'd asked Doug Biedebeck to be on the board, but that was later. But Doug was a very good friend of mine, so I was always using his restaurant, because he was so generous and he never would charge me, or the Festival. So we went for lunch. Depardieu arrived in town like two hours before the lunch. We go to Vic's. We have this incredible lunch. Depardieu says to me, "I'm on a diet." I said, "Okay, have a salad." "Well, excuse me. May I have the steak." He says, "I'm on a diet." So he ordered a salad. I, of course, ordered mounds of food.

Well, the next thing I know, he's switching plates and he's eating my lunch. So then, I don't know, they took him off to do interviews and stuff, and then that night he comes to the bar and he says, "Where are we going for dinner?" And I thought, "Hmm. I don't remember any mention of dinner" He said, "I want Chinese." And I said, "Okay, fine." So we took him to Yuet Lee because that was kind of like our neighborhood restaurant the whole time we were here at night. They were open till three in the morning, so Peter and Jeannette and whoever was here after everyone left, we'd go up to Yuet Lee and we would have dinner at three in the morning. So we took him there. He loved it. He spent the rest of the time eating lunch and dinner at Yuet Lee.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And he walked around in a Sharks jacket.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But that happened later. What happened was, I had a Sharks jacket that George had given me and it was the first of the line.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That really nice leather one

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was the first jacket. So I had it. And it was big. I have photos in the back room. Somebody gave a party in Berkeley—Goldstein, Danny Goldstein and his wife gave a party honoring Depardieu. And it was an afternoon garden party, and we were there and I

had my Sharks jacket on. He looked at me—we were having a cigarette. Pamela took all these photos of us smoking out in the garden. He looked at my jacket and he says, “You know, I love your jacket.” And I said, “Well, you can’t have it.” Because I could see the way he was looking at it, and I said, “You can’t have it. Plus the fact you wouldn’t be able to get into it. You won’t fit.” He said, “If I can fit into that jacket, you’ll give it to me.” I said, “No, no, no. I won’t give it to you. But you can’t fit into it.” I mean, this argument.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And then Mike Leigh came back probably five, six, several years later. Unfortunately, I cannot recall which film it was he was there for, but I was in the lobby of the Kabuki and he was coming. His film was being shown. We were waiting for him, and all of a sudden I look and, remember how there’s all those doors to enter into the Kabuki, and he is trying to figure out which one to go in. He’s by himself and I’m looking, like, “What is going on?” I said, “Hi, we’ve been waiting for you. Welcome.” And he said, “Oh, thank you, thank you.” He’s like a little nomad. He’s very, very unassuming. Mike Leigh, remember? That was him. On his own, trying to get in, just kind of unrecognized, to get upstairs to introduce his film.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Was it **Secrets and Lies**?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: No, it was way before that.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was before that. I just can’t remember which film it was.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It wasn’t **Vera Drake**? That was the latest one I’ve seen.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Way before that.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He’s an interesting director.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He is. He’s a good friend of the Festival.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He lets the actors write their own dialogue, doesn’t he?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That I'm not sure about. I'm trying to think of the year we closed with Madonna's **Truth or Dare**. Was it '89? It might have been '89. Obviously, nobody was coming from the film, although it was sold out. Everybody wanted a ticket. I don't know if Jeannette remembers this or not, but they're like, "We've got to create some buzz." They said, "Okay, you pretend to be Madonna." This was to me. I had long dark hair then. "What? This is crazy!" "No, no, she has dark hair. We'll huddle around you and we'll really make a scene." So Peter and a couple of other guys, and one of the guys from the Kabuki, ushered me down the street to the Kabuki, like they were security. And there are all these people outside. It was a total bust because people, if anything, just wondered, "Well, who is that?" I had glasses on and I had my head down. They're trying to usher me in, and they were trying to make people believe that it was Madonna entering the theater. It was so embarrassing.

SHEILA CADIGAN: We were in '94, and I noticed that Almodovar, Pedro—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Pedro! There. I went shopping with Pedro at Britex. That was the thing to do. To buy fabrics.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Rosie de Palma.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And Bebe Anderson, didn't she come?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes! Or he. He/she. Bebe Anderson, it's questionable?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, I don't know.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was great. We had a party for him. He was great.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah, he was fabulous. He was a lot of fun.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: What was the party like?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was just kind of a big splashy party. It was on a couple of different levels. It was fun. It generated a lot of buzz and excitement, and he was fun.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: There's George and me cooking in the kitchen, making breakfast. How about you and Bob and me dancing on the bar? What year was that?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was in the '90s. Maybe '93.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was a filmmaker from Tajikistan. His name was Bokianar Kojianara. And remember, he had never seen the Pacific Ocean and he'd never been on a beach, so we decided at four in the morning to show him the Pacific Ocean.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Were you able to find it?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We took him out to Ocean Beach.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We took him out to the beach, and then we got busted by the parks patrol. We were always getting into trouble with cops.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It's a good thing you're friends with so many. Or is that how you make friends?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know. I was going to tell you the story about when the Festival was at the Kabuki, and one of our patrons was mugged in front of the ATM, right across the street from the Kabuki. I don't know who it was that told me about it and said, "You know all these cops." Maybe it was Peter. Oh, and then, right after that person was mugged, the guy who was bringing the films to the theater from the office was attacked. I mean, attacked so brutally that he was sent to the hospital. He was wheeling the film cans on a little dolly.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: The print transfer person?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. Whoever that was. He was mugged. So I called Bruce Marovitch, who had gone to high school with my brother and he is my son's godfather, he's retired, but he was head of The Tact Squad, all the undercover plainclothes guys. They were cowboys. So I called Bruce and I told him about this and I said, "You know, we have a lot of

filmmakers from other countries and the screenings are at night, and there's a lot of shit happening." And he said to me, "Can't you find another theater? You're in the worst neighborhood for trying to protect you." So he sent this entire squad down to Fillmore, and he did it for years. The whole time that he was working for the police department, there was always a group of undercover cops that worked the Kabuki, and the parking lots and stuff.

One night, Jeannette and I are coming out of the theater and it's the closing of that night, so it's late and her car is parked in the parking lot where the office is. And the office is now on Eddy Street so it's further away. We're happily walking down the street, and all of a sudden we hear this honking. It's Bruce and his partner and they're in plainclothes and they're driving, and Bruce yells out the window, screaming and yelling, "What are the two of you doing walking down the street alone?" "We're going to Jeannette's car." "Get in!" So we got in to the back seat of his car and they've got their radio on, and I don't know, somehow there was a description of somebody who had just mugged somebody, and the next thing, the guy is in front of them in the car. And Bruce doesn't even get out to deal with the guy. He shoots him. He shoots him through the window of the car with the two of us in the back seat. Can you imagine if that had ever gotten into the paper? The Office of Citizen Complaints would have had their badges in a minute.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Did the guy survive?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah. He shot him in the ass. He just shot him to keep him from running, so he wouldn't have to run. And it was like we were never allowed to walk alone again out there. We had to call the guys who were working the detail. Those guys were fantastic. They were so great and they were the guys who, as a joke, when they honored Sean Penn, I asked them to come and bodyguard Sean, and I have this great photo that Pamela took on the back staircase of the Kabuki with the entire Tact squad surrounding Sean.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Was that about the time that **Colors** came out?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And they walked in with him and they were backstage the whole time. No. Later. But Sean absolutely loved it. And Pamela had to print pictures for each one of the Tact squad guys that was in the photo.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Jeannette, did you play a role in getting some of these people to be the award recipients?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: If I knew them and could make the phone call, sure.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Do you remember some in particular? I'm thinking around the years of the Owens awards, like Nicolas Cage and Sean Penn.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Nicolas, yeah. Sean.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Was that '96? Because I see him in pictures in '96, and he's starting to come to the Festival, regularly—Sean Penn.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: In '96, it was Harvey Keitel that got that award.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: But he was the first one, wasn't he? For Owens.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That's right. For Owens. And do you know what? Do you remember that? It was hilarious. He came on stage. You were there—

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Hmmm.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: They showed a clip and Harvey got all pissed off, and right in the middle of the clip he came ranting onstage, because he wanted to set up the clip. He was really difficult. We had moved that awards gala to an afternoon and it was at the Four Seasons Hotel, which is now the Clift. And it was after the screening of his film, so it was like around 5 o'clock. We couldn't get anybody to sit at his table. Nobody wanted to sit with him because he was so difficult.

