SICULAR: [00:00] OK, ready?
CREW: We're rolling.
SICULAR: Hi, my name is Patty Sicul and together with Professor Karen Trivette Cannell from New York’s Fashion Institute of Technology we're so happy to be interviewing the wonderful Maud Adams. Today is Monday, June 20th, 2011. We’re at the vault in Culver City, California and we're going to start. So thank you for taking the time. Maud's era started in the late 1960s and she’s had a fabulous career modeling in the '60s and the '70s and then she went into acting.
ADAMS: So I did.
SICULAR: Ready?
ADAMS: If I wear glasses now and then is that OK?
CREW: Yeah, there's no glare. If you want to use that pillow for your back if you're more comfortable.
SICULAR: Do you want another pillow?
ADAMS: No, I'm fine. It's just that I have --
CREW: You're all set just from here to here. [01:00]
SICULAR: So Maud, where are you from? Where did you grow up?
ADAMS: I grew up in northern Sweden, a place called Lulea. It's way up in the north. It's just south of the Arctic Circle.

SICULAR: By Lapland?

ADAMS: Yes, but Lapland is on the inland area. This is on the coast.

SICULAR: And when did you start modeling and how did you find a way to become a model?

ADAMS: I started actually because a photographer in my town had sent in a photograph the year prior to a fashion modeling contest that a big magazine in Sweden had. And believe it or not, he won with this submission. The girl that came from Lulea won that competition. And so he did the same thing with me. And I had done a few things. I was still going to school and I'd done a few local ads for him and he sent the photograph in without me knowing it and all of a sudden I found out that I'm in this competition and it was a semifinal which I thought was great. I got a necklace. And then I accepted, [02:00] but I never thought I would win, which I actually did.

SICULAR: And winning, what was the prize?

ADAMS: The prize was a contract with a modeling agency in New York -- I mean sorry, the prize was a contract with a modeling agency in Stockholm.
SICULAR: Which agency was that?

ADAMS: It was Kim Soderlund. Later on I moved on to another agency called [Modelkroten?] the group of models is called. And I also had a contract with a magazine, Femina [Alice?] and I did a lot of work for them during that time.

SICULAR: Were you still in high school, equivalent of high school?

ADAMS: Oh, yes, I was. I had about a year left from a baccalaureal and it was a big deal trying to convince my parents to leave. And obviously I felt that my education was opportunity, but I also didn't want to miss the opportunity, so I was able to tell them that I would study at night in Stockholm while I was working and I would get my baccalaureal and that would -- sort of that would probably be it. Because probably nothing would happen [03:00] with this anyway. Well, it didn't turn out that way. I started working really, really a lot from the very beginning. And I was flying all over Europe. I was working in Germany, I was working in England, and didn't have time to complete my studies, but I did meet Eileen Ford during that time. Eileen and Jerry Ford were in Stockholm and they were sort of scouting for new models and my name came up and they asked for a meeting and from then
on she took me under her wings and she sort of coached me until I finally came to New York a few years later.

SICULAR: And did you live with her when you first moved here?
ADAMS: No. While I was working in Stockholm I met this man called Roy Adams, a photographer, and we went to Paris together where Eileen had recommended we should go and work on my book for a while. And before coming to New York Eileen said to me, being the kind of strict woman that she is, “You can't live together if you're not married” so we solved the problem by getting married. So when I came to New York I had a husband in my baggage.

SICULAR: Eileen told that to all the foreign girls that used to get very upset, I think, when some of the foreign girls would be living with guys for years and not married.

ADAMS: That's right.

SICULAR: What was the best piece of advice Eileen ever gave you?
ADAMS: So many.

SICULAR: What were some of the advice that she gave you?
ADAMS: I'm trying to think of it. Number one, to show up on time and always be professional. That was her big -- she really ran a tight ship and I think one of the best things about the Ford agency is that you felt safe there. I mean Eileen made sure that you were always protected and taken care of. And I think that's really, really important
because I was very young. Even though I was married I was 21 years old, but there are a lot of temptations that come in a way and you get an awful lot of attention and it's difficult to handle. And today you know the girls are starting much, much younger and it's really important for the parents as well as for the girls to know that they are being taken care of, and they really did [05:00] that for us.

SICULAR: How about Jerry? Any --

ADAMS: Jerry was wonderful. Eileen was always kind of the woman who educated you or told you what to do, very strict and --

SICULAR: Disciplinarian.

ADAMS: And disciplinarian. And Jerry was the one who was sort of softening things and made sure you felt OK and were doing all right.

SICULAR: Do you remember the first time you saw yourself in print, what magazine it was for?

ADAMS: I actually don’t remember because there's been quite a lot.

SICULAR: Was it when --

ADAMS: It's been in many, many different countries, of course, so. But I remember my first covers. I worked a lot for Elle during my Paris period and also for both English and
French Harper’s Bazaar, but I think Elle was kind of my home in Paris. They had me book there I think two or three times a week. And it was right around the corner from where I was living so I just kind of would go there and be there all day long. I really enjoyed that part.

