

CHARLOTTE “CHOTSY” TEMPLE

Interview 301a

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Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer

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ABSTRACT:

In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, Charlotte Temple discusses growing up in Lufkin as the daughter of Arthur Temple, attending high school in Lufkin and in Dallas, and university at Duke. She discusses the differences in Lufkin and her time in larger cities and the friends she grew up with in Lufkin, as well as the fun times they had. Ms. Temple also talks about her family, her relationship with her father, and her place within the family itself and the family businesses as a daughter, rather than a son. She reminisces about her various educational pursuits, first at Duke, then at UNC for planning, then Stanford for business, and the San Francisco Art Institute. She also discusses her varied professional pursuits and her love for China and fine art photography.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): Ok, today’s date is April 19, 2022. My name is Jonathan Gerland. I’m with Chotsy Temple today, and we’re in The History Center here in Diboll, and we’re going to do an oral history interview. So Chotsy, I don’t know where the best place to begin, but you were saying earlier about some of your childhood memories of this spot right here.

Charlotte “Chotsy” Temple (hereafter CT): Yeah, yeah. Well...

JG: Just start...where do you want to start?

CT: I’ll start with that, since we’re here. When I was about—God, who knows—five to eight, I would say, my dad used to bring my brother, Buddy, and myself down to Diboll. And we would ride right here in this spot where The History Center is. There was a stable and a riding ring, and so I’m sure Daddy was going to the office to work, so he’d drop us off and we’d ride all morning. Then he’d pick us up and we’d go to The Antlers Hotel for lunch. I remember him admonishing me one time not to wear my tight blue jeans. I mean I was only about eight, I think, but he thought that my blue jeans were too tight to be coming into The Antlers Hotel.

JG: That would have been—I guess—after the war then. Like in late forties, maybe?

CT: Would’ve been...if I was eight...I was born in 1940, so it would’ve been about ’48. Yeah.

JG: And Buddy would’ve been about six, I guess?

CT: Yeah, he would've been about six. And there was a great big old stallion that stayed there. And I remember its name was Trigger, and it threw me once. I don't know why I was even on it at my age, but it threw me one day. And it was the proverbial, 'You've gotta get back on this horse,' but the horse was about twice as tall as I was, so it looked huge. But I got back on, and we had a good time in those days.

JG: Now do you remember the July 4th picnics?

CT: Yeah, I do. And you know for years, I mean, the parks and the office...I mean it was the office, what is now the office, or was the office—I saw they had a sign, Southern Pine Plaza on it now—but that was the old Boy Scout place. And all the woods over there where the office is now, people had lots of picnics, and you know it wasn't divided up like it is now. There was just the road that came in.

JG: Right, right. That's where some of the, I guess the early Diboll Day gatherings and things were?

CT: Yeah.

JG: So, what are your memories of those kinds of things?

CT: Oh, God!

JG: Because you were living in Lufkin.

CT: We were living in Lufkin. My mother never wanted to live in Diboll. She should've, but she didn't. And so, we would come down for everything. And I know Daddy wanted Buddy and me to get to know Diboll. And Diboll was a unique kind of community. Lufkin, which was about 15,000 then, was a small place. But, you know, my mom had her friends, and they played bridge every afternoon. They did those things, so she didn't want to be separated from that. But we came down from, we'd come to all the events down here, and they were wonderful. I remember when they did a Texas Monthly article—Bud Shrake did it—called Land of the Permanent Wave. Have you ever seen that? Oh, I have a copy. I'll send it to you. It was called Land of the Permanent Wave, and it had Arch Hollingsworth and the whole cast of characters. One of the things he talks about is Diboll Day. And he says, you know, talks about how they had log seating for all the people. And Daddy used to laugh, 'That was intentional.' He said, 'It's not that we couldn't have done something else, but that was intentional.' And they worked. They really worked at making the community a part of everything. You know, they'd get the local...the governor in to speak, and you know, I think that's one way Charlie Wilson got started because he was always there as a speaker. You know that would have been much later than that. But there would be a local dignitary in there.

JG: So, do you remember meeting these people?

CT: Oh, absolutely!

JG: I know we've got a picture, like of Buddy and [Governor] Beauford Jester, and maybe Allan Shivers.