The movie was Wayne Wang's **Smoke**. Stockard Channing is a friend of mine and she hadn't been invited by the Festival. She happened to be here with Dan, her boyfriend, and they were visiting me. I invited them and I said, "You know, your movie is playing at the festival." Later I asked her to be honored. She was one of the Owens awards. But that night she was just in town

with Dan, and I said, “Why don’t you come?” They sat with me because she didn’t want to sit with Harvey. And she’d made the movie with Harvey.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was very weird.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Even Wayne, we had to really twist his arm to have him sit with Harvey. Because it was Harvey and his manager.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Not his girlfriend? Was his girlfriend there?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don’t remember.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He’s married to Lorraine Bracco, or someone.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I don’t know that he was at that point. I think they’d split up. She was with Edward Olmos at that point.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I think the reason that they did it in the afternoon is because he had to leave early. He was only there for a few hours.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was the only time we did it in the afternoon, yes. But he was just a big pain in the ass. And it’s so funny because just recently somebody said they ran into him in New York, and he said to be sure to say hello to me. I thought, “Oh, are you sure?” “Oh, yeah. He mentioned you by name.”

SHEILA CADIGAN: You’re a good friend of his, didn’t you know? You’re probably one of his best friends and you don’t even know it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: One year we gave the Kurosawa Award to a Portuguese director, Manoel de Oliveira. He was 85 years old at the time, and we had a party for him on a boat. Actually, it wasn’t for him.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Party on a boat, yeah, and he came.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And he came, and he and Jeannette were dancing very, very, very wildly and we all stood there watching.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Thinking this guy was going to drop dead.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We were holding our breath. This guy was not like [imitates dancing,], he was like . . .

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was jitterbugging.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was gyrate, hip-hop crazy. We were like, “He is going to kick the bucket right now. He hasn’t even had his tribute yet!” Oh, my God! That was so funny.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I thought I was going to die. I was exhausted.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She was going crazy too.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. He was 85.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And you know, he was at San Sebastián this year with a new film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know. I heard.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was too much. This guy was so amazing. He was there and they were dancing like insane **American Bandstand** teenagers. We were like, “He’s going to kick it right now!” But he didn’t; he survived.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And do you remember when Andy Garcia was here with his family?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah. We had a party on the boat then, too.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was a nightmare. Because I was working the door and everybody was trying to crash that party. It was like having one of your parties. All of a sudden he's behind me, and I hear somebody speaking to me in Spanish. There were certain people he wanted to get in.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: "He" being Andy?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Andy came out, speaking to me in Spanish. I finally turned around and I said, "I don't speak Spanish. Who are you looking for?" It was very crazy.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He came with his wife, with his assistant. Rose was her name. And his kids. And they were all up at the St. Francis and I remember Peter was just like undone because of the expenses. The flight had to be first class. From L.A. for God's sake, you know? First I talked to Rose and I said to her, "You know, these expense are really outrageous and the Festival can't afford this." I didn't know what to do, and I was looking to her to see if she could give me any advice on how to approach him. I knew him, but I wanted to know the best way. And Rose said to me, "Oh, just talk to him. Just tell him." And I did. I told Andy. And he sent a check. He sent a check to the Festival.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Hmmm. He reimbursed us.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, for the whole thing.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Ninety-three.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It was the same year that we had Dario Grandinetti here.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I heard recently that you hooked him up with a ballet dancer.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Hmmm. From Cuba. I hooked him up because Phil Kaufman was shooting a movie with Andy Garcia, and Phil needed a Spanish dancer for a scene in his movie. They were shooting over at the War Memorial building, next door to the Opera House, and the

ballet school and ballet building is right across the street. So Phil was saying, “If you know of anybody . . .” Because he knows my thing with dancers, so he said, “If you know anybody to do this number.” I said, “Well, as a matter of fact, I do.” They were filming. I went across the street and went over to the ballet building, went to the rehearsal studios, saw Lorena. This is a Cuban girl. Her name is Lorena Feijoo.

I went in, and she was rehearsing, and she was in her little—not a tutu, but a little skirt—with tights and her point shoes and she was rehearsing a ballet, with a couple of other people. I looked at her and I said, “Lorena, come with me.” She said, “What?” Because Lorena had said to me about a year before, she says, “You know, when I retire, I don’t know what I’m going to do. Because, you know, it’s ballet, I need a career.” She said, “You know all these movie people, maybe you can get me into the movies.” And she’s wonderful and she’s very dramatic and gorgeous. So I said, “Come with me,” and she said, “Where?” I said, “Come. Right now.” She wanted to go change, and I said, “No, we don’t have time.” I dragged her across the street in her pointe shoes, in her little outfit. Brought her into the War Memorial Building, introduced her to Phil, introduced her to Andy. I said, “Andy, she’s Cuban . . . dah, dah, dah.” Next thing, I know, she’s from the same village that Andy’s father is from, where Andy was born.

Phil wanted her. Turned out she couldn’t do it because the ballet company was on tour, at the time that he was going to shoot this sequence. He ended up not having a Spanish dancer. And I was like, “Show him the **Vogue** magazine!” She had done a photo layout in French **Vogue** about six months before with Yuri Possokhov, a Russian dancer. They were naked, both of them. I mean, these bodies—incredible! I mean, you could not imagine how beautiful these two people are. I finally found the **Vogue** and showed it to Phil and Andy. My God! They were like chewing on their knuckles. Andy used her in his film **The Lost City**. She did an interview where she said that I introduced her to Andy, blah, blah, blah.

And now—the best is—Yuri Possokhov, the Russian dancer, I get this phone call from David Venture’s wife. They’re casting this movie they’re doing with Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, and in the course of this story, Cate Blanchett’s character has an affair with a Russian ballet dancer. So Venture’s wife calls me and says, “I know you know all these ballet dancers. Can you find me . . .?” I said, “I got the guy. Yuri.” So I got Lorena and Yuri.