SICULAR: Did your parents enjoy your success?

ADAMS: You know, my father was so worried about me going away at that age and he really felt I should have my education. I think my mother was more in my corner than he was. [06:00] And it took a very long time for him to accept the fact that I wasn't actually out there selling myself, that I was earning a good living and I had a sort of reputable profession.

SICULAR: You have one of the most recognizable faces. When you modeled you were so well-known. Were you stopped on the street a lot, people coming up to you?

ADAMS: I was during that time, yes. People recognized me quite -- almost every --

SICULAR: Telling you how beautiful you were or --

ADAMS: And they still do, which is amazing because I look quite different today.

SICULAR: No, you don’t. You look the same. Hold this up, look, here. Can you see this?

ADAMS: There you go.
SICULAR: She looks the same.

ADAMS: Thanks.

SICULAR: Did you have a booker that you always worked with? Did you have one booker at that point?

ADAMS: Yeah, I had Rusty and I had --

SICULAR: Who was the senior vice president at Ford? Did you have an agent?

ADAMS: Yeah, Sue Charney.

SICULAR: She was in charge of new faces at the time.

ADAMS: Right.

SICULAR: Both wonderful women, strong.

ADAMS: Absolutely, wonderful women. They also made you feel like you had somebody in your corner that looked after you that you could rely on if things went wrong. You could call up and they would handle whatever situation might come up. Very often working in New York I was booked very, very tightly. Most of the time you had two or three bookings during a day. Not all work was one big session. And often a half an hour in between each booking. That's not a lot of time when you're trying to fight traffic and pack up all your stuff and get to the next booking. So very often you could be a little late and it was always stressful to get somewhere on time.
SICULAR: Did you have to do your own hair and makeup or did you have hair and makeup artists?

ADAMS: Depended on the booking. During that time when I was working a lot of the time you did your own makeup, but if it was a big, big ad campaign, yes, you would have people there.

SICULAR: Did you prefer doing fashion or beauty?

ADAMS: I don’t know. I don’t think I have a preference. I think I enjoy them both. Eileen always steered me. I did quite a lot of commercial work as well as editorial because the money was in the commercial work and I think [08:00] Eileen wanted to make sure that you didn't get trapped in just doing editorial because during that time you do quite a lot of that and --

SICULAR: Not make money.

ADAMS: Not make money.

SICULAR: And when you did TV commercials did you have to have a coach to make your accent more American?

ADAMS: Yes. My first television commercial was one for Lip Quencher. That was a make of lipstick. It started out with a very, very strong close-up on my lip as I'm talking and I remember they used my accent. They enjoyed the fact that I had an accent during that time. But a lot of the
commercials I did where they were mostly beauty and they were not so much speaking in the commercials.

SICULAR: Who were some of the favorite photographers that you got to work with?

ADAMS: The photographer I think I liked the most -- I worked a lot with Neal Barr, but I liked so many of them. But Neal Barr was a lovely, lovely guy. I mean he’s still working.

SICULAR: (inaudible)

ADAMS: Yes. But we did a lot of work together, mainly for *Harper’s Bazaar* and he was [09:00] such a sweetheart. I loved being in that studio. But Jimmy Moore, a wonderful -- I can't name them all, but there were many, many wonderful photographers.

SICULAR: Did you find work different from country to country? Say the American way of working from the French or the Swedish or the Italian or the German?

ADAMS: Actually I don’t remember. But I know that -- I mean a lot of the work later on when I started working, I used to fly over to do the collections in Paris or in Rome or Milano during that time from New York, and also when I was living in Paris I did a lot of commercial work. I used to do what they called carosellis for Italian television which are very, very long television commercials and I played a
twin. I had a wig and I was actually doubling myself. And so during that time, what I really enjoyed during that time, working in Europe especially, in Italy and France, is that you still took very, very long lunches. You really enjoyed your day. You worked long, long [10:00] hours, but you had a more -- the pressure wasn't quite as high as I find that it is in the US.

SICULAR: Really?

ADAMS: Yeah, at least during that time.

SICULAR: Did you work in the orient at all, in Japan or --

ADAMS: No, but I took trips. I went to India for French Elle and I did quite a lot in northern Africa for various photographers, Helmut Newton being one of them.

SICULAR: Say when you did an editorial, because everyone who watches this is not in the fashion business, when you do catalog they try and shoot between 10 and 20 pictures a day really fast.

ADAMS: Quick, quick.

SICULAR: But when you did a shoot for something like French Vogue or Harper’s Bazaar how many shots would you get done in a day?

ADAMS: Oh, it would take a long time. Maybe two or three.

SICULAR: A day?

ADAMS: Yes.
SICULAR: It's a lot different.

ADAMS: Yes.

SICULAR: And they would change hair and makeup in between?

ADAMS: Change hair and makeup and you would change often location. Very often it was not in the studio. I did a lot of location work for the editorial magazines.

SICULAR: What's the best [11:00] part of modeling? Was it traveling or meeting people or working [at vest]??