CT: Oh, yeah. Yeah. We all met 'em. Had our pictures taken and so forth.

JG: Now, as a little girl, you know, you didn't really probably see the significance, but you knew they were important.

CT: Well, you know one of the things I remember so well, and it certainly influenced my life was how people would come to Diboll, like governors and senators and so forth. They would come. They would come to Pineland. We'd go over there for the weekend. But there was always wonderful conversation in the living room, and as Daddy got older, in the bedroom. There was always kind of a court of dignitaries, and people who were...you know and I never knew who they were, but I loved the conversation. I never hesitated to serve coffee as I got older. If that would let me into the conversation, I would happily serve coffee. And frequently did.

JG: So, you were allowed to just play or move around? Interact?

CT: Yeah. Well one of the advantages, I think, of my being a girl was that because I was an insignificant woman—and I say that seriously—I had the freedom that my brother never had. I was able to hear some of the most interesting people, and their political ideas, and hear the arguments that went on. It was just a fabulous way to grow up.

JG: So, this would be at your home?

CT: At my...it was at my home, yeah. And I always kind of kid my friends that I know from Lufkin and people I meet, and I say, 'I grew up as a fairy princess.' And I pretty much did, because I had a very unusual life for somebody growing up in a small town. But I had all the advantages of it, too. But that's...you know, my dad was so far-ranging. He went to Europe early on. I still remember when he went, I think the CIA gave him a little camera to take pictures. But, you know, he was so proud of that, he had one of those little tiny Minox cameras. He went to investigate how they were...the most modern techniques for lumber. I was lucky. Of course, I didn't go with him to Europe, but my mother never really liked being a corporate wife, and she wasn't. I would go to lumber association meetings with him. I'd be in the receiving line in my little white socks, shaking hands with people. It was really kind of funny. It was really a very special way to grow up.

JG: Well, you mentioned, part joke, but part truth: insignificant female.

CT: Yeah, yeah!

JG: So, I imagine part of that was the era, but if we can, can we talk a little bit more about your relationship with your father?

CT: Sure!

JG: And you know, that family business? And your relationship to the family, but also the business.

CT: Well, I was...you know, Buddy and I used to say...Buddy said, "I love East Texas. You're gonna leave, but I never will." And I used to say, "No, I love East Texas, too." But in a way, he was right, because there was not a lot of opportunities for women, and this falls under what you said, Jonathan, of 'be careful what you say, your mother might hear it.' The men in my family were very—including my father whom I adored—you know, when I (laughs)...he was really my hero, and I was a daddy's girl. But, I was a girl, and you know when Texas Monthly did a cover story on...on...it was called Arthur Temple and the End of His Dynasty. And it was...King of the Forest.

JG: King of the Forest, with the cowboy boots on the front.

CT: The cowboy boots. And I read that story and I was...I had gone...I was living somewhere else at that...

JG: I think that was '82.

CT: Ok. Well, I was living somewhere far away, and I was home, and I read that. I was totally pissed off. I went upstairs and Charlie Wilson was there. It was Charlie, and Lottie, and my dad. We were over in Jasper. And I went up and I said, 'there is not one female in this story. They do not even know that I or Lottie, who was his helpmeet his entire life, even exist.' I said, 'What happened?' And I said, 'if you asked Buddy to run the company...if he was going to run the company, why did you never ask me?' And he replied, 'Because a woman can't run a sawmill.' And Lottie said, 'Well, what about Miss So-and-so over in Colmesneil?' Or wherever it was. (laughs) She was always sticking up for me. Of course, if I had stayed here, and if I had gone, who would know I would have my MBA from Stanford, and start my own businesses. But I was pretty angry about that. So, my relationship with my dad was always a little ambivalent. On one hand he had a very definite idea of what a woman ought to be doing. When I divorced my husband, he thought I had lost my mind. He said nobody...in fact, we had a real rupture for about a year or so, because he thought somebody with four children had absolutely no business divorcing her husband. And, uh, that was one time when I knew that I was right and he was wrong. He was generally right most of the time, but not in that case. But you know growing up with him was really interesting.

JG: Did you ever express a desire to him that you'd want to? Other than that. Like, before that article came out.

CT: No, but I just took it for granted, because I always thought I could do anything in the world I wanted to. And I just took it for granted that I would be treated equally. I knew Buddy was the heir, but it wasn't until I got older that I really...

