

San Francisco Film Society  
Oral History Project

**Interview with Marty Rubin**  
**Conducted by Margarita Landazuri**  
**Via Telephone**  
**October 11, 2006**

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Today is Wednesday, October 11, 2006. This is a telephone interview with Marty Rubin in Chicago on the tape recorder right now. All right. So how did you end up at the San Francisco International Film Festival? And when?

MARTY RUBIN: The first year—as your notes tell me—was 1973. At the time, I was running a film program at a museum in New York called the New York Cultural Center, on Columbus Circle. I received a phone call from Claude Jarman. I had never met him or spoken with him before. As you know, Albert Johnson had left. They were breaking up his job into several components, one of which would be the tribute programs. They had originally approached Peter Bogdanovich to do this. Peter, I assume because he was too busy with other things, politely declined and recommended me.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Where was his career at that point? He hadn't started... yes, he had started directing. He had made **Last Picture Show**, that's right.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. I was friendly with him at the time. I had done some interviews with him. As fellow cinephiles, we would often chat. He very nicely recommended me for the job. Claude was coming through New York on his way to a film festival or something, so he arranged to meet me. I guess he was either too desperate or was not unfavorably impressed and so they hired me to take the job.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And the job was?

MARTY RUBIN: I think the official title was something like Associate Director in Charge of Tributary Programming. That sounds kind of geographical, but what it means is I was in charge of the tribute programs. I was in charge, basically, of producing them.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The clip reels?

MARTY RUBIN: We didn't actually do clip reels. This was the pre-video era, you have to remember. We worked directly from film. Usually they were studio archival prints, therefore we could not cut them, so everything was cued.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Wow! I did not know that.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, it was a big production. I would see the films in advance. I would figure out which scenes I was gonna do. I would find them on the reels. I would mark them with a slip of paper. Then we would do a rehearsal where we would set the sound levels and also get the out cues, which were very important. You know, where do you stop? So it was elaborate and it was fun. It was not quite like leading an orchestra—much smaller scale—but we had, I believe, three 35mm projectors and a 16mm projector. A team of three projectionists: one handling one projector, one getting ready to do the next reel, one handling the rewinds and supervising the others. It was a well-coordinated presentation.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's amazing! I've never heard this before. That's wonderful.

MARTY RUBIN: Nowadays, I would assume this is totally unthinkable. Nobody would even dream of doing something like this. But we did it approximately five times a year during the Festival. It was fun. It was a real show.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Had you done this sort of thing before?

MARTY RUBIN: Absolutely not. I learned very quickly!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You must have been very young.

MARTY RUBIN: Yes, I was. Well, I wasn't that young. Twenty-six years old.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's young!

MARTY RUBIN: Orson Welles had already made **Citizen Kane** at 26!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Exactly. So that's remarkable. I didn't know all of this. So you, just as a film buff, and someone who knew a lot about classic films—

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, and also had worked professionally presenting films. This would have been the equivalent of—I'm trying to think—in San Francisco—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Pacific Film Archive?

MARTY RUBIN: Not that big. Whatever's a notch below that. Pacific Film Archive would have been like the Museum of Modern Art in New York. We were No. 2 at the time, in that field.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Does that still exist?

MARTY RUBIN: It exists, but not as the same entity—it was taken over. It was a notorious institution that had been started by Huntington Hartford, the grocery store magnate. He called it the Gallery of Modern Art and he built it. It's a really weird building that sits in the middle of Columbus Circle, slightly Moorish. Edward Durrell Stone was the architect. Very impractical building on a very strange site. A very small site. After Hartford got tired of it, or it became too insolvent, it was taken over by Fairleigh Dickinson University and redubbed the New York Cultural Center. It ran for several years until the university pulled out their funding. At that point, the museum closed and I lost my job. It was taken over by the city to use as a visitor center. As far as I know, it's still standing and there have been rumors of tearing it down, but people have been fighting that because the building is considered to be of some architectural significance.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Edward Durrell Stone, I would say, yeah.

MARTY RUBIN: Frankly, it might look nice from the outside, but, as a practical place in which to work and in which to run an art gallery, it was widely despised by the people who worked there, who thought it was a lemon.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you had that job while you were doing the Festival as well?

MARTY RUBIN: Yes. I was just a temporary. I would come out maybe two or three weeks before the Festival started and would basically just hunker down with these prints and watch them and take notes and mark out the scenes I was going to show.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Which you probably already had an idea about anyway, right?

MARTY RUBIN: Not really. I heard that the guy who was before me, Albert Johnson, would do that. He would guess. He would come in the day before they were actually going to do the tribute. It might have even been the same day. I forget which one. And he would say, “I think the scene is on reel four,” or something like that. And apparently, amazingly often, he was right. I don’t have that good a memory. But he was also not infrequently wrong and that would cause a lot of last-minute problems.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I’m sure he had access to the films though, because he was at the University. He was at UC Berkeley, where the Film Archive was.

MARTY RUBIN: That could be.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But I would believe it—you know, from all I’ve heard about him—that he would come in on the day. That just sounds like him.

MARTY RUBIN: He was, from what I hear, big at winging it. My style was totally the opposite. I’m very methodical and painstaking.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now, did you know some of this background with Albert and his firing and all that?

MARTY RUBIN: I just heard it by rumor. I knew some people who were Albert Johnson loyalists, like Tom Luddy, but I really didn’t know the man himself. I met him a couple of times afterwards at film festivals and just chatted with him briefly. But I didn’t know him. I was curious about it, though, and I would either eavesdrop or ask people because I wanted to know what I was getting into and if I was being some sort of usurper or carpetbagger. Not taking his place, but taking a third of his place.

One thing I'll say is that of all the people who worked for the Festival—some of whom were not especially big fans of Claude Jarman—none of them missed Albert Johnson. Not one single person I ever spoke to. They seemed more relieved than anything else that he was gone. I gather he had a kind of peremptory managerial style that made it difficult to work for him. I don't know if this coincides with other things you've heard.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes.

MARTY RUBIN: And that he would do things that were self-promotional, but other people would have to clean up the mess. I don't know if you heard about the famous incident—which was before my time—where he announced on the stage that from now on all these tributes will be free, and he hadn't told anybody beforehand.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes. Well, they had been free and then the Festival started charging for them and then he threatened to quit. Yeah. This is all very well documented in the press of the day.

MARTY RUBIN: Okay.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you're not telling tales out of school or anything.

MARTY RUBIN: All right. Yeah.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So were you intimidated? Because he had this huge reputation?

MARTY RUBIN: No, because I was too young and too dumb and really didn't know that much about it. Really didn't know him. I wasn't intimidated mainly out of naiveté. Also, one of the reasons I didn't feel intimidated: I know he was a grand figure and a charismatic figure whom people idolized, but in terms of my particular little job that I had there, he was actually an easy act to follow. Because he had done things in this kind of winging it, sloppy way, when I came in, because I was better organized, I looked good. It was hard not to. People were immediately

impressed that I was doing a less charismatic but more thorough and well-prepared job than he had been doing. So there really wasn't much reason to be intimidated.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you consult with anybody on the staff as to what clips they wanted included? Because I know that Albert's job had been to both do the interview with the person and do the clip reel. I keep saying "clip reels," but you know what I mean.