ADAMS: It's a combination of both. It was a great education. Number one, I got to travel a lot. I got to meet an awful lot of people. I came out of Sweden as a shy teenager and I end up -- I brought that with me of course in the beginning, but it does give you so much exposure, gives you so much more confidence as you grow within the business.

SICULAR: Did you realize how lucky you were that you were at the top tier?

ADAMS: Oh, extremely lucky, absolutely. And the good thing too is that you learn so much in the process. You’re exposed to so many different things.

SICULAR: Do you think you became a better model as you went along?

ADAMS: Yes, I do. Definitely. I think in a way when I started my acting career it was a little bit of a problem because at that point I was so aware of my exterior self
and presenting my -- [12:00] connecting with the interior became a little bit of a challenge in the beginning, I thought.

SICULAR: When you were a young girl growing up did you read fashion magazines, the equivalent of what we have as Seventeen for the young girls?

ADAMS: Yes, I did. A Swedish magazine, [Dominis Vad?], [Femina?], yes.

SICULAR: And then when you were growing up who were some of your style icons before you started modeling? Actresses or models. Did you pay attention to them at all?

ADAMS: I remember Suzy --

SICULAR: Suzy Parker? (inaudible)

ADAMS: Yes, absolutely. And Kate Kendall who sort of transitioned into --

SICULAR: She was so beautiful.

ADAMS: But she also became an actor and she was a wonderful actress.

SICULAR: I know. She did media.

ADAMS: Fabulous comedy. And I remember her quite a lot, but many of the people I sort of admired, they were contemporaries of mine. Jean Shrimpton and Jean and I used to work quite a bit together [13:00] at Neal Barr’s studio. I worked quite a bit in England as well. Many, many --
SICULAR: What would a perfect day be for you working? If Eileen or Rusty or Sue were gone to a place and you're going to do whatever, is there something that you’d wake up and go this would be such a great booking?

ADAMS: If you knew you were working with a good photographer number one, of course. I mean if you knew you were working for the magazine that's also really a feather in your hat and you know you're doing something that people are going to really pay attention to.

SICULAR: Once you became really well-known did you have any input saying I don’t want to do such and such or I don’t want to do doubles anymore, I don’t want to work with a certain photographer?

ADAMS: No, I did everything. Eileen made sure that I did most things because she felt that it would be good to do everything, have exposure to everything. I forgot the question.

SICULAR: I was asking if you [14:00] had any input that you could turn down bookings once you became so established.

ADAMS: Yes, I could. If there was something I didn't like to do I wouldn't do it. I didn't do any nudes during that time, but I did do underwear sometimes. Got paid quite a lot of money for that, so that was always a bonus. And of course the underwear shoots were all really very clean and
very nice. And I remember Eileen Ford, she used to take me and Lauren Hutton, every time she wanted to raise the girls’ rates a little bit she pushed me and Lauren first and she would raise -- I remember when she raised it up to $100 which we thought oh my God, we're never going to work after this. We started out at $75, we thought that was a lot, and $100, we're going to be out of the business. But we did really well, it didn't really make any difference. And then she would inch the other girls up after us. But when she made those kind of executive decisions you just went along with it even though you might feel that --

SICULAR: Did you ever say no to Eileen?

ADAMS: [15:00] I think everybody was terrified of Eileen. You don’t say no to her. It’s only now that I can talk to her as a -- tell her exactly what I feel about what she’s saying. And even then we had a -- I met her recently, she was here visiting her daughter for the holidays and we got together and hand lunch and afterwards I invited some of her old models that are living out here to my house, so we all talked about old times. And after she left we were still there and everybody looked at each other and said, “My God, she still scares the hell out of me.”

SICULAR: She hasn't changed.
ADAMS: I know. She had authority. I mean she really does, she still does.

SICULAR: You can go any era, but to you the most beautiful icons whether actresses or models from any era.

ADAMS: Well, both, I think. I mean Jean Shrimpton for sure and [16:00] Evelyn Kuhn, absolutely gorgeous woman.


ADAMS: You think so? Well, thank you, that's a compliment. She was a beautiful woman.

SICULAR: She says the same.

ADAMS: Really?

SICULAR: She says, “Really? Thank you.”

ADAMS: (laughter) No, there were so many at that time and I also have to say that many of the girls that I worked with, they have, like me, transitioned and became actors afterwards. Susan Blakely, Lois Childs, [Ellie Makara?].

SICULAR: Jackie Stone.

ADAMS: Yes, absolutely.

SICULAR: (inaudible)

ADAMS: Absolutely.

SICULAR: So many. Were most of your friends in the business?

ADAMS: We saw so much of each other in the studio so we didn't see that much of it. I did have a few friends from
the business, absolutely, but not as many as you might think.

SICULAR: You tried to get away from it when you were --

ADAMS: No, I mean a lot of the time you just didn't have time. You worked so much. A lot of people thought that all we did was clubbing at night and having fun and going to parties, but that wasn't true. You really couldn't do that and be [17:00] fresh in the morning.

SICULAR: Have you ever -- I know I used to get, and some of the models I worked with, they'd be upset, sometimes they'd be on the set and people would talk about them as if they weren't there. Talk about their hair or their makeup, their clothing. Did that ever happen to you?

ADAMS: It happened to me and I think it's something that you kind of accept. If they're trying to create something you have to allow yourself to become a palette. That's basically what you're there for. And you may not always like what they're doing to you, but that was part of the reason why you're there.

SICULAR: Is that your friend? Do you want to shut it off?

CREW: You can keep it running.

ADAMS: Hello there, Carl.

SICULAR: Hi Carl, I'm Patty.

RICHARDS: And on camera with this panel.
SICULAR: And tell me -- you look like a mensch. You have a wonderful --

RICHARDS: Thank you.

ADAMS: He's a Brooklyn boy.

SICULAR: I'm a Long Island girl. But so did you rep photographers?

RICHARDS: I did. I repped Bill Helburn.

SICULAR: I want to find out so I can introduce you.

ADAMS: I repped Bill Helburn. [18:00] I repped Harold Becker.

SICULAR: We're going to have to have a separate interview. We can let you talk about this. And your name is Carl?

RICHARDS: Carl Richards.

SICULAR: OK, should I stand up and interview him or can I do it from here?

CREW: You can just sit down.

SICULAR: Ready? Hi, it's Patty again. We're so happy we have Carl Richards here who is a very important photographer's rep in New York. He handled Bill Helburn and a lot of other photographers and he's very, very, very good friends with Maud so we're going to include him in our interview and maybe if we're lucky we can snag him again later for a separate interview.

RICHARDS: Hi.

SICULAR: Want to shut it off so I can --
CREW: No, no.

SICULAR: He’s going to edit it anyway.

RICHARDS: I'm allowed to do that.

SICULAR: So how long have you both known each other?

RICHARDS: I met Maud when she first got here. Sunny Griffin introduced me to her.

SICULAR: Sunny is wonderful.

ADAMS: Yeah. We actually have a little group -- we talked about many friends. I didn't have a lot of friends, but we had [19:00] this little group of models that always got together for weekends at Sunny’s house in New Jersey and we would ride horses and Carl was part of that group later on.

RICHARDS: A religious commune around.

SICULAR: And the most beautiful.

RICHARDS: And the most beautiful.

SICULAR: Were you the ring leader?

RICHARDS: Oh, no. I was always --

ADAMS: We all had husbands and boyfriends at the time. He’s the only one that's left of all those first --

RICHARDS: In fact, I was with Josephine Henry who used to book models at Ford and she was a stylist to Bill for many years until she went into film.

ADAMS: A long time ago.

RICHARDS: In ’69, ’70, something like that. The early ’70s.

SICULAR: So was there just before me.

RICHARDS: Yeah, she was there with Rusty.

SICULAR: Right, I worked with Rusty.

RICHARDS: And she was there with --

SICULAR: Sue?

ADAMS: Sue Charney.

RICHARDS: Monique.

SICULAR: Monique Pillard and Dottie (inaudible).

RICHARDS: In fact, it was just about the time when we left.

SICULAR: Who was so beautiful and nice. [20:00]

RICHARDS: Yeah, just before she left to go to Wilhelmina.

SICULAR: We're going to talk more about Maud’s career, but how you were involved in it, and then we're going to -- maybe another time we're going to make you come back for an interview.

ADAMS: Good. Stay here.

SICULAR: Did you ever do bookings? Did you book Maud for bookings? Or did you suggest Maud for bookings?

RICHARDS: No. I was at -- that was not my position. I was a general manager at Altman Stoller which is a very big fashion agency. So I got to cover shoots with Wingate Paine, with Bill and everybody around. When I left Altman
Stoller I went into the film business, became an assistant director.

SICULAR: And did you ever suggest -- tell Maud or suggest to Maud that she should do certain bookings?

ADAMS: Never did that.

RICHARDS: It was never my position.

SICULAR: Were you a confidante for all the models?

RICHARDS: Oh yeah.

SICULAR: I'm sure you have great stories.

RICHARDS: Oh yeah.

ADAMS: Oh yeah?

RICHARDS: Oh yeah. I've always been there.

ADAMS: He’s still friends with Sunny Griffin who you’d probably love to talk to.

SICULAR: Yeah, I'm friends with her. We did that last year.

Do you want to tell us about any of your pictures?

ADAMS: What?

SICULAR: Did you want to tell us about any of your pictures?

ADAMS: No, I don’t.

SICULAR: No? Do you mind if I show it?

ADAMS: Go ahead.

RICHARDS: She was the last of the people that we showed. Do you have a flare on there at all?

CREW: No.
RICHARDS: You good?

CREW: Yeah.

SICULAR: Look at these beautiful pictures, those eyes. You OK? I love this one. It’s so beautiful. I know we're embarrassing you now. I'm sorry. It's a journal cover.

RICHARDS: I remember that cover. You're 12 years old.

ADAMS: Well, I was, Carl.

RICHARDS: Sorry.

SICULAR: That's OK.