JG: Because you would've been about 42 by then.

CT: Yeah. Yeah.

JG: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

CT: No. When I got older, it wasn't until then that I realized in my family, women were supposed to be a certain way. I've always...I had a friend I lived with for several years and one day he looked up and he said, 'You really are a free spirit, aren't you?' And I said, 'Yeah. I think I always have been.' You know it never occurred to me that there was a boundary anywhere. And yet, there was one.

JG: Now how did that work with...I know Lottie, and probably your father supported her in that, maybe encouraged her. But she headed up some of the financial institutions, and things like that. So, how...

CT: Lottie. I mean that was the contradiction in it all. You know, Daddy and Lottie would be talking about some business deal and he'd say, 'Lottie, what are the tax effects of that?' And she'd say—makes a noise—you know. And I'd sit there. I mean, that's one reason I'm sure I thought I could do anything I wanted to, because I had Lottie to look at. I mean, she was amazing. I think I was as mad that they hadn't mentioned her in that Texas Monthly article as they had that I was invisible. But she was just amazing. And you know, my dad, I have to say as much as I admired him and loved him, he would not have been where he was without Lottie. She was there for him. She was everything from his live-in secretary, his total love, and business-wise she was smart as a whip. She was an amazing woman. And just so giving. You know, there were times when I was having a crisis in my life. I remember one I was supposed to come home, and she was giving one of these parties that they gave every Christmas for the whole county, the community, everybody. I called her on a Thursday and I said, 'Lottie, I'm supposed to be coming down today or tomorrow with the kids, and I just...I can't come. I've got the flu. Can I—they were old enough to travel alone by then— She said, 'Oh, Chotsy, I'll go down to Houston and pick them up in the morning and bring them up.' She was giving this party that night. And she was just...she would always rise to the occasion without a single complaint. Nothing. Just an amazing woman. What a wonderful role model she was. But she had her place. And she was expected to be in that place.

JG: So even though she had—for lack of a better word—freedom and opportunities, she still had a limit too, somewhere in there.

CT: Yes, she did.

JG: That your dad sort of set.

CT: Yeah, she was Lottie. She was his helpmeet. And you know, he would've been... And she never expected more than that. But I always got a little tickled, when they would

go on these European trips with all the Time executives and their wives. You know, paragons of New York society and everything. And Lottie could handle her own. She knew current events. She had thoughts of her own on politics. You know, she could hold her own in any company.

JG: And your mom, you said, never really liked being the wife of a business executive.

CT: No!

JG: Was it as much social? I know my wife; she doesn't like to be around crowds. Was it more than that?

CT: I think it was insecurity frankly. My parents had a terrible marriage, and Buddy and I were both quite relieved when they split up. They had nothing in common, and so, it was a very good thing when they divorced. I called it my two-for-one split. My dad married Lottie, and my mother married Kester Denman, and they were both very happy.

JG: I remember you speaking at your mom's funeral, and you sort of said...you didn't say that...

CT: I didn't say...I didn't say that. But for the record, I'll say it. But they all found second lives that were much more satisfying.

JG: I think that was more of what you were saying at the funeral.

CT: It was. Yeah.

JG: You didn't talk about your dad. You were talking about your mom.

CT: Right. Right. But I adored my dad. And you know when you're a child, you don't question. I always got along well in China, because I understood hierarchy. And as a child, you know what your place is. In fact, I've always said my security came from my upbringing in East Texas because I always knew who I was, where I was from. I never, you know all this angst that some people have, especially as they start to become adults and go into their twenties. I never had that because I always knew who I was. And that was a tremendous help all my life. It's made me a fairly fearless person.

JG: Being rooted here.

CT: Being rooted. And I hope that I've given that to my children. But I'm a great believer in that small towns are wonderful places for kids to grow up. But I really, my dad was just my hero. And I was fine, as I said, I'd serve coffee to anybody if I could join in the conversation. Or I didn't even join in most of the time. I listened.

JG: You were allowed to listen.

CT: Yeah.

JG: Talk about, say...I do want to come back to some of who your friends were here growing up and that kind of thing. But maybe more importantly, talk about those years when you're finishing grade school and considering college and what you want to do with your life, in the context of what you've already said. You know, when you went to college, I know you went to Duke. So just talk about those years and the relationship with Buddy and your dad and your mom and Lottie.

