

BENNINGTON DANCE PROJECT

The Reminiscences of

Elizabeth Waters

Oral History Research Office

Columbia University

1980

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Elizabeth H. Davis
January 21, 1987

PREFACE

This memoir is the result of a tape-recorded interview conducted for the Oral History Research Office by Theresa Bowers with Elizabeth Waters on September 20, 1979, at Echo Canyon, New Mexico. Ms. Waters has read the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. The reader is asked to bear in mind that s/he is reading a verbatim transcript of the spoken word.

This interview forms part of a series documenting the Bennington Summer School of the Dance.

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BENNINGTON PROJECT

Interviewee: Elizabeth Waters
Interviewer: Theresa Bowers
Place: Echo Canyon, N.M.
Date: September 20th 1979

Q: It's September 20th 1979. I am in the home of Elizabeth Waters, in a canyon called Echo Canyon, N.M. It's a beautiful day. My name is Theresa Bowers. and this is part of a series of interviews about Bennington.

Madame Waters: I started dance at five. My father owned an opera house and theaters in Salem, Ore., where I was born. My mother was a musician, so I was given opportunities in music -- cello, trumpet, piano, voice, and dance. And dance took over. That's what I wanted.

But as I ^{look back,} ~~James~~ I wish I'd kept on ^{with} the others.

Q: Okay. I'd like to know what kind of dancing that was that you were ~~taught~~ taught in Oregon.

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Waters: At that time it was interpretive and ballet. But I had an excellent teacher, because I would go tripping off and not stick to the ballet, and make up dances at a very young age, and Julia White, the teacher, said, "Go ahead, keep going, this is excellent." So I had freedom at a young age, plus this kind of . . .

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ner?

Q: Technique. I see. I am going to make a list, as you talk, of the people that you mention so that they will be spelled properly.

Waters: Okay, Julia White in Salem, Ore.

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Q: So in other words you grew up in a family where this kind of thing was encouraged very much?

mainly

Waters: Yes. I was fortunate.

Q: And as you grew older were your parents pleased that you were so involved in dancing?

Waters: Yes. My father, quite a strict person --

Perry Mansfield I picked to go to after high school, and my father said, "All right, Elizabeth, I will pay half of your tuition, but you've got to pay the rest, period." (pounds table punctuating words)

So I worked for 25 cents an hour ushering at theaters, not only my father's but other theaters, and I made up the half of the tuition, so Perry Mansfield was my first. . .

Q: How had you heard about Perry Mansfield, from your teacher?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did Denishawn ever come to Salem? Did you see them?

Waters: Wait. Later on I was Ruth St. Denis' personal maid, so we'll wait on that.

Q: I see. Okay. But these theaters that you were in were mainly like vaudeville, maybe?

Waters: Yes.

Q: I see. I just wanted to get an idea of what you'd seen.

Waters: And some movies too. But the opera house I can remember -- beautiful -- but the spring recital which local schools do today, *which* I don't believe ^{in --} that they work all year to give that recital, but our recital was in the opera house, and so long I can remember taking snacks to eat in between dances.

Q: Oh! Because they had to have enough dances for everybody to be in?

Waters: Right. But Julia White was an excellent teacher. and ~~an~~ excellent person. I was fortunate. I didn't realize it until I got away to compare.

Q: So Perry Mansfield was the first time you left home?

Waters: Right. Hmmm, no, I ^{had} danced in vaudeville with Julia White's son in Canada during the summer months.

Q: What sort of dancing was that?

Waters: *Adagio.*

Q: Sort of balletic *then*. Hmmm. Interesting. What did you learn at Perry Mansfield? What did you do there?

Waters: Well, this is where Martha Wilcox was the counselor in the professional house where I lived. Now at that time they had a touring company, and they picked me, a part of the touring company. Then we got to Sioux City, Iowa -- I think that was the first place. Then when we got to New York, Portia and ^{Kingo}~~Kano~~ sold the company to vaudeville.

Q: Portia and who?

Portia Mansfield - Charlotte Perry Kingo

Waters: ^{Kingo}~~Kano~~. ^{was man}~~Was it he?~~ Yes, ^{Kingo}~~Kano~~. And there were, as I remember, about eight or ten dancers, and when they sold it to vaudeville only five people were picked, and I was one of the five, and in vaudeville.

Q: To do the same act, right?

Fortunes - music changed

Waters: Now wait. They changed the dances. The rodeo dance was jazzed up, the cathedral dance -- which I have beautiful pictures of now ^{had}--/white streamers and white long dresses, and big white headpieces. They took the headpieces off, they slashed off the dresses and cut them all ^{off} and the white cathedral streamers were dyed all flashy colors. The music was changed, and we were rushed under -- make designs, go to another part of the stage, make designs. So everything was geared for vaudeville.

But the people that I toured with were wonderful people, and I toured in vaudeville in Canada, all over the southern part of the States. Not West. Oh yes, we did too -- we went West, now I remember. ~~I think~~

Then because I wanted so much to study I must get out of vaudeville, but I didn't have money. Speaking of money, I paid royalties to Perry Mansfield for quite a time out of my salary, and it wasn't much, because of the job.

Q: That doesn't seem right, since they sold you.

Waters: Yes, yes.

Q: Did your parents think this was okay?

Waters: Oh yes.

Q: They were in that world, and they knew that you were going to be able to take care of yourself?

Waters: Yes. Then the Dancers' Club in New York City -- I stayed there and I managed the dining room, I think, for room and board. Then Alice Dudley. *This was another Alice Dudley*

Q: ~~Jane Dudley's~~ mother? *No*

Waters: No, this is another Dudley. They were staying at the Dancers' Club -- she was taking lessons -- and her mother said, "Go to Ruth St. Denis' and Ted Shawn's ^{school} place at Cortland Park and tell them that you are the new secretary."

I did, and Ruth St. Denis was doing The Prophetess for the stadium performances.

Q: The Lewisohn Stadium?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Had you been studying with somebody else before you went to Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn?

Waters: Lisa Parnova, just "poquito" -- a little.

Q: Was that ballet?

Waters: No, it was. . . . er. . . . so-so -- modern. ^{When} But Ruth St. Denis, ^{was} rehearsing ^{she} brought the typewriter and said, "Elizabeth, whatever I say, you type." I couldn't type, so I started to cry, and cried, because I was so so down. She had a great stairway, almost like an Aztec pyramid, and she walked down, and she came to me, and she said, "Let me see what you've typed."

And I said, "I can't type."

"But you are my secretary."

"Yes, but I am not."

She *felt* sorry ~~for me.~~ ^{for me.} "Okay, you can ~~stay~~, but you have to wait on me, sort of as maid, or help in the kitchen," et cetera, et cetera.