RICHARDS: Am I still there?

CREW: Turn it a little bit, got some glare.

SICULAR: How’s that?

CREW: A little more. Yeah.

SICULAR: This one, I just want to see -- [22:00] you've already got this one. My glasses. David [McCabe?].

ADAMS: [Ray Capone?]. I think he did some of these.

SICULAR: I'm friends with his brother.

ADAMS: Oh, really?

RICHARDS: Have you been over to the Armuson -- not the Armuson, the Anenberg?

ADAMS: We're going there on Wednesday.

SICULAR: Thursday.

ADAMS: You can join us.

RICHARDS: I've been there. I saw the show.
SICULAR: My friend curated it, but we have to talk about Maud because that's going to --

RICHARDS: OK.

ADAMS: Steal my thunder.

SICULAR: Puts his words into you.

SICULAR: Can you just tilt it?

RICHARDS: Which way?

CREW: The other way. That’s good.

RICHARDS: Oh, this is where celebrity vault went.

ADAMS: Yes, I was about to tell you.

SICULAR: Did you meet Sara?

RICHARDS: I know Cole.

SICULAR: Clauss. [23:00]

RICHARDS: Yeah, he’s the painter. He was involved with it.

SICULAR: That's so pretty. Can you see this?

CREW: Hold it.

SICULAR: Like that?

CREW: Yeah, that's good.

RICHARDS: Certainly is --

ADAMS: I kept saying.

RICHARDS: No, you said vault and it's not the vault. It's celebrity vault.

ADAMS: It's called the vault.
RICHARDS: Right. I didn't know they came down here. I thought they were out in [Quincy?].

SICULAR: Did you wear (inaudible) if you did -- whether it was campaigns or editorials, did you do -- or runway shows.

Did you get to do any runway shows?

ADAMS: You know, during my time we didn't do runway.

SICULAR: I know, it was separate.

ADAMS: It was separate.

SICULAR: And most of the print models looked down on the runway.

ADAMS: Right. For instance, when I was doing the collections for the magazines in Europe the runway girls would work the shows during the day and we would photograph at night and it was always separated. It was only towards the end that that started to change and --

SICULAR: I think it was [24:00] Calvin Klein and Perry Ellis, people like that, who changed it.

ADAMS: Yeah.

SICULAR: Are you happy with the era that you got to work in? Could you have been happy --

ADAMS: Oh, yes, very, very happy.

SICULAR: Do you think it was the best era?

ADAMS: I think it was a good era. But I remember talking to some of Eileen Ford’s models that came before me and they used to tell stories about how they would have to carry
with them several different wigs and they would have to have --

SICULAR: Right, hair pieces.

ADAMS: Hair pieces and they would have to have shoes for all kinds of -- and all the makeup they did themselves. And they felt they didn't earn enough money and we were so lucky to be working, and I'm looking around now and saying oh my God. I mean I still had to carry a few hair pieces and I still -- sometimes they asked you to bring shoes, but most of the time you didn't have to worry about those things and we made a lot more money. And of course that has changed even more so now.

SICULAR: When you were doing editorial shoots, say doing the really most important, the collections, where did you get your inspiration from? Because it's almost like being a silent screen actress. You're not just standing there on the set, you're emoting.

ADAMS: I'm sorry, I didn't understand the question.

SICULAR: When you're doing great editorial it's almost like you're a silent screen actress. You're emoting. It's not --

ADAMS: Yes, it is in a way. Depending on the photographer. I mean yes, a photographer like Helmut Newton or Neal Barr, they would always have something in mind that they wanted
you to do. Neal Barr in particular, he always wanted me flying for some reason and also a lot of poses on my knees and it was hard physical work at times. But also yes, they wanted you to be -- to take on a persona for sure.

SICULAR: And do you think he wanted the same persona in every picture? Or with your career we know there's a certain type whereas other models would be known --

ADAMS: I think you're somewhat restricted by your structure, I mean your physical structure. So definitely they would use you maybe for certain things that they felt that they could -- you would blend well into it. Talking about Evelyn Kuhn, she has a lot more softer, more prettier -- I have a very angled face. She was always the beautiful --

[26:00]

SICULAR: That's what they say about you. That’s what she says about you.

ADAMS: Really?

SICULAR: Yes.

ADAMS: Well, I always thought that she was so much -- so good for that. I had more of a boyish figure and more angled face and I'm very, very tall compared to her, so I thought I was quite a different type and I think they used me differently too.

SICULAR: Right. You both did a lot of beauty.
ADAMS: Yeah, we did. We did a lot, yes.

SICULAR: And how did modeling help you with your -- you

transitioned into acting, so was modeling a hindrance or --

ADAMS: No, it actually did help because when I was doing that
television commercial I was talking about, the one for the
Lip Quencher, Leslie Caron, the actress, was married to a
producer and he was doing this movie called The Christian
Licorice Store and she brought -- she told her husband to
look me up because she knew me as a model and she'd seen me
in the commercial. And they called me up and said would
you like to come to California and do a screen test. At
first I thought of course they must [27:00] be kidding. I
mean obviously this doesn't happen like this. But it
seemed legitimate enough and I checked it out and so
eventually I came out here and I did the test and I got the
part. And that's how it happened basically because of my
exposure as a model.

SICULAR: And did Jerry and Eileen speak to them first and make
sure you were taken of?

ADAMS: I don’t remember exactly how that went down. I didn't
have an agent at the time, so I'm pretty sure they would
have been part of it. But of course after I made my first
movie then I had an agent after that.

SICULAR: You made a lot of movies.
ADAMS: Yes.

SICULAR: You were in two James Bond films. You're the only person that was in two, I think, two James Bond films.

ADAMS: Yes, I'm the only one who’s played leading role in --

SICULAR: Twice.

ADAMS: Twice, yes. But I've made about 20, over 20 feature films in leading roles and a lot of television.

SICULAR: Here and in Sweden.

ADAMS: Yes.

SICULAR: And do you have any special -- your happiest moment in modeling that you’d like to tell or that you're most proud of?

ADAMS: I think one of the most [28:00] wonderful experiences I had was my trip to India with Norman Parkinson. And that was early on and we spent a whole month in northern India and we trekked up in the mountains, in the lower Himalayas, and we stayed in houseboats and we were a team of I guess about 10 people and we traveled in these wonderful cars, private cars, on trains in India. So it was one of the -- it was so different from anything I’d ever experienced and it was so beautiful physically, but also the culture was so rich and so different from what I knew. So that was a fantastic experience.

SICULAR: Was that for Vogue or Harper’s Bazaar?
ADAMS: That was for French Elle.

SICULAR: Were there any other models on the shoot?

ADAMS: Yes, Kasia from Finland and --

SICULAR: She’s in Vancouver now, I think.

ADAMS: Oh really? I didn't know that.

SICULAR: Kasia [Neiman?]?

ADAMS: Yes. And [Gunnel?] -- a Swedish girl, Gunel.

SICULAR: [Glinda]?

ADAMS: Yeah, I think so.

SICULAR: She’s in New York.

ADAMS: Not [29:00] Gunilla. No, this is Gunel, but she’s also married to a photographer, but I think she’s back in Sweden.

SICULAR: Is there anything you’d like to add?

ADAMS: There have been many, many wonderful experiences like that, but I think that is the one that stays.

SICULAR: Would you like to -- since you've been in the business would you like to ask? This is for the FIT archives.

RICHARDS: No, I've been around for thousands of years so I know all that she did.

ADAMS: Yeah, we had this group of friends --

RICHARDS: I'm very happy for her.

ADAMS: Sunny Griffin, Annie Larsen, Tanya Mallett who is now in England, back in England and Carl.
RICHARDS: I mean we've been a family.

ADAMS: We called ourself the family before the family became a bad word out here. But we've known each other, we've kept in touch ever since. And we always know -- Carl usually keeps in touch with who's doing what and whenever somebody's in town we get together and we --

RICHARDS: Did you speak to Sunny?

ADAMS: We're like sisters and he's the older brother.

SICULAR: Do you have any last thoughts before --

ADAMS: Only that it's a fantastic career and if [30:00] you use it for the right purpose and if you're careful and make sure that you don't get sidetracked and you keep your focus on what you're doing and treat it as a business.

SICULAR: Thank you.

ADAMS: Thank you very much.

SICULAR: But you could just say hi to Eileen or whatever.

RICHARDS: She's around my birthday. I'm the 26th, she's around --

SICULAR: She's around the -- is it the 15th, I think? No, I have to double check. It's not the 15th.

ADAMS: Anyway hi, Eileen. Happy birthday. You know I love you and always will and thanks for all the fantastic memories.

SICULAR: Should she mention her name?
ADAMS: You don’t need to.

SICULAR: I'll tell you why later.

ADAMS: Hi, Eileen, it's Maud. Happy birthday and much love.

SICULAR: Were you friends with Eileen?

RICHARDS: Not so much friends, but we knew each other. I've been to her parties. Hi, I'm Carl Richards. Hey, Eileen, how are you? It was so nice to see you at Maud’s tea party. Hope you're well. [31:00]

CREW: Hold on, hold on. And you're both in the shot, just so you know.

SICULAR: Hi, my name is Patty Sicular and together with Professor Karen Trivette Cannell from FIT, which is Fashion Institute of Technology, we're so pleased to invite Carl Richards to be part of our interview. And today is June 20th, 2011. We’re at the vault in Culver City. Carl was wonderful to talk for his rep and his era was approximately 1969 and then going forward. He repped many famous photographers and he was also a director, an assistant director. So we're going to start.

RICHARDS: Hi.

SICULAR: Thank you for joining us. This is quite a nice surprise.

RICHARDS: It's my pleasure.
SICULAR: And Carl is friends with Maud and that's how we got to Carl. And Carl is from Brooklyn, New York and he lives now in Long Island and in California. So how did you get into the fashion business?

RICHARDS: I dated the daughter [32:00] of an advertising agency, a fashion advertising agency, Max Stoller. It was Altman, Stoller, Chalk. And I worked there for nine years starting, became the general manager and we did fashion photography. So I was always involved with the models. I went down to the cover photographing shoots. I was around. And then I met Sunny one bright young kipper day.

SICULAR: Sunny?

RICHARDS: Griffin. We went to Central Park for lunch with Bill Helburn.

SICULAR: Who is a famous photographer.

RICHARDS: One of the top fashion photographers.

SICULAR: And what was his era?

RICHARDS: It's all the beautiful people era, the '60s.

SICULAR: The '60s and '70s?

RICHARDS: Yes. In fact, the other day I was trying to think of when the heck all this happened, but I went from watching famous great photographers, Wingate Paine, Neal Barr, [33:00] Jimmy Moore, I then went into repping photographers. And I met the Maysles brothers, I repped Helburn, I repped
Harold Becker who went on to become a film director and I repped Helburn when he went into film. All the top still photographers went into cinematography. And then I started -- I went into cinematography and I became an assistant director, a member of the DGA. And I worked with Academy Award-winning cinematographers. Then I retired 11 years ago, picked up a camera and now I'm a photographer. So it's been a wonderful -- and --

SICULAR: And what kind of photography are you doing?

RICHARDS: Landscape and wildlife. Most of my friends, models, they're a little older, a little tougher to shoot, you see. Never shoot a woman over 45. [34:00] They’ll hate every shot you do.

ADAMS: You can tell he’s taken my picture a few times. I said, “God, this is awful.”

RICHARDS: With great difficulty.

ADAMS: Can't you give me better light than this? I don’t look like that.

RICHARDS: She calls me up. You needed pictures. “Patty needs pictures, come right over.” Well, OK and I go right over. I know how difficult she is to shoot, so I take two pictures --

ADAMS: It's because he’s a bad photographer.
RICHARDS: Yes. I take two pictures. I put them on my computer, she hates both of them. Then I take three more, put them on the computer, she hates those three. So it became an afternoon of, “Wait a minute, you didn't even put your eyes on.” She says, “Oh, I forgot.” Don’t shoot anybody over 45. I've learned. But I've had a wonderful career in the commercial business and then --

SICULAR: You're a very good landscape [35:00] photographer. Does beautiful --

RICHARDS: I have photographs showing at a gallery, in Abbot Kinney, and the reason I'm showing on Abbot Kinney is because it's the center of galleries in Los Angeles today. So a friend of mine wanted to show his pictures that he took in Antarctica. He bought the building and said, “Carl, what are you putting in here?” “Nothing, I don’t want to be in a gallery.” So he had a lot of my pictures because he’s a Photoshop expert and he put my pictures up and I sold pictures.

SICULAR: Wow.

RICHARDS: So now I can put professional photographer in front of my name. And I still enjoy shooting. It's just fantastic to be able to do that.

SICULAR: When you repped the photographers in the ‘60s and the ‘70s would you -- how would you try -- was it the same as
it was with models, trying to get [36:00] their work seen more in magazines first and then going to --

RICHARDS: I carried their portfolios to art directors at all the agencies in New York City. I made hundreds of phone calls to get five appointments and I wandered around with this huge portfolio. Mainly it was Bill Helburn’s.

SICULAR: He was so well-known.

RICHARDS: And so it was kind of easy to get work. So I did that for a number of years.

SICULAR: Did you build up any photographers?

RICHARDS: No, that was never my job to -- I repped famous -- I repped photographers who had a reputation. Mostly I put people together. I became a creative catalyst. Somebody wanted music, I knew somebody who did music. Somebody who wanted models, I know models. I put them together. [37:00] So I made a little bit of magic. And that led to becoming an assistant director.

SICULAR: And working --

RICHARDS: I don’t have to be creative. I'm a mechanic. You want a farm with a wheat field and the sun setting behind the farm? I know where that is. It's in Argentina because there's no wheat in the United States now. You know, it's that kind of a thing. And I so enjoyed doing the magic that I did it for 35 years.
SICULAR: That's a long time.

RICHARDS: Yes. I'm ancient. I'm one of the elders.

SICULAR: But you're here and you're still standing.

RICHARDS: Ho. And I'm still running around and I'm still carrying on, yes.

SICULAR: I think it's great. Did you have a close relationship with agencies, every model agency? Did you ever have to book the talent?

RICHARDS: No, I never had to book the talent. I was friends with Joey Hunter over at Ford’s. Of course at one point a lot of the male models came through the agency I worked with. [38:00] Gene Barakat and --

SICULAR: Warren Stevens, Jack Scalia.

RICHARDS: Thank you for remembering all those.

ADAMS: Oh my God, Gene Barakat was such a good friend of mine.

SICULAR: He was so handsome.

RICHARDS: Barakat was a piece of work.

SICULAR: Everyone in the business is. Otherwise they’d be insurance salesmen somewhere.

RICHARDS: Right. Two of the young male models opened a restaurant in Union Square, as I recall.

SICULAR: Keith [Gott?]....

RICHARDS: Yes, Keith was one.

SICULAR: And there's Jimmy McMullen uptown.
RICHARDS: McMullen’s is uptown, right. I had little dealings with the models outside my own little family.

SICULAR: Did they get to know you?

RICHARDS: Oh yeah.

SICULAR: Because you’d introduce them.

RICHARDS: Oh yeah. Because I was on sets. I was always on the set. I was running around. So I met, you know, and I knew them.

SICULAR: And did you have any dealings with Eileen and Jerry?

RICHARDS: Yes, I went to all their parties.

SICULAR: Did Eileen ever give you any advice?

RICHARDS: Me?

SICULAR: Yeah.

RICHARDS: No.

SICULAR: Or Jerry? Well, Jerry was so nice.

RICHARDS: No. One evening at one party [39:00] Dick Richards said to me, “If you marry Josephine I’ll take the pictures.” That’s an incentive, Dick Richards is a fantastic photographer, but we never married.

SICULAR: And you never got the pictures.

RICHARDS: Never got the pictures.

SICULAR: You can take your own pictures now. (inaudible) taking pictures.
RICHARDS: I have pictures of Maud coming out of the shower with the towel wrapped on her head with a lollipop in her mouth.

SICULAR: What was that for?

RICHARDS: Just coming out of the shower. We were all hanging around at a -- wait a minute, you want a story about models? I'll give you a story about models. We were going to see Hair. It was playing at the Buck's County Playhouse and Sunny Griffin’s farm wasn't far from there. At 2:00 in the afternoon I started yelling at the girls, “Go get dressed, go get dressed, go get dressed.” They didn't go get dressed. When they finally went to get dressed one came down with eyelashes. They all ran up to get eyelashes. [40:00] One came down with a high collar, they all went up to get a -- we missed the opening curtain starting at 2:00.

That’s --

SICULAR: But you all -- you came in with --

RICHARDS: But could they eat. Oh. Maud’s a fantastic cook. Sunny was a fantastic cook.

ADAMS: We didn't starve. We never starved.

RICHARDS: Everybody ate and everybody was just -- it was a family.

SICULAR: I mean even when I worked in the business, and I worked in the business for a while, why do think the
creators, like everybody likes to stay so close in the same group?

RICHARDS: We understand each other.

SICULAR: (inaudible)

ADAMS: Yeah, you have the same experiences. You know what your life is like to a large degree.

RICHARDS: Years later when Maud and I go to dinner with a group, our present group of friends, somehow or other we're always sitting together. It's just -- we don't plan it.

SICULAR: It's like a magnet.

RICHARDS: We sit down and [41:00] we're sitting together. We know each other. I got sick one day in New York and I was running a fever so Annie said, “Go to my apartment.” She calls the apartment, they let me in, I had the most beautiful women in New York bring me chicken soup and flowers. I could stay sick for a long time. They were terrific. It was just fantastic.

SICULAR: Who do you think are some of the most beautiful women of all eras, whether models or actresses, when you were --

RICHARDS: Audrey Hepburn. That's it, just Audrey Hepburn. There's nobody else. Jean Simmons would work in that category and then Josephine Henry. She was the prettiest of them all except she was five feet and it was tough to model.
SICULAR: Was she with Ford?

RICHARDS: She booked for Ford.

SICULAR: Oh, she was a booker?

ADAMS: That was his girlfriend.

RICHARDS: And she also booked for Nina Blanchard in Paris.

SICULAR: I loved Nina, everybody loved Nina.

RICHARDS: [42:00] Another name. I don’t think I’ve ever met Nina.

SICULAR: She was wonderful.

RICHARDS: But I met -- I sort of met everybody else. We were just friends. Couldn’t help walking -- in New York you walk down the street you meet everybody.

SICULAR: Did your family get to see your success?

RICHARDS: My parents never understood what I did for a living.

I had my father come to a shoot and he’s sitting back there and I'm doing my job and after the shoot he says to me, “That’s what you do? You yell quiet, roll sound and they pay you? It’s a good job, kid.” And he gave me a pinch and I took him home. That was my father. They never understood what I did. I don’t think I ever understood what I did. I just did it.

SICULAR: What do you attribute your great success to?

RICHARDS: The buck stops here. It was solutions and no problems. People in the industry have a lot of problems and they
brought them to the assistant director and the assistant
director [43:00] made them go away. That was it.

SICULAR: Any last thoughts?
RICHARDS: No, I think I've said as much as I can remember about
the industry. It's a great wonderful industry and look at
the people I get to work with. They're all on the walls
here. It's just fantastic. I mean I worked with Bert
Stern who photographed Marilyn, I worked with Melvin
Sokolsky. In fact, we did a commercial together, Sokolsky
and I, for a beer. We flew to Shenandoah Valley to shoot
Coors.

SICULAR: Wow.
RICHARDS: And I'd seen Mel wandering around, I see him in the
camera stores here. He's still out there, he's good.

SICULAR: Is that it?

END OF AUDIO FILE