MARTY RUBIN: I did not do the interviews at all. They were done by Mark Chase. He handled that. All I did was, I was the grind in the back room. I watched the films and I selected the clips and I supervised the actual show, the actual presentation of the clips. I supervised the projectionists and made sure everything was going off as it should be. That was it. I had very little public appearance.

As far as the clips went, they trusted me and they thought I knew what I was doing, so I had total license in terms of selecting the clips. I would always be sure to ask the celebrities themselves if there were any films they especially wanted represented and if there were any they especially did not want represented. Sometimes they would participate in that way; other times they would just not care. You know, "Whatever you want." Others would have a specific request, "Oh, be sure to show this one," or "I hated this film; don't show it."

The one who was the most hands-on in that respect was Mel Brooks. He was what we would call a *nudzh*. He had very specific ideas about exactly what he wanted. And he just picked out from every film exactly what he wanted to show. I did a little bit of negotiating with him to get things that I felt should be shown. Then he would change his mind and come back a couple of days later with a radically different list, and we'd have to start over again. So I can imagine he requires a little patience to work for.

But I gotta say, he was right. He knew the audience. I, in my callow youth, did not realize that. So the scenes he picked—even though some of them I was dubious about at the beginning—when they actually played before the audience, they did play very well. I remember **Young Frankenstein**. I thought the scene to show was obviously the "Puttin' on the Ritz" scene, with Peter Boyle. It's hilarious! He didn't feel that was the one to show. He wanted to show the opening lecture scene, in the classroom. Which I thought was okay, but Groucho had already

done it better in **Horse Feathers**. So our compromise was to include both scenes, and his scene played much, much better with the audience. He was right. He knew his audience.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Interesting.

MARTY RUBIN: And who was I to presume to tell Mel Brooks what works with an audience!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: From reading the press from that, that was one of the big, big hits of the Festival. His appearance and how he did schtick, you know, he just was *on* the whole time.

MARTY RUBIN: Oh, yeah. Absolutely! His adrenaline level must be incredible. Through the roof!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: With Mark Chase doing the interviews, did he come to the dress rehearsal so he would know what to talk about?

MARTY RUBIN: No, I don't recall that at all. He would just prepare, do research, read articles and stuff like that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: It's funny now, because with the prevalence of video, we forget that to see these films was difficult.

MARTY RUBIN: It certainly was. And rounding up the prints. It was Lorena Cantrell who basically did the print traffic and getting the prints. She was behind the scenes a very key person, because people, it's true, they don't appreciate how difficult that was. And not every studio would be cooperative. Some of them, we just couldn't get prints from. Universal in those days was a notoriously uncooperative company. Paramount was very difficult. They might give us one print or something like that. One or two, if you really begged for them. So, yeah, it was tough to put those shows together just on a physical level, of actually getting the material.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And what happened when you weren't able to get a film that you wanted?

MARTY RUBIN: We regretted it. We had to. I can't remember offhand any, but there must have been several. Sometimes we would use the celebrity to run interference for us. I remember Natalie Wood was extremely effective in that department. She just called up Lew Wasserman and said, "Hey, will you give us these prints?" And the next day, they were there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's great. How much time did you spend in San Francisco? You said that you came a month before?

MARTY RUBIN: I'm not sure exactly. Maybe two to three weeks, and I would basically bury myself. At first, they would get a local theater. I remember there was a theater up on Union Street, an old picture palace.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The Metro.

MARTY RUBIN: That might have been it. I would screen the films in the morning or the early afternoon before their regular shows started. And it was basically just hunkering down. After that, at some point they got a portable 35mm projector that I would operate myself and we would do it in the offices of the Film Festival. There was a back room and I would just go in there and thread up the film.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you have other audience come in? Other members of the staff?

MARTY RUBIN: My wife, Penney. Very occasionally, other people. Here's the most memorable one: Yves Montand. He was very nice, very cordial. He had one request—he asked when we were screening **Let's Make Love** and he asked if he could sit in on it. As you know, he had a romance with Marilyn. He came in very promptly just before we started screening it. He sat there totally enraptured the whole time, then quietly thanked us and left. And everybody—particularly the women—was very impressed by that. He was still carrying a torch for Marilyn, I guess.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: But according to my notes here from the press clippings of that time, he was very gallant about not wanting to discuss that in the interview.

MARTY RUBIN: He might not have wanted to discuss it, but he certainly wanted to see that movie. Made a very big point of that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Ah. That's great. I love that story! Let's talk about the administrative set-up at the Festival when you came. Who was in charge? What were peoples' duties?

MARTY RUBIN: Since I was not involved in the day-to-day operation of the main part of the Festival—I was a specialist—I might not be the best person to ask about this. Claude Jarman was very much in charge, but in a low-key way. I don't know what you've heard from other people, but I thought Claude Jarman—although I was too young to appreciate it at the time—was an excellent boss. An excellent leader. He knew how to exercise authority. He knew how to use it discreetly. When it was needed, he would step in and exercise it. When it wasn't, he wouldn't. That's a very rare quality, which I appreciate more as I grow older because I've rarely, if ever, seen it in other bosses I've worked for. I don't know what your experience has been, but bosses are usually pains in the ass that have to be tolerated. Claude was not like that. So he was in charge, but not in the sense of running around and bossing people around—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Not overbearing.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, exactly. Nuts-and-bolts stuff was shared by Lorena and Mark. Lorena did more of the administrative type work. Mark might have been a little more of a front man. And there were some volunteers who worked for the Festival, but basically it was just those three, plus me doing the tributes. That was basically it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Do you know how the people were selected for the tributes?

MARTY RUBIN: I was not involved at all. They would do it. I think it was mainly Claude. The other two people might have had some input. Often they were approached by agents or whatever. Other times they would seek people out. I'm not really sure what the selection process was. All I know is, I was not really involved in it. I remember, I very much wanted to do Samuel Fuller—and I kept begging them because I knew it would be a great show, I knew the clips would be

great, he'd be great. And they just kind of politely ignored me, and went on with their own selection, which they did very well. I really had no complaints about the people they picked. One big problem was a lot of the people had been used up already. They'd been doing this for a long time, and I used to gnash my teeth when I'd see the old programs, because they went through them like a phone book. All the great old directors. They'd do like ten a year of these great old directors! There weren't many left—I guess a lot of the choices were obvious just based on who's left who's famous enough whom we haven't done before.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: As far as you know, was San Francisco the first festival to do this?

MARTY RUBIN: As far as I know—that was their claim, I know.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's what I'm hearing a lot, is that basically, Albert invented it. Who did you work with most closely?

MARTY RUBIN: Lorena, in terms of print acquisition. And the projectionists. And then there was often a kind of gopher. It was usually a very nice young man who would do a lot of the grunt work, and I would become very close with him during the course of the Festival.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Tell me a little about Lorena and Mark, because they're both gone.

MARTY RUBIN: Mark, I didn't know that well. He seemed very nice, but I didn't have that much contact with him. Lorena, I would work with on a daily basis, and she was very nice and very efficient, and I think probably responsible for a lot of the efficiency of the Festival.

