

# **A C T U P O R A L H I S T O R Y P R O J E C T**

A PROGRAM OF  
**MIX – THE NEW YORK LESBIAN &  
GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL**

Interviewee: **Nanette Kazaoka**

Interview Number: **162**

Interviewer: **Sarah Schulman**

Date of Interview: **January 15, 2014**

ACT UP Oral History Project  
Interview of Nanette Kazaoka  
January 15, 2014

**SARAH SCHULMAN: You just look at me. And the way we start every interview is you say your name, your age, today's date, and where we are.**

NANETTE KAZAOKA: My name is Nanette Kazaoka, and today is January 15, 2014. I am seventy-two years old. I was born on the Upper West Side at the Women's Hospital, which no longer exists,

**SS: Right**

NK: and I was baptized at St. John the Divine.

**SS: Oh, wow, a New Yorker. And where are we?**

NK: We are at my apartment, 210 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, apartment 704.

**SS: Right here in New York City. Great. So you were born in New York.**

NK: Yes.

**SS: Had your parents been here a long time?**

NK: Not really. My mother's from New York. My father's from Italy, and he came over here when he was twenty-one

**SS: And your mother was born in the city?**

NK: I think she was born in the city. My grandmother was from Michigan, actually, initially. But I'm pretty sure she was living — they went back and forth, but I think at that time she was in New York City. She was a musician. She was actually a child prodigy, my grandmother, and played the piano at like — she was with the Detroit Symphony at eleven.

**SS: Wow. So where did you grow up?**

NK: I grew up in Sunnyside in Queens.

**SS: Sunnyside, okay. And what did your parents do?**

NK: My parents? My father was a waiter at the St. Regis Hotel, the captain. My mother started in show business with my aunt. The two of them were in burlesque, but at a time when burlesque was not, I would say vulgar.

**SS: It was more vaudeville?**

NK: It was more like vaudeville. It was part of vaudeville. Vaudeville came out of burlesque. So there were big productions and whatnot. Later on, my mother was a hat-check girl for a while, till she met my father at the St. Regis. Then she worked in a restaurant as a maître d — no, not maître d; a hostess.

**SS: Do you remember the restaurant?**

NK: Yes, she was at the Carnegie for many, many, many years.

**SS: The Carnegie Deli?**

NK: The Carnegie Deli.

**SS: Wow. Oh, wow, so you really grew up in the restaurant world of New York City.**

NK: Yes. Well, my family in Italy also were in restaurant — hotel, restaurant.

**SS: So when you were growing up, was your family very community oriented?**

NK: No, I would say not at all. My mother was very liberal — more liberal than anybody else in the neighborhood — and my father was very conservative, being an immigrant. I think that was part of it.

**SS: So when did you start to become political?**

NK: Well, I was political in the sense that my mother was political, in terms of how she felt and was outspoken, but I wouldn't say she went out and protested. She just had a very definite opinion about things and was extremely liberal, but she was interested in politics, even though she didn't participate in the sense of volunteering or anything like that. So I became political, I would say during when I joined ACT UP, basically.

**SS: So all those years before, you had never been in a political organization or in a movement?**

NK: Not really, no. I should have been, but I think at the time of civil rights, I was married to a very wealthy man, much older than I was, and having had two children. So I thought about it when I saw things on television, but I didn't do anything at that time.

**SS: How old were you when you got married?**

NK: I was twenty-two.

**SS: Did you go to college?**

00:05:00

NK: I went to college, but not full-time, but I continued going to college all of my life, never stopping.

**SS: In the city here?**

NK: Yes.

**SS: So twenty-two is very young, although at that time it wasn't, to be married. It was normal getting married at twenty-two.**

NK: Right.

**SS: So were you working or were you mostly taking care of your kids in the early years?**

NK: I just did what I wanted to do, which was to take dance classes, ballet classes, French. I was good at cooking. I liked cooking. But I really didn't — in terms of making any money, no, I didn't do that at all.

**SS: Did you have any relationship to the gay community before you got involved with ACT UP?**

NK: Well, my family being in show business, they were very accepting, I would say. And then my first husband, believe it or not, who was straight, said, "I hear that Fire Island is like a real 'in' place to go." So we started going, and we went to Ocean Beach. I said, "What's this? This is, like, horrible. You can't even walk down the street with a drink in your hand. I don't like this." And then somehow we got to Cherry Grove.

**SS: Okay. What years was that?**

NK: I would say — let's see — about '64. And it was like magic, for me anyway. All men, and just really nice, you know. I mean, there were a few gay women, but not many, and we just really liked it. We didn't say there initially. We used to come over and go dancing there. We must have stayed there, though, because I don't remember staying in Cherry Grove, though. Anyway, we were there, and I met somebody else there, and they said, "You have to go to the Pines." So from Cherry Grove, we went to the Pines, and then we started renting there.

**SS: So what was the Pines like in the sixties?**

NK: What was it like?

**SS: Yeah.**

NK: It was like, I would say, 75 percent gay anyway, and some couples that I'm not sure. They could have been gay men married to women but in the closet or not so much in the closet. But the whole thing was very interesting at that time, because, like, in Cherry Grove they were really — well, I guess it was all whatever bar you were at. If the men were dancing on the floor, and there were too many men dancing on the floor, they would pull the jukebox. You could not have too many. You had to have a certain amount of women on the floor. So people were very happy if you got up and danced with them. Even if you came out and you had a little bit of makeup on as a man, and maybe beads around your neck and some earrings, the cops would come over and say, "Take that off."

**SS: Wow.**

NK: Oh, it was awful. Then they would raid them. They would raid them in the Meat Market, and I heard stories where they told me, like, they would hold them overnight, not giving them a bathroom or anything. It was pretty awful.

Then in the Pines, I mean, it was not any different, except that more people partied in Cherry Grove than in the Pines. I just came to know a lot of gay men in the Pines also. My husband said, "There's something wrong with you. You get along with gay men, but you don't like my friends" who were Republicans, of course.

Then I became involved with a gay man, and he kind of—

**SS: What was his name?**

NK: Ivan Bekoff. And he gave me an ultimatum that either I leave my husband or he wasn't going to continue, so I left my husband, which caused a big

scandal in the Pines because we rented and we were known, and then Ivan owned a house there too.

Then for, like, two years — eight months or six months, I'd say about eight months out of the year we lived on Fire Island and the kids went to school. They had to have a bus driver, which they found at the last minute — they were very upset in Ocean Beach — that there were two children that were going to be going to school there. So they had to hire a bus driver, what they called a bus driver was a guy with a Jeep, and he would come down and pick them up and take them to Ocean Beach every day to the school.

0:10:00

Then usually January something happened where I had to get off, so I was very happy because then it would get really, really cold after that.

**SS: And how long did you live on Fire Island?**

NK: Just for a couple years, on and off, because Ivan had an apartment in New York and we'd stay in New York, and the kids sometimes would go to their grandparents instead.

**SS: What years was that?**

NK: This was around 1968, '69.

**SS: So that's right when the Gay Movement was starting.**

NK: And I was on a beach on Fire Island when we heard about it, and we were so excited, really excited about it.