So we did the performance at the Stadium. I helped backstage, her dressing et cetera. Then Miriam Winslow from Boston came to the school looking for a teacher at her school in Boston. She picked me.

Q: Because in exchange for working for ^{Miss} Ruth you were able to take classes?

Waters: Some classes, not much. I wasn't happy. But I ^{*am glad I*} had the experience. It was a tremendous experience. I learned oriental routines ~~that~~, as I grew older and more knowledgeable I realized that ^{*the classes*} I didn't have the depth of the ~~classes~~ Oriental dance.

So I went to Boston. I think I was there three winters, and I taught for her, and her studio was very close to the Boston Orchestra Auditorium, and I'll never forget, I wanted ~~the~~ things so badly -- music especially -- that I would go to the Auditorium and wait till the audience was in, and if there were any seats -- the ushers began to know me -- I got in free. And I did that for many, many performances.

Q: You were teaching what?

Waters: Dance.

Q: What kind of dancing?

Waters: Some Oriental, ballet, and stuff that I had made up, because I truly made up things as a very small child.

Q: You were still very young while you were doing this, weren't you?

Waters: Yes. When I went to Perry Mansfield I had turned 19 in March.

Q: So maybe you were 21 or 22 in Boston.

Waters: Yes. The Winslow family were millionnaires, and they were so wonderful to me. Their home was in Brookline (Mass.) and to me a butler and maids, ^{cooks,} and cars that were made for them, I just couldn't believe it. But they were down-to-earth, and they were absolutely wonderful to me.

Now Miriam went to Argentina and started a school there -- her parents died, brothers et cetera -- but because of friction et cetera, et cetera I understand now that she's outside

of Paris. Do you know Mary Campbell ?

Q: Marian Van Tuyl Campbell? From San Francisco?

Waters: No. Mary Campbell, a pianist, from Jacob's Pillow.

Q: Would you like for me to try to find her?

Waters: Er, yes, because she knew Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis very well. *Her address during the winter - 314 Texas St apt 7 Denton TX 76201*
During the summer - Island Falls, Maine Box 96-2 apt 104747

Q: I could certainly try to find her.

Waters: Now she ^{played} ~~was playing~~ the piano for Miriam Winslow in Boston. That's how I got to know her, and to this day we still correspond. She is a tremendous person. At Denton (Tex.) at the Women's State Texas College, Mary played and -- oh, I am getting off the track, that should come later --

Q: Okay, we can come back to it. Now we have you in Boston, and Miriam Winslow had just gone off to Argentina.

Waters: Well, she had gotten word from Mary Wigman's school, and sent out information that they were giving three fellowships, and would I like to try it out, and I said absolutely.

So I went to Steinway Hall in New York, tried ~~it~~ out and got it, and that's how I started with Hanya Holm.

Q: Had Wigman come to New York yet? Had you seen her?

Waters: She taught for a few lessons. No, I saw her at a performance in Boston, and that's what convinced me that that's what I want (pounds table for emphasis).

Q: So when you heard about the fellowship, you just knew?

Waters: Yes. Now I don't remember if she came back and taught a short time because of the war, or Hanya.

Q: I think Wigman just performed and went back, and only Hanya taught. I think so, but I am not sure either.

So, the fellowship to study with Wigman -- did that take you to Germany?

Waters: No, for Hanya.

Q: I see, it was for Hanya's school that she was opening to teach the Wigman (technique).

Waters: Right.

Q: In New York?

Waters: Yes.

Q: So you moved from Boston to New York to do this?

Waters: Yes. Then things began to happen -- that I can study, perform, go to Bennington, come back home to New York and study, and tour, and study.

Q: Had you missed performing while you were in Boston?

Waters: Ah, yes, but as I remember I think I gave two solo performances, because I loved to compose dance, and I couldn't live without it. Shall we take a break?

Q: Sure.

I'd like you to talk as much as you can about what it was like maybe the first time you met Hanya, and all the ideas that she gave you that were new, like percussion studies and the movement ideas, and everything that you can think about -- just the whole story of being with Hanya.

Waters: Well, when I went there she was teaching in Steinway Hall. Then she had to move out, and moved down on 12th Street.

Was it 12th or ~~15th Street~~? (pause) Anyway her classes were exciting for me, because I truly hadn't had real classes.

And the percussion, because of my music background, I took to it, and she had Henry Cowell teach one course which I remember very well, and have used Henry Cowell's music.

Q: What did he teach?

Waters: Percussion. *music composition*

Q: How would he go about it?

Waters: Well, Hanya had gotten some instruments, some from Germany, some from other places, so his classes were percussion, but we had to know music notation, which I knew up to a certain point. But Hanya's classes were -- and still are -- and when I get back out to this part of the country, I will tell you what I did with those classes to embrace new approaches, and why. But her work is in depth of subtleties, and even today I think one movement can be done a million different ways, according to the attack from inside.

Q: And Hanya would talk about that?

Waters: Somewhat. But I worked on it more. But her subtleties were something that I hadn't had at Perry Mansfield or in Oregon.

Q: Did any of that come from isolations? Did she work with that?

Waters: How do you mean?

Q: Like working, for example, just with the hands, for a while -- that kind of thing.

Waters: Yes.

Q: In other words getting a full vocabulary for each part of your body.

Waters: Right, right.

Q: Did you do anything on the floor? Would you start on the floor?

Waters: Yes, oh yes, we did stretching.

Q: Was that strange for you?

Waters: No.

Q: You were used to that already?

Waters: Yes.

Q: And what was Hanya's personality like when she first came?

Waters: Very eager, but in a way, as I look back, that I was too young and too engrossed in myself to break down what she had gone through. Now I know, and having seen incredible movies around Hitler -- The Holocaust, did you see that?

Q: [REDACTED] Hmm.

Waters: Oh!

Q: But Hanya didn't really know about that when she left, I don't think.

Waters: I think she knew some of it.

Q: Well, there was a feeling. I think they had a sort of creeping sense of evil.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did she ever talk about Totenmal that she did in Germany?

Waters: Very little.

Q: Do you remember anything that she would have said? Have you seen photographs of it?

Waters: Yes. I've forgotten about that. But Louise would be the person. She would know, absolutely.

Q: Okay. You said Hanya was eager. Do you think she was excited about being in a new place, or was she also a little edgy?

Waters: I think she was somewhat scared, and I think that she was careful to realize our customs.

Q: Oh. In what way?

Waters: Just everyday things, so that she wouldn't be utterly. .

Q: . . . a foreigner.

Waters: I do remember when Klaus (her son) came. We had just finished class, and I don't remember if Carolyn Durand or Louise or who it was, or maybe even me -- I don't remember -- went to the ship when it came into port to pick up Klaus, but I do remember Klaus when he stepped in the studio and ^I met him for the first time: skinny, in kneepants.

Q: Very European.