I thought it was a very well run festival. I've already said what a small staff it was. They weren't necessarily the most knowledgeable cinephiles in the world, but they knew how to put on a classy festival on a very tight budget and with a very small staff. I know a lot of people who know a lot about movies—including myself—and they're a dime a dozen, but I don't know many people who could run a film festival that well.

At one point, I heard what the New York Film Festival budget was and I compared it to the San Francisco Film Festival. I don't remember the exact figures now, but it was like the San Francisco budget was a tenth of what the New York Film Festival budget was. Something like that. And yet they put on a festival that was much more than a tenth as classy. I think they really did a good job of running that Festival, and I don't know if that was sufficiently acknowledged or recognized at the time.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think you're right that the San Francisco Festival, for a lot of reasons, has not gotten the kind of credit it deserves. George Gund, I haven't asked you about him. Did you have any interaction with him?

MARTY RUBIN: Very little. He was this rich guy who wasn't very articulate whom they would bring out. He might have had a lot to do behind the scenes, but our paths rarely even crossed. Whatever he did was in a separate domain. I assume he was very instrumental in fundraising, financing and stuff like that. But I was not involved with that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Exactly. And he was actually somewhat involved in programming too.

MARTY RUBIN: Not in my term.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes, he used to go to the festivals—and still does—to Karlovy Vary. He is kind of a specialist in Eastern European films. Okay. Let's go year by year, then, and talk about some of these tributes because what you've told me already is tantalizing.

MARTY RUBIN: I remember much better after looking over the list. With some I was horrified how little I remember. And others, for whatever reason, still stand out. Hopefully there'll be enough of the latter.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Oh, I'm sure. Okay. 1973. The big one was Truffaut.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. Truffaut was fun. He was extremely gracious. He was gallant. He was very considerate. He came with Jacqueline Bisset and they were obviously romantically

involved. I'm not sure how long this lasted. They were very openly physically affectionate toward each other. She had been in his most recent film **Day for Night**. She acted as translator when I would talk with Truffaut, even though he obviously understood English to a large degree. I guess he wasn't confident enough. He wanted to have a translator there, too. I could tell, as I was talking to her, that he understood what I was saying, but he would wait until she relayed it to him. He sat down and he went over every clip. He was very cooperative. He made a few suggestions, but he was very pleased with my selection.

One thing I remember—and this is a little weird—is a scene from **Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me**, one of his lesser-known films. I was trying to explain to him which scene it was and I was having trouble. And I said, “Well, it's the scene where the heroine talks about penis envy.” There was a problem that nobody could figure out how to translate “penis envy” and finally Jacqueline Bisset said: “Oh! Penis sublimée!” And Truffaut said, “Oh! Penis sublimée!” For some reason that just sticks in my mind. This great rapture over realizing that “penis sublimée” is how you say “penis envy.” Hearing Jacqueline Bisset, this beautiful woman, say “penis sublimée” was quite a thrill for a young man.

And he also thanked me from the stage at the end of the presentation, which I don't believe any other person ever did, so I appreciated that, too.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, you know, he's a true cinéaste. Or was.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. A real gentleman.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I don't know if you knew this, but this was the first time that one of the tributes had ever been done at night. I think it was Opening Night—I'm not sure—of the Festival.

MARTY RUBIN: I seem to remember the very first one I did was Joanne Woodward, so it must have been—my memory might be playing tricks. But I have a feeling Truffaut followed Joanne Woodward.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Okay. Actually, it was the first one they'd done at night. It wasn't Opening Night, but it was the first one they'd done as an evening performance. So, Joanne Woodward. Tell me about her.

MARTY RUBIN: I don't remember that well. What I mainly remember is a kind of negative thing. I must've been a little nervous because it was my first one, and we had asked—as we asked everybody—are there any films you particularly want us to show or not to show? And the word we got back was, “It really doesn't matter; whatever you want.” So after we showed the clips, she got up on the stage and virtually the first thing she said was, ‘Well, of course, they didn't show my favorite film, which is **Count Three and Pray**.’ It's her first film. It's not very well known. She didn't, let's say, make a fan of me. Although she was very nice and her program was very good.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you attend all the programs? Of course, you did, you were there with the projectionist. What am I talking about!

MARTY RUBIN: I was very much there. Standing there in the booth saying, “*Now!*”

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you have time to listen to any of what was going on onstage?

MARTY RUBIN: Oh sure. Of course. I would come out after the show and sit by the booth and listen. Like a real fan.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And you were right, by the way. Robert Altman was 1973. I checked.

MARTY RUBIN: I'm not sure, but I might have recommended him. It might have been one of my few—if not only—recommendations that the other Festival programmers actually acted on. Because I admired him so much. And I really enjoyed doing the tribute. It was before **Nashville**. Before he'd become The Great Robert Altman, even though he certainly had a lot of good films under his belt. He was very unpretentious. He came in a little rental car with his wife. No entourage at all. I remember standing with him in the parking lot after the show and he was very thankful and said, “What a good time I've had, coming to San Francisco.” He didn't have any

kind of star presumptiveness at all. I don't know if he's changed since then. But he was very nice and very straightforward.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I imagine that he would be someone who would have definite ideas about things he wanted included?

MARTY RUBIN: No, I don't recall that at all. But I remember he really liked the selection I had done. I remember that he was very impressed that I had been able to make **Countdown** look good by the way I selected the clip. I don't remember him interfering in the process or even participating. I don't think he did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What about Ruth Gordon? I would imagine you would have had a hard time finding enough clips!

MARTY RUBIN: No, actually it turned out to be a good show because with Ruth Gordon, she's both a screenwriter and an actress and there were some excellent films. **The Marrying Kind** is a great film, I think. **Adam's Rib**. **The Actress**, which is a wonderful film by George Cukor, based on Gordon's early life. So between the screenplays and her juicy roles—I probably showed fewer and longer clips, but there were more than enough. I remember people went wild when we did the **Harold and Maude** clip. She was very feisty and very—she acted Ruth Gordon. I mean, she acted that character. I don't know if she was always on like that, but she did it to a T, and she really had the audience eating out of her hand.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think that was it for '73. In '74, the one that stands out... well, there's several that stand out in this one, but there was a couple of firsts. James Wong Howe, first cinematographer. Truman Capote, first screenwriter.

MARTY RUBIN: Right. James Wong Howe was very challenging for that reason. I was very conscious of that going in, that this would be especially challenging. We had to get 35mm prints. They had to be good prints. And I had to select clips that would clearly demonstrate the cinematographer's contribution without getting into a rut. The most obvious things to do are scenes with very spectacular low-key film-noir-ish lighting, because that stands out. But you can

only do so many of those and it starts to become monotonous. So that was very challenging. Because of that, I really liked it. It was one of the tributes that I was proudest of.

Howe seemed very honored. He seemed to be getting a little senile at that point, and he would often mix up people's names and stuff like that. I mean I'm not saying... I'm starting to do that too; it's not like I feel so superior! So he was very nice but I didn't feel he was completely there at times. What he did that was most memorable... You know, he used to run a Chinese restaurant in Los Angeles. In San Francisco, there was a restaurant called the Empress of China. Is it still there?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes. Still there.