**SS: What did you hear?**

NK: Well, we heard about the, what we heard was that all the, what did they call them, transvestites, or drag, people in drag, protested down the block, kicking,

kicking, and it started in Stonewall. We were just, like, ecstatic. I was just, like, something fantastic.

**SS: Wow. So what was your life like being involved with a gay man?**

**I mean, it must have been very interesting the way other people related to you.**

NK: He was, like, very well known. He had done some studio cards, like the first person to do studio graphic cards. I didn't know him at the time. He had, like, given it up, but people knew about him and knew him, and people came in and said, "The whole gay world is talking about you," and everything. It was really interesting.

I was basically rejected by my straight friends and family. They thought I was doing—I mean, they didn't reject me, but they thought it was like a horrible thing I was doing. And the gay world was, like, extremely excited and happy about it. So it was kind of like in reverse what would happen now. Like I don't think people would respond that way now, because people had the — I mean, I never thought there was anything wrong with being gay, but Ivan, I think, did. I think that he was waiting for some woman to come along, or something like that. So, I mean, I think it was real. I mean, I think he was interested in me. But he was a difficult person to get along with. He wanted to control everything. So after a couple of years, we—I just wasn't going to let people tell me what to do, so I left him.

**SS: Then what did you do?**

NK: Then he called me back up and asked me if I'd marry him, because his brother offered us a house in Canada if I would marry him. And I said no. I wanted to get away. I could go to my dance classes and do what I wanted to do. It was great.

**SS: So then what did you do in your life after that?**

NK: I took a dance therapy class, a course. Actually, it was an intense course in dance therapy up at the Mental Retardation Institute, which was connected to Flower Fifth Avenue at the time, Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital. And while I was there, I met my second husband.

**SS: Who was that?**

NK: That was Katsushiga Kazaoka. He was Japanese American.

**SS: And he was a doctor?**

NK: He was a psychologist, and he was teaching a course, but we weren't, like, getting credit for it or anything like that. He was teaching behavior modification. And then we became involved.

**SS: And you got married?**

NK: Right.

**SS: And where were you living in New York at the time?**

NK: Here.

**SS: Oh, this apartment?**

NK: Yes.

**SS: So when did you first become aware of AIDS?**

NK: Very soon, because my — well, I knew a lot of people. All of a sudden so many horrible things were happening, and people, like, in the music business were — I used to go to the Harlem School of the Arts, and some of the people there were dying, had died or people, friends of friends and whatnot. And then my friend worked for the New York City Council of Churches, and she said there's a meeting about — what did they call it then? HIV? Not even HIV at that time.

**SS: Was it GRID?**

NK: GRID or—and I said, “Okay, we’ll go,” and we went. It was run by the churches, or something like the church, and there was somebody up there talking about how horrible it was, how horrible he was treated in the hospital. It was amazing. I mean, he looked fine. I think I would have continued, but what happened is my husband got cancer of the pancreas, and you don’t live long with that, and he left in six months. And then I had to change. My whole life changed. I had to go out and get a job and make some money and survive.

**SS: What did you do for a living?**

00:15:00 NK: I worked for First Boston, which was a financial company, as a receptionist for three years. I went down to NYU and took some Strong tests and different tests to see what would work out, because I hated it there more than anything. And occupational therapy came out, and physical therapy and nutritionist and different things like that. I thought I wanted to go into television, do producing, but that didn’t—I actually took two tests. I took another test called the SIGI [Systems of Interactive Guidance and Information], and that actually analyzed everything. It came up with all these things, and it didn’t come out with television producing or anything like that. It said, “Because you wanted something secure.” So I did. I ended up going—and I had thought about occupational therapy before, so I went to Downstate Medical.

**SS: So then how did AIDS come back into your life?**

NK: I was working at a restaurant also at the same time, as hat-check, which I definitely didn’t want to do long because it was too like my mother, and my mother, you know, was not somebody that I wanted to identify with that much, although

she was a good person. But she had issues. Alcoholism, actually. So anyway, I was there and I met this—

**SS: Which restaurant were you working at?**

NK: Broadway Joe's on 46<sup>th</sup> Street.

**SS: Joe Namath's place?**

NK: No. Everybody thinks that. We actually got a whole bunch of football players coming in thinking that it was Joe Namath's place. His place was on the East Side. Loads of people would come in and ask that.

I became friendly with this guy, William Valdespino, who was a waiter there, and a lot of times—I mean, he spoke English, but he was dating this guy that was an actor, and like he said, sometimes he didn't know what to say, so he'd bring me with him. Then I met his friend, Jeff Wolfson, and that's who brought me in. Jeff said, "I can't stand what's going on with people with AIDS. I can't stand what's happening to the gay people," and went through the whole thing. And he said, "Why don't you come to a meeting." And it was at Tony Davis' house, so I never went to the Center.

And I knew Rollerena. They said, "Rollerena comes."

And I said, "Wow. Really?" Because we used to meet at — I'm blocking. Wait a minute. Studio 54. So I met him through my hairdresser and we were sort of friends.

**SS: What's Rollerena's real name?**

NK: I don't know off the top of my head.

**SS: So you knew him as Rollerena out of Studio 54?**

NK: Right. So anyway—I diverged.

**SS: So you used to go to Tony Davis' house.**

NK: Oh, yes, I went to Tony Davis' house, and there was Garance, Pam Earring, Michael Wiggins, Jeff Wolfson, who brought me, Sharon Tramutola, who we still see, and they had — the group was called Dada.

**SS: It was called Dada?**

NK: Like the art, yes. And they were talking about doing this big demo. Meanwhile, they brought up this thing that Garance had taken flyers and put them under the doors of — I don't know where — somewhere in the city, like by the Mayor's Office or something. And Pam was screaming at her, and Garance was crying, and this is my first meeting. Then they turn around and ask me, well, what do I think? I hardly know what they're talking about. What do I think? "She shouldn't have done it. She should have asked the floor."

I said, "Well, I don't really — I agree with both of you," or I tried to get out of it. Like, I don't really have the whole idea yet. I mean, it was really very, like, you know, they were, like, really wild. They were, like, going at it big time, for a long time in the middle of the meeting. I mean, that's what I remember of the meeting. The demo hardly was talked about, just the flyers going under the door, and how dare Garance do that.

**SS: Right.**

NK: Then I went to the meeting, finally to the Center, the night before the big demo.

**SS: Which demo was it?**

00:20:00 NK: This was City Hall 2, and I was going to get arrested, and then I worried about it a little bit and thought, maybe for the first time I should be a — they said, “Do you want to be a support person instead?”

I said, “Oh, yes, that’s good. I’ll be a support person,” except I didn’t know everybody. It’s hard to be a support person when you don’t know what the people look like that you’re supposed to be supporting. But anyway, it worked out. I was okay. I went to the jail and waited for them and whatnot. There was a pretty big demo, and this one, if I remember correctly, was the one where they strip-searched eight women. You don’t think so?

**JAMES WENTZY: That was the original one.**

**SS: That was City Hall 1?**

NK: No, but I remember it, so it couldn’t have been the — then that was the — I’m pretty sure Target City Hall March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1989, second anniversary. That’s what it said, “Target City Hall, inadequacy of New York AIDS policies under Mayor Koch.” Two hundred people were arrested. Because that had to be the one because I wasn’t in the other one; I wasn’t there. So it was eight of them. I think eight. And they got, I think, \$8,000 each. But then most of them turned it back over to ACT UP.

**SS: Right.**

NK: Thank god I didn’t do it, because I would have had to take the \$8,000 and had psych — that would have really freaked me out for my first time.

Then I was on the committee for the Stock Exchange, but I just hardly knew what they were talking about either actually, at that time. I mean, I knew what they

did and everything before that, but they were just planning. I was on the planning committee.

The next big thing was actually the fundraising thing, because I volunteered to work on it.

**SS: Who did you work with?**

NK: I worked basically with Jeffrey Aronoff and Ken Silver. They were on both, but I don't remember them so much on the first one as the second one. I got food and wine and—

**SS: Who donated food and wine?**

NK: Eli [Zabar], E.A.T. — you know E.A.T.? Well, my daughter's boyfriend at that time, before she decided that she was gay, he worked there, and we got food from them, which was free.

**SS: So can you tell us about that first fundraiser? What was it?**

**What was the event?**

**J: The second one.**

**SS: The second fundraiser.**

NK: They both were auctions, and they were both — Ken Silver and Jeffrey Aronoff. Ken Silver was in the art department at NYU. Now he's the head, I'm sorry, the head of the modern art department at NYU, and he had a lot of connections, like he knew David Hockney and he did a book on him. So he basically was the one that did a lot of work. And also Jeffrey Aronoff.

**SS: Can you describe the event, like where it was and who came?**

NK: Oh, yes. Okay. Now, I cannot remember. I thought it was the Puck Building. Does anybody remember where the first one was? It was two people. It was kind of funny, because two people, husband and wife, had a magazine, a famous magazine and they owned the building and they were letting us do it at the building. But they were in jail for tax evasion. Does it ring a bell?

**SS: Yes. Somebody was just telling us about this. Jeffrey—**

NK: I thought it was the Puck Building. I went online to see if it was Puck Building, and apparently I didn't see anything about anybody owning, but it was a building like that — down in that area. And they were in jail for tax evasion, and we said, "What are we going to do?" I think we still used — I don't know whether we — I think we still used the same building.

**JH: I thought the first one was where the Guggenheim was, the Guggenheim and then it became the Prada store.**

**SS: Prince and Broadway?**

**JH: Yes.**

NK: I don't remember.

**JW: I think so.**

NK: Is that right?

**JH: Yeah.**

NK: But who were the owners?

**JH: Well, that building's owned by the guy who owns Progressive Insurance.**

NK: This is somebody that owned a magazine. They were famous for their magazine.<sup>1</sup>

**JH: But they're the same people who funded Housing Works, right?**

NK: Who did?

**JH: If it was the whole thing about — wasn't there the whole thing about Housing Works and the guy had to volunteer in order to get out of jail?**

**SS: Oh, I don't know this story.**

NK: No. But this —

**JH: That's what it sounds like to me.**

00:25:00 NK: I think they got out of jail. Otherwise, we wouldn't have been able to do it there. But they were in jail, and I remember hearing, "What are we going to do?" But they owned also — I mean, they were famous for this magazine that they put out, a famous magazine. Like what's the name of the —

**SS: *Details?***

NK: — music magazine, the one that's still out?

**SS: *Spin, Vibe, Interview?***

NK: *Interview*.

**SS: Well, that was Andy Warhol.**

NK: Okay, so it wasn't *Interview*. But it was something equal to that.

**SS: Okay. It doesn't matter.**

NK: Okay. We'll go on. So the second one was at the American Ballet Theatre Building on 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway, and we did as well with that one.

---

<sup>1</sup> In the late 1980s, the Puck Building was the headquarters of *Spy* magazine.

**SS: Do you remember how much you made?**

NK: Yes, half a million. Half a million for the first and a half a million for the second one — give or take a couple of dollars.

**SS: Right. And so who were some of the artists whose work was included?**

NK: Oh, my god. I have it here. I have a list of them, but — and there was a party also. That's right. For the second one, there was a party, which is why I can — did I put it over here? Yes. Which was kind of fun. Paula Cooper gave the party. We went to Paula Cooper's. This is like a pre thing. And Agnes Gund was there. I was really impressed. In fact, I went over to meet her. Of course, her daughter was the —

**JW: *Diva TV*. Did you know that? Did you know Catherine was her daughter?**

NK: Catherine went under a different name, though, at that time.

**SS: Yes, Saalfield.**

NK: Then she went back to — now she's Gund again. So we went there and they wanted us to, like, show up, like, people wanted to see us, and, like, wear our leather jackets and whatnot. It was very nice.

Then here, I can name you. Here are all the artists. There is quite a few.

**SS: Do you remember if there was anyone who they asked who refused to donate? Do you remember any discussions like that?**

NK: No, I don't, no.

**SS: Do you want to read some of the names?**

NK: Kiki Smith. Let's see. Robert Gober, who also was on the committee with us. Howard Hodgkin. Jenny Holzer. Mike Kelly. Jeff Koons. Let's see if I see anybody that's like really — oh, Jean-Michel Basquiat. Mel Bochner. Louise Bourgeois. Francesco Clemente. David Dupuis. Tony Feher. Eric Fischl. By the way, Tony Feher was also with ACT UP.

Louise Fishman. Mike Glier. Dan Graham. Mary Heilmann. Roni Horn. Gary Hume. Larry Johnson. Louise Lawler. Zoe Leonard. Sol LeWitt. Glen Ligon. John Lindell. Richard Long. Andrew Lord. Robert Mangold. Is that enough, or do you want—

**SS: Sure, that's fine.**

**SS: Here, let me just hold it up.**

NK: Robert Wilson, but I don't know—

**JH: Do you want the date?**

**SS: December 5<sup>th</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup>, 1991.**

**JH: Can you get the whole list there?**

**SS: Philip Pearlstein. Jack Pierson. Terry Winters. Lawrence Weiner.**

**JW: How was that different from the first art auction?**

NK: How was it different? I think I was just more involved. For me, the first one, I'd just began with ACT UP, so the second one I knew more people. I even got to know Aldyn better.

00:30:00

**SS: Aldyn McKean.**

NK: It was just more involvement, totally, in terms of the auction and the meetings. My daughter was part of it — Kelly came in. That's how we got the food, but she came to the meetings and everything.

**SS: Great. Okay. Let's keep going.**

NK: Okay. So, Stop the Church. I wasn't going to talk about this, because it's not like—I didn't get arrested or anything. I was just there, which was kind of amazing. And WHAM!, with WHAM! and ACT UP.

**SS: You were in WHAM!?**

NK: I wasn't in WHAM!, but I have my WHAM! — one of the people who started WHAM!, Laura Sydell's furniture is, like, my bedroom the dresser with the mirror.

**SS: That was Laura's?**

NK: Yes, because I met Laura before she left for San Francisco with her lover, and she said — I don't know how we started talking, and then she said, "You know, I had something to do with WHAM! I started WHAM!"

And I said, "No."

She got into this whole thing. I was talking to her because she was selling her furniture, because she was leaving. So, you always hear Laura Sydell on NPR.

**SS: How did you feel about Stop the Church?**

NK: I don't think I had — I mean, in terms of inside the church and during the Mass, stopping it, I felt a little squeamish about that. I mean, I wasn't, like, totally happy about it, but at the same time, looking back on it, so what. I really don't care. I'm glad they did it.

**SS: Did you grow up Catholic? Your father was Catholic?**

NK: No. My father was Catholic, and the compromise was Episcopal.

My name is a compromise, too, because he wanted to name me Natalina after his mother, and my mother said she thought that was too ethnic. So she asked him if he would like — would Nanette be all right, and Natalina is my middle name. My real name is Nanette Natalina Bottinelli.

**SS: Bottinelli? Were you named after Nanette Fabray, perhaps?**

NK: No. She had probably gone to the movie, because the show was, like, earlier. But she probably went to the movie, which doesn't have the name *No, No, Nanette*. It has another name, but it's the play, I mean based on the play, with Doris Day in it.

**SS: Okay. Great. Keep going.**

NK: So anyway, I was going to school at that time. When I went into school the next day, after Stop the Church, I was attacked verbally by — who do you think — all the Orthodox Jewish girls that were there. Nobody Catholic said a word. Well, one person said to me said — one of the people in the department said, "You guys should think about what you're doing before you do it." They go, "How could you do such a thing?" It was all these Orthodox Jewish girls.

**SS: So everyone at work knew you were in ACT UP? Everybody?**

NK: Yes.

**SS: You were the representative of ACT UP at work.**

NK: Yes. I had a big issue with them. They wanted the military to come on to try to talk people into going into the military that were occupational therapists, and the head of the department said, “Is there anybody who objects?”

And I raised my hand, and I think people misunderstood — they got mad at me. I said that he couldn’t come, and then I thought about it and said, “Well, he can come if I can hand out literature.”

And they said, “No, he didn’t want to come at all if you were—.”

So I got the literature anyway, and I handed it out. And they thought, I think, that I was against the war, which I was anyway. This is the Iraq 1. But that was not it. Of course, it was because of them not allowing gay people in the military. And when they found out that, they were all — like there was this one gay person, guy, and they’ve totally changed.

**SS: They were more favorable towards it?**

NK: Yes. Yes, they were.

**JW: That was after Grand Central?**

**SS: No, the Stop the Church.**

NK: No, that was Stop the Church. I could see them people complaining about that too.

**JW: I meant the Gulf War, though.**

**SS: Okay. Thanks. Okay. Go ahead.**

NK: I sent one of the Christmas cards to Gina Kolata.

00:35:00

**SS: Oh, tell us about that. Who was Gina Kolata and what was the card?**

NK: Gina Kolata was writing about AIDS in *The New York Times*. I don't even know why they allowed her to do it. And she was — half of the stuff she was writing wasn't true, and even to the point that she just wanted to do something that would, like, get a lot of attention, or whatever. So she called up one doctor and said, "If you say such-and-such, I'll print your name."

Then he said, "No, I don't want to, because that's not true. I'm not going to do that."

So we heard all kinds of stories about Gina Kolata, and so we decided to write her Christmas cards, wishing her Merry Christmas and telling her what we thought of her as a journalist, and we did.

**SS: So what did you say?**

NK: "I think you're a horrible journalist." I think they went to her house and sang Christmas carols outside her house too. I was watching cable TV one time, and she happened to be on and she said — and they were not talking about ACT UP. I don't know. There was a whole other show. And she said, "I'll never forget what ACT UP did to me."

**SS: Do you remember anything specific that she said that was wrong or not true?"**

NK: Oh, just the thing about the doctor, but I mean, I don't really know if that was really true. I just know that I heard that she had said that and that some doctor had said that she had said that.

**SS: Okay.**

NK: I did join the protest of police brutality, where Chris, Christopher Hennelly was beat up. We got up in the middle of the meeting and we went to the police—North? It was North, wasn't it?" I think.

**JW: Midtown North.**

NK: Yes, Midtown North, to protest brutality, and they end up beating up somebody. That was pretty interesting.

**SS: Do you remember what the event was that caused the demo?**

**JW: Yes. Some chalk outlines around St. Patrick's, that some people got arrested with chalk outlines on a sidewalk, and they were arrested and that provoked the first demo.**

NK: But was that the original one?

**JW: I think so.**

**SS: Were you there when Chris got beaten up?**

NK: Yes.

**SS: You saw it?**

NK: You couldn't see it, because what the police did when they did it was they made a circle, and you couldn't get into the circle to see what was going on. My daughter and Christopher went to school together many years earlier, before he knew he was gay, and he came to visit. And after he left, I said, "You think he's straight?"

She's just like, "Here's my friend. You have to meet him."

I said, "Well, he'll find out." Then the next thing I knew, I saw him in  
ACT UP.

**SS: Wow. Then you were there when he got beaten up.**

NK: Yes.

**SS: Are you still friends with him?**

NK: Yes. I mean, I haven't seen him in years. I don't know where he's living now. I know he's on Facebook.

My first arrest.

**SS: Okay. Great. Tell us.**

NK: I'm looking for the photograph. I have a photograph that a cop took of me and gave it to me, a Polaroid, but I couldn't find it. I mean, it's somewhere in a box of photos. It's not lost.

But anyway, this was a march — it said 1,000 people. It was a lot of people. It was when Clinton was running, and we wanted to make sure that AIDS was an issue. So that was my first arrest.

**SS: What was the action?**

NK: That was it.

**SS: What did you guys do? Where was it?**

NK: I think we sat in the middle of the street on Madison Avenue.

**SS: And why that location?**

NK: I really don't know why we chose that, but I know it was way downtown. There was another demonstration going on at the same time, and because of that, we got in and out very quickly, because they were waiting for the next group to come.

**SS: And was that the Haitians? Who was the other group?**

NK: It might have been the Haitians. I was trying to think. It's possible it was the Haitians.

**SS: So what was it like to get arrested?**

NK: Well, that particular time was very pleasant. The fact that the guy took a picture and gave it to me was very — it was not bad at all. The only thing that bothers me is the bathroom.

**SS: Right. Who was in your cell with you, do you remember?**

00:40:00 NK: No, I really don't remember who was in. I remember the guys were calling, and yelling and screaming, and you could see them. It was like one group of the women and one group of the men, and they were calling to each other and calling us out. I was out getting my picture taken, and they were like, "Nanette! Hey, Nanette!" screaming, the guys. It was fun. It was not bad at all. It was only like three hours. After that, I learned to take Advil. I take Advil before any kind of — like if I think I'm going to get arrested, because you don't have to go to the bathroom. It makes you hold water.

**SS: Oh, really? I didn't know that.**

NK: This is why Advil works so well is the fact that for hangovers is that — of course, it's bad for the liver because you're already destroying your liver with the alcohol that you get. You're worried about a hangover, and then you take Advil, which affects the liver too. But it does keep you from getting a hangover if you drink a lot of water afterwards and you take Advil. We learned that from the doctors at the hospital.

**SS: That's good to know. So you didn't have to go to trial?**

NK: No. I mean, we were the desk appearance. All of mine have been desk appearances, but sometimes they're four times of desk appearance. You go and you

have to come back, something went wrong. So every time I'd have to do that, I'd have to take off from work.

So my next one, this was kind of fun. I don't know if anybody ever talked about this. During the Democratic Convention in 1992, we went to different parties. We crashed different parties. Then we would eat and drink, and then we'd announce who we were and talk about AIDS.

**SS: Where was the Democratic Convention?**

NK: These were the little hotels where they had the —

**SS: In New York.**

NK: In New York.

**SS: So which parties did you —**

NK: We didn't go into the — no, we didn't go into the main. I went Illinois, and I remember people getting upset when all of a sudden we started yelling and handing our papers about AIDS and whatnot. And some woman said, "This is not the place to do it."

And some other guy turned around said, "Well, where do you think they should do it then? Where do you think they should do it?" So I thought that was good.

Then I went to the International AIDS Conference.

**SS: In Montreal?**

NK: No. I did the one in Amsterdam.

**SS: What was that like?**

NK: That was pretty spectacular. It was — I'm trying to think. I'm trying to think of who it was that died in the plane crash. Jon. Jonathan Mann? Jonathan Mann was the head of it at the time.

I also had a poster presentation from my school which I did also. We would do little protests to drug companies and all around, and then we — was Tommy Thompson the health? — I remember reading off something about Tommy Thompson while people were screaming and yelling, and I went right up to where he was standing and started yelling at him. But I never could remember anything, so I had a piece of paper and I'm reading it to him. Meanwhile, the guy is over there, like, going —

That was the one. Elizabeth Taylor.

**SS: Elizabeth who?**

NK: Taylor.

**SS: So did ACT UP pay for you to go? Did ACT UP pay everyone?**

NK: Actually, they paid everybody except me.

**SS: Why?**

NK: I didn't ask for any money, and I was going for the poster presentation too.

**SS: So how was ACT UP viewed by other people?**

NK: Oh, we had a lot of money then. At that time we had a lot of money. How were they viewed? In terms of who, like the pharmaceutical company?

**SS: Yeah.**

NK: I think they were very afraid of them, I think. In fact, I tripped once and almost went — I was looking at — I wanted to go over, and we had done so many at

that point, I said, “I’m not doing a demo against you right now. I just want to look at your book.”

**SS: Do you remember what was achieved in Amsterdam? Did ACT UP win anything?**

NK: Win anything?

**SS: Like the things that you were protesting.**

NK: Oh, did we win anything in terms of —

**SS: Yeah.**

NK: I don’t remember anything — I remember we did a big protest with the sex workers because at that time they had taken women from Burma and — wasn’t it Thailand, that they were in Thailand and they gave them to the Burmese? Yes, that’s what it was. Then they injected them with — I can’t think of what. They injected them with — I mean, to kill them, but something that they use a lot. When they came over on the other side of the border, they killed them.

**SS: Oh, wow.**

00:45:00

NK: Yes, the Thailand people got them and pushed them over to Burma. So we did a big protest with the sex workers in Amsterdam.

**SS: Were you in an affinity group or did you just go from action to action?**

NK: An affinity group?

**SS: Did you belong to an affinity group?**

NK: Well, Dada was the only one initially.

**SS: Dada, right.**

NK: We had different ones that we made up too. My poster presentation was “The Survey of Attitudes Held by Occupational Therapists Toward Homosexuals and People with AIDS.”

**SS: Oh, okay.**

NK: We did — oh, this I wanted to talk about because I don’t know if many people talked about what we did. It says we demonstrated, yelled and demonstrated at the Board of Ed for multicultural curriculum. But we didn’t really—I mean, we did do demonstrations there. This was in November, but November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1992, some of us spoke. So I spoke about the multicultural curriculum, and I talked about being on Fire Island in the gay community and how my children picked up on what it meant for older men to have boyfriends. I had a live-in babysitter who was gay, and some of the people said to me — and I brought her back after I broke up with Ivan. She came to live with me in this apartment here. People were saying to me — relatives were saying, “Well, how can you trust this lesbian that’s taking care of your children?”

And, of course, I answered it in the end here. I said, “There’s more heterosexual people that molest children than gay people.” And the end of my talk was that, “By the way,” I put down, “I feel that my children’s experience living in a lesbian and gay community contributed to them being the wonderful human beings they are today. And, by the way, both are straight, and I would be just as proud if they were lesbian,” because at that time Kelly was straight.

**SS: Was straight.**

NK: Whatever she was. Now she tells me, “I was always a lesbian.”

“Well, okay.” And her wife is bisexual. I said, “Okay.”

So the next one is the tenth anniversary

**SS: Okay, great.**

NK: which we were in a group. I had that thing over here, because I was one of them. I won't say we were pill people, but we were with the pill people, or something like that.

**JW: You did the coffin with all the pill bottles?**

NK: No, I think we did the pills, and we were dressed like widows. I wonder if it's over there. I have a list of all the people that were in it, in the entire thing.

**SS: Do you want to go take a look?**

NK: Oh, here it is. I have it. Okay. The affinity group members, we — I can name out some of the names, though. City AIDS Action Group; the CIPES; the First Blood; the Freelancers; Moving Equipment Stand; Paionon. I don't know what that means. And Pill Bearers. We were the Pill Bearers. That's what I'm thinking. I think we did have coffins too. We had coffins and we were dressed like widows. We made little hats. Maxine, and about six or seven of us made little hats and veils. Then we decided when we're going to get arrested that we would sit down on the floor and throw the pills all over the place.

**SS: What was the action for?**

NK: It was, let's see, to protest price gouging, basically pharmaceutical price gouging.

**SS: And where was it?**

NK: And cutbacks in the Medicaid funding. And it was on Wall Street.

00:50:00

We had a big tenth anniversary. I did most of the party for the anniversary.

**SS: Where was the party?**

NK: The party was at PS 122, and they were willing to do it. I called them back on the twentieth one, they were not because they're just too big now. Mark Russell was the head there. I think he's still the head there.

Oh, one thing when we were getting arrested, Maxine — somebody moved her hat, and she said, "My hat, my hat, my hat!" like it was a really important thing. Because we had sat and made them, handmade them, and put them together.

That was the first time I had experienced electronic fingerprinting, and they just — I think Ann [Northrop] had the same problem. I think when you get older, your hands get too dry or something. I don't know, but it does not work that well, and they kept on, over and over. Finally they said, "We're giving up. We can't take it." They called people down to help them out. They still couldn't do it. So we finally went back to the old-fashioned for us.

**SS: The inkpad.**

NK: Yes. So, back to the party, we had Hot Peaches, Penny Arcade, and David Drake.

**SS: Oh, great.**

NK: Yes, it was great. It was a great party.

Then I want to get to this next one, which I don't think a lot of people talked about, which is on 1998, Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, five of us invaded the DuPont offices because of Sustiva, they wanted to talk, the CEO — we had tried, oh no, it was ADAP that wanted to talk to the heads, to the CEO, Nick Teti. And he wouldn't agree to

meet with the people from ADAP, so we just walked right in, and it was the fashion part of DuPont or something like that. That's why they happened to be there.

They let us come in, and then they were like, you know, they sent everybody home, and the police were there right away. We hung out a banner saying "Greed = Death" out the window. Then, when we told the police that we were here because they wouldn't have this meeting, the police repeated everything to their superiors.

And listen to this. They wanted to meet with the CEO, and he refuses them. They took our sides completely. It was very interesting. I felt like the tide is turning, really. Kind of amazing. And they gave us back our banner. That's really amazing.

**SS: Because you wanted the price to go down, was that the issue?**

NK: That we wanted to have the price lowered, and they wouldn't even meet with us to discuss it. And I didn't know whether I was going — I was planning on getting arrested for that, and I had, like, somebody was going to call and tell them at work, because you're supposed to tell people the day before at my job, since it's the hospital and everything. You have to tell them that you're not coming in the day before, unless you're sick or something like that. And I wouldn't chance something like that.

**SS: Who else was with you?**

NK: Let's see. It was Ann Northrop, Mark Milano.

**SS: Ann who?**

NK: Northrop. Mark Milano, me, Ken Bing, and the last person, there was one other person, and I can't remember who it was.

**JW: Kate?**

NK: Who?

**JW: Kate Barnhart maybe?**

NK: No, I don't think so. No.

Then we did a demo. This was 2002 for Dr. Wan. I just took off from work. I mean I went during my lunch hour.

**SS: What was the demo for?**

NK: I went on my lunch hour to protest at the Chinese Consulate. But you had to be careful. We had to be, like, really super-careful about how we got in and handled it, because he was in jail because —

**SS: What's the name of the doctor?**

NK: Wan, W-a-n. He finally came here.

**SS: Jack Wan?**

**JW: Doctor.**

NK: No.

**JW: No, he's Chinese.**

**SS: What's his full name?**

NK: His last name is Wan. I don't know what the first name is.

**JW: It's on the website. [Wan Yanhai]**

**SS: Dr. Wan, okay. And what was the issue?**

00:55:00 NK: The issue was that he had publicized an AIDS scandal in the Hunan Province, in which one million farmers were accidentally infected with AIDS. They put him in — well, he was released September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

**JW: The day after.**

NK: And this was the day after, yes.

**SS: Wow. So what did you at the action?**

NK: We just stood outside, like on the other side of the street with posters, probably. We weren't aggressive or anything, because we were afraid. I don't know who this is.

And then the next one was the Naked Action.

**SS: What did you do?**

NK: I didn't take off all my clothes, that's for sure, because I decided my body wasn't that great that I wanted to show it. There was two of us. Katie didn't either, and the rest of us did. And the police insisted that I did. Anyway.

**SS: What was the event? Where were you?**

NK: This was the event with the Republican National Convention in New York City, and we wanted to drop the debt. Like drop our clothes, drop the debt for poor countries with large HIV population epidemics. And the police — I must say there was kind of a — it was like, really interesting. When we dropped our clothes — because I still took off my clothes; I was just standing in underwear — the police stood there with their mouth open. They did nothing. And the photographers were there for like a half-hour. A half-hour. And I couldn't quite understand what was going on, the fact that they just said nothing, but then I heard later on that one of the cops had said to somebody, one of our people had heard them say, "Well, I didn't know what to do. There were people talking about AIDS and they had no clothes on. So we were afraid to arrest them." It's kind of interesting.

**SS: So where was this? It was on the floor of the Republican Convention?**

NK: No, no. We were not inside. This was outside Madison Square Garden, in the back, and, I mean, there were photographers from all over. I think we told everybody what we were going to do at the last minute, so there were photographers from all over, and they were available anyway because of the convention.

And finally, this head cop, I guess, a big huge guy in a suit comes over and says, “Arrest them! Arrest them!” Like a maniac. Then we, like, reached for the clothes, of course, on the floor, and some people almost tripped, and he was like — they tried to pull up their clothes, and he said, “Forget about it! Leave the clothes! Just arrest them!” He was so angry. Then they put paper bags over — plastic bags over some of the people that didn’t have any clothes on, to take us to the precinct.

**SS: And what were you charged with?**

NK: I think I have that, actually. There was three charges. One was indecent exposure. One was — I forgot. There’s like three different charges. I was charged with the same as the naked people. Katie was not. Then there was a third charge, which I have pictures of, actually, of some of the stuff.

**SS: Okay. Let’s see them.**

NK: Oh, yes. Okay. This is it, because I have this too.

**SS: That’s the photograph?**

NK: That’s the frontal. Here’s the other one, the more famous one. So I was charged with public lewdness, which Paul Davis was, and the rest of the people. And disorderly conduct, that was Katie Reich. Reckless endangerment was Aaron Ball

and Susie Corn. I think they put them through the system. She was with me in jail, but they were going to put her through the system, no doubt, because of that, climbing on this.

**SS: Oh, that's reckless endangerment.**

NK: Yes.

**JW: Certainly is.**

**SS: So what finally happened?**

NK: You mean what was the result of our demonstration?

**SS: Yes, or what happened with the charges? Did you get convicted?**

NK: No. They were dropped.

**SS: So did you ever get convicted with all your arrests?**

NK: No, no. Oh, then we had to sometimes do community service, but we always ended up doing it for Housing Works, or somebody like that.

**SS: Right.**

01:00:00

NK: Yeah. What happened in terms of this was that 100 billion — they dropped the debt for \$100 billion in twenty-eight countries. It added up to 100 billion for twenty-eight countries, so that's pretty impressive.

**SS: Wow. Pretty impressive for one taking off your clothes.**

NK: I never knew that. I was going through that and found out recently.

**SS: Wow.**

NK: Because I thought maybe they just — like people excited about being naked, but then they forget the issue, and I was afraid that might happen with that.

On the twentieth anniversary, we returned to Wall Street and got arrested with — I didn't, but the Physicians for National Healthcare, single-payer health insurance, for single health payer.

And that's about it, except for now we're trying to get a meeting with De Blasio and make sure that Tom Farley doesn't become the next health commissioner.

**SS: Why is that?**

NK: Because I heard that he was homophobic and wasn't really interested in AIDS and a lot of people feel that he would be really — he's been health commissioner, and that he would really be bad. He was more interested in soda pop and taking soda away from people and diets and smoking, than really interested in AIDS. And we haven't been able to get a meeting with De Blasio. So we're hoping to meet with him before he chooses someone, to tell him how we feel.

We also have been working on the Robin Hood tax currently.

**SS: Is that possible to win?**

NK: There's other countries that are doing it. We're not the only one. It's not like something unique. They're doing it. They did it in France already, so it is possible. It's a small tax, 0.05 percent or less, and it's a speculative—it's only in the transactions of speculative trades, and, yeah, just transactions. It's not like it's going to affect other people.

Then we've been dealing with — I don't know if you heard the story about Mt. Sinai, and the fact that somebody went in there to get PEP, which is Post Exposure Prophylaxis, and they didn't know what he was talking about because he had had unsafe sex, or something had happened, and they turned him away. Then they went

to ACT UP, and, luckily, somebody from ACT UP had a relative that worked for Mt. Sinai, and so he was called back and they got him to come in. But we wanted to do a demo anyway, and they didn't want us to do one, but we did it. And then we're working with Department of Health trying to get the Department of Health to put out guidelines for PEP and PrEP.

**SS: So there are no guidelines?**

NK: Well, there are no guidelines for PrEP at all, but I heard as of yesterday they did put them out, because we were going to have a demonstration against them next week, and I think they — I didn't see exactly what it was that they put—they said they had put them out. They were threatened.

**SS: And do you agree with the guidelines? Is ACT UP comfortable?**

NK: Well, I haven't seen the guidelines. They just put it online. I just saw, like, that they had put it out, but I don't know anything about the guidelines. I know that the one for PEP that we had, the brochure that they put out for people was not really acceptable. We asked them to do that again also.

**SS: What was wrong with it?**

NK: It was just it said nothing. It was just weak.

**SS: So where do you think ACT UP is now?**

NK: I think they're in a very good place now. I think that the two movies, the films, really, really helped. I think people got excited over them and wanted to come to ACT UP, and some of those people have left, but there's other people that have come. We have, like, a whole young new group of people with the old people now, and some of the old people have come back, like Jim Eigo, who is really great. People yell at each

other and get into fights. I say, “Oh, my god, this is really like — it is really becoming like the old ACT UP.”

**SS: Like at the last meeting, how many people were there?**

NK: About 25 people.

**SS: Great.**

NK: Yes. I mean, it’s not like 800 or 400, 400 and —

**SS: No, but still, 25 can do a lot.**

NK: Yeah.

**SS: So what would you say is the focus right now?**

NK: Well, the focus has been with the group. I mean, that’s been a big deal.

**SS: What is that?**

01:05:00

NK: Peter Staley — don’t ask me. It’s prevention, but-

**SS: Okay.**

NK: Yes, it’s prevention, and Jim Eigo was in that group with Terri Wilder.

**SS: So you’ve spent your life in ACT UP. I mean, you’ve been in ACT UP almost thirty years, right?**

NK: Well, since 1989.

**SS: 1989. Twenty-five years you’ve been in ACT UP.**

NK: Yeah, yeah.

**SS: So, I mean, what is —**

NK: What keeps me going?

**SS: Yes.**

NK: Well, now I think it's become — I think for a while I would come, and maybe I'd be out for two Mondays, or three Mondays, and go back, and we just kept — I don't know. I'm the type of person that doesn't, like, I guess, give up things. And I, like, studied French for thirty years, though I haven't been doing it right now because I lost my voice about two years ago after having pneumonia, and my voice is still not normal. And I'm losing my hearing. So to go back to French, but I still want to go back to French. I don't want to lose it after all those years. I just stick to things. I'm still taking ballet at seventy-two years old. I'm still taking a ballet class.

**SS: That's great.**

NK: Yes. I can't jump up and down because my knees are bothering me. I can jump, but it hurts, and I don't want to aggravate my knees, so I don't do *grand plié* — because Dr. Foley said, "People after thirty-seven don't do *grand pliés*. You don't have to do a *grand plié*." So I've given up that.

But I think part of it is my personality, and there were people that went to ACT UP that were still going that I liked. I think if it had gotten to the point where I didn't like anybody in ACT UP, even all five or ten that were showing up every week, I probably would have stopped going.

**SS: Well, let's unfold that banner that you have.**

NK: Oh, yeah.

**SS: I can't - can I just unplug for a second? Oh, Jim will do it, okay.**

**JH: Wait. Wait. Be careful of the -**

NK: Oh. Yes. I see something. You're right. Okay, that would have been a big mess.

**SS: Hey your wire is going to cut through the table.**

NK: Oh, now we're in another wire.

**JH: If you - okay, I'll hold it.**

NK: I'll walk over here.

**JH: Turn around. Where we going to -**

**SS: Right here. Put it right in front of the camera.**

NK: I think we should put it - let's see. It's probably better over here. It's not really a banner. You have to do it the other way because we did it to, like, go down the stairs.

**JH: Oh it's really -**

NK: It's not a banner really and it's read the other way.

**SS: It's backwards. Jim, you have to turn it around.**

**JH: Oh, okay. You want to -**

NK: Yeah.

**SS: And you don't remember what this was used for?**

NK: We just did it. This was the Albany protest against Cuomo. And I think it was the third one, which was the biggest demo.

**JW: And then we had Pataki.**

**SS: Wait a second. What year was that? 1990**

NK: Oh it's up there. I was looking all over for it. Okay, there it is.

**SS: Start to - can you start rolling it up so we can see it?**

**Okay. "Time's UP. We the people with AIDS/HIV, families, friends, and lovers demand." I'm just really interested to see if anyone signed this thing, because there might be some friends of ours on this.**

NK: Yes, that's what I keep on looking for now, but I haven't, like, taken it out for a while.

**SS: Martin Worman, he died. He was a friend of ours. "Release Drugs Now. Free Healthcare is a Right." Will Myerhoffer says, "Money for AIDS, Mario, Honey." "You're hilarious, Cuomo." "Do your job, save the people." I can't, Paul somebody. I can't read the signature. Brother Chris Murphy. *Sabas Mario Estes De Carajo.***

**JH: *Carajo.* From hell.**

**SS: *Carajo.* What does this say?**

**JH: "Charlie, we are still fighting. We love you. I love you."**

**SS: Must be Charlie Barber. And can you read that?**

**JH: "And you deserve better than what you got at that fucking hospital."**

**SS: This says, "For Vito Russo."**

NK: Is there one for — really?

**SS: This says, "For Vito Russo." Can you read that, Jim?**

**JH: "For Sue, love you all gave me, I promise never to stop fighting."**

NK: There's Charles Hovland. He was on our Finance Committee.

"Money for AIDS." Did you read that one?

**SS: No.**

NK: Charles Hovland, H-O-V-L-A-N-D.

**SS: “People are dying now. More funding now for Victor Efay?**

**“Do the right thing now. Save our lives.” “Safe, secure housing for Rudy Leander, Tom, Patrick Hacker.” I don’t know who that is.**

**JH: “For my brother Dean, prison healthcare is a lie.”**

NK: Yes, Gerri Wells’ brother died, I remember that. Yeah.

**SS: “Money for AIDS. Six years working with, living with people with AIDS, money, care. You’ll be held accountable for mass murders. Steve Bourne.” Well, no one was ever held accountable for mass murder. That was wishful thinking.**

NK: As you roll it, I'll roll it down. Okay?

**SS: Yeah**

**JH: “I am here for Len Calder and Sal Licata.**

**SS: Sal**

**JH: Sal Licata and the ninety-two other friends I have lost because of my government’s murderous neglect. No matter what it costs me, governor, I will make you acknowledge your responsibility. No more rhetoric. I want action. Brent Nicholson Earle. ACT UP. Fight Back. Fight AIDS.”**

NK: Oh, I just saw him on Monday night.

**SS: “We care desperately. ACT UP now for our friends.”**

**JH: “Elizabeth Hess.”**

**SS: Oh, she was the art critic. She was the dance or somebody critic.**

**“No more dying. Pay up, Mario.”**

NK: Did somebody get in touch with Jim Hubbard about —

**SS: He's Jim Hubbard.**

NK: Oh, you are Jim Hubbard. I didn't recognize you. You look totally different. I don't know why. About Phil. Are you recording this, or can I?

**JH: Yeah, yeah, go ahead.**

NK: Or maybe I shouldn't say it. No, no, oh, okay.

**SS: No, say it.**

**JH: No, go ahead.**

NK: Well, no. Somebody was looking for film from — I think it was in your —

**JH: Oh, right, yes, yes, the Italian guy.**

NK: Yes.

**JH: Luca I wrote him.**

NK: Because I have it, I think. I have a piece from that. That was our action. The part that was in the ten-year anniversary, is that what he was looking for?

**JH: No. He was looking for earlier stuff.**

NK: Earlier? I thought he was looking for the ten-year anniversary.

**JH: That's not what he said to me. What he said to me is he wanted — it was whatchamacallit. The film has to do with Tompkins Square. So it's 1989 that he's looking for.**

NK: Oh. Maybe they said after — is it after Stonewall? I thought that.

**JH: I just sent him to the library.**

**SS: "Shelters aren't housing. Mario, save your family. Halston."**

NK: Yes, that's odd, isn't it?

**SS: "Thomas Oakley, Keith Haring, you are remembered." Why, did Halston die of AIDS?**

**JH: I think, yes.**

NK: I don't know.

**JH: "Save women's lives."**

NK: "Fund our hospitals." That was a big deal.

**SS: "More hospital beds."**

NK: "We are starved."

**SS: "Nanette." That's you.**

NK: Yes, that's me.

**SS: "Fund hospital beds. All the babies in my hospital who died of AIDS."**

NK: "Who died of AIDS. Pediatric social worker." I know who that is, Joan, actually. Emily. "We are starved for real leadership. Tony Davis." He's the one that had this idea to do this.

**JH: "Bill Tedesco?"**

NK: Rollerena signed it. "This banner is big enough for me, for all the names the people I know to die of AIDS. Rollerena." "Serve the people now." I don't know who this is. Is this Ann Northrop?

**JH: Ann Northrop, yeah. "People are dying senselessly."**

NK: "Universal housing and healthcare. Ken." Could be any Ken. Could be our Ken, I guess, Ken Bing. I don't know.

**SS: “Help us fight AIDS,” and that’s it.**

**JH: “Quality healthcare for everyone.”**

**SS: Great. Thank you. Wonderful.**

**JW: And you can use it for the new governor.**

**SS: Right.**

NK: Oh, by the way, the person that I was with that I almost married died of AIDS.

**SS: Oh, Ivan, he died of AIDS?**

NK: Yes.

**SS: Wow. And were you in touch with him at the end of his life?**

NK: No. He actually died two years after my husband died.

**SS: Here Jim. You have it.**

**JH: What should we do with it**

**SS: You want to put it back?**

01:15:00

**SS: Oh, wow, that’s a lot at once. So let me ask you a few more questions. Shit.**

**JH: Do I need to reposition the light, James?**

**JW: No. You can do it again for the camera.**

**SS: How do you understand The Split?**

NK: The Split? That’s when we were over at Cooper Union?

**SS: Mm-hmm.**

NK: Yes, that’s when it happened. I remember that day. For me, when Maxine was there, and they were talking about taking a million dollars from Bristol

Myer. No. From who? Now I can't remember who it was. One of the pharmaceutical companies, and there was a discussion about working from the inside or working from the outside and being co-opted. I felt that Maxine felt that you had to stay on the outside and not break bread, or whatever, or take anything from the pharmaceutical companies, and I think Peter Staley thought that you could work around it and get in, and get something out of it and work with them. And that was that big discussion, that one night that I remember, that split. For me, that's what it was. I may be wrong.

**SS: It's different, for each person has their own view. How did it affect ACT UP?**

NK: Oh, we got smaller, basically. I think Garance left with them. There was not a lot of them that left, but I think it just happened at a time when maybe ACT UP was getting smaller anyway, and we did move back to the Center.

**SS: Why do you think it happened?**

NK: I think the space had — I mean, this may sound a little stupid, but I think we were functioning better at the Center, and I think the space at Cooper Union allowed people to get up and walk around and have little talks on their own and not really focus on the meeting. It was just too big, and people, their attention span was just not there at Cooper Union. I think that it really did have something to do with it. I'm not 100 percent sure.

**SS: Many people have said that. That's a shared view.**

NK: Really?

**SS: Yes. Did ACT UP ever do anything that you disagreed with?**

NK: No. There was like — I didn't go to the Grand Central one. I wasn't sure about that, and what happened was I was interning and I was going to go. Then I started to get my asthma, and I said, "Well, that answers it for me, because I'm not going to go in the middle of a group of people with, you know, having asthma." So I didn't go. But now I look at it and I'm sorry I didn't go, so I don't know. I wouldn't say I disagreed, but I thought maybe you're not going to get anywhere with stopping people that want to go home and not being able to get home for three or four hours. And now I don't feel that way at all. I think it was a great thing that they did. So that one. And maybe breaking the away from the church. That I wasn't comfortable with.

**SS: What do you think ACT UP can ultimately accomplish?**

NK: Now? Well, hopefully, ending the AIDS crisis. That would be really good.

**SS: So I only have one more question. Is there anything we haven't covered that you think we should talk about?**

NK: No, I can't—I think we did very well. I can't think of anything right now. I'll probably think about it the minute you go out the door. I'll go, "Oh, no."

**SS: So my final question is, looking back, because you have this huge view of ACT UP, been there for so many years, what do you think was ACT UP's greatest achievement and what do you think was its biggest disappointment?**

01:20:00

NK: Hmm. Well, the Naked Action was pretty good, and that was more basically fairly recent. I thought, since I was involved in it, I thought that was pretty good. Then I would also say the Stock Market, the one Sell Burroughs Welcome. I wish

I had been there, but then I would have been arrested, maybe lost my license. I don't know. Possibility. I don't know what they were charged with.

**SS: Not the best action, but overall what has been its greatest achievement overall, cumulatively?**

NK: Making people aware of AIDS, I think, around the world, because we were all over the world.

**SS: Right. And what's the biggest disappointment?**

NK: I guess the thing that — I guess people when they stopped going. People at one point were hating each other and very angry, and losing momentum because of that and people leaving. But I wouldn't call that really the question you — I'm answering it in the wrong way.

**SS: That's okay. That was the disappointment, but what was that really about?**

NK: Frustration maybe. I mean, there were definitely people that didn't like each other, but they continued to come, and continued to, like, deal with other people they didn't like, just until at least the AIDS crisis was over.

**SS: Thank you so much.**

NK: You're welcome.

**SS: Thank you for everything.**

NK: You were great at interviewing.

**SS: Oh, thanks. Well, thanks for being prepared. Some people don't even bother to think about it.**

NK: I spent a lot of time. I took an extra day off yesterday. I didn't really study today, but, like, I really tried to have something to say and to, like —

**SS: You did, and you told us a lot of things that we didn't know, so it was really great. Thank you very much.**

NK: Thank you.

**SS: Thank you.**

**SS: Where's your bathroom**

NK: Right in there. Oh wait, am I still attached? Yes I am

**JH: Thanks**