Waters: Yes. But exceedingly charming.

Q: One of the customs that's different between Americans and Germans is that the Germans have their big meal in the middle of the day and a light meal towards the evening.

Waters: That changed.

Q: She ate American style?

Waters: *yes.*

Q: Would she take meals with you all?

Waters: Oh yes. We ate with her, we took her out, and she would take us out.

Q: There was a community. You were close.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Were the classes large?

Waters: No. Then when (pounds on table) the war did break out ~~the Jews were all gone~~, I think I am right in saying that it seemed like overnight that the Jews were all gone, and Louise was left. Now Henrietta (Greenhood) is Jewish.

Q: yes.

Waters: But she stuck it out, as I remember. But you felt something wrong.

Q: Just a

Waters: Yes, and I think that was an exceedingly trying period for Hanya. But we were too young, we didn't know what gives.

Q: And Hanya was so good and simple and friendly, that. . .

Waters: Yes. It seemed that her discipline at times -- and I am not afraid to say it -- was too severe, and she picked on people, and she picked on me.

Q: For what kind of things?

Waters: If you weren't doing something quite right, she'd. . .

Q: Physically?

Waters: No. And because of that I learned that with my students I had discipline, but up to a certain point. I would not touch them.

Q: So that they still have their own style and that kind of thing.

Waters: Well, as far as style ^{of} ~~the~~ movement Hanya was very good about, because I had a certain kind of body, and moved a certain way. That was all right, but if there were *picky* things (pounds loudly on table) she'd catch it.

Haven't you heard that?

Q: Well, it sort of goes with people's idea of the German character -- that it's very precise.

Before we leave Henry Cowell -- we talked a little bit about him before, and what his classes were -- how was he? Was he friendly? What sort of a man was he?

Waters: I remember he was very nice to me. Speaking of Henry ^{then} Cowell, /Louis Horst at Perry Mansfield, everybody was scared of him, but Louis Horst ~~was~~ was absolutely wonderful to me.

Q: Yes? Was he teaching the preclassic forms then?

Waters: *Yes.*

Q: So you studied that with him.

Waters: Yes. I'd forgotten, I am sorry.

Q: That's okay. Did you enjoy it?

Waters: Yes. I enjoyed anything that was new. Then later on I began to sift.

Q: As you had more of an idea of what was you?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Well, that happens as everyone grows older, I think.

Waters: Yes. Now to get back to. . .

Q: We are still in Hanya's studio with Henry Cowell.

Waters: Then rehearsals with ^{the} ~~a~~ group were rough, because Hanya had some money-- she got some money, I don't remember. . .

Q: Sol Hurok gave her money.

Waters: Yes, but somebody private gave her money too.

Q: To get a fellowship, did that mean that you were automatically in the group?

Waters: Yes. Well, I don't remember. I think because of my eagerness and willingness to work that she respected -- I would work all night if need be --

Q: That's what she wanted.

Waters: Right!

Q: And you did.

Waters: Yes.

Q: I just love Mr. Cowell's music, and I've always wondered -- was he quiet or outgoing or strict or casual?

Waters: I think he was very gentle and outgoing. Not outgoing in a vivacious way. I loved his classes, and I learned a lot.

Q: Would he teach you about, say opposing different rhythms like with different parts of your body, maybe your feet doing a three-four and your arms doing. . .

Waters: I don't remember.

Q: Was it the kind of class where you sat down with instruments or got up and moved?

Waters: We did both.

Q: You did both, I see. Was that sort of an unusual idea at the time: to have music/^{sort of}integrated with dance?

Waters: Yes.

Q: But it seemed natural to you?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Was Franziska Boas there when you were?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did Henry Cowell leave and her come in, or did they both teach at the same time, only different styles?

Waters: I don't remember. Is she living?

Q: I don't think so. I am not sure.

Waters: Because she would remember me.

Q: What was she like? She is a very shadowy figure, hard to hear about her.

Waters: I liked her. She was rough, as I remember. But, Theresa, when you say rough, at that age the judgment is different than as you grow older. So maybe she wasn't. I don't know. (laughs)

Q: Well, can you think of anything that made her classes different from Henry Cowell's classes? What was the different thing that they were trying to teach?

Waters: I think that Henry Cowell went into compositions -- small phrasing, assembly -- more. Yes, I am right. But Franziska I think went into the actual technique of playing.

Q: I see.

Waters: But I might be wrong.

Q: Oh it's okay, If that's your idea it's fine. Who else was there while you were there? Was Tina Flade there yet?

Waters: Is that her married name?

Q: No, her married name is Mooney.

Waters: No.

Q: She wasn't there. Nancy Hauser ?

Waters: Oh gosh, I saw Nancy this summer, and one of my students that Nancy has picked, she leaves me after Christmas and goes to Nancy.

Q: In Minneapolis?

Waters: *yes.* And Cindy (McGossen) -- Cindy's father I had as ~~a~~ student in Santa Fe. We haven't gotten to Santa Fe yet.

Q: I ^{ive} heard that Hanya tried to use each dancer for what gifts they had.

Waters: I think so.

Q: What sort of a dancer was Nancy, for example?

Waters: Nancy wasn't as good, I must admit -- and she will say it too, that she wasn't a dancer, compared to me and Louise and others.

Q: Well, Louise -- I've seen a little film of her dancing, and she was all watery and sinuous and long and . . .right?

Waters: Right.

Q: What were your qualities? You were hard and percussive.

Waters: And daring, jumpy.

Q: You weren't afraid of hurting yourself?

Waters: No, which I did.

Q: Right. (laughter) Well, I guess you are right, you are proving your own point.

Would Hanya ever talk to you about your style and about how you were developing?

Waters: I don't think she did.

Q: Hmmm. Well, when Hanya was teaching a class, what kinds of things would she tell you? What sort of corrections would she give you?

Waters: I vaguely remember -- and I bring it up with my students, but maybe I have dramatized on it, I don't remember -- I

used my arms and hands much too much, and as I remember I think that she told me -- I might be wrong -- "Don't use your arms for quite a few lessons," and consequently the torso was used much more

Q: So that was what she was trying to get across.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Was there an idea behind that, to make it more internal?

Waters: I think so.

Q: Did Hanya talk much philosophy?

Waters: Yes.

Q: She did? What kind of things?

Waters: Doing the best you can. But I say, doing the best of your ability. But she pushed us. And I can now understand more because of the problem, ~~and~~ to get going in this country, but we didn't understand that then.

Q: Of course not.

Waters: But now I do. But I do think her pushing at times was too extreme.

Q: Would you talk about that with, say, Louise or....

Waters: I talked to Louise.

Q: You all were friends?

Waters: ~~Yes~~. yes.

Q: In the company you each had kinds of special friends I guess?

Waters: Well, Louise. . . Carolyn Durand. . .