MARTY RUBIN: He would hold court there every night while he was here for the Festival. He would have an enormous banquet. I guess he was visiting royalty to the people at the restaurant. One night, my wife and I were summoned to participate, to go to one of these banquets, and it was amazing. It was the most incredible Chinese food I've ever seen. It was like a scene out of Fellini's **Satyricon**! They would bring out these incredible dishes, course after course. And they were all great. You'd want to eat them. But by the end, you were just so stuffed that these huge platters would go by, and people would pick idly at them, and the whole thing would go back to the kitchen. It was decadent, but an amazing meal! So that's my main memory of James Wong Howe.

He didn't participate that much in the selection. The main thing I remember is—it's not always clear what the director of photography's contribution was and what might have been second unit. So I would sometimes ask him, "Were you responsible for this scene?" The aerial scenes and model shots from **Air Force** or something like that. Inevitably, he would say yes. He was the chief cinematographer and he considered that everything came under his domain whether he actually photographed it or not.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: They always all had their names on it, whether they did it or not. Truman Capote?

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. There wasn't a huge amount of material to work with there. He didn't work on that many screenplays, so it was kind of a light tribute. In my dealings with him, he was not at all like the legendary Truman Capote. He wasn't a prima donna at all. He was very cooperative, very low key, very intelligent, and had very good suggestions to offer about his clips.

Maybe he was in a mellow mood, but he was nothing like the character that you now read about or see represented in movies. This sacred monster character. He wasn't like that at all. The way that Philip Seymour Hoffman talks, Capote didn't talk like that. He was a little peculiar, but it wasn't nearly to that extent. And he was an extremely good storyteller. I remember on the stage, he was very good. He told the classic story of how he broke Humphrey Bogart's arm.

I was presumptuous enough—he had recommended a film based on material of his called **The Glass House**. It was a TV movie about prison. I watched it and I thought it was a lousy film, and I called him up and told him that. I said, "I can't really find a scene to show from this; I don't think it's very good." And he took it very nicely. There was a scene with a homosexual character, and he said, "I kind of liked that scene, but I understand. If you don't want to show it, don't feel obligated." He was really nice.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So did you not show it?

MARTY RUBIN: Right, I did not show it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who else? Oh, Jeanne Moreau. This, according to my notes, was one of the longest tributes ever and that there were two hours of clips?

MARTY RUBIN: I don't remember that very well. I remember she was very gracious and very beautiful. Yeah, she had a huge multifaceted career. I don't remember that much about her personally. It just went smoothly and she was nice and that was about it. I hadn't remembered that that was the longest tribute. I must have felt for some reason it needed to be two hours long. I can't remember now, but they would always let me do what I wanted.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How long did the clips tributes usually run?

MARTY RUBIN: As I recall, from 90 minutes to two hours. There was one that went much longer—Mankiewicz. And it would be very dependent on both the extent of the career and what materials we had been able to obtain. So that's why the James Wong Howe was fairly long, while the Truman Capote was on the shorter side because there just wasn't that much material to work with.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I would imagine, too, that because of the way you had to do it, you would show fairly long scenes. None of these montage sequences.

MARTY RUBIN: Very good point, very good! Yeah. Because of the more cumbersome nature of having to deal with the film reels. But that coincided with my inclination, anyway. I always tried to show a whole scene, or something that had an obvious beginning and an end. I don't like the choppy-chop stuff, this kind of Chuck Workman stuff. I don't like that at all. It trivializes films. Even to excerpt is presumptuous, and I tried to soften the blow as much as possible by showing at least some sort of self-enclosed coherent piece. So I would go more for the longer scenes. A couple of times I was tempted to try to do fancier things with shorter clips and they usually just didn't come off. It was much better to work with the longer deep-dish scenes that you could sink into. So there, the technology and my own preferences worked together.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Sam Peckinpah.

MARTY RUBIN: That was the opposite of Jeanne Moreau. That's one I do remember. He was one of the more memorable tributees we did. First of all, we've had some big people there, like Jack Nicholson, Burt Lancaster and so on. Big, major stars. Peckinpah was the only one who came with a huge entourage of sycophants and ass-kissers. He had his posse, or whatever. Also, he was totally shit-faced drunk from the minute he rolled off the plane to the minute he staggered back onto it a few days later. And he was *not* a pleasant drunk. He was not a jolly drunk. He was a querulous, combative drunk. Querulous. Not so much combative. He would nod off and then that would be punctuated by these querulous outbursts. And then he'd nod off again. But, hey! This is Sam Peckinpah, you know. He's acting out his legend. From that standpoint it was quite fascinating.

Okay. Here's a story that my wife Penney and I have told often. Penney, who would go to San Francisco with me, was a big Peckinpah fan so she was really thrilled that we were doing him. In the green room, before the show, we were introduced to him and she said, "Oh, Mr Peckinpah, I'm so glad to meet you, I'm one of your biggest fans." My wife has—what shall I say—small but lovely breasts. Bleary-eyed, he stared right at her chest and said, "No, I don't think you're one of my biggest fans at all!" I've heard similar stories from other people—that he had a breast fixation and could be quite rude about it. Penney was at first taken aback, but then she realized that it was her brush with greatness and a story that could be told and retold for time immemorial.

One thing I remember about that tribute is I did it totally intuitively. I didn't go chronologically, for some reason. He's a great director of set-piece scenes, if anybody is, so it was great material to work with. I just went with an intuitive, emotional sequence. I started out, I think, with the gunfight from **Ride the High Country** and then went directly to the big shootout at the end of **The Wild Bunch**, and ended on a more mellow note, with the end of **Ballad of Cable Hogue**. I thought it worked rather well. I don't know of any others I did quite like that, but I just felt the scenes worked together a certain way. And he was puzzled by that at first, but kind of appreciated it. He said, "Oh, you do the number before you do the setup." It took me a while to understand what he meant, but he meant I was showing the climax before I was showing the earlier scenes. He seemed intrigued by that.

I thought it was —clip-wise—one of the best tributes I did. Probably just because, how can you miss with Peckinpah scenes?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think in some of the press things said about that tribute, it kind of mentioned his combative manner during the interview.

MARTY RUBIN: Yes. I guess you could say that. And he had some red-meat fans who egged him on in that direction, too. That was definitely one of the more interesting ones.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: This is some great stuff! Okay. I think that's it for '74. Yeah. '75. Oh, big crowd here! We've got Mankiewicz. One of my favorites.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, Mankiewicz was one of the ones I was most excited by because he was the only old Hollywood director whom I did, who was still left.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Stanley Donen was that same year, too.

MARTY RUBIN: Oh, Stanley Donen! Right, right, right. He comes in a little later. Okay, Mankiewicz was the first one I did so I was quite excited. When I was watching his films, I realized that his films center on these big—I think the term I used at the time was “arias.” These long scenes, like Elizabeth Taylor’s big scene at the end of **Suddenly Last Summer**, where she describes the death of Sebastian. These big verbal arias that go on and on. You just couldn’t cut them. There was no way. They had their own momentum and their own length. So I ended up selecting very few scenes, but they were very long. Every scene was 15, 20 minutes. So, even though there were fewer films represented it was the longest tribute I ever did. At least, that’s my memory of it.

He was good. He was a bit cranky.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes. I was there. I remember that.

MARTY RUBIN: Oh, you remember it? You were there? How many of the ones I’ve been talking about did you go to?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Quite a few.

MARTY RUBIN: So you’ve been going to the Festival for a while?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes. Since I first came to San Francisco. I’d say ’74 was the first year I started going.

MARTY RUBIN: So you went to the James Wong Howe and the Truman Capote?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I went to the Jeanne Moreau one that year and then Mankiewicz. That was a favorite.

MARTY RUBIN: I've read since, that he really soured in his later years and he burned a lot of bridges with old friends, and I can see how that happened. I had this experience with him—and I think Lorena did, too—where he would suddenly just start screaming at you. Just have a paranoid outburst and start tearing you apart. When it first happened, I got a little taken aback, but then he would change and the next time you talked to him, he would be like nothing had happened. He wasn't the most pleasant person that we dealt with. It was well worth it just to have him there and show those incredible scenes. He could sometimes be a little ornery to deal with, but from the standpoint of material, it was one of the most exciting ones that I did.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you get a sense that some of that had to do—I remember this with him and with some other people—that they felt they were never fully appreciated?

MARTY RUBIN: Hmmm. I don't know. Maybe it had to do with his career was declining... although he'd had a recent hit in **Sleuth**. Oh, that's something I remember. Because it was going so long, I had to cut something, and so I decided—probably foolishly—to cut **Sleuth** because it had just been out and I figured, well, this one, people know, they're already familiar with it, whereas these other great films from the '40s and '50s, they wouldn't be familiar with. And he got pissed at that. He got really pissed. He first said it was okay when I asked him if I could do it, but then he must have brooded about it and decided he really did want to do it. If you were there, he might have complained about it from the stage. Oh, well!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And the other director from that year was Stanley Donen.

MARTY RUBIN: Another great one to do. As I told him, every scene is going to be a number, whether it's a literal musical number or just a number in the more general sense. I thought it was a wonderful group of clips. I really had fun doing that one. I don't remember that much about him. I saw him when he accepted the honorary Oscar, and he was this wonderful character. I don't remember him being like that when he was at our tribute. He was not as animated. He even seemed a little uptight. The main thing I remember, he was married to Yvette Mimieux at the time, and he was very protective of her. She seemed kind of frail and he was constantly hovering around her and watching over her. That's the main thing. But I can't remember anything he actually said or what he looked like on the stage.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I don't know if it was at this tribute or I think I've been to another one of him, but there was some sort of resentment between him and Gene Kelly about who gets credit for what.

MARTY RUBIN: I don't remember that coming up.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That may have come later.

MARTY RUBIN: I don't think he had any involvement in the selection of the clips. It was just a fun tribute to do because every one of the clips was fun.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think you included something from **It's Always Fair Weather**, which was one that was way overlooked.

MARTY RUBIN: Roller-skating?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah. Or the three guys dancing, I'm not sure. But that was a film that had been overlooked a lot.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. That was a great one to do. That is an underrated film. And you know why? I have my theory why. It doesn't have a great score. It doesn't have a memorable song that's become a standard or was a standard before, like "Singin' in the Rain." I think on every other level, it's as good as **On the Town** or **Singin' in the Rain**, but it just doesn't have those tunes that you hum afterwards.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, it's also got kind of that dark edge, too, which is kind of out of sync with musicals.

MARTY RUBIN: Right!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Jack Lemmon was also that year.

MARTY RUBIN: That was a fun one to do. I don't remember much about him except he was very nice. He was very nice and very friendly. I was very impressed by the film he directed—the only film he ever directed. It was called **Kotch**. With Walter Matthau. I thought it was very nice. It's an actor's film, very performance oriented, with very restrained, intelligent direction. I told him that, and he seemed to appreciate that. I don't think that film got much recognition. I asked him if he was ever going to direct again, and he was noncommittal. I don't remember much about him personally. Just that he was nice.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Was this the year that he did **Save the Tiger**?

MARTY RUBIN: It might have been a little after that. It might have been a couple of years after. I'm trying to remember what the most recent clip was that we showed. If you hold on, I'll look in my book here, see if I can pinpoint it. So this would have been '75?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah.

MARTY RUBIN: I think we had something from **The Front Page**. And definitely **The Prisoner of Second Avenue** from 1975. **Save the Tiger** was '73.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's right. These tributes weren't all tie-ins to movies, were they!

MARTY RUBIN: No, often not. Often not. Or sometimes they would bring work prints. I remember Altman brought a work print of **Thieves Like Us**. It was in editing. And we had to do the—I forget the technical term—where the mag track and the image are on two separate projectors. Interlock. But it happened with several tributees. They would bring what they were working on at the time.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: In '75, I think, Spielberg brought **Jaws**.

MARTY RUBIN: I had nothing to do with that. I didn't attend it. I guess he made up his own program or something, but I was not involved in that at all.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Michael Caine must have been there because of **Sleuth**, and did he have a tribute?

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. He had a full-scale tribute. Michael Caine was one of—and I think I can speak for everyone at the Festival—one of the biggest surprises. It was still fairly early in his career, before he won Oscars and became a guru of acting and all that. I think people were surprised by him. He was extremely intelligent. Extremely. In a way that might not have been immediately apparent from his film roles. And very modest in a way. He was one of the biggest surprises in terms of just his on-stage presence. He was much more solid and had much more depth than I think people were expecting. Nowadays, or maybe even ten years later, people would expect that. But at the time, people weren't that aware of his substance. So that was a very good one. Mainly in terms of himself. I don't know if you were there for that one, but it was one of the most impressive interview segments that I can recall. He was really great, and wowed the audience.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: In terms of telling stories?

MARTY RUBIN: Just projecting an extremely intelligent, level-headed attitude. I don't recall the stories so much as just his own personality, which came through so vividly and so impressively.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: How about Gene Hackman?

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. He's one that doesn't stand out that much. As I recall, he wasn't that ebullient. He was low-key on stage. He was very solid and very intelligent, but he didn't make that much of an impression that I remember. He had a good set of clips, but I don't remember anything distinctive about his tribute. There's great stuff to work with; **The Conversation** and so on. But I just don't remember him being that dynamic a presence on stage. Or off-stage really. That's what character actors are all about.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Right. Jane Fonda was kind of a controversial guest.

MARTY RUBIN: I wasn't aware of that, but yeah, she was fun to do in this respect—what her career demonstrated more than any other that I did, was a process of growth. You start out with something like **Tall Story** or **Sunday in New York**, where she's playing these airheads earlier in her career. And then you can see her growth in awareness and political consciousness. And taking on more grown-up, mature roles. I thought that made it a very exciting tribute because it was so vivid. In a relatively short time, she had traveled so far. That was a fun one to do.

I remember she was very nice and very gracious. One other thing I remember, though—and this was not with the hindsight we would have now—I thought that outside of certain specific political opinions that she'd become notorious for, she was actually a very mainstream person. She wasn't really a radical person at all. In terms of her taste in films and in the directors she worked with, for example, she was quite conventional. That was interesting. I wasn't surprised when she ended up with Ted Turner. Whatever her controversial area was, it was very specific, very well defined. She was not a full-time radical.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And that kind of radicalism was fashionable then, too.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, I guess. Although I certainly believe she was sincere. I don't think she just did it for... there are easier ways to be fashionable. She's still suffering from it. She's still Hanoi Jane to many people, amazingly.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Louis Malle.

MARTY RUBIN: What happened in this year was I was overloaded with tributes. There might have been some problem in getting prints, too. So what we did was, instead of showing clips, we just showed a couple of his features. One was **The Lovers**. I can't remember what the other one was. So, I kind of blew off Louis Malle.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: In '76 the retros were called Festival Forum because there were people who were still working.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, I read that in your list. I don't remember that at all. And I don't remember that having the slightest effect on what I did! Also, I don't remember Dyan Cannon at

all. You said she just showed her new feature. I don't think I worked with her at all. I don't remember doing film clips for her. And the other people, I don't really see why they would say that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, Nicholson was still fairly young and still active.

MARTY RUBIN: He still does a lot today.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And Shelley Winters.

MARTY RUBIN: I don't remember this Festival Forum idea at all. I don't know if I just wasn't aware of it or I just felt it was so insignificant that it didn't register.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Like I say, a lot of this information was from press clips.

MARTY RUBIN: Maybe it was some kind of marketing thing. I didn't pay any attention to it that I can recall.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Okay. I understand that Nicholson and Evans were both fun.

MARTY RUBIN: Nicholson—of course he was fun. There was already a lot to choose from. I particularly enjoyed doing some of the earlier films like **Psych-Out**, a film I'm particularly fond of, and **Cry Baby Killer**. I thought that was fun, again, to show progression in the career, like with Jane Fonda.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he have any problems with seeing any of those?

MARTY RUBIN: No, but he called me personally and he wanted to know exactly what I was showing, and he was very concerned that the right scenes were shown. It turned out we were thinking of the same scene in almost every instance, but he was very definite about what he wanted, and very much didn't want to leave it to chance. He wanted to make sure, like in **Missouri Breaks**, was I going to show the scene with Harry Dean Stanton. Yes, I was. He wanted to make sure that certain notes were hit. He's the only one that I can remember where we

had screaming girls outside the stage door. That's the only time I can remember that kind of scene, where there was a mob outside of real fanatics. So that was fun, too!

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What about Evans? Robert Evans.

MARTY RUBIN: Evans. Hmm. Evans was probably my least favorite of all the ones I did. I didn't like him personally. That's probably not that unusual. I found him kind of creepy.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And getting creepier by the day.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, well, even back then. I remember he had really slicked-back hair. His hair was plastered back, but there was one forelock that very carefully came out. He was extremely vain. Maybe a lot of the other people we did were vain, too, but they hid it better.

This is before his autobiography, where he became the legendary Bob Evans, or whatever, so I think the main reason he was selected was because we had a hard time getting prints from Paramount and he was our main contact to get prints if we really needed them. So I think the reason he was selected was to keep that door open. Because his career as a producer is what he's best known for, I envisioned showing scenes from **Chinatown**, **Godfather**, **Rosemary's Baby**.

I thought it might be fun to show a couple of clips from his acting career, but I wanted to make sure that he wouldn't be uncomfortable with that. You know, he might want to forget about that and be considered just a distinguished producer of Academy Award winning films, rather than the actor of **The Fiend Who Walked the West**. Well! It turned out that's the only thing he wanted to see. He must have always felt that he could have been a "contendah" as an actor, and this still rankled him—this unfulfilled promise that he had to be a movie star. You know, he wanted to be in the **Chinatown** sequel. You might recall that?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes.

MARTY RUBIN: And was actually cast at some point. It was like he could care less about **The Godfather** or **Chinatown** and stuff like that. All he was concerned with was that we show his performances as an actor, and not only that, show virtually every scene he was in. Even if it was

a scene where he only comes in at the end and says one line, he wanted those scenes shown. And when I started to protest, and said, “Gee, this is interesting but I really thought your career as a producer was a little more significant,” he got really nasty and hard-ass, “Look kid, this is how it’s gonna be.” I did it. You know, what am I going to do? But for me it was the silliest tribute. All these little snippets of Robert Evans, who wasn’t the most appealing actor in the world doing—

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The matador from **Sun Also Rises!**

MARTY RUBIN: Every fucking scene that he was in in that film, he wanted it to be shown. Even, like I said, if he was only in it for a few seconds. The clips from the produced films, of course, were terrific, and the ones of the actor were interesting, but it got a bit silly to show all these little insignificant scenes. It was shortly after Ali McGraw had left him for Steve McQueen, so he was very much playing the tragic hero, the jilted tragic lover. I know he has these real loyalists in Hollywood high circles, and I assume he’s helped them, and so forth. But I imagine to be a lower-echelon person working for him would be a real hell, from the little taste I got of it.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: You know, somehow this does not surprise me. How about Burt Lancaster?

MARTY RUBIN: It was a good tribute. I don’t really remember him that well. I just remember he was quite distinguished and quite articulate.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: According to the press accounts of that Festival, the two outstanding ones were Natalie Wood and Shelley Winters.

MARTY RUBIN: Yes, yes, yes. Wow! We did a lot of people that year.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah.

MARTY RUBIN: Now I’m starting to remember. For some reason, two got added on at the very last minute so I was really...

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think Shelley had canceled from two years earlier.

MARTY RUBIN: I think you're right. I'd forgotten about that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I love her. She is the best interview in the world.

MARTY RUBIN: Oh, well then you know. Were you at that one?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yes. And then I subsequently interviewed her twice for Turner.

MARTY RUBIN: This is how I remember it. Maybe memory has improved on it, but as I recall she got asked one question, and that was it. Followed by an hour-long monologue. It was like interviewers were superfluous with her. Once she started, she was off, and it was just this amazing stream of consciousness monologue that went on for a solid hour. Yeah, there was certainly no other guest who did that. And her career was a lot of fun, too, because it's so varied. Going from **A Place in the Sun** to **Bloody Mama**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, and she's got a story about every one of them.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, right. Such a rich and varied career and she was such an extrovert. It was really a lot of fun.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And also very articulate about acting. The craft. She was great on that.

MARTY RUBIN: Hm-mmm. Hm-mmm.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And Natalie Wood?

MARTY RUBIN: Natalie Wood—I think anyone connected with the Festival at that time would have said this—was personally the most impressive person we did. And somewhat like with Michael Caine, but even to a much greater extent, it was unexpected. Although she had a

distinguished career, you maybe don't think of her as being a "great actress" like Joanne Woodward or somebody like that. She had her ups and downs in her career, but, man, she was a really together, intelligent woman who knew what she wanted and knew how to get it in a very nice way. Since then, I've read biographies of her and I can see that she did have this extraordinary depth that wasn't always acknowledged by Hollywood, but she really showed it at the tribute. She was extremely gracious and extremely considerate. She was very involved. She was very helpful. As I said, she helped to get prints. She personally went to studios. She was extremely charming. The audience loved her. I don't know if you were at that one, but she impressed everyone, in terms of just her personality and her character. More than anybody else who was a tributee when I was there.

She came with her family, with Robert Wagner, and really got into it. They were obviously very moved by the tribute. There were tears in their eyes when it was over. She was really great. And the tribute was fun. She was very definite about some things she didn't want. There were some films that she was embarrassed by.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Like what?

MARTY RUBIN: **The Burning Hills**, a western she did with Tab Hunter. **The Girl He Left Behind**, another Tab Hunter, possibly one or two more. Other than that, she gave me my head. I'm a particular fan of a film I think is very underrated called **Inside Daisy Clover**. I told her that, and she seemed very impressed and very surprised by that. For one thing, she was very close friends with the screenwriter, Gavin Lambert. She went to dinner with him a couple of nights later and told him about it, that there was this guy up in San Francisco who really liked **Inside Daisy Clover**. So that was definitely one of the more memorable ones, and because of her.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Who else was there? Oh! Frank Westmore. Did you have anything to do with that one?

MARTY RUBIN: Yes, absolutely. And I think that was one of the ones that were added at the last minute. That was very challenging. He had just written a book called **The Westmores of Hollywood**, about his whole family, a dynasty of Hollywood makeup people. So it was

interesting, like with James Wong Howe, to go into a different area. It was a similar problem to try to show the importance of makeup without always going for the most obvious—monsters or deformed people or something spectacular like that. That was a challenging one and interesting on that level. Looking back, I wish we had done more cinematographers, more screenwriters, more other people besides just the actors and the directors.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Roger Vadim?

MARTY RUBIN: Roger Vadim, somewhat like Loius Malle, got blown off. I think, again, there was a problem with prints and I was being overwhelmed and we eventually decided just to show a couple of his films. One of them, I remember, was **Liaisons Dangereuses**. I can't remember what the other one was. And he just talked—I forget—either before or after or between the films. I remember he was very nice and very low-key.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I thought he would have been a Robert Evans type.

MARTY RUBIN: No, not at all. He neither looked nor acted like a Great Casanova. Maybe that was part of his appeal. No, he wasn't like that at all. Very modest is the main thing I remember.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you have anything to do with **Hollywood on Trial**?

MARTY RUBIN: No, I didn't. I wasn't even aware of it. And I'm sorry that I didn't because it sounds like something that would be really interesting.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Gail Sondergaard was there, and Lester Cole.

MARTY RUBIN: That was the toughest year in terms of labor-intensive.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Because there were so many people?

MARTY RUBIN: There were a lot of large careers and I just had a lot to screen and not enough time to do it in. I remember I stayed up all night before the Natalie Wood tribute because, I think we had four in one weekend. We had two each day, it was really a killer.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: There were a lot of people then. Okay, '77. This was the Mel Brooks year.

MARTY RUBIN: Right. Like I said, he was a pip, as you might imagine, and he was very *nudzhy* but he was right. And of course it was fun to watch the films and to show clips from them.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: His stuff really holds up.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. I agree.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Sydney Pollack?

MARTY RUBIN: Mmm. Don't remember him tremendously much. I believe the reason we were doing him was because his film, **Bobby Deerfield**, was the opening film. Is that right?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Let me just look at my notes. I know that **Bobby Deerfield** opened the Festival one year. Yeah, it was. That was it.

MARTY RUBIN: I think part of the package was we did a tribute to him.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What a stink film.

MARTY RUBIN: I think he's a terrific actor. I think he's not an interesting director. He's very posh and polished, but—with the exception of **They Shoot Horses**—I can't think of a single film of his that I find interesting, so from that standpoint it was one of the more challenging tributes to do, because I did not have a high estimation of the director's work. I hope he doesn't read this and destroy me in some way. He seems to be a very powerful person. And, I'm sure, a very nice person. And as I say, he's a terrific actor. Much more interesting as an actor than as a director.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Another kind of "pop" director—Claude Lelouch.

MARTY RUBIN: Claude Lelouch, yeah. I had a reaction like with Sydney Pollack: “Oh, my God! Claude Lelouch?!” I wasn’t a big fan but I hadn’t seen a lot of his films, and I have to say watching all of his films was a somewhat educational experience. I won’t say I was converted to thinking he was a great director, but there was a lot more interest there and a lot more interesting films—often lesser-known ones—than I had at first anticipated. So it ended up being a respectable tribute with a lot of interesting material that I hadn’t anticipated.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Like what?

MARTY RUBIN: Hold on, I’ll refresh my memory. Not the ones he’s best known for—like **A Man and a Woman** and **And Now, My Love**—but there are some lesser-known films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: He did some thrillers that were kind of fun, weren’t they?

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. He did some—I won’t say “great” films, but there are some little gems in his filmography. **Happy New Year** was one of them. **Smic Smac Smoc. Love is a Funny Thing**, a film he made in America with Jean-Paul Belmondo. It’s really an overlooked film. It’s one of these foreigners-discovering-the-USA films and it’s quite good. **Cat and Mouse** was okay.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That was the one I was thinking of.

MARTY RUBIN: I wouldn’t say he’s an awesome director, but he had some interesting films. Like I said, it was mildly surprising. There was more there to work with... at first I groaned, but my groans turned to smiles by the time he got there.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Then we have Lauren Bacall.

MARTY RUBIN: Lauren Bacall. I don’t remember her very well, surprisingly. I remember it was a big deal because she was very much the grande dame.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I was just gonna say that. That’s what I’ve heard.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, she was very much the grande dame. I remember we had to—this is where George Gund came in—she insisted as part of the conditions, because she didn't want to spend any more time than was necessary, that a private jet would pick her up exactly at the right time, take her to the Festival exactly at the right time, and then bring her back. George Gund *did* have a private jet, so that was what clinched the deal with Lauren Bacall—that we were able to provide that service without having to spend a fortune.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, she gets up on the stage and she gives her performance and everything is fine, but you're right, you know. Then she's the grande dame offstage.

MARTY RUBIN: I don't really remember anything particular about her personal appearance or interview or anything like that.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What about the clips? What about her as an actress?

MARTY RUBIN: As an actress, she has a strange career because there's this big blaze at the beginning, and then it becomes more uneven. I mean, I really like **Written on the Wind**, but she has kind of a dull part in it. As I recall, the best clip from her late films was from **Designing Women** by Vincente Minnelli, and that really carried the last part of the tribute. You start out with **To Have and Have Not** and **The Big Sleep** and it's like, Wow! But then it slows down and she doesn't get as interesting roles. That was the challenge there, to find material beyond her very early films.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: **The Shootist**.

MARTY RUBIN: **The Shootist**, that was a good scene. You're right. Very good. I'm trying to remember what the other ones were that I went for. **How to Marry a Millionaire**. That was fun. There must have been a good scene from that. **Woman's World**, I showed a clip from that. That's a fun film, too.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah it is. There were fewer tributes this year. Do you know why that was?

MARTY RUBIN: I read that and I was surprised. I don't remember that. All I can think of is there must've been something that fell through. I can't remember specifically what it would have been.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Or budgets?

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, but I would suspect that there were one or two that got dropped. The star dropped out at the last minute and they didn't have enough time to make up for it. I don't remember any conscious policy. Was there something? Were they cutting down?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, I think so.

MARTY RUBIN: Oh, so they were becoming too expensive.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Yeah, I think that's it.

MARTY RUBIN: For some reason I don't remember that, but it makes sense.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think that was happening then. And then, '78, which was your last year, you say. And that was Yves Montand.

MARTY RUBIN: Like I said, he wanted to see the Marilyn film. Also, there were a couple of films that he felt very strongly about. One was **The Confession** by Costa-Gavras and there was another one, and he wanted to know just what I was showing from those films. And when I mentioned exactly the right scenes that he wanted to show, he was totally won over and he was very gracious and very cooperative and very pleased.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he speak English?

MARTY RUBIN: Yes. And with an accent that really adds to it rather than detracts.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did he prefer the serious films or the comedies?

MARTY RUBIN: Serious films. The political films. He always did have a very serious political engagement. One was **The Confession** and I can't remember what the other one was. It might have been **Z**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: What was the one where he was there for the Spanish Civil War?

MARTY RUBIN: The Resnais film. **La Guerre Est Finie**.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So who else, Paul Mazursky you had that year, as well.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah, Paul Mazursky, who at that time I was fairly fond of. His career went into a tailspin, but I really liked **Next Stop Greenwich Village**. I remember I showed an enormous clip. It was one of the longest clips I'd ever shown. I remember it was the only time this happened: Claude Jarman called up to the booth and said, "When is this going to be over?" It was fun to do his tribute. Even his films that are less successful, like **Alex in Wonderland**, have really nice scenes in them. For some reason, I don't remember him at all on the stage. I showed some of his acting. I showed a scene from **Blackboard Jungle**. But I don't remember him at all. I don't think he involved himself in the tribute at all.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's strange that a director wouldn't.

MARTY RUBIN: Yeah. No, I don't think he did. I'm sorry to say, I don't really have anything memorable to say about him.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Buñuel had a tribute and there was a lot of back-and-forth as to whether he was going to be here, and he ultimately didn't come.

MARTY RUBIN: He canceled out at the last minute. He apparently was very nervous about coming and very reluctant. His producer, Serge Silberman, promised that he could deliver Buñuel, that he would come with him and hold his hand, and for that reason Buñuel would come. Obviously, I was... I mean, Buñuel! Nothing against Mankiewicz and Altman, but this was by far the greatest director I would be doing. So I put a lot of extra effort into it. Lorena did, too. Getting prints and working on it. I think this was one where I used short clips at one point, at the

end. And it actually kind of worked. The only time it really worked. He canceled at the last minute, just a couple of days before the tribute was supposed to go on, as I recall. It was disappointing. They went ahead and did the tribute anyway without him. But, of course, it was a terrific group of clips.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you have any input from him on this?

MARTY RUBIN: Not at all. None whatsoever.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: So you didn't even have the pleasure of talking to him on the phone, huh?

MARTY RUBIN: As I understand, he was deaf at the time. But, no, I had no contact with him whatsoever. As I recall, all the contact anybody had was with Serge Silberman. He was the one they were talking with and who was going to facilitate the whole thing, but in the end, the story was that Buñuel was ill. It might have been true. But he didn't come. It was a big disappointment. From what I gather, he was fairly deaf by this time and I don't how great he would have been on the stage in an interview, but still just to be in the presence of Buñuel would have been quite a kick.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: The other one that year was Claude Chabrol.

MARTY RUBIN: Claude Chabrol, the last tribute I ever did, although I didn't realize it at the time. I really liked Chabrol's work, and I was thrilled to do him. I thought it was a good tribute. There were very good scenes from his films. He didn't have any input, although I think he was helpful in supplying prints. Some of the films that hadn't been distributed in the United States, he was able to help—somebody was able to help—us get them.

I didn't have much contact with him. In fact, none. But he said something very peculiar, very interesting. After the clips were over, he said something like, "Whoever selected those clips, I'd like to psychoanalyze him." I guess he felt that the clips I selected showed some sort of weird personal inclination, although I thought I was just picking the most obvious scenes. But he thought that it was very revealing of some deep-seated things in my subconscious. I thought that

was very interesting, and I went up afterwards and introduced myself to him and asked, “What exactly do you think you’ll find?” but he was not forthcoming about whatever dark secrets he had gleaned from my selection of clips.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, his films show some sort of deep-seated psychological—

MARTY RUBIN: I would think so, too, but he seemed to feel that the clips I selected were somehow peculiarly revealing not of *his* personality, which is what I would have suspected, but of mine. I was very intrigued by that, and puzzled.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Now, you say that was your last tribute.

MARTY RUBIN: That was the last one.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And you didn’t know it at the time? What happened?

MARTY RUBIN: I guess there was some sort of change in the administration there, where they had to make peace with the other faction, and part of the deal was that I was out. They were regretful about it, but I think they themselves were out very shortly after that. So.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Well, Claude Jarman had announced that 1979 would be his last year, so that was already in the works. I think as part of his plan to leave, they were bringing Albert back.

MARTY RUBIN: Ah, well, there it is. Albert coming back would make me expendable.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I think that’s what it is. That’s what I can gather from the materials that I’ve read. So, were you regretful?

MARTY RUBIN: Very much. It was fun to go to San Francisco and watch all those movies. The people were very nice and I love San Francisco. It’s a very, very dazzling city. Very, very cinematic. A very visual city. It’s a CinemaScope city, it really is. It was a nice gig and I very much enjoyed it while it lasted.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Did you ever come to the Festival after that?

MARTY RUBIN: Never to the Festival. I went back to San Francisco and visited with Lorena. I'm not sure if I ever saw Claude again. When I came back, Mark was already dying of AIDS, so I didn't see him. I know Lorena had a bout with cancer, but I was not aware... the last I'd heard, she had surmounted that, but I guess, what, it got her in the end?

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I don't know. All I know is that she... and I don't even know when because I never knew her.

MARTY RUBIN: We would keep in touch with her. We'd occasionally call and exchange Christmas cards and that kind of thing. And then, at some point, we stopped hearing from her. We tried to find out where she was. This was before the Internet where you can use those people-search things, and we just could never track her down. We tried phonebooks and stuff like that. Our cards would come back Addressee Unknown or whatever.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: I can probably find out if you want.

MARTY RUBIN: I liked Lorena. Everybody liked Lorena very much. Claude was the leader, but I think she was really the heart of the Festival just in terms of day-to-day operations and relationships between people.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: That's good to hear. What is your happiest memory, your fondest memory of your years with the Festival?

MARTY RUBIN: Wow! That's a toughie. It probably would be something that has nothing directly to do with the Festival. It was somehow very closely related with my relationship with my wife. I first started going out with Penney very shortly before, I think it was the '74 Festival. We were new lovers, and so my fondest memories are connected to that.

In terms of the Festival itself, I don't know if I could think of a particular moment. It really was the whole gestalt. I very much enjoyed doing it. I enjoyed San Francisco. I enjoyed the people I

worked with. Something that hasn't been mentioned: The projectionists were very important and they got really good projectionists to work there. They were extremely helpful and extremely patient and very good at their jobs. I just liked the whole thing. The whole thing really is a fond memory. I've indicated what some of my favorites were and some of my least favorite or least memorable, but I can't think of any particular moment.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: And your biggest challenges?

MARTY RUBIN: Like I said, some of the particular tributes were challenging. The James Wong Howe tribute was challenging. The Frank Westmore tribute was challenging. In its own way, the Sam Peckinpah was challenging because I did it in an unconventional manner.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Do you do these kinds of tributes now, or have you over the years?

MARTY RUBIN: No, I've never done it since. I never did it before and I haven't done it since. It was this isolated chapter in my life.

MARGARITA LANDAZURI: Thank you so much, I really appreciate it.