CT: Well, I had straight A's. I was always a good student. It's always helped me. That's why I have three master's degrees. It's always been a way to reform myself when I would go back to school, because they couldn't keep me out when I went to planning school, which was after I'd been married for ten years and was leaving my husband. They told me to go home and take care of my children. Which (laughs) I'd sue the socks off of 'em today. But at that time, that's what they told me. But when I was in high school, it was...I had some wonderful teachers. I remember Mrs. Manley, my music teacher, particularly. I always loved to sing. And Tom Jack Lucas. You know, there was wonderful music. I'm not...it's funny, even though I'm a fine art photographer, I'm not a great supporter of the arts, as far as The Foundation goes, but I have to say that I loved those years. In junior high, we were over where the foundry is now, and I had a steady boyfriend, Charles Vansau. And, uh...you know, he played football. And so, I had a pretty normal East Texas...I was a cheerleader. Had a great time in junior high, and then high school, I started. And then when I was a junior, I went off to Hockaday, and I loved that because—

JG: In Dallas?

CT: In Dallas. Yeah. It was girls' school. It was not huge. And for the first time, it was like being let out of the bag because I loved my friends here. They were all terrific. I'm still friends with one of them in particular. And, uh...but, but I had to be somebody I probably wasn't, to get along, and to be popular. And of course, every teenager wants to be popular. And my house was sort of the center. My mother was a great hostess. She loved having all the kids over. But when I got to Hockaday, I didn't have to worry about people thinking I was too smart. I didn't have people...(laughs) Everybody cheated off my papers, and I had to let them, because you had to. And you know, doing a paper in Lufkin High School at that time was copying paragraphs. Just like people do off the internet now, but only they did it out of the books. When I got to Hockaday, there was an honor code, and it was taken very seriously. There was...you could...you could...I mean it was wonderful to be smart. And so, I mean I'm no smarter than a lot of people, but you felt here that if you wanted...and I was a woman, and I couldn't be too smart. So, when I got there and it was all girls, I didn't have to worry about dating. I didn't care if I never saw a guy. I just wanted to work and learn. And it was just like being...I was just let out of the bag when I went to Hockaday.

And I hope the schools are better now. And I had wonderful times, but they were not great schools. I remember one time in high school. It was...Lufkin started before Hockaday did. And so—

JG: The semesters?

CT: The semester. In the fall, when I was going to Hockaday. So, they let me visit. And I was in an English class and the teacher said, ‘Ok, what did you read this summer?’ And I was the only person in the class who read a book. And that’s...So, when I went to Hockaday, and people actually read books, and talked about them. Because we read books at home. Not a lot of them, but it was...I came from a home culture that was very different from my school culture. And plus, I wasn’t a fairy princess anymore, because Hockaday was populated by fairy princesses. We had every small town in the state had a fairy princess who was sent to Hockaday. So, you know, it was there, they were your peers, no big deal, people traveled. Things that were my experiences—which were very unusual for Lufkin because at that time people didn’t travel much—I was with people who did, and so—

JG: Did that appeal to you?

CT: It appealed to me, but it freed me up to talk about stuff. Because I couldn’t talk about that kind of thing here. Because then it would look like I was showing off, or I was bragging, or so forth. So, I had to always keep a pretty tight lid on what I said or what I did here. And I never realized how much I did that until later.

JG: Did your mom and dad read much? When you were growing up.

CT: My dad pretended to read. I remember one time he was reading Lady Chatterley’s Lover in his steam bath. He had a steam cabinet in his closet. And he put it under something, I think it was Stanley Marcus’s autobiography or something, and we caught him at it one day. And my mother didn’t read. She was never a reader, but...you know.

JG: What were some of your favorite books as a girl growing up?

CT: Well, I started out with Nancy Drew, of course. And I read a lot of...and I still love historical novels. I read a lot of Irving Stone at the time.

JG: Any of the English classics?

CT: Oh, yeah. Yeah. And a lot of Jane Austen. I always loved poetry. I’ve always been a writer, and I just finished writing an introduction to the China book I’m working on. And I’ve rediscovered writing and I’m trying to do more of it now. But I...you know, the magic of words was always... I love languages and words.