SHEILA CADIGAN: That's awesome. A connector again, crossing these two worlds together—film and ballet.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She does.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I got Phil Kaufman the girl who played Sally Rand in **The Right Stuff**. She was a ballet dancer.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Do you remember that same year, David Byrne?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I do.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Which year?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: The same year as the film.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: His film, Jonathan Demme came for. David Byrne didn't come for it.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: No, no. David Byrne presented some shorts.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, that was separate from Jonathan Demme.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: The Jonathan Demme was '84 or something. It was way earlier. But in '93, David Byrne came and showed a shorts program of these mambo films from the 1950s. He came over here.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: David Byrne was in town because there's a sound recording studio that used to be on Pacific and Larkin. I didn't go to the **Stop Making Sense** film, because I gave my tickets to my son because he wanted to go see it. So I didn't know anything about those guys. I mean, they were here. They came to the bar. But they could've been any customer. I didn't know that music part. So I get this phone call from a guy named Leslie Shultz who does sound recording, and he has a studio. He says to me, "A guy named David Byrne is coming to town. Could you possibly find out if you know anybody who could rent an apartment for him for a

couple of months, because he's going to be doing some work in town." I said, "Okay, fine." I didn't ask him about David Byrne.

As it turned out, Robin Williams at that time was just getting divorced from Valerie, and Robin had found a place with Marsha, the woman he ended up marrying, but he had this great apartment that he had rented. And Robin said, "Oh, you know, that apartment is fantastic and it'll be great for a guy who is writing. It has a view of the city." So I called back and I said, "Here's this apartment. The address . . ." A couple of days later, this guy walks into the bar and he says to me, "I'm David Byrne. I just wanted to tell you thank you so much for the apartment. It's just spectacular. The view is beautiful and I'm really inspired."

He's sitting with me at the bar and we're talking, and I noticed that people are coming into the bar but they're like doing double takes when they see him. So I kind of leaned over to him and I said, "Can I ask you a question?" And he said, "What is it?" And I said, "Who are you?" He said, "Why?" I said, "Because people are looking at you like you're somebody important and I don't know who you are."

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And that's how you found out who David Byrne is?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. He was coming here pretty much every night while he was working.

SHEILA CADIGAN: That was in '94, '95?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And then he was here for that introduction of those films. That was the time.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In '95, there are pictures of Coppola, Saul Zaentz, Jane Seymour, Joan Chen.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Oh, Jane Seymour came with her husband who had produced a film. James Keach had produced a film that we showed at the Castro. I can't recall the name of it. That's why she came. That was in her **Dr. Quinn Medicine Woman** heyday, too.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Joan Chen? Is that the year she directed her film?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She had **The Comedown Girl**.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: **The Sentdown Girl**.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Comedown, Sentdown.

SHEILA CADIGAN: She lives here and she's married to a doctor, Peter. She was a beautiful actress in films before that?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was in Bernardo Bertolucci's film, **The Last Emperor**. And then she was in **Twin Peaks**.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Right. And she became a friend of the Festival, too. She really did.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: She comes almost every year.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Sort of a connector!

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yes. A connection of the heart.

SHEILA CADIGAN: That's right. And hips and things. Medical connection. Jim Jarmusch in 1996.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That late, huh?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was **Dead Man** with Johnny Depp. And Sean Penn. Sean must've been hanging around, right? He wasn't honored in '96.

SHEILA CADIGAN: He would have just moved up here at that point, right? I heard his wife was carjacked in L.A. and their two kids were nearly stolen.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She said she couldn't live there. Sean had come up here the year before, and he was making a movie with Michael Douglas, **The Game**. Then this thing happened. And he was already very interested in moving the family to a place where the kids could go to school like normal kids, and have a normal life. And that's what they have.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Ninety-seven, Nicolas Cage, Annette Bening, Philip Kaufman.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was the 40th anniversary year, '97.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What was Annette Bening doing in town?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was honored.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: She was the Owens Award recipient. Warren did come, but not at the beginning. Not for the event at the St. Francis.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, but he came too, because I remember we talked about—

MIGUEL PENDÁS: The onstage interview at the Kabuki, he came for that. And then she brought all the kids.

SHEILA CADIGAN: She went to San Francisco State, didn't she?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, and she went to ACT. She's from Los Gatos.

SHEILA CADIGAN: It's good to see a lot of local filmmakers coming back, because their roots are here even if they're not in the Festival.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, her family lives in Los Gatos.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: So, '96—who was our big recipient? Was that Harvey Keitel in '96? I guess so. No, '97. And '96 is the year I came back after I had left. I came back just a couple of weeks before the Festival started.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Yes, you flee the scene at this point.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Several of us kind of moved on.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Was there a big staff change? Did something happen?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, there was a big staff change. Things were moving in a different direction.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Did the director change?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: The director changed after that. Peter focused more on being artistic director. We brought in a new executive director, Barbara Stone, at the time.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Barbara was on the board. Maurice had brought her on the board. Then who left, kind of like abruptly, and that's why they put Barbara Stone in there?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Laura left.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, no. Who was the director that left?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Peter was the director at the time.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Peter was the executive director, and '95 was—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, that was the year they decided they were going to do two people. They were going to do an executive director and an artistic director.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Well, a managing director and an artistic director. Equal partners, not one over the other.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And she left. I'd left by then. Nancy Newsom who worked in sponsorship had left by then.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Peter left, didn't he?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Not yet. Tom had left by then. Laura left. Marie-Pierre, I believe, was still there. And Rachel was still there, and Brian was still there. And then Barbara Stone left three weeks before the festival started. Jeannette was instrumental in Peter having call me at midnight one night, to ask me if I would come back, "Just to help." Everything was in place.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was all just so crazy.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I just came back and helped usher things through, on that scale of administrative and helping the hospitality people and stuff like that. That was '96. That was my 11th festival.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Also, a lot of you did graduate, moved on to other places.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Absolutely. Laura went to Aspen.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Especially after '95. That was the last Festival for several people.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I mean, ten years, you kind of feel like there's not much more you can do.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: What would happen was, we would have these, you know, Bosnian filmmakers. Sarajevo was happening. All the stuff that was on the front page of the paper was not being covered by the entertainment section, to let people know that they could see the reality on film of what they were reading on the front page. I remember Dan Rosenheim, he was the managing editor at the time and I used to call Dan regularly and tell him, "You need

better coverage for these films so that people can see what's going on and come to the Festival.” I can't tell you how many times—I don't know who hung up on who first. I met with the editorial editor; she took me to lunch.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Who's that?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She's not there anymore. Liz Lufkin. Because they weren't covering the Festival the way they should.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Exactly. They were covering it as though a Hollywood film was opening and they'd give a review . . .

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: The only person that was seriously interested in all of these films was Edward Guthmann and they weren't giving him enough, or if they did, it wouldn't run. I remember when Arthur Penn was honored. Edward had done a feature piece on Arthur Penn, and Arthur Penn was a major person. I said to Edward, “When is your piece going to run?” And he said, “Well, you know, I don't know what's going on but I think the piece isn't going to run until after the tribute on stage.” I said, “That's not acceptable.” So I called the paper and I gave them shit, and I said, “What is the matter with you people? This is a major film person.”

I had organized a dinner for Arthur Penn and Willie Brown, who was mayor at that time, in the back room at Stars. Arthur Penn was very instrumental in making filming happen easier in New York. They were having the same problems that other cities were, and Arthur Penn turned NYC around for filming. I wanted Willie to understand how important filming was for San Francisco. So, all of that shit, and then the paper. And he said to me, “Why do you care if the piece runs after the tribute? Are you having a hard time selling tickets?” I said, “No, it's not about selling tickets. It's about making the public aware of what they might be able to see, and that they didn't get to see after it was over.” And they just never got it. They still don't get it.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I just hosted a panel of film critics recently, and they were all on the verge of a nervous breakdown, because they have to watch everything. Edward Guthmann's out of the business for that reason.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, he moved over to books. I know. But anyway, it is the paper's responsibility.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: To inform and educate its readers.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, that's right, and they don't do that.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: They're treating these like Hollywood films.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And the critics, I mean, if you read the stuff, you wonder. And I mentioned it one night in here to the new publisher. And Bronstein was here. I said, "You know, reading these criticisms of films, I get the feeling that you people walk into the newsroom and say, 'Okay, we have tickets for a press screening for such-and-such a film. Who wants to go cover it?' And if the copy boy or the sweeper raises his hand, you give them the tickets." Because it's written that way. It's not written from a writer's, critic's perspective. I go to those press screenings. I get invited to all that shit that's at the Variety Club, and I look at these people and I think, "Who are these people?" And they let go people who should be reviewing. Michael Schragger was a great reviewer. Because of some personal difference that Bronstein had with him, he's gone.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I'm friendly with Mick LaSalle and the other ones. He was on a panel I was at, and he said, "We'd love to cover these films but there are not enough venues."

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, that's not true. Anyway it's not about that. Let's move on.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Well, in '91, we had a filmmaker here, Zoran Masirevic from Yugoslavia, with a film. He was a young guy and he had his actor here, Davor Janjic, and he was very young, and they were very spirited, great guys, and civil war broke out—while they were here—in Yugoslavia. I can't even imagine what that would be like, if that happened to us somewhere. Now, Zoran was really fairly calm about it because Zoran, I think, was very much living over there. He eventually moved to L.A. Davor was very young. His father and grandfather were in the military, and he was a wreck and devastated.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: So what's your point?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That these things were happening while we had the Film Festival. That civil war was breaking out in another country and we had those people from those countries here. They couldn't get home. So politics were playing a big part, as well, in the Festival. Not only are we showing international films, but it's very timely. What's happening in the world today is affecting people that we are hosting at the same time.

The guy came the next year that directed **Tito and Me**. Another director from the same region. We were at our office on Fillmore Street; it was the night before Opening Night. **Tito and Me** might even have been an Opening Night film, I can't remember. He walked in with his film, and we're like, "Oh, hello! It's so nice to see you again." And he's telling us the story of being on a small plane, having to get off, having to walk across the border—because it's split now—with his film in hand to get on another plane to get here safely to present his film. It just was very interesting to me that what's happening in the world was affecting what we were doing at the same time.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yes, I think one of the big disconnects in American society is that you are reading about these countries every day in the news, and the American people have no idea what these countries are really like. The closest thing you can come to knowing is to come to the Film Festival and see a film from Iran, and then you see how someone is in their daily life as a person in a way that you will never find in the newspaper, even though you were reading about that country constantly.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Exactly! And that's where the education comes in.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And that's where the paper falls down.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah. They're looking at it like that's it, "I'm just gonna critique this film as a film." Now the Rodney King verdict came through during our Festival.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Ninety-two.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And the riot started, curfew started. We canceled some of our screenings that night and closed down the Kabuki. I remember Tom and I were walking back to our office with T-shirts and thinking, “Are they gonna think we’re looting?” At the same time, Eric Stoltz was in a film that year, something with Helen Hunt—I forget the name—in which he was a paraplegic. He came to the festival and he was really freaked out because when he left L.A. his neighborhood was on fire, and he wasn’t sure if his house was in danger or not. That was all tied in to those riots at the time.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I didn’t know that screenings had been cancelled.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We cancelled that night. We closed down early. We had to refund people. Because everybody was on edge, and the neighborhood we were in is pretty much a cultural on-the-edge neighborhood. We just felt it was safer at that time. We didn’t know what was happening. We were hearing news reports, and we closed it down.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Jeannette, I’ve been wanting to ask you about operational aspects of the Festival because you, in your position—and I forget exactly what your title was—you ended up being in charge of things like box office, volunteers, all these kinds of things. And certain norms are established and things are done a certain way, and when you’ve got a way of doing things, it really brings a lot of stability. You just know what you have to do every year. What was your involvement in developing ways of doing box-office and all of those kinds of things?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Well, it was really getting a good crew in there that could stay on top of things. It was almost a game of manipulation, especially with box-office. I ran the front office of the Film Society, bringing people in to take care of things and handle films and such at that time.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And what time was this? You said you started out being just kind of an office person, but then at a certain point you took more and more responsibility. When did that happen?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Probably within the first year. And the full escalation of that was probably in the next couple of years after that. Then, when Tom Schmidt came on, he was head

of all administrative and he was really focusing on dealing with grants and things like that, and audience surveys and such, and I just was in charge of the nuts and bolts running of behind-the-scenes to make sure that things moved smoothly. Probably the biggest challenge was the box-office. We had amazing volunteers. A huge group of them. We eventually got Katy Cavanaugh in to run the volunteers, and I would just oversee and help guide her through that. But she did a really good job of coordinating them and their schedules.

Box-office was a big game of manipulation because you had to coordinate with the press office, with the programmers, with the sponsors, everybody. The name of the game is Sell Tickets. The more tickets you sell, the better off you'll be at the end. At the same time, you have a sponsor coming in; they're owed 20 tickets. You've got press people; they're owed so many tickets. Box office started in our office, and that was the pre-sales, and then it eventually moved to the theater. Several times a day, I would go in and I would meet with the managers and we would look at all the numbers, and we would move them as I would have a block held for, you know, pass holders. Because we had membership levels at \$500 a year, which means you get ten tickets. You had to hold for them. You had to hold for sponsors. You had to hold for filmmakers. You had to hold for press.

So we would look at all the numbers, like I said, several times a day and just keep moving things around and see how it was selling. Where we could move things here and there. At the end of the day, you want to sell tickets more than you want to give them away. We would oversell. We would hold a certain number back. It was like the lottery. "Okay, I've got ten tickets in my hand, it's the day before Opening Night, this is what you release, this is what you won't release." It was intense. But it just became so normal to me, year after year, and that was the game you had to play.

You really had to manipulate it to accommodate the general public because they're your loyal audience more than the sponsor, more than a press person, anybody else. You've got to make sure that general audience is taken care of year after year after year. That was probably the biggest challenge. Even over membership and merchandising and Will Call—making sure you don't have empty seats and that everybody who can possibly get a seat can get a seat.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Do you remember first going in to the Kabuki? That happened in 1987? Was it the first year in the Kabuki?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Was it that quickly? Eighty-seven or '88? I guess it's '87. Yeah, the next year. I remember going in there. I don't remember a lot about it, but they had eight screens.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Who came up with that? When did the Kabuki get built?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I think the main theater had already existed, but the multiplex opened in '87.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It wasn't the main theater. It was a concert hall. It was for live venues.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: But there was a multiplex around it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But I mean, it wasn't a movie theater.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No. They created a movie theater out of that space. The multiplex, owned by AMC, and AMC was very corporate, and it was trying to mesh together the corporate and the artistic minds, which was not easy. But we did end up with a good working relationship with them. It was very challenging. Because you had so many theaters. You only had one big theater, which was 700 seats. The next one after that was maybe 265. And it went all the way down to maybe 150. So it was a challenge for the programmers, which film is going to go in which theater.

Many times—maybe a week before—you were moving theaters because you realized the ticket sales are much higher for this film that's in the 150-seat theater, and you've got hardly anything sold for a 260-seat. It is constant, constant manipulation. It's not easy. The behind-the-scenes, I think, would make a fascinating documentary of how to really put a festival on. Especially one that's so important to a city like this, a big cosmopolitan city. And that Festival is the oldest in North America, something that you know people look forward to every year.

SHEILA CADIGAN: And it has these challenges to be not elitist and not just a once-a-year thing.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's right. We want to be accessible to everybody. We want to educate. We started Schools in the Festival in the '90s. It was always, "What new angle can we bring into this?" But it was a challenge that first year, and it was rough going because it was a learning experience for the Kabuki staff and for us. And after that it got easier, and easier and we forged a really good relationship. But that first year was really tough. Really tough.

Before that, we were at the Palace of Fine Arts, and at the Opera Plaza. We were at the York, which was a bit run-down, and they were trying to build that up. We were at the Lumiere. Maybe one or two. But Opera Plaza we did a lot at. It was a perfect marriage for the Kabuki. At the time, we did not take over eight screens; we took over maybe six screens.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: If that much.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: If that much. Maybe it was five. I can't remember exactly. And it was also very confusing, because you had the general public coming in to see some mainstream Hollywood film that opened, and there's all this other stuff going on. So it was a little bumpy at first. But it eventually smoothed out, and it was a perfect, perfect match, you know?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Now, the Film Society's doing screenings in firehouses and in people's homes with outreach materials. It is really a traveling circus in a way. Year-round. In the park. They're having screenings in Union Square Park.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That's not the Film Society. That's Alfie Felder. Neighborhood Theater.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We did branch out to Marin. And at the same time, you've got all of the Berkeley films.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You had San Jose, and you had Palo Alto.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: San Jose, we did that year. It was worth trying. I don't know if it was the best idea to have things out in San Jose, but again the idea was to get it out there.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Do you know what happened? I think the whole thing kind of took a nosedive when all these other people started making their own festivals. Like the Asian Festival. The Gay and Lesbian Festival. The Italian Festival. The Irish Festival. The Jewish Film Festival. All those film festivals started showing their own films.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: They were sprouting up everywhere.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And then, at the time of year, they got better films than we did because the availability was not always—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It's very competitive.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Now, it's like everybody's got a film festival. Eddie Muller's got that Film Noir. I love his festival. I introduced him to Sean Penn, and Sean came and introduced a film and talked about it. It happened to be a film his father acted in. There's all these festivals. So, year-round, you can go to a film festival.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yeah, the world has changed a lot in fifty years.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know how great it is to do all that stuff on the Internet, but then again I'm the wrong person because I don't have a computer. I just don't like the idea of everybody having to be closed in in their houses, and there's no interaction with people. I want to go to a movie theater.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah. Remember when we had the—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: **The Decalogue**. I was just going to say, we had a club. It was so great.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We had a core group of people every day come in to see that film.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We came every night, because it was Kieslowski. And it was based on the Ten Commandments. They were ten films that were made for Polish television. It started small, and then all of a sudden—

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Every day, we would have the same people coming. They were very committed to it.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And by the end, we all knew each other. We'd all made friends, because we were the same people coming every night to see the films, and hanging out and talking about it. That's what it's about. Instead of this sitting at home looking at something on a screen.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I hope it never gets to that.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know, they tried doing it, they've done two of them here where they've shown a film on the computer and then they say, "Let's all meet at Tosca and talk about it." The first one they did, they had a decent turnout. But the second one they did, which was just a couple weeks ago, there was hardly anybody here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Is that something the Film Society is doing outside of the Film Festival?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, they are.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: It's like a little film club?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't know. It's something that Graham has put together. I know, if I had a computer and if I watched this thing and I was at home, I don't think I'd feel like going out at ten o'clock.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: So you watch it and then got out after the film?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. And then you go out and then you're supposed to... I don't know.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: There's just no experience like being in a movie theater and having a filmmaker there to talk about their film and their life. What we promoted all those years—which was completely different than when they started the Festival—was educating people about other people from around the world and what their lives are like.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You also have to remember that it was a very exciting time for film in Europe, in Eastern Europe, in other countries. There was a lot going on as opposed to now, when all these countries have lost all their financing, so everybody's scrambling just like they are here, in this country. So those films aren't coming out. Look at all those Russians. My God! They made incredible films. All those people were making great films.

SHEILA CADIGAN: State financing?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. And it doesn't happen any more. So I think it's harder to get films. The New Wave. Where's the next wave?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's a good question. Where is the next wave?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It's been a long time, you know? I remember I was in college when I was seeing all those films. But there were movie theaters. There aren't even movie theaters any more. There aren't art houses. I mean, Mel Novikoff, he made his money on these theaters. I used to go out to the Surf Theatre. I don't even know if anybody remembers the Surf Theatre.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Out in the Sunset/Richmond?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Does it still exist?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: No. It's a church now.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: There's no more of those kind of theaters.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I was at the Balboa, recently. That's still there. Gary Meyer.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Do you remember Mel?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Of course I remember Mel.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: What was your interaction with Mel?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: So sweet! The kindest, nicest, most unassuming, wonderful, generous man.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And he was a board member, like Jeannette, although he had a film theater and all of that. Where she was aligned with us in another way, he was very close to Peter and programming. On that level. He was so generous of spirit. It was very sad when he died. Very sad.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Very sweet guy. Maurice reminds me a little bit of him in his generosity. Mel was not as flamboyant.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Maury's a little crazier.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Maurice used to come with Ben Barenholtz to look at films, to buy films for their theaters. Then Maurice ended up renting an apartment here. And then he came on the board. And then he started Skyy Vodka. All of that was later. The way we first met Maurice was he was a customer. He and Ben Barenholtz.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And this was before he started Skyy Vodka?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, way before.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He started Skyy Vodka in '92, I think. But he owned the theater, the Quad, in New York. He started the first multiplex there.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Maurice is the guy who invented that thing, you know, you buy in the drugstore to take lint off your—the roller. That's Maurice. Maurice has invented all kinds of things.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Games and things.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. He's an inventor.

SHEILA CADIGAN: But he had a grand passion for film.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember these women coming from Eastern Europe. They'd had pretty rough lives, a lot of these women, and they would just be like huddled together in the Kabuki in the café level while their film was going on, drinking flasks of whisky or whatever. I just really kind of was in awe of them. Coming to this country, first of all, and then to this city, and to this Film Festival.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And you're talking about filmmakers? Actors?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yes, filmmakers. Mostly filmmakers. Not the actors so much. It just made an impression on me.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Do you think that the Film Festival helped develop these national cinema ones, their exposure here? As far as putting them out into other cities in the US?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Maybe a little bit. Sharing with other film festivals and getting their films shown. But there was so much you really could do.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I know a filmmaker that made an impression on you was Yusuf Chahine.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah. The Egyptian. His last name is spelt differently. He's like the most famous director in Egypt and we had one of his films. Or did he get the Kurosawa?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, he didn't get the Kurosawa.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Was it called **The Immigrant**?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah. He came and all of these Egyptian people came. Delegates from the consulate here. It was very, very fancy and, I think, just an honor for these people to be in his presence. That was pretty neat, to meet him.

SHEILA CADIGAN: What's your best memory of festival years?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: My best? That's a tough one. I don't have one best one. Dancing on the bar?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I was going to say, dancing on the car.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Dancing on the car, yeah. I mean, there are the memories of all the people and all the films, but honestly it's, I think, the camaraderie. We were so tightly knit together.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We had good times, but like you said, it was a different Festival in those days and everybody was very tight and close.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I think what meant the most to me was seeing people respond. Seeing people come in droves and go to the box-office and come to those films. It was like you really did it right because people are responding to what you worked so hard to accomplish and be successful at. You're not putting this on for yourself; you're putting it on for the city. It's a big responsibility. To see people respond to that, I think, meant more to me than anything. Next to, you know, being at Tosca till three in the morning every single night. With my home girls.

PAMELA GENTILE: We'd be here, the three of us, all the time.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And Marie-Pierre.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was the three of us, huh.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Seeing the audience come, people come, and respond to what really was your reward.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: My most memorable—not “most” but one of them—was George Gund used to rent the skating rink. There used to be a skating rink out on 48th Avenue, an ice skating rink. It closed on Sunday night at 9 o’clock, and we would leave the bar here and go skating and play hockey. There was a bunch of Russian filmmakers one year, and George was very tight with the consulate. In those days, the consulate always went with the filmmakers—God forbid anybody should defect! We took these Russian filmmakers out to skate.

So we’re all at the ice skating rink and we’re putting skates on and everybody’s skating and we’re playing hockey, kinda like, half-assed. And these Russians keep leaving the ice and going into the room, and the guys who owned the skating rink would open it just for George on Sunday night so he could skate. So we’re doing this and back and forth and they’re taking time out. They were getting shit-faced! They had vodka in their bags. Well, by the time we finished playing we had like five Russians who couldn’t stand. George kept saying, “What’s wrong with them?” I said, “Look at what they’re doing.” There were empty bottles of Stoli in these bags.

So now we’re driving back, and they’re like passed out in the back seat and in the other seat. So I said to George, “Where are we taking them?” He said, “I don’t know. I thought you knew where we were taking them.” I said, “Don’t you know what hotel they’re staying at?” And he said, “No. I thought you knew.” I had no idea. We were driving around half the night, going to all the hotels that the Festival had booked for people, and we didn’t even know their names. We ended up going to the Soviet Consulate because we had one guy from the consulate.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I wonder what year that was.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don’t know.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Early '80s?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. Do you remember when he had the Sharks and we would be here waiting for him because he was down in San Jose at the game, and I would always call him on his cellphone and say, "Whatever food you have left over in the suite, bring with you." So he would take the food, put it in the back of his car and drive up. Most of the time, you had to be on the phone with George because you didn't want him falling asleep while he was driving. So I'm talking to him. All of a sudden I hear this noise. I said, "What is that?" He said, "The Highway Patrol is after me." I said, "George, haven't you turned your radar thing on?" Because he has one of those radar things in the car, you know, that shows you when somebody's coming up close. "Oh, I don't think I turned it on." Jesus Christ!

The guy has got him, and now I'm listening to this guy saying, "you were speeding." I don't know what he's saying, and I'm saying, "George, tell him who you are. Show him your card." And I hear the guy say, "So, who are you? The caterer for the Sharks?" Cause he had all this Sharks stuff, paraphernalia in the back seat. I said, "Don't tell him you're the caterer. Tell him you're the owner."

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's George. He would show up at the rink without ID and they'd say, "Who are you? You can't get in."

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: We got thrown out one night. When the Sharks first started and it was at the Cow Palace. They were doing all the exhibition games at the Cow Palace before the Shark Tank was built. So he says to me—Where is that thing? Oh, I think we got rid of it. It was a great big poster and it was in the press room. George said to me—this was after the game. Nobody there. We were wandering around. We're in the pressroom. "Get the poster." I said, "Oh, that's pretty nice." He said, "Yeah, why don't you take that for the back room?"

So now we're walking out with this poster and there's a security guard who is a woman, and she is this big, and she's got holsters on her hips. And she's saying, "What are you two doing here?" And he's mumbling something. He's not opening his mouth. All you have to do is say, "I'm the owner of the team."

SHEILA CADIGAN: You didn't offer up that info?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You know what I did? I had the program and I opened it and I said, "See these eyebrows?" I'm showing it to this woman. I said, "Look!"

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's George. He's so unassuming.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He once called me from the parking lot of the Cow Palace because he didn't know how to get out.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He would come to Opening Night, and that morning he'd been in Iceland. You know?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He would drive up here, open the trunk of the car and have salmon cause he'd just come from Alaska. And he would make my mother make salmon roe out of the roe, make caviar, you know? Finally, the freezers in everybody's house were full of salmon. I said, "This can't go on," so I finally started taking them to the smokehouse down on... What's that place? That big restaurant? Anyway, down on the pier there's a smokehouse, so I started having them smoked so they'd keep longer. What do you want to go to, here?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Okay. Let's do this. Let's do the one-minute story.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Which is?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: We have some names. We'll throw in a name. You can either just say, "Don't know anything about him," or a one-minute story.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Mikhail Baryshnikov was here in '98, at the Festival. He's in the pictures.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: He attended, was it Opening Night, for the Wayne Wang film?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Came to a party.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He must've come with me, cause I can't imagine why he would go without me. I don't even remember Mischa coming.

PAMELA GENTILE: He did.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yeah. We've got the pictures.

PAMELA GENTILE: There are pictures. Yeah. I remember it. It was pretty quiet, is what I remember.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And I brought him?

PAMELA GENTILE: I think so. I don't remember. I honestly don't remember.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Who else would have brought him?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I know. That's what I'm thinking.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I've got Jeremy Irons, Sharon Stone and Robin Williams all in the same picture.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, I did bring Mischa. I remember that. At the Castro. Yeah.

SHEILA CADIGAN: And the Arquette-Cage couple is there and you're pictured with them.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And my mother.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Charles Bronson was there in '99.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Charles Bronson, how sweet was he? He came for Sean's tribute, and Sean personally wanted him there because he was so important to him from **Indian Runner**.

He was a very nice man and I think he was already having Alzheimer's at that time, so it was kind of sad. But it was so nice that Sean was so great to him and included him. He didn't speak.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Winona Ryder in 2000.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, my honey! That was the finest. When she got up on stage and she said there were three things about San Francisco that she loved, and it was City Lights Bookstore, the MUNI, and me and Tosca. Remember that?

SHEILA CADIGAN: Those are beautiful pictures of you. Spike Jonze was there with Sophia Coppola.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was for **Virgin Suicides**, right?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: How great was Marie-Pierre? Marie-Pierre got that film into Cannes.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Clint Eastwood in 2001.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's when I came with Bruce.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Clint Eastwood and Forest Whitaker. Was Stockard here?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah. He got the Kurosawa or whatever it was called at that point. She got the acting award.

SHEILA CADIGAN: The celebrity aspect seemed to start picking up steam around then. Because in 2002, Warren Beatty was here, George Hamilton, Kevin Spacey, Sharon Stone, Marisol Medina.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Sharon Stone was great because she was dating Phil Bronstein at the time, or they were already married, and she raised a lot of money doing her auction stuff.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was the Nicolas Cage year that she did the auction.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was at that Anna Hotel.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Nancy Pelosi and her daughter were there.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was the same time? But that was not opening or gala. That was just the film was screened.

SHEILA CADIGAN: In 2003, Robert Altman, Dustin Hoffman, Lily Tomlin.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: That was the year that Robin pulled me into the photo.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Robin?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Williams. Yeah. With Tom Waites and Dustin Hoffman. Just a whole bunch of people. And Robin.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Who were you guys honoring?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: They were honoring Dustin Hoffman, and who else?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Altman.

PAMELA GENTILE: Altman and Hoffman. Do you remember what Robin said? At that event? He was cracking jokes and he said this thing about George's eyebrows.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, he did. He made a joke about George's eyebrows.

PAMELA GENTILE: It was sort of surprising to me because no one had ever said that in front of George.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: No, no. Lauren did that at Devon's wedding. To George.

PAMELA GENTILE: Oh, really?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He said, “My! That’s quite some eyebrows you have.” So it wasn’t just Robin.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: What was Dustin Hoffman doing there?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Actually, Dustin Hoffman turned out pretty good considering he’s one of those people who’s hard to please because he’s so intellectual. I remember Sean Penn telling me this story that he went over to his house in New York once to talk about a film, and he said twelve hours later he was still in that house listening to him talk! About some book. And it was just one thing: the book.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Kurosawa comes back in 2004, just three years ago.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: No.

SHEILA CADIGAN: I see pictures of Gavin Newsom and Jerry Brown, so they were there. Morgan Freeman?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: This was last year, Gavin and Jerry. This was at Werner Herzog, and Ed Harris and Jean-Claude.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Okay, I think we’re current now.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Yeah, pretty much. Except for maybe—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Kevin Spacey! How about Kevin Spacey? When Sean introduced him and he had these—remember the glasses? Those were Nick Nolte’s glasses. Here’s the pictures, right? That was also the pictures that she wasn’t too happy that I was there. Because I came with Sean and when we found out that Kevin was being honored, I told Sean, “You know,

it would be really nice-cause you got the award last year, that you would introduce Kevin this year.”

SHEILA CADIGAN: Just like the Oscars!

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, you know, I kind of wasn't involved at that point so I was going as a guest. The night before, Nick Nolte was wearing these glasses and they were regular reading glasses but they had little lights on them. When we came in, after you'd taken all these pictures and we were sitting at the table, and we were waiting for Sean's turn to get up and do the thing, Sean opens his jacket and shows me the glasses. I said, "Oh, my God! You're not!" He said, "Yes." And he got up and when he went to the podium to make his speech, he put the glasses on. And did his speech. That was a great night in here afterwards. Was that Warren?

PAMELA GENTILE: Annette and Warren.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, but I'm talking about Warren when he got his.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was 2002.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Right. Who else got it with him? Because we spent the entire time talking politics. Give me a break. You know, who do I know who's going to run for governor? I don't have the inside scoop.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Did you meet Taylor Hackford or Helen Mirren when they were here?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: They were here the night before the awards. Taylor is very good friends with Rob Nilsson. So they spent the evening here. And Helen Mirren, her last name is Miranoff. She's Russian. She speaks Russian fluently.

SHEILA CADIGAN: She was in **White Nights**.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, she was.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Let's see who else is current. Guy Maddin was here last year. Tilda Swinton. Werner Herzog.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Tilda Swinton's been here a lot because she's friends with Lynn Hershman and she's been in her films.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Guy Maddin has been here before too. He was here for **Tales From the Gimli Hospital**, and he was making out ferociously in a booth in Tosca. We told Ben Barenholtz, "Tell him to go get a room."

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Who else?

SHEILA CADIGAN: That's it.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Are we there?

SHEILA CADIGAN: I think we're there. Benjamin Bratt. Did you meet him when he was here?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was when his brother did that film—

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yeah, Peter.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But I didn't meet him then. I met him when he was dating Julia Roberts and he was bringing her to town a lot. So that was not in the Festival.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: But he came later, post-Julia Roberts.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: With his wife.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Well, I think that covers it. We're up to date.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, we had Jimmy Smits!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Remember? Oh, he was fantastic.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was here for **Mi Familia**.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Big smoker.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was hot.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And he was so charming. And so nice.

PAMELA GENTILE: Which men really sort of charmed your pants off over the years?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Literally or figuratively?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: We'll take whatever!

PAMELA GENTILE: The girls want to know. Which are the men that you've met that—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Well, my favorite was Toshiro Mifune. I was going to say Gérard Depardieu, yeah. But you weren't here earlier when I told them how I felt about Toshiro.

PAMELA GENTILE: And did you talk about on-stage?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Oh, yeah. I think Dario Graninetti for me. Dario came the year of **The Dark Side of the Heart**. He was beyond sexy. And the funny thing is, Marie-Pierre and I went to pick him up at the airport. Paula drove us. We're standing inside the airport, waiting, waiting. She said, "Look at the film. He's so beautiful. Smoldering." We're like, "Is that him?" Because the poor guy probably flew like 15 hours. He was in a **Gilligan's Island** hat.

Then we got in the car, and it was late. It was like 11 o'clock or so. We're talking to him, we get in the car and we just busted open a bottle of champagne—which you probably gave us—and

he's interested in Paula. And we're driving, and he's like, "Paula! This is wonderful!" You know? And we came right to the bar. The guy flew from Argentina, we took him right to the bar, and we sat in here. Everybody was mad at us because we were the two who went to pick him up. We were like, "I don't care. We're going to pick him up." Sometimes hierarchy, longevity. "I don't care how long you've been in the job. We've been here longer; we're picking him up." I had a great time with him. He was just really a beautiful person.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, who cares whether you did or you didn't?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: We didn't.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You wanted to!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Sure. I admit it. His sister came from L.A. and was here. Pamela and I stayed friends with his sister for a while. He was great. He was very charming. We can't get into like who were the hook-ups. That's for another publication.

PAMELA GENTILE: Or the divas and the drama queens. Are there any that stand out in your memory?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But there are still people I'm friends with today, filmmakers that I met years ago.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't think they're drama queens when they come to a festival. Not a festival like this.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I can't think of anybody that was difficult.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No. And the people I stayed friends with were not.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Given the foreign filmmaking aspect of this, any misinterpretations? Where someone just really didn't understand what was going on and you didn't have an interpreter?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: There's a lot of those!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: There are. I really think the strangest honoree we ever, ever had was that guy you and I were talking about that got that award.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Arturo.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No, no, no. He's the Mexican. The guy, Artour Aristakisian that got that award. Remember him? With the long hair. He was something out of the musical **Hair**. He had that crazy five-hour film nobody could understand. What award did he get?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: It was the Satyajit Ray Award.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He got \$10,000. More than he'll ever have in his life.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Wait a minute? Who picked his film to be in the Festival?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Peter.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: The name of the film is **Palms**.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: **Palms**. And let me tell you, there were volunteers lining up to sleep with him. He was like a little rock star.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: It was about beggars.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Let's talk about Otar.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He was pretty crazy.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was nuts.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Otar Iosseliani.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was great.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Who was he?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He's a Georgian filmmaker who lives in Paris and makes wonderful films, but he's got a drinking problem. He's always drunk.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Always.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Always drunk. And like that thing for Sally Potter at the Castro, and Peter is on the stage with Sally Potter. It was **Orlando**.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And it was the Satyajit Ray Award. The first one.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. And all of a sudden, he came strutting down the aisle of the Castro, walked right up to the stage, and started telling her how much he loved her. Only I think he was telling her in Georgian. Nobody knew what he was saying.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And God bless Peter, because Peter, in those insane moments, knew how to handle these people.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: You've got to give him credit, you really do.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: He's just be like, "Oh, ladies and gentleman. Otar Iosseliani." He was trying to make the best of a very embarrassing situation.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was very funny.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Someone threw wine on Sally Potter's dress or something?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Do you remember that? It was at Crowne Point Press Plaza, the reception. I was trying to remember who spilled the wine on her. She had a white dress on, remember? And it was red wine. And it was all down the back of her. Everybody sort of walked away. I thought maybe you would remember.

PAMELA GENTILE: I remember the incident.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And they did it on purpose.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Really?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was somebody that obviously wanted the award more than she did. Something like that. I don't remember who it was.

SHEILA CADIGAN: Any other catfights? Other than the famous Deneuve one.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Not really. There really were not. Internally, maybe, but not with any of our guests.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Internally!

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No, I'm kidding. With the guests, not really. It never really got to that.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Also maybe 'cause they weren't here long enough to get into any.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, they weren't here that long and a lot of them were just in awe of being, like I said, not only in this country but in this city. We really tried to host them very well, and I think we did in those days. Take them around. Show them around. They'd go on tours. We'd have tours set up for them.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: But don't you do that still?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Yes, the guest services are very good.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: You know what, maybe it was a more personal time. It was one-on-one attention.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: There was a period where they were banned from coming here. That's what I heard. And I heard that from a person who worked in the office.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Oh, yeah. Yes, I know what you mean.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Can you imagine? Telling them that they would be fired if they came here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I have a feeling—and I haven't been around for many years—that it's definitely not the same here during the Festival than it was in those years.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It isn't. Don't you think it's changed?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Sure.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: There was just no question that you would come here at the end of the night. With every filmmaker.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And every night. Every night. It wasn't just Closing.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: No, every single night.

PAMELA GENTILE: When was the Néstor Almendros?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Eighty-six. We had a tribute to him.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: How great was that! And I threw a party for him. I had all the tables moved out. I had an oyster bar brought in, and I had shucking oysters. Oh, my God, it was so much fun!

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Why oysters?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Because Néstor liked oysters.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That's it? You'd heard that Nestor liked oysters?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That's a really good description of you.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: How did you know Nestor before he came to the Festival?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I knew Nestor through friends of mine in New York. Like I said, I met Nestor when he was doing the **Koko: A Talking Gorilla** documentary. It was never in the Film Festival, was it?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: I don't think so.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Penny moved down to Woodside, on Dale's property, and started working with her, teaching her sign language. Meantime, she's driving a car. And they made this film. Nestor and Barbet. I met Nestor then. Then again when I was in New York, my friend Howard—remember Howard? Gillman. Howard is the executor of Nestor's estate. Through the years, we saw each other, we'd have dinner. And Nestor was Cuban, but Nestor was not a Fidel Cuban. Nestor has an amazing amount of footage that he shot when the revolution happened. The day, in Havana.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Where is all that footage now?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He left everything to the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and Howard was in charge of it. I tried to get the museum in New York, through Aggie, to do a tribute to Nestor after he died. Nothing ever happened. But I'd already known Nestor quite a few

years before. He had a big fight with one of the Cuban directors that happened to be at the Festival at the same time that Nestor was honored. It was a guy named Tomás—

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Gutiérrez Alea. It was 1984.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Right here in my bar.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Really? Oh, my goodness. Tell us about the story. What happened?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: How can I tell you? It was in Spanish. But the other guy's the one who left.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Gutiérrez Aleas is probably the best known, the most prominent Cuban director in Cuba's history.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, well, they had it out. In here.

SHEILA CADIGAN: We asked about fights.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It wasn't a fight. It wasn't physical.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: A heated political discussion.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: It was very political. Tom Luddy was standing there grinning the whole time. He loved it. He's such a provocateur. Nestor was one of a kind. This woman who'd shot those French films—Caroline Champetier—did **Le Petit Lieutenant** and then she had the other one. The one about the couple in the hotel room, divorced. That I walked out of. She said to me when she came back after the screening, "Why did you leave?" I said, "I didn't like those people. I had nothing in common with those people. So I left the film."

Nestor was her mentor. She learned everything from Nestor. She apprenticed with him. When she saw that picture of Nestor and me and Marjory, she started crying. She wanted to know how

I knew him. She was going back to Paris to shoot a film with Barbet. That movie opened, by the way. It got picked up, **Le Petit Lieutenant**.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I remember one year during the Festival and you were having **Basic Instinct** shot in here.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Was that during the Festival?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: During the Festival. You and I came and stood in the kitchen.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Ninety-two? Ninety-one?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I don't know. While they shot that scene. It was '91 because it was the same year when the Bosnia war broke out. And those two directors were here.

PAMELA GENTILE: Is it that photo?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That one, right there. With Michael Douglas and Paul Verhoeven. George Dzundza was here. That was pretty crazy. You had Hollywood filming here. You had the Festival crashing here.

PAMELA GENTILE: Was Agnieszka Holland here?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yes. She was here a lot.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She was here my first year for **Vagabond**. Didn't she come for—

MIGUEL PENDÁS: You're thinking of Agnes Varda.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: You're right. Sorry.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Agnieszka Holland came—

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Did **Secret Garden**. Wasn't it **Secret Garden**?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Yeah, but we didn't show that. We showed something else of hers.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Varda is married to who?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: Jacques Demy.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Godard was here.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: That was in 1980. The same year that Truffaut was here. And they were possibly not speaking.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes. It was Godard. I remember, God, he smelled so bad. Ugh! And his teeth.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Really?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Oh, yeah.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: **Every Man for Himself** is the name of the film. He came? You met him?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah, he was here.

MIGUEL PENDÁS: And?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: And. Antonioni was here. Alberto Moravia was here. What was he here for? Moravia. Giulietta Masina was here.

PAMELA GENTILE: When was Giulietta Masina here?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Wasn't that before our time?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Before your time. Ettore Scola was here.

PAMELA GENTILE: When was Masina here?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She was here all week. She was here with her nephew the whole time. The poor kid had to escort his aunt. He never got to have any fun, so he would bring her over here and I'd babysit her while he went in the neighborhood.

PAMELA GENTILE: Was she here for the Festival?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yes, yes.

PAMELA GENTILE: What was Truffaut like?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Very volatile, apparently. Slugging it out with Deneuve backstage.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Wait a minute. He wasn't. She started it.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: But he hit her back, right?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: I don't think he hit her back. I don't know. Who told you he hit her back? She hit him. No. She was doing the slapping, and it was all in French. I dunno. He seemed kinda mild-mannered, you know?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: They weren't lovers, were they?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Yeah. They were. And then years later, what's her name, the daughter, Kiara.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: Kiara daughter of Mastroianni.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: Kiara wanted me to take a picture of her sitting on the same bar stool that her mother was sitting on twenty years earlier.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: That was in '95, Kiara was here with that film.

PAMELA GENTILE: And didn't she meet a boyfriend here? Husband?

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: And they had a child, right? Who's now older, and now she's married to a French singer and they have a baby. Well, who's now probably two years old.

PAMELA GENTILE: Who was the man that Kiara met here and married?

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: He was a filmmaker and he had a film here.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: I thought he was an artist. She had a film here. He was an artist. They never got married. And she was friends with Seymour Cassell. Very crazy! Oh, my God! Our connection to Seymour is that Opening Night of his film. It was at the Fillmore Auditorium, and Seymour Cassell happened to be at the Opening Night. Oh, my God, what's her son's name, McKenzie Astin. Patty Duke's son. They were filming here. We went up and started chatting them up and we brought them to Tosca. We introduced Jeannette to him. They started chatting and then they became friends. And then that film they were working on was the Opening Night the next year. Horrible film, but they were back for that. And then those two stayed on to become friends.

PAMELA GENTILE: Gena Rowlands came to the festival?

MIGUEL PENDÁS: '84.

JEANNETTE SHAHEEN: She's somebody you should become friends with.

JEANNETTE ETHEREDGE: She's wonderful. She's wonderful.