But Louise I knew, and she knew me better. You see, I brought Louise out here to teach, guest teaching, in Santa Fe. And well, ~~Yes~~ touring in the trains with Hanya, we didn't have money, and I remember Louise and I slept in an upper ^{bunk} ^ together because I was short and she was tall, so she would sleep at my feet, and my head would be at her feet, so we got along better..(laughter)

Q: You complemented one another.

Waters: ~~Yes~~. yes.

Q: You said that Henrietta Greenhood, who became Eve Gentry, was Jewish, and she disappeared about the time of the war?

Waters: No, she didn't, she stuck it out, but I think there was a slight feeling..But you have to ask Henrietta, because ..I don't know, I was too young.

Q: You were both the short girls in the company.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Would Hanya use you in similar ways?

Waters: No, I don't think so, because I think I had a physical capacity -- rolls, jumps, dynamics -- but I might again be wrong, I don't know.

Q: Well, your impressions, what you remember, your first impulses are probably true, so trust yourself a little bit.

Waters: All right.

Q: While you were living and studying in New York were you going to concerts? Were you seeing Martha Graham, Charles Weidman and Doris Humphrey? You were seeing them?

Waters: And also I was living on nothing, and I mean nothing. But people today... I had an apartment that was something like twenty dollars a month.

Q: Did you live with somebody else in the company or did you live alone?

Waters: No. I preferred being alone. I lived at a girls' boarding house when I first came but got out pretty quick. But I didn't have any money. I remember I had to share a room with a stranger. Then I got my own and I was so proud.

You see, my parents didn't help me after I moved out. That was it.

Q: Well, you were a big girl. You had to...

Waters: But many students of mine^{today -} they get help right and left. Many don't but many do.

Q: Do you remember seeing Martha Graham? Let's just start with her... her concerts in New York?

Waters: Yes.

Q: What were your feelings when you went to see her?

Were you interested?

Waters: Yes. Anything.

Q: Anything was interesting.

Waters: Yes. Anything. But when I left Hanya, I went to Martha and of course Martha knew me and I took about two weeks and I said, "Martha, this is not for me." But she said, "Elizabeth, you're a dancer already." And she's been always very nice to me. And one of my former students, Tim Wengard...

Q: Oh, I know who he is. Of course.

Waters; I started Tim at twelve years old and had him clear through two years of college. I just heard from Tim in Egypt.

Q: Yes, they're on a big tour.

Okay, ~~we~~^{we} started talking a little about you saw Martha Graham's work and then we mentioned Tim, your student. But while you were studying with Hanya, you said you didn't study ^{except} with Martha ~~after~~ after you had left the company and then...

Waters: We didn't have the time.

Q: You were at Hanya's all day.

Waters: Yes. But I knew Doris Humphrey well and I knew Doris Humphrey, you see... I went back to Perry-Mansfield to teach and ^{perform,} too... and she was back there at the ^{same} time.
^

Q: So that's how you got to know her.

Waters: Better. Yes.

Q: Well, some people, have you read that book that was written about Hanya that I think Walter Terry wrote?

Waters: No, it isn't Walter Terry.

Q: Walter Sorell. Yes, that's it. I'm sorry. Well in that book, he says that Hanya was busy building up this company because she wanted... but she said it would take her five years to get ready for a performance, you know, that she felt it would take that much preparation to teach the dancers, to do the choreography and she wasn't going to do it until she was ready and it was right.

But meanwhile, there were all these other performances going on. Did Hanya feel that it was important to develop a reputation as a choreographer and a performer as well as a teacher? Did you feel that this was a big...

Waters: Yes. Now, Hanya basically is not a dancer.

Q: She's a teacher?

Waters: Yes. And also physically. You see, her knees...

Q: They weren't good even then?

Waters: No. And I think, because of this, she went into choreography and she was very good at it and she increased because she thought in terms of choreography more than teaching later. Now Hanya did dance in the group.

Q: So, it wasn't—that wasn't her big concern. She didn't let that really affect what she knew she truly was, which was a good teacher? Or did she feel she had to make a mark as a choreographer?

Waters: Yes, I think she felt that she did, because, I think,

how can I put it? She wanted desperately to be known. But if I say that, that could mean that that's all she thought about. That is not true.

She had another side of her, but I do think that she was deeply concerned of her reputation. I was not... I did because I believed, but I was different and in a different situation, so I had no right to criticize.

Q: No, no. It's not a criticism.

Waters: But I do think she was concerned about making a reputation.

Q: Was that because she felt a debt to Mary Wigman maybe?

Waters: Yes. And also because she was taken out in this country and, gosh, being in another country in a situation of the world would do any of us sort of a...

Q: Oh, yes. It's perfectly understandable. Well, while you were at the studio, when you were working on choreography and technique and percussive... you weren't working on choreography?

Waters: *Myself.*

Q: Yes. Were composition classes taught in the studio?

Waters: Yes.

Q: How was it different from what Louis Horst had taught at Perry-Mansfield?

Waters: Well, Louis abided by the pre-classic forms. Hanya... no, if we wanted to go off on a tangent, go ahead, go off on a tangent. But the ^{pre-}classic forms were valuable because of the strictness, and what you composed on your own, on a tangent, unconsciously you might borrow...

Q: Yes, so you had this underlying sense of form but it was your own material. Yes.

Would Hanya teach the composition classes herself? Would she give you an exercise, maybe, well for example, like an exercise in different levels, maybe?

Waters: I don't remember. You see, in Trend, and I didn't know it. Stupid me! I worked on this dance as one of the solos, a daring, "Lest ~~you~~ ^{We} Remember," that...

She said one day, "Okay, this dance goes into Trend without music." It was done in sheer silence. But it came from me. It wasn't completely her choreography.

Q: Right. I've heard....

Waters: And that's what I do with my people too. Get the best out of them. You let them be up to a certain point. Then guide them. But it shocked me because I didn't know I was going to do a solo. And without music...

Q: Oh, it was scary.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Was there an idea at that time that modern dancers should be choreographers too? That one shouldn't be just a dancer?

Waters: I think so.

Q: That wasn't true in ballet. It was a new idea.

Waters: Right, right. But I was making... did I go back

to Salem.

Q: Yes.

Waters: Okay. In high school, Erlene Speck, my English teacher, that I was exceedingly shy and I couldn't memorize Chaucer. So Erlene Speck said, "Compose a dance and you will find that you can memorize."

Q: Because you had the rhythm of it.

Waters: Right. And to this day, I still correspond with Erlene Speck.

Q: She must have been a fine teacher.

Waters: And she has... I lost track of her for a while but about eight years ago, ten years ago, I was out in San Diego. I had lost her address. It was the same address but I looked and got it in the phone book and I called her. And since then, she writes to me. And she has a collection of my letters from way way way back. And I think her teaching helped me in dance and as a person also.

Now, do you know that a thesis has been written about me?

Q: No. By whom?

Waters: By Lauren Gossid^t I have it here.
Howett

Q: Good.

Waters: And it was completed about a year ago. I have it if you want to look at it.

Q: I will, yes.

Waters: And then, Don Hatfield in Berkeley is doing a book on my barnstorming tour, because he took pictures upon pictures upon pictures of me ^{and the group} in Minnesota.

Q: You've just been every where.

Waters: Well, Hanya too. She's incredible.

Q: Yes. Well, as you were starting to ... as Hanya... I understand that you were working on your own choreography and things, but Hanya was working on this overall plan for Trend.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Right? And you all worked on your own solo pieces and then she worked on, I guess, the idea for the overall thing and her own solo, right? But she didn't start to do this until you knew that you were going to Bennington, right?

Waters: I think so. I think you're right.

Q: Do you remember how you first got a clue about Bennington or what the idea seem to be?

Waters: I think I went to Bennington the year before, before Trend. I think I was at Bennington for three years.

Q: Maybe as a teacher that ^{first} ~~year~~ year?

Waters; I helped Hanya. I think I taught the beginning stretching class.

Q: That makes sense. A lot of the choreographers would bring in assistants and then ... that was the year that Doris Humphrey did With My Red Fires ...

Waters : I saw that.

Q: Okay. Well, then that's the year...

Waters: What year was that?

Q: 1936.

Waters: Then yes.

Q: And then you went again in 1937...

Waters: And '38.

Q: And in 1938, you did Dances at Work and Play.

Waters: Correct. Right.

Q: Okay. Well, let's talk about 1936 first. Do you remember how Hanya felt about it or how you felt about going up there to teach? Was it something you looked forward to, to leave the city?

Waters: Yes. I did. And as I told you, that crazy idea of getting good food...

Q: (Laughter) Right. You're not the only one who ^{has} said that, you know, a lot of people were starving. So the food was important up there.

Waters: Yes. Then, it was a relief because, being born in Oregon and going to the Coast and being out in the open to get away from New York City was a treat.

Q: I'm sure. Yes. Did you feel any... was there a difference between 1936 and 1937 in that Doris Humphrey was sort of the featured choreographer that summer? Did you feel like you were maybe less involved or anything, or was it...did you feel the same both summers?

Waters: I think I felt the same both summers.

Q: Were you and Hanya comfortable up at Bennington?

Waters: Yes. I think so. Why? Did you get other reactions?

Q: No. It just seems like maybe, to me, I don't know, all I can do is imagine, of course, but it seems to me like I would have felt maybe more that it was my place if ... in the year that my company was doing the performance. But like I say,

that's just imagination. I don't know.

Waters: As I told you, with me, I wanted so much everything that I didn't have that feeling. And I think José...

Erick Hawkins, for instance. Erick has contacted me and been out to this house, that he was so nice to me there.

Q: Well, he's fascinated by Indians and the Southwest and everything.

Waters: Yes. I didn't feel that. Maybe I was too naive. I don't know.

Q: But you remember it was friendly and you made friends.

Waters: Oh, yes.

Q: In all the different companies and stuff. What about your students, the people that you were teaching? Would you become friendly with them?

Waters: I think I did.

Q: A lot of them were phys ed teachers. Do you remember that?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did they have a harder time?

Waters: Yes. But I think basically, even today, that when I travel in these tiny tiny communities, if I can help, let me help.

Q: So you didn't resent teaching these people who were never going to be dancers. You enjoyed it.

Waters: If we can help for the dance to change their attitude, it's our duty to do so and not criticize.

Q: So by teaching teachers, it was really spreading the word.

Did they ever have... I mean physically, they had some sort of limitations because they were older and everything, but did they ever have limitations and did they resist you or have trouble grasping the ideas...

Waters: I think sometimes they did.

Q: And you would help them with that, talk about it with them. And then they sort of came around and got excited?

Waters: I think so.

Q: Would any of them seem to be...

Waters: But look, that Hanya should thank some of those people because when we toured, it was the P.E. department that got us there.

Q: And they were P.E. teachers that you had met at Bennington?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Oh, I'm sure, yes. A lot of people have mentioned how grateful they are to those people...

Waters: Rightly.

Q: Sure. Do you know that what was happening at Bennington was that students would come there to study and they would study with each technique for a few weeks. Some people felt really confused at the end of that time if they didn't have enough training to grasp them all. Did you encounter much of trying to explain, "Well, one technique does it this way," and did you have to explain the ideas very much to get across

to people what the differences were? Do you remember them being confused?

Waters: Not too much.~ Yes, I did feel some agitation , yes.

Q: Because they wanted to do it right.

Waters: Yes.

Q: But it was physically hard for them and then mentally...

Waters: Well, my gosh, dance or any art is a lifetime, and you don't learn it in six weeks, period.

Q: Yes. Well, also, some people have said that when they got to Bennington, there was a tendency to start to belong to one technique or the other. Everybody seemed to want to say, "Well, I like this one better." Another one, "This one's better." Do you remember that?

Waters: Somewhat.

Q: But you don't remember that being a real... it didn't get in the way of their learning.

Waters: I don't think so.

Q: It didn't worry you while you were there. Did you look forward to the year when Hanya would do her big piece? Was that something that you were excited about?

Waters: Yes.

Q: While you worked on Trend, you each had... members of the company had a solo. But then there was this big augmented group. Do you remember that? The extra people and stuff. Did Hanya like that, to have a lot of people to work with?

Waters: I think so. But my gosh, as I look back, what a job to handle!

Q: Really.

Waters: I've got pictures of it.

Q: Of Trend.

Waters: Yes.

Q: That was a great big work. Was it exciting?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did you feel like you were showing something new that other people hadn't...

Waters: I felt that it had a great deal of depth. It wasn't a dancybancy.

Q: Do you remember Arch Lauterer making the sets?

Waters: Oh, yes.

Q: How do you remember him? He's the most fascinating character.

Waters: He was very nice to me.

Q: Did you talk to him very much or socialize with him?

Waters: Not particularly.

Q: He was just gracious and thoughtful.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Do you have a picture of him on a ladder or doing something?

Waters: I've got pictures upon pictures. I'm going to have to check through.

Q: No, I mean in your mind.

Waters: Oh, yes. Yes, yes.

Q: What did you think of him?

Waters: And also the woman photographer.

Q: Barbara Morgan.

Waters: Yes. I remember her too.

Q: How would you remember them up there?

Waters: I think they were both very eager and careful about timing to get the essence and not just take a picture.

Q: Arch was like that too. He really worked from the inside out. And he tried... there were all those ramps and all those levels in the Armory and stuff. Can you talk about working on those? What was it like? It's hard.

Waters: It was hard. But, I think I had, even as a child, the spirit of dare or I wouldn't be where I am now. Because I could tell you incredible things, but it's too long.

Q: Do you mean risks that you've taken and stuff?

Waters: Well, what happened to me. Yes. Risks. You see, I wanted to get to places. I took a steamer to Cuba, Bermuda, Halifax, Nassau and danced on a boat, solo; a little young kid from the sticks. You know, really.

Q: Why were all those levels and why was that complicated set necessary for Trend?

Waters: Well, I think what she wanted to do... ^{wish I had} I talked with her this summer about that. We didn't. We talked about other things. I think that she felt that the steps and the ramps were the power of transitions and in all art pieces is a constant growth, then transitions, then to go down to the

steps, to come up, was a constant rotation of experience.
Maybe I'm wrong. I don't know.

Q: Do you remember your solo?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Each solo had a name. What was yours called?

Waters: Lest We Remember.

Q: Yes. Now, what was that about?

Waters: I think, Theresa, I had a lot of inner feelings
that I never talked to Hanya about or anybody. I think it came
out in the movement and Hanya saw it and used it.

Q: Because I had heard that she gave you each themes to
make...

Waters: I didn't get a theme from her.

Q: No. Maybe you already had a piece that she decided to use
without a theme. Have you any idea why you titled it that?

Waters: She did.

Q: Oh, she titled it. I see. Interesting. Well, what it implies is that there's something we must forget.

Waters: Yes.

Q: What was that you were trying to... that you were repressing and trying not to remember?

Waters: Well, you see, my parents were waiting for me to leave home to get a divorce. And this was on my mind. And many things at home happened that I wished to forget. I still remember. You can't.

Q: And Hanya saw it and...

Waters: Maybe she did. I don't know. You can't tell after forty years.

Q: Oh but the title sounds like she understood.

Waters: Yes.

Q: She was good to you all as a company. Did she look after you and ask you if you were...

Waters: Yes. She would do things for us.

I think she was so concerned with her survival that many times, she didn't feel what we felt. Have you talked with any of the other group members?

Q: I spoke to Bernice Van Gelder. Do you remember her?

Waters: Oh, yes.

Q: Her solo was called Lucre Lunacy. Remember?

Waters: Yes.

Q: And let's see. I think that's all.

Waters: Did she respond this way?

Q: She remembered... yes. She remembered Hanya telling her the theme, you know on how money makes us crazy and how she worked on that and then she talked a little bit about how Hanya would edit it, and things like that. But it was such

a big piece and to be inside it, it's really hard to get specific impressions about what was going on around you, which is why all I can do is just ask and ask about... I mean what you said about the ramps and the steps and the cycle and going up and going down to come up was really interesting to me.

Waters: Well, I felt that.

Q: You think that that was one of the major ^{themes} ~~parts~~ of the piece because part of it was called "Resurgence."

Waters: You see, since I've been here, the seasons, the ~~change~~ change -- we must go through constant change to survive and progress --

But then of course ^I ~~we~~ didn't have my experience with the Indians that I have had, and living it rough in a rough country during the war.

Q: Do you remember working very hard? Did you work hard at Bennington?

Waters: Yes, I did.

Q: Was the pace faster than in New York? More concentrated?

Waters: It was more concentrated. I'll tell you a funny thing, but don't publish it.

Q: Okay.

Waters: I can remember in the dorm that I was so tired and so hot that I would not sleep with anything on, and I got up one night to go to the bathroom, and I walked right in front of a patrolman or a security man, and. . . (laughter and noises)

I bring it up because of working so hard. And I can remember the muscles. . . I work hard today, but the muscles have never hurt like they did at Bennington. I worked and worked.

Q: Constantly.

Waters: YES! Late at night, early in the morning.

My stamina is inherited.

Q: Do you remember the musicians that you had that summer? You had Wallingford Riegger, right?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Do you remember him?

Waters: Yes.

Q: He was an unusual man, wasn't he?

Waters: And then again there were so many of these people that were so nice.

Q: He was nice to you?

Waters: ~~Yes~~.

Q: Friendly, in that he would talk to you?

Waters: And Harry Partch, my gosh, Harry Partch was
? — — — — in this part of the country.

And I have used his music and have done beautiful things,
and I wrote to him for permission, and he said, "Elizabeth,
you are the first and only person that has asked for permission.
By all means take it."

When we lived in Valley he came down to the house.

Q: You made a lot of friends at Bennington that you kept up
with later, would you say that?

Waters: Yes, because when I toured in Barnstorming a lot of the places we wouldn't have gotten if it hadn't been for the students that knew me.

Q: From Bennington.

Waters: And also touring with Hanya.

Q: This business of touring and living so closely together up at Bennington, did it make you closer to the company, or did it make you want to be more alone?

Waters: Oh at times you had to get away from each other. You'd had it.

Q: Well, of course that's going to be true of any place.

Waters: But I think with Louise (Kloepper), we always had a wonderful relationship.

Q: Was the performance a success?

Waters: I thought ^{she was} ~~we were~~.

Q: You were satisfied? It was good feeling of working hard and pulling it off?

Waters: ~~Yes.~~ Yes.

Q: How did those students in the augmented group work out?
Did they do okay?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Do you think that it was apparent to the audience that there were good dancers and then there were these other people that were kind of background?

Waters: Oh yes.

Q: Did Hanya spend a lot of time working on costumes? Was that a big concern ? Because I remember that they were very delicately shaded in shades of black to gray, right?

Waters: Yes. Yes, she is conscious of that sort of thing, and even in the summer up there this was important.

She sees ~~the~~ the total, not just movement, but the total, the effects of lights, the effects of sound.

Q: But because Hanya had been trained in Germany at the Bauhaus where they were very concerned ^{with that} ~~with that~~, was she more concerned with it than Graham and the Humphrey-Weidman companies? Was that

one of her special contributions?

Waters: I think so. Of course Noguchi with Martha Graham, my God, what he did for her!

Q: Later, not then. You performed Trend in Bennington and in New York. Was it different?

Waters: Yes.

Q: How?

Waters: I don't think we had this equivalent, the same background people, mass people, as much.

Q: In New York? You couldn't get that many people?

Waters: I remember in New York that my mother was in Washington, D.C., and I had gotten a telegram to come, that she was dying, and I was in rehearsal at the time. I went anyway, but got back in time. But there was some confusion.

Q: In the New York performance?

Waters: Yes, for me.

Q: Personally, yes. Hmmm. What were the reviews like? They were sort of mixed, I think.

Waters: I think they were, yes.

Q: Did you have the feeling that people were not understanding it?

Waters: Yes, I think a lot of people didn't. My gosh, a subject like that, that's not dressed up with clichés, is pretty hard to take at that time. But today, my gosh, what people do, and the young choreographers. . .

Q: So it was the audience that just wasn't very sophisticated.

Waters: I think.

Q: Do you think Trend would go over today?

Waters: Yes, it would.

Q: I wish I could see it. (laughs)

Waters: Yes, I think it would. In fact even more so than ten years ago, because the tendency -- and I found it here too --

that it's technique, technique, technique; and technique isn't it.

Q: No.

Waters: And the individual -- like here I have students that come from the University to get my approach, because I still teach. . .

Q: The inside.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Now in 1938 you went back to Bennington, and that was the year that all the choreographers were ~~going~~ going to do a major piece and everything. Was there a different feeling on the campus?

Waters: There probably was. I would stick to myself. I didn't notice it, but maybe there was.

Q: Well, Dances of Work and Play was a very different kind of work,

Waters: Yes. , I know.

Q: That strikes me as strange -- I mean that a choreographer does two such different things so close together. Why do you think Hanya decided to do something like that?

Waters: Trend I think was mixed up with her own life too, and she had had it. It was an expression.

Q: And she got it out.

Waters: Yes, and Work and Play, let's bring in a little humor and a little play, which I feel at times, too. We all do. We've had it. Let's get out and do something.

Q: So it was an antidote.

Waters: I think. It was a fun dance, and I think it was a good dance.

Q: Did Hanya still like going back to Bennington? Do you remember always the feeling of relief, or did you get tired of it towards the end?

Waters: I think we were getting tired of it. I was. In fact I left Hanya, I think the spring of 1939, because I formed my own group and toured from coast to coast, the ^{Barnstorming} ~~Barntouring~~ Tour that Nik was in.

Q: Nick Kravitzky?

Waters: No, Alwin Nikolais.

Q: Oh!

Waters: We worked together.

Q: And he was in your group?

Waters: Yes,⁴ people barnstorming. My mother had died, and she'd left me 800 dollars, with which I bought a second-hand Dodge in New Jersey for 110 dollars, and I knew nothing about cars. We piled in that car and went across country, slept in haystacks, and Nik was with us, and you talk with Nik.

Q: How about that? Were you doing all the choreography?

Waters: No.

Q: Was each person doing it?

Waters: Well, mostly me.

Q: Who were the other people?

Waters: Carolyn. She now lives in Eugene, Ore. And Ray Mallin we have lost track of. I don't know where Ray is. And it's too bad, because the man that's writing the book about the Barnstorming Tour, he came here to talk to me, and he said, what about Ray? And I can't find him, I don't know where he is.

Q: Had Ray been in Hanya's company also?

Waters: No. I don't know where I picked him up. And I don't know about Nik.

Q: Well, Nik was at Bennington.

Waters: I think Nik I helped teach down at the Henry Street Settlement and knew him, and we are very good friends today.

Q: Because he had been at Bennington. Did you know him at Bennington?

Waters: No. It was after.

Q: You left Hanya because you wanted to do your own choreography? That was the main reason?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Hanya's company also didn't perform that much. Was that a consideration? You wanted to do more performing?

Waters: *Yes.*

Q: Was Hanya agreeable and understanding when you left, or was it hard for her?

Waters: *Not particularly.*

Q: It was like a personal rejection, I guess.

Waters: You've heard that?

Q: Well, it's inevitable. Everybody must feel that way. There's nothing unusual about it.

Waters: Well, just like what I said about Cindy going to Nancy's ~~after~~ after ~~Christmas~~ Christmas, and I wrote her and said, "I am sure that you had people that you brought up and now they are gone." It happens. That's ~~progress~~ *progress.* No, I shouldn't say ~~progress~~ *progress.* It's change. As we change, sometimes it's progress and sometimes no. *We learn.*

Q: And people have to do what they feel they have to do. So Hanya wasn't pleased, but she somewhat understood.

Waters: Yes.

Q: And you remained friendly with her?

Waters: Yes.

Q: And you studied with Martha, you said, for a little while?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did you ever study with Humphrey or Weidman?

Waters: No, I don't think I did.

Q: Did you like their work?

Waters: ^{Yes.} ~~Yes.~~ Well, as I told you, anything -- let's get going, searching.

Q: When you'd go and look at things, just whatever concert you might have happened to have gone to take a look at, would you go with people and discuss it afterwards with them?

Waters: Not particularly. I went alone a lot.

Q: Were you familiar with Helen Tamiris' work?

Waters: I knew her.

Q: Oh you did?

Waters: She taught at Perry Mansfield too.

Q: Aha. Did it seem strange to you that Helen wasn't invited to Bennington?

Waters: Yes, I wondered about that.

Q: Do you have any ideas why it might have been?

Waters: No.

Q: I understand that some people found Helen a little harder to take because she was so political.

Waters: Yes, that could be.

Q: But that didn't affect you? You got along with her fine?

Waters: ~~no~~ yes.

Q: Were you ever involved in politics? Politics and dancing were very closely related in that period.

Waters: I don't believe in it. I don't here. That's what's wrong with the Chicanos.

Q: They are behaving politically?

Waters: People are people, period. If you are black you are black. Who cares? If you are Spanish, who cares?

Q: But at that time people were more concerned with that. It was a political time.

Waters: I wear ~~braids and~~ many students, because I am part of this country, say, "Are you part Indian? Are you Indian?" I say, "I don't know, maybe I am." (laughter) Which is true. I could be a New York Indian.

Q: That's great. Well, for the time that you were with Hanya, Bennington was a big part of it, wasn't it?

Waters: Yes.

Q: It sort of stands out in your memory.

Waters: Yes, but some of our tours were rough but excellent. Oh, some of the things touring.

Q: It was hard?

Waters: It was rough.

Q: You mean like where you slept and what you had to eat, or didn't eat? But you didn't mind.

Waters: In some place in Nebraska -- I don't remember -- there was a snowstorm; the train pulled into some station -- it was a big station -- and we just slept on the benches. And we hadn't had any sleep, and we gave a morning lecture demonstration.

Oh, Margaret Erlanger from Illinois, gosh, I went on one date with her, she came to the University to start another degree in anthropology, and we got to know each other, and I went to Nik's, Harry Partch. . .

I can't think what it is. Was it Bewitched ?
I can't think. I will remember it.

But Margaret Erlanger, we had a lot in common here, and that little ^{child's} Kachina, the little bitty one, she gave me.

Q: Was she at Bennington? Where is she from? I've heard of her,

but I don't know where.

Waters: I only knew her at Champaign.

Q: Where you went on a tour with Hanya?

Waters: ~~Yes,~~ and my own tour too.

Q: What was the name of that barnstorming group that you talked about?

Waters: "Dancers en Route."

Q (laughs): Oh that's funny. That's a good name.

Waters: We had fun though. We even danced in farms' barns.

Q: Literally.

Waters: Yes. And at the San Francisco World's Fair too.

Q: That would have been in 1939 or 1940?

Waters: Yes.

Q: How long did you have that group?

Waters: Almost three years.

Q: And then the war came.

Waters: Yes. You see, I had the group at Chapel Hill, I told you, and then came out here. That was what started...

Q: But the group in Chapel Hill wasn't the barnstorming group, was it?

Waters: Some of it was.

Q: I see. What made you settle in Chapel Hill?

Waters: They asked me, and I did quite a bit of choreography for the Drama Department, and they helped us greatly.

Q: Did Hanya see your choreography after you left her?

Waters: I don't know if she did or not. Of course we were doing things on nothing, as I told you -- 800 dollars.

Talk to Nik - he'll tell you ~~that~~^{it} wasn't all that bad.

But we had fun.

Q: You did?

Waters: Yes, and I think we reached a lot of new people.

Q: That was part of what you were about in those days? It was spreading the word and showing people what it was about?

Waters: (answer is not heard)

But I have never been -- how can I say it --- big-time stuff. Maybe I could have been if I'd played the game right, but I don't care.

Q: You mean go after money for funds and. . .

Waters: Even now it just bores me. I have to match with the grant, and it's incredible that *former* students way, way, way back from Hawaii, all over, contribute ████████ money.

Q: That must make you feel good.

Waters: And

But it's a bore.

I can't keep up with it. And it's taken away some of the joy of choreography. But I love teaching.

Q: And you still choreograph and teach?

Waters: Yes. But it's getting now ████ to the point where I've

become a business manager and I can't do it. I am not made that way. So if it goes under, it goes under.

Q: As you look back, now that we've sort of sketched out the shape of how it all happened, what did Bennington mean? Was it a place to teach, a place to eat, a place to perform, or did it have a special ambiance of its own?

Waters: I felt that meeting new people was delightful.

Q: It was sort of a "people" thing then? It was a big exchange?

Waters: For me.

Q: Did you meet musicians from other companies and dancers from other companies, people from outside?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did you mix more at Bennington than in New York?

Waters: Yes, because we were all right there. In New York I lived down in the dumps someplace. Nancy had a loft with her sculptor husband. No, we didn't get together too much. We were always so busy. You see, I was a waitress.

Q: So Bennington you remember mainly as a pleasant relief in the country to do your work?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Was going to Bennington an honor? I mean did it have that feeling about it? That you were privileged and important to be there?

Waters: I think so, ^{that I} was chosen and that I had worked so hard from Oregon to get there.

Q: Right. Some people have said that Bennington by bringing the New York critics up there and having everybody together it helped make a name for modern dance and it helped establish it.

Waters: I think it did.

Q: You do feel that way?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Do you remember John Martin up there?

Waters: Oh yes. In fact John Martin, I talked with, and the other critic that wrote about me.

Q: A man or a woman?

Waters: A man. Walter Terry.

Even I was there. I am mentioned in there.

Q: So people thought about the critics, but you didn't mix with the critics. *It was okay* to be friendly with them, and stuff.

Waters: *yes.*

Q: John Martin taught at Bennington, he taught a dance history course. Do you remember him being around? Were you aware of him a lot?

Waters: Not too much.

Q: Some people have said that because he was so tall, important and distinguished he was a presence that they were aware of a lot. Not for you though.

Waters: No.

Q: Shall we turn off the tape and just try to think if there's anything that we haven't talked about?

Waters: I would like to say this -- that I think Bennington contributed to the development of the creative dance in America.

Q: By creating the touring circuit?

Waters: Yes.

Q: And teaching the teachers?

Waters: Yes.

Q: And giving you a place to live.

Waters: And making it a festival. You see, there's been so many music festivals, and still music festivals. Aspen is terrific.

Q: You go there?

Waters: Yes, yes. So I truly feel that even if there's criticisms -- there is always criticisms by everybody for everything -- that is a part of growth too. But I think they did a lot for the dance.

Q: "They" being Martha Hill and Mary Jo Shelly?

Waters: Yes.

Q: Did you become friendly with them?

Waters: Not too.

Q: They were just there making it happen?

Waters: ~~██████~~ yes.

Q: Hanya was friendly with them, wasn't she?

Waters: ~~██████~~ yes.

Q: Was Hanya friendly with Martha and Doris and Charles?

Waters: I don't know. Er. . . uh. . . Maybe not, I don't know.

Q: The reason I ask is that I've seen a picture with the four of them standing together, and it's strange, and then you realize that you don't see pictures of them, you know, and I wonder if they stuck with their own company members.

~~████████████████████~~

Waters: I think they did.

Q: Did you eat meals with Hanya? I mean the company would sort

of eat as a group?

Waters: We did, yes.

Q: It was sort of your family.

Waters: Yes.

Q: Speaking of family, did your family come and see you perform with Hanya?

Waters: My oldest brother came. I think it was the barnstorming tour in San Francisco. My father did in vaudeville.

Q: And they remained supportive and pleased, and glad for you?

Waters: Oh yes.

Q: Good.

Waters: Well, like for instance. . . We'd better turn it (the recording machine) off.

Q: Okay.

(end of recording)

INDEX

Boas, Franziska 22-23
 Campbell, Mary 10
 Cowell, Henry 13, 19-20, 21-22, 23
 Dudley, Alice 6-7
 Durand, Carolyn 16, 62
 Graham, Martha 28, 29-30, 56, 57
 Greenhood, Henrietta 18, 28
 Hauser, Nancy 24
 Hawkins, Erick 41
 Hill, Martha 74-75
 Holm, Hanya 11, 12-19, 20-21, 24, 25-27, 30-38, 40, 43, 48-51, 56,
 60, 63-64, 75-76
 Holm, Klaus 16-17
 Horst, Louis 19, 34
 Humphrey, Doris 28, 31, 40
 Hurok, Sol 20
 Kloepper, Louise 16, 18, 24, 25, 27, 55
 Lauterer, Arch 46-48
 McGossen, Cindy 24, 63
 Mallin, Ray 62
 Mansfield, Portia 5
 Martin, John 72-73
 Morgan, Barbara 47
 Nikolais, Alwin 60-61, 62
 Noguchi 57
 Parnova, Lisa 7
 Partch, Harry 54
 Perry, "Kingo" Charlotte 5
 Riegger, Wallingford 53-54
 St. Denis, Ruth 3, 7-8
 Shawn, Ted 7
 Shelly, Mary Jo 74-75
 Sorell, Walter 31
 Speck, Erlene 36
 Tamiris, Helen 65
 Terry, Walter 73
 Van Gelder, Bernice 51
 Wengard, Tim 30
 White, Julia 2, 3, 4
 Wigman, Mary 10-11, 31
 Winslow, Miriam 8-10