JG: I never studied half enough myself, but I remember when there was the regimen of having to read in high school. It was fun to have your friends having to read the same book. And you could talk about it, or ‘where are you?’ We were always competitive.

CT: Yeah, yeah.

JG: ‘Oh, I’m on this chapter.’ Then ‘Oh, I passed you up.’ But did you not have that in Lufkin?

CT: No. I didn’t have that in Lufkin. When I was a sophomore in college, and I’d been at Duke for a year. In fact, Reynolds Price, who was a minor literary figure, especially in North Carolina, was my freshman writing teacher. So, Duke taught me to write, but I got a scholarship because my mom and dad were breaking up at the time. And so, I said, ‘If I get a scholarship, they’ve got to let me go.’ And I got a scholarship at Duke. They gave one to Harvard summer school. So, I went up there and I took creative writing when I was up there, and I audited about four other courses. Man, I was in heaven. But no, that was one of the things about going to Hockaday, was people read. People talked about their books. And I hope to God Lufkin is different now. But you know, everybody was all into cheerleading and football. People didn’t read books. People didn’t talk about ideas. And I got that at home, so... I got it from Daddy. I didn’t get it much from my mom. But, uh...you know the whole...I mean that’s why I’m really interested in education, because trying to wake people up to the beauty of words, and to the beauty of landscape, and the gifts that we’re given. You know, instead of just kind of plodding along, doing what everybody does. I really think education is just so important. Especially in places like East Texas.

JG: Talk about some of the friends you had in high school. You mentioned there’s one you keep in touch with.

CT: There’s one. You know I hadn’t seen her for a long time. We’d sort of sent messages to each other. Nancy Worrell was my...my... Nancy Worrell and Bim Franklin were my two best friends. And then we had a little group of, you know, Betty Reynolds, and Jill Kimes and a whole bunch of other people. But we three were the closest, and Nancy and I sang together. I was a soprano and she was an alto. And she played the piano. Still does. As an Episcopalian, you know, we were a little tiny group. We never had youth group at night, but the Baptists did. And frequently I’d go to church with Nancy, and Nancy and I would perform before the congregation at Sunday night’s service in the Baptist church. You know, we had so much fun, in spite of the bad things I was talking about. The identity things. We had a great time. We had slumber parties, and we slept over at everybody’s house.

And one of the best compliments I’ve ever...my dad ever had was Nancy’s father, who was a foreman at the paper mill, came to my dad and said he would like to work for him. And I just thought that was the nicest tribute that my dad could have ever had. And Nancy, of course, hung out at our house all the time. And we met up at a reunion. I haven’t...have made hardly any of my reunions, but I did try to go to the last one because we kept losing people. And it was really fun, and really wonderful. Saw some old friends. Billy Poland, who was a baseball player in high school and was a good friend, and he and I had a real good talk. And Georgia Davis. I mean, that’s not their names now. They’re all married. But Nancy and I kind of followed each other through the years. We both had a set of twins. But she’s in Florida now where her boys are. But we’ve stayed in touch. Bim died of cancer a few years ago, and that was really sad. But he found his own life in Atlanta and became a very good graphic artist.

JG: That's good. I don't want to jump too far from chronological, but is there anything in particular that you would like to discuss or talk about?

CT: Well... Sometimes I say I'm an escapee from Texas. My roots are still here.

JG: When did you leave? If there's a time or time frame.

CT: I basically left when I went to Hockaday, and I wanted to go out-of-state to school. I applied to Duke and to Stanford, and I got into both of them. And I decided I would go east first. That was how I decided where to go. Because I had already been to California my junior year with a friend whose family was out there.

JG: What part of California?

CT: Northern California. San Francisco. So, I knew I'd get back there someday, eventually. So, I thought well, I'll go explore the east for a little while and so I went to Duke. Then I married out there, so I was on the east coast until I went out to business school.

JG: How was Duke? How would you describe Duke?

CT: Duke was...Duke...

JG: I've been there one time to the campus. It's a beautiful campus.

CT: It's a wonderful school, but then, I have to say, it was very much a southern school. It's much more universal now. Much more diverse. It was very much a southern school. The women's campus was separate from the men's campus. Although we had classes together, but all the residences were separated. Which was great because you could go to breakfast in your nightgown with your raincoat on. And no makeup. No nothing. (laughs) It was pretty nice that way. And it had a wonderful, intellectual atmosphere. Although, when I went to Harvard, it was like—oh my God! And it was very good. It was much more conservative than it is now. I'm sure, looking back. And it was in the middle of tobacco land, so... But it was a wonderful school. They gave me a good education. It was very liberal arts. Now there's many more specializations. My photographic archive on China is going to their archives. And I've been trying to organize it for the last three years. I've got about 150,000 photos of China over 35 years, so I'm glad it's not going into the dumpster.

JG: How much of it is on film?

CT: About a third, I'd say.

JG: Slides?

CT: No, mostly negatives. Because I did fine art prints, and I still print. But I love digital. I just love digital. You can do so much with it. You know I am not a great technical photographer, so I love being able to correct stuff. I'm much better now than I used to be. Heaven forbid, some of my negatives...you know, we rephotographed everything, and made digital negatives for the archives. And thank God I was able to edit them, although I still have all my originals. But, it's a...I love digital photography. It's just wonderful.

JG: So, you're in Duke, in North Carolina. Way over here, and you go to Stanford, way over here on the other side.

CT: Well, I'll give you a brief history. This is my life in 15 seconds. I graduated from Hockaday. I went to Duke. I married my junior year. Had a baby a year later—Spence. Continued to have babies—had Chris, then Cathy and Arthur were twins. And after being married for ten years and the kids got into nursery school, I said, 'Oh, now I can go back to school.' Which I had always intended on having a career. So, this...my husband was unaware of all of this, and this made many issues when I... And I talked my way by taking some continuing courses under the professors, I got into the master's program at UNC and city planning. So, I got in a regional planning degree. I had interviewed Bob Simon, who built Reston, Virginia for my master's thesis on new towns—which I was very interested in. And he offered me a job at the end of the interview. I don't know who was interviewing whom. So, when I left Bill, my husband, and went off to seek my fortune, I called Bob Simon back. His family had just sold Carnegie Hall. And so, he took the money and put it into Reston, and he was building a second new town in Rochester, New York. So, I called him and said, 'Hey, I'm single. I don't have to follow my husband to Houston.' And so anyway, I ended up working for the new town in Rochester, New York.

JG: Now when you say the new town, is that a development? Or what?

CT: The new town, there were a number of Title VII government backed—they sold bonds—new towns. The government, and that would have been in about the 1970's... '71. The government had decided to back new towns because it was a way of controlling growth. And after Columbia... Jim Rouse did Columbia, which was very successful and was much more socially oriented. That's another story. I got a full tour with Jim. All one day of Columbia, and it was fantastic. But he won an award that had my dad's name on it from House and Home magazine at the time. So, Daddy fixed it up. He was a wonderful man. He was another one of my idols. So, anyway, I'm getting off the subject. But I went up to work for the new town, and after about a year of doing that and wearing many hats, including going down to get grants with Bob Simon, who took me to the Russian Tea Room. Really, it was fun. We went to all the foundations asking for money, for all these different projects. I was in charge of several, so I could speak to them. After that, I jumped off and renovated with a partner three houses in Rochester, New York, and I did all the design work - I'm a frustrated architect - with a good construction man. And we got awards, and magazine covers and stuff for that. And I decided that I had...at one point I had to shut down the project because my partner had just run us into the ground. And I invented the accounting systems. So, I decided what I

really needed was a business education. Not a planning education, because all the decisions were business decisions. So, after inventing purchase orders and cost accounting, I got a late admission. I went out to Stanford in August, after I had taken my test and interviewed, and I found out a week...two weeks before school started, I was admitted to Stanford business school. So, I sold my house in two weeks, packed up the kids in the station wagon, and rode across the country, and got there just in time for the first beer reception. Had rented a little house out there. So that's how we arrived in California. So, I did my MBA at Stanford, and then went to work for Crocker Bank.

JG: For which bank?

CT: For Crocker Bank. It's not existing now. It was eaten by another bank.

JG: As many of them were.

CT: Yeah. And so, I worked for them for two years and decided that I could make a hell of a lot more money if I went out on my own. So, I had been working with pension funds, finding properties for investment. And not many people knew that area, because it had just been allowed by ERISA to do that. To invest in real estate. Before it had been considered too risky. And I knew how to do all the analysis, so I could give them a cogent package and had a group of people I did brokerage for. So, I made a lot more money doing basically the same thing, and I ran my own commercial brokerage working with pension funds for about ten years. And then, I took my first trip to China and thought this is pretty interesting. Came back. I'd always loved photography, so I decided I wanted to learn how to print color. Because on that first trip, I found out I'm a color photographer. I just see color, and it's a different kind of information. So, I went to the San Francisco Art Institute to take printing. Ended up six months later, I said, 'You know, I can do this.' And closed my office, fired my secretary, and got a masters degree in fine arts and in photography at the San Francisco Art Institute. I had a great time for two years, got off all my boards, just did photography for two years, and at the same time started going to China, because I decided that that would be a great project. Because it was clear it was going to change very quickly. And some did, some didn't. The outback, which is the part I loved, didn't. In fact, it was only in the last about eight years that it really caught up much. But...

JG: Of course, it's in the news every day.

CT: Yeah.

JG: For at least two reasons.

CT: So, I've been wandering China since 1985, and especially in the back. I have a Chinese family that I stay with in the south. And as I said, I've got about 150,000 photographs that are going to Duke.

JG: So, when you go with photography in mind, what is a typical trip?

CT: Well, a typical trip usually I come in to Shanghai or Beijing, depending on where I'm going. And kind of cool off there and readjust for a few days. Then I have learned...I used to travel...Bill, I should talk about Bill Wu a little bit. Because he was my best friend for a lot of years. He introduced me to China. He had a PhD in Asian art and archeology from Princeton. He was Chinese. He was from a family of eleven kids.

JG: Spell his name, if you don't mind.

CT: W-U. Bill Wu.

JG: It's Bill, not William?

CT: William. Yes. William Wu. He was a Professor at Oberlin, at Dartmouth. Then he was brought up to San Francisco to start the Chinese culture center. He ended up by kind of a fluke, because right after China opened, he had been by invitation before. He left when he was eight. So, he had been around very talented people. All of the brothers and sisters. Concert pianists, and architects, and everybody. Anyway, I went on his first tour, just by a fluke. Not his first tour, my first tour I went. And it was to three places. One is Ningxia, which is in the north, which is the Trenton-New Jersey of China. And Huainan, which is one of my dearest places. It's one of the tribal areas. My family down there is a Miao tribal family that I stay with. And Tibet, which I also love dearly. So, after that I had to go back. And I had to go back. Bill would, sometimes I would go with Bill and he'd just let me drop in on his tours. You know like if I hadn't been on the Yangtze cruise, he'd say, 'Well, meet us in Chongqing, and you know, we'll go.' Later, after he died—he died in '06, no, '08—and he would fix me up with local guides and stuff so I could go out myself. Then more and more, I would hire local guides and get a car and a driver. The full employment Chinese have you...you have to have a guide AND a driver, even if the guide drives. So, then I would take off and go into villages and wander around and see the most wonderful things. So, you know, it would depend on where I was going. I have a whole body of work on Chinese gardens that's around Shanghai and Suzhou, and then some down in the south which are different. And some in Beijing which are royal gardens. I love wandering through. Usually, I'd go for a month to six weeks, too. But I'd go out with a guide and a driver. I studied Chinese, although if you don't use it, you lose it. And I still scare my drivers and my guide, when after listening to them talk for about two weeks, I start breaking out in Chinese, and they're all terrified at what I might have heard them say. But, you know, I'm a wanderer, and I love to just wander. My frustration...my last trip was to Tibet...and my frustration, that was in '19, just before Covid...was that now the surveillance is so heavy there, that you can't wander like I wander. And I think China is probably over now for me. I'm turning to Europe a bit more, but I'm still a wanderer, and have always been. Probably will be until the day I die. But that's my 20-minute exposé.

JG: Well, I appreciate it very much. I see by the clock that our sort of pre-appointed time that we agreed to end. Maybe sometime in the future we could pick up and cover some more ground.

CT: Oh, there's a lot to cover.

JG: Again, I appreciate it, and I guess we'll conclude this recording.

CT: Ok. Nice to talk to you.

JG: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW