Hi, I’m Patty Sicular with the Ford Model Agency together with Professor Karen Cannell from Fashion Institutive Technology. We’re about to be interviewing Sharon Steinberg today, who started out in the 1970s as a stylist with Saks Fifth Avenue. And now she’s on staff in [our art?] department, here at Ford Models New York. Today’s date is June 23rd, 2010. And we’re about to start asking questions. Thank you for joining us, Sharon.

SICULAR: Gl...
STEINBERG: Yeah -- so -- and I didn’t really realize what I was getting into. (laughs)

SICULAR: And did you have any special education for this -- [before you entered?], or did you just --

STEINBERG: Not real-- well, I went to Parsons School Design and [New?] in the school of art and I was always into fashion.

SICULAR: And what made you decide to become a stylist as a career?

STEINBERG: Well what happened was, after I ended up doing that TV commercial by accident, the stylist needed help. And I started assisting and it kept snowballing. And so, before I knew it, I was styling. And I never knew what a stylist was.

SICULAR: And what year was that?

STEINBERG: That was in the mid -- probably early to mid ’70s and nobody knew what a stylist was, so it was very different --

SICULAR: And was that your first job after graduating?

STEINBERG: No, I went -- I was at Bergdorf Goodman, like, just selling when I first came to New York. Yeah.

SICULAR: From where? Where did you come from?

STEINBERG: I was at Parsons School of Design and New England School of Art.
SICULAR: No, where did you grow up?

STEINBERG: Oh, Connecticut.

SICULAR: Connecticut. [02:00] And now, I know you’ve stopped for many years, did you prefer working on catalogue and [editorial?] runway campaigns or television?

STEINBERG: Catalogue and editorial.

SICULAR: How come?

STEINBERG: I -- well, especially editorial is more creative.

SICULAR: And what magazines have your editorial ads appeared in?

STEINBERG: It really wasn’t my background, but once in a while we would get something that was more editorial. So -- and there was more freedom then. Nobody would tell me how to style or how to cast, they would just completely -- it was like, total freedom.

SICULAR: And how did you feel the first time you saw your -- something that you styled in a major magazine?

STEINBERG: That’s interesting because I think we got so busy and I was so naïve and didn’t really know how lucky I was and what I got into, that I didn’t even -- I mean, obviously there were a couple of things -- OK, one comes to mind with Francesca Scavullo. It was a group shot and they all wore [Selleran?] clothes, so that was -- that was wonderful. But I think we were so busy that I didn’t have
time to [03:00] think. But that’s one thing that comes to mind.

SICULAR: Did you save the tear sheets of it?

STEINBERG: I did and -- but unfortunately, believe it or not, I mean -- some of them, I don’t know where they are and I really regret it now.

SICULAR: And when you were growing up, who were some of your favorite style icons from all times, what were yours?

STEINBERG: Oh, Jackie Kennedy and, for the younger version, Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy. (laughs) And I really look up to Carine -- what is the editor for Vogue?

SICULAR: Are you talking about Karen --

STEINBERG: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) -- Oh no, no it’s -- it was Carine Roitfield.

SICULAR: Oh --

STEINBERG: Roitfield, of the Paris Vogue. Yeah.

SICULAR: Oh, Paris. What attracted you to the fashion business to begin with?

STEINBERG: Well I always knew I was going to be in the fashion industry, so it was natural for me to be into it, even when I was a child. And then I just --

SICULAR: When you were growing up, you put together your own outfits --
STEINBERG: I got all those from my mother. She was a clotheshorse, yeah.

SICULAR: And what are some of the favorite aspects of your work?

STEINBERG: Of my -- oh, you mean styling? [04:00] When I was a stylist, or now?

SICULAR: Both.

STEINBERG: I think that at Saks, when we sold certain dresses, like certain outfits did really, really well, for one reason or another. Either the accessorizer that Elaine Irwin was wearing one of them, and now it’s really when clients book a model right from her test shots, like right after she’s tested. When she hasn’t worked for a while, you know.

SICULAR: Because you put together the composites and the portfolios and the website --

STEINBERG: Right, right. Like, sometimes they don’t work and certain photographers do such a great job and all of a sudden, their work takes off from their cards and their books.

SICULAR: When you were working as a stylist on location, did you prefer working in a controlled environment like a studio, or did you prefer going on location?
STEINBERG: Well, I have to admit, we had more control in a studio and the end result was, like, more amazing. It had more impact. You had more control in a studio. You could afford to be more creative, it’s -- in a different way.

[05:00]

SICULAR: And who were some of the great photographers you got to work with?

STEINBERG: Patrick Demarchelie and Arthur Elgort and --

SICULAR: And you mentioned Scavullo.

STEINBERG: Scavullo, and I loved working with Marcus [Bard?] and [Eddie Colley?] and [Eddie Colley?].

SICULAR: And do you enjoy wearing fashion?

STEINBERG: Oh yes.

SICULAR: And who are some designers or labels that we would find in your closet?

STEINBERG: Oh. Well, believe it or not, just like J.Crew, maybe Maximira and Burberry. I love J.Crew.

SICULAR: J.Crew, how come?

STEINBERG: Yeah. I don’t -- I guess it’s just I feel -- I’m very -- I’m very casual and like, that’s my lifestyle.

SICULAR: And I know you’ve known Eileen and Jerry Ford for some time. What was your relationship like with them?

STEINBERG: When I was a client, I, you know, met her a couple of times and she -- I was petrified of her. Of
course, everybody was, but then every since I started working here, I adore her. And I have a special feeling for her and Jerry and I miss Jerry very much.

SICULAR: Did Eileen ever give you any great [06:00] advice that -- or do you remember any advice she’s given you?

STEINBERG: I think she probably -- I’m not so sure. I can’t remember off the top of my head, but I do remember a funny story where she had fake emerald earrings on and she went into Cartier and they [sold?] -- and they said, “Eileen Ford, we love your emerald earrings.” You know, that’s something I’ll always remember.

SICULAR: Cartier said that to her?

STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: That’s [wonderful?]. When you were a client and you used to [groom?] models, did you try to work with one booker at each agency, or [could you?] --

STEINBERG: Yeah, yeah. It was one or two and I’d always know the voice or the name and it was -- it made things much easier. They knew what you wanted and, yeah, it was better that way. That’s why the bookers here are -- you know, form relationships with certain clients. And I understand this end of the business because of that. Yeah.

SICULAR: So you think there’s a very -- this definite relationship between the booker and the client?
STEINBERG: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SICULAR: And when you style -- or, for booking -- were all the ideas coming from you or did you have to follow what the client dictated, or did you try to get the [07:00] shot and then be creative and show them what you could do?

STEINBERG: That’s an interesting question because -- usually, like I said, there was more freedom years ago, in the ’70s. Nobody would tell me who to cast and what to style. And as the years went on, we had meetings all the time and the -- a lot of people wanted to get in on controlling how things were styled to such a degree that they would be styled, like, with Polaroid’s and instructions and -- I mean, you know, I mean can see when there’s lots and lots of clothes, you have to do that and get things done within a certain amount of time, but I think it would frustrate the photographer and the stylist and the crew, because you can’t control what’s going to really happen on location when it comes to getting a beautiful shot. So, yeah, it did change over the years. It became more controlled.

SICULAR: I know that you were very successful stylist for many years before Ford snagged you and hired you here. Why do you think clients booked you over and over again as a stylist?
STEINBERG: Oh, I guess [08:00] bec-- well, I think with certain places, they understood -- like, Saks had a certain style. So, you know what I mean? They -- and if they can -- you have to be able to do what a client wants and I think that was important, if you got along with everybody and you had a -- it had to be, like, a certain image. You know, just like Ford is a certain image from another modeling agency, it’s the same thing.

SICULAR: Right.

STEINBERG: You know?

SICULAR: A look associated --

STEINBERG: Yeah, a look. A certain look. Like Saks’s look, I understood that, yeah.

SICULAR: And what do you think are some of your stronger skills that enabled you to be rehired over and over again?

STEINBERG: Oh, that was a (inaudible) -- and just organization, you know, knowing -- experience, you know? Really, it takes years of experience. You know, I didn’t know what I fell into. Now I know stylists, you know, they all want to be stylists and they’re so many of them. And it didn’t exist years ago. I was just very lucky that I fell into something like that.

SICULAR: And maybe they were lucky that they fell and got to work with you and stuff.
STEINBERG: Thank you. [09:00]

SICULAR: As a young girl, when you were growing up, who were some of your influences style-wise, besides Jackie Kennedy? Such as, which models, and also, which magazines did you like to read?

STEINBERG: Well, Vogue and -- Vogue and Harper’s Bazaar and I loved Shalom Harlow. She was, like, my favorite model. And what -- in the photographers, I had mentioned, Patrick Demarchelier and Arthur Elgort. And, you know, like Eddie Colley, Marcus Baird like I said before. And there was a photographer I loved, Deborah Tuberville. I don’t know where she is now; the name doesn’t even exist anymore, but she was very talented.

SICULAR: And can you explain the process, for instance, if you were doing an editorial shoot, how many shots would you get done a day? And if you were doing a catalogue shoot, how many shots would you get in a day?

STEINBERG: See, editorially, it would only be maybe, you know, five, six pictures. And a catalogue, it would go from 10 to 20. I think today it’s even crazier, you know. It really depends.

SICULAR: With the digital.

STEINBERG: Yeah.
SICULAR: When you were working as a stylist, did you prefer working with the same team over and over again, the familiarity of it? Or did you like working with people --

STEINBERG: Yeah, I noticed -- yeah --

SICULAR: -- new energy?

STEINBERG: Yeah, there was an understanding of what everybody wanted. You know, things went more smoothly. The crew got -- you know, got along very well together, especially when you go on location.

SICULAR: What are some of the locations you got to go to?

STEINBERG: St. Bart’s, Scotland, the Bahamas, you know. Yeah. And we also were in the United States a lot.

SICULAR: And during your time off now, and also when you were working as a stylist, did you try to separate yourself from the fashion [and your?] business?

STEINBERG: At times, yeah.

SICULAR: And how did you do that?

STEINBERG: You know, out in the country, out at the beach. You know, you try to -- but, in a way, I mean, you know, it’s hard to do it. I mean, my whole -- I mean, I draw and stuff, so everything’s art. So fashion’s art, you know what I mean? Everything’s art.

SICULAR: And how would you prepare yourself for a shoot, [11:00] professionally and also [personally]?
STEINBERG: Well I think after a while, you have it do--organized. And after many, many years, you really have it down pat. And it just comes naturally. And know you’re going through castings; there were lots of meetings with buyers and merchandise managers and they discus kind of the look they want for every outfit. And you had an idea of what type of model go-- looks right in the clothes. And so -- and there’s like a whole, you know, production going on with location and hotels and caterers and --

SICULAR: Did you ever style the fashion shows for Saks?

STEINBERG: No, no, no. That’s a whole other thing. That was, like, PR. That was completely different. And when I was really young, I was a dresser. (laughs) You know, before I was a stylist.

SICULAR: I’m sure you learned from that too. And that’s dressing models for a fashion show.

STEINBERG: Yeah, right, right, yeah.

SICULAR: And I know you work with young interns now, do you learn anything from them?

STEINBERG: Oh definitely, yeah. Young, fresh ideas. Absolutely.

SICULAR: What would you [12:00] say is the biggest prize of your career?

STEINBERG: That I’m at Ford. (laughs)
SICULAR: Why is that?

STEINBERG: Because when I was a stylist, I never thought I’d be on this end of the business.

SICULAR: You’ve been here a long time.

STEINBERG: Right.

SICULAR: Over 10 years.

STEINBERG: Yeah, absolutely.

SICULAR: And that was our lucky day.

STEINBERG: Yup.

CANNELL: I hired her.

STEINBERG: She hired me. (laughs)

CANNELL: [Now we’re all?] together --

SICULAR: Yes.

CANNELL: Let me tell you, she’s one of the best.

STEINBERG: I used to book models through her.

M1: Oh, always [delivered?].

CANNELL: [And we’ll be better for it?].

SICULAR: Yeah.

STEINBERG: Things go in circles.

SICULAR: Seems a nice relationship.

STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: Do you -- if you’re looking back, do you remember, like, one favorite shoot, whether it was great
photographer, great location, great models -- what was that?

STEINBERG: Two times, [that was?] particular -- when I was in St. Bart’s with Marcus Baird and the sun was going down and there were goats on the beach and we were running, like, to -- we were running because we were going to lose the light. And the other time was when I was doing that group shot with Scavullo in the studio.

SICULAR: And did the photographers always show you the courtesy and respect [13:00] --

STEINBERG: Oh yeah.

SICULAR: -- of the stylists?

STEINBERG: Oh yeah, yeah. They’re wonderful.

SICULAR: And the next question, have you -- looking back on any shoots, were there ever any shoots where --

STEINBERG: I regret?

SICULAR: Yeah, any ones [and why?]?

STEINBERG: Not really. I mean, if they were difficult, really difficult, and, you know, and maybe the clothes weren’t great. I mean, I kind of don’t remember them.

(laughs) It’s vague in my mind. Yeah.

SICULAR: Do you have any advice to young people starting out? You know, if there’s --
STEINBERG: Yeah, I think what they should do -- well, one thing they should do is, certain people that they feel that have a lot of knowledge, that are older than them, they should try to absorb that knowledge and learn from them and always be open to learning new things, because if they feel like they know it all, they’re never going to learn, you know? It’s very important because I know that when I was young, I really wanted to absorb information from these photographers that were really old and -- much older than I -- and even [14:00] old-time models and older stylists, everybody in the industry. That’s definitely -- they should try to learn from them.

SICULAR: OK. Do you think -- how do you think the digital age has changed the way that we work?

STEINBERG: God, everything. Everything. Everything is so computerized. Yeah, it just even developed -- I mean, printing, I mean, dark rooms and stuff. None of this exists anymore. Everything is much faster.

SICULAR: And do you think the picture quality is [the same]?

STEINBERG: It’s different. It’s different, because in the old way of doing it -- I mean, there are pros and cons to everything. Yeah. Yeah, everybody wants everything very fast.

SICULAR: Right, maybe --
STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: And how has your job changed over the decades?

STEINBERG: So much. I mean, everything that I used to do -- I used to edit film with a loop and, like, contact sheets and negatives and, like, you know, everything -- I mean, I like it better. I [15:00] l-- I’d much rather edit film on a computer, you know?

SICULAR: Is it faster?

STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: And where -- I know -- I mean, you’re so artistic; I’ve seen you work and [I’ve even works like I saw of you?], where do you get your inspiration from? Because it’s just amazes me. I mean, you just pull things out of the air and it’s just amazing to see what you accomplish.

STEINBERG: No, I think --

SICULAR: You see things that most people don’t see.

STEINBERG: No, right. But you know who I really do get it from? I can honestly say, my boss at Saks.

SICULAR: Who was --

STEINBERG: For some reason --

SICULAR: Who’s that?

STEINBERG: -- was a huge influence on me. Vicki Sorel, she was a terrific stylist. And I just -- she made a huge impression on me.
SICULAR: Is she still around?

STEINBERG: Yeah, yeah. I think she was doing something in landscaping, but I haven’t seen her in a really long time.

SICULAR: When you’re on set, is it a collaborative situation or just a creative director [or the topical] shot -- can you --

STEINBERG: No, it’s a creative situ-- I mean, because usually an art director has a lot of say. And -- but usually the art directors that I worked with were wonderful. [16:00] I com-- they were so talented. And I wasn’t -- it wasn’t a problem. I can’t think of one art director at Saks that wasn’t good.

SICULAR: And how many -- a place like Saks in New York, did they do the advertising for all the Saks across the country?

STEINBERG: Yeah. Yeah, well they did when I was there. And I don’t know what’s going on now.

SICULAR: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) -- how many people are we talking about?

STEINBERG: Not really that much. I mean, the people that did the photo shoots -- you know, there would be an art director, a stylist, a photographer, an assistant -- on each shoot. And there maybe would be three or four shoots going on at once. That’s a lot for --
SICULAR: Back in the ’80s, when I would with Saks -- when I was a booker --

STEINBERG: Right.

SICULAR: -- they would call on, like, three days a week, they would do newspaper.

STEINBERG: Mm-hmm, that’s right.

SICULAR: And then separate days, they would do catalogue --

STEINBERG: That was completely two different departments --

SICULAR: Right, and then separate for advertising.

STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: Everything was separated.

STEINBERG: Yeah, it’s a separate department. Yeah.

SICULAR: What do you think you contributed to our business?

STEINBERG: I hope that -- the girls had really beautiful test shoots and I know that they got booked from this, [17:00] that their books look really good and the web looks good and -- so, the -- all of the PR stuff, the advertising stuff, you know, looks good and that -- how happy they are after they do it.

SICULAR: Do you give them advice and direction before --

STEINBERG: Yeah --

SICULAR: -- they do --

STEINBERG: -- oh yeah.
SICULAR: Any advice for people that aren’t models, before they get in front of the camera?

STEINBERG: That want to become models --

SICULAR: No --

STEINBERG: -- or just aren’t models? Just in general want pictures done? I think it’s good to look at magazines. You have to look at material and you have to train yourself. I think the more that you look around in the fashion industry and absorb a lot.

SICULAR: Have you ever seen any look that you’ve been inspired, maybe by an accessory on the street?

STEINBERG: Oh, absolutely. Yes.

SICULAR: On the street on --

STEINBERG: Yes.

SICULAR: Really? And how did that make you feel?

STEINBERG: And from young girls and stuff, and from anything, in museums and -- you know, everywhere. No, it’s wonderful.

SICULAR: Yeah.

STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: Did you want to ask any questions?

M1: Yeah, sure.

STEINBERG: OK.

M1: Susan --
SICULAR: Sharon.

STEINBERG: Sharon, it’s OK, everybody calls Sharon Susan, don’t you know that? [18:00]

SICULAR: [He believes to call get us mixed up all?].

(laughter)

M1: OK. As an outsider in the fashion industry, what is a stylist?

STEINBERG: A stylist -- fashion stylist, because, you know, you can be all kinds of stylist -- a fashion stylist is someone -- when they’re -- let’s, for an instance, when they do catalogue. Somebody has to do the casting of the models.

M1: OK.

STEINBERG: So the models have to get booked for the photo shoot, and then they have a certain amount of clothing, let’s say, because the buyers -- I’m speaking -- I’m totally -- I’m only speaking about a department store, let’s say, that wants to do a catalogue, because you’ll understand it better. They supply the advertising department with the clothes; they come up with a rolling rack of clothes and they’ll go through the clothes as a -- to kind of -- what kind of look they want. Although years ago, they never said anything.

M1: OK.
STEINBERG: All right. And so -- and then you cast the models and you have to figure out a schedule the day --

M1: Do you cast them all?

STEINBERG: Yes.

M1: -- or you, OK.

STEINBERG: Yeah. You have to figure out the whole scheduling so you communicate with the photographer, [19:00] and also he has -- he has input too. And so after the models are all booked and scheduled, I used to go down to the floor with a [burrow?] book and I would have in mind exactly all the clothes and I would start pulling shoes, jewelry, hats, gloves, everything. And then -- but I would have in mind -- it would be thought out before, how it was going to be put together.

M1: You mean creating the visual look?

STEINBERG: Yeah, and there would be more than one -- one option --

M1: OK.

STEINBERG: -- for the outfits. You know, we have these big trunks on wheels and, you know, we bring them to the studio and stuff. And hair and makeup is there too. So basically, that’s how it gets all put together. But you know, you’re dealing with a lot of clothes. You’re dealing
with probably, you know, 20 or more -- probably more than 20 outfits a day.

M1: Now do you just deal with the clothes or do you deal with the hair and the makeup, the whole look --

STEINBERG: No, the hair and makeup people -- well, the hair and makeup people are there, but they have to look at the clothes and they have to -- by looking at that dress, they’re going to [20:00] know what kind of hair to do. And the makeup person knows what colors and looks at the model and looks at her coloring and what she needs.

M1: And do you have a say in that, or?

STEINBERG: Yeah, I mean, well you still kind of stand there and we all work together and then sometimes props are involved.

M1: OK.

STEINBERG: Bringing props in the studio. And so that’s a whole other thing.

SICULAR: Animals are always tough to work with.

STEINBERG: Yeah, right. Right.

SICULAR: And babies.

STEINBERG: Right. Yeah, and babies. They bring more than one baby in case the baby --

SICULAR: And animal.

STEINBERG: -- cries or -- and animals too.
SICULAR: And [double the?] animals.

STEINBERG: Yeah, right.

M1: Now in terms of styling, is it something that innate or is it learned?

STEINBERG: I think -- I think a stylist is -- there's a lot of stylists that want to be stylists and, you know, they're around this fashion industry here and New York and they could absorb it, but for the most part, good stylists -- and you'll ask any -- any editor, Vogue or Harper's Bazaar, it's innate, and it's developed. It's there and then it's developed by their environment.

M1: Oh, I see.

STEINBERG: Yeah.

M1: [21:00] Have you met anyone where it's the other way around?

STEINBERG: No.

M1: Never.

STEINBERG: Never. No, to me -- like an artist, somebody that paints, somebody that sings music, they're born with an ear for music. It's the same thing.

M1: And that it's just fine-tuned.

STEINBERG: Yeah, exactly.

M1: I see.
STEINBERG: Yeah. And it doesn’t mean it has to be expensive either.

M1: Oh, I see.

STEINBERG: Yeah.

M1: And so what is your role -- you’re a stylist that [bored?] now, you were at Saks --

STEINBERG: Well I’m -- (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) -- Patty had hired me as a --

SICULAR: Creative director --

M1: Creative director --

STEINBERG: Creative director to kind of -- because, somebody to do the cards and --

SICULAR: She’s so visual --

STEINBERG: -- the books and all of that stuff.

SICULAR: The artwork.

STEINBERG: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I got too old to run in and out of vans after a while. I mean, going on location was very grueling.

M1: It would become exhausting.

STEINBERG: Oh, early in the morning, suns-- you know, the sun -- sun’s up into sunset.

M1: It’s like shooting a film almost.

SICULAR: We were actu--
STEINBERG: Yeah, a mini one. A real mini one, because doing film is really complicated.

M1: Have you thought of going into that ever?

STEINBERG: I did many times. Part of me regrets it, but it’s -- it involves [22:00] a lot of traveling for long periods of time, you know, months at a time.

M1: And that doesn’t appeal to you?

STEINBERG: I don’t know. Ask me if I was 22 again.

(laughs) Yeah. And lived -- lived in California, you know. I think it’s probably easier.

M1: OK. What’s very -- what’s hard about your job? Is there anything that’s really hard?

STEINBERG: What’s hard about it is when there’s too many opinions.

M1: Too many cooks in the kitchen.

STEINBERG: Yeah. That’s what’s hard. And -- but it’s important to know what’s going to sell, so sometimes you do need that feedback. You know?

M1: So how do you deal with that?

STEINBERG: Well, I think that everybody tries to make piece. It took a long time but -- you try to understand each person and, you know, you have to bend. And then sometimes, you know, I -- I’ll have total freedom. But you know, for the most part, you know, they get feedback -- the
bookers get feedback from the clients so they know exactly what the client’s looking for.

M1: [That was?] -- [I know?] interview another career director, [23:00] she said that she tries to set the tone that she’s the boss in the beginning. Do you find --

STEINBERG: Cre-- but where -- she’s a creative director for who?

SICULAR  It was Nesta David who is at --

STEINBERG: That’s a whole other thing and that’s Nesta David, God bless her. No -- because it’s for catalogue. And she’s right. She -- (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) -- does set the tone; that’s a whole different thing. But -- no, I’m talking about in a model agency, it’s a little different because -- it’s a whole different thing. The bookers are dealing with the clients directly; they’re getting feedback as to what’s booking and that’s what matters because that’s how we make money. But as far a styling, what happened at Saks was, when we were on location, we had to make -- this woman have -- a creative director happy. And I would get faxes saying, “Please do it your way and her way.” And if we had 20 shots a day, we had to do it two different ways and it was very hard on the photographer, because we had to do it two different ways on location, each picture.
M1: Just to placate everybody.

STEINBERG: Exactly.

SICULAR: But when I worked in advertising, what they would do is -- say if they had a dress, then the buyers would come in, “No, I want that top to show and I want the button to show.” So we would get [24:00] the shot and then --

STEINBERG: I understand that yeah --

SICULAR: -- and then after that, we would do whatever we wanted creatively, as long as we got the shot for him, and then --

STEINBERG: Oh, oh.

SICULAR: -- [after a year?], we’d --

STEINBERG: Yeah, that’s what we -- kind of what we were doing. Yeah, we were doing it with a certain earring and maybe taking the earring off. Like we were doing it --

SICULAR: And then --

STEINBERG: -- two different ways.

SICULAR: Because you’re so creative --

STEINBERG: Yeah.

SICULAR: -- it’d be tough for you to just get the shot.

STEINBERG: Well and also, not even just me. Like, with somebody like Marcus Baird, such a fabulous photographer and, I mean, you don’t want to stifle him and, you know, so --

M1: What would you say you love most about your job?
STEINBERG: That I got to work with people like that. Like people that I could really look up to and absorb and learn from. And that’s what I try to tell everybody that’s younger. And I want everything right now, but, like, just to be around those people — Scavullo — I mean, just to learn from him and how, you know, their eye. It’s, like, so important.

M1: What was your journey to where you are now? What was the stepping-stone, like, for somebody’s watching, they say, [25:00] “Well, I really feel like I can be a stylist,” or, “It’s something I want to do,” what are those steps they have to take?

STEINBERG: I think they have to be — be an assistant in a really good place.

M1: Like what?

STEINBERG: Like they have to be an assistant at Vogue, Harper’s Bazaar, or any good department store —

SICULAR: Saks —

STEINBERG: Anywhere, they have to start with the bottom and they have to really work hard with a positive attitude and try to learn as much as possible.

M1: Even in —

STEINBERG: And a lot of people want to start up — you know, don’t want to do that anymore but —
M1: Or even an internship, something like that --

STEINBERG: Yeah, very important. Yeah. But you have to do it around the right environment with the right people; I think that’s the key.

M1: And something you said earlier, [start live thing?], that you’re boss at Saks was a big influence.

STEINBERG: Oh yeah.

M1: Why?

STEINBERG: Well, she was this beautiful woman who -- inside and out -- who was so creative. And she would come -- she would have expensive clothes, but she would also have clothes that were really inexpensive. And she always put them together beautifully. [26:00]

M1: [And would look?]?

STEINBERG: Yeah, and that was the key. I mean, her sense of style -- it didn’t matter, she just threw anything together. And -- but really, really nice. You know, it wasn’t like -- it wasn’t like a boss, it -- she treated me like her equal.

M1: Well what was sort, I don’t know, sort of business tricks that you get from her or creative -- mean other than that, I mean -- other things --

STEINBERG: The way she treated people at shoots.

M1: And how was --
STEINBERG: With everyone, me, everyone.

M1: How was -- and what was that --

STEINBERG: Very, like -- very, like -- I never felt like she was making me do the scut work. And I mean, my -- one of my first shoots was ironing boxer shorts at Patrick Demarchelier’s studio. And -- but I didn’t feel like I was doing the dr-- she didn’t make me feel that way. You know, she would have gotten in there and she would have done the same thing.

M1: She made you feel a part of the team?

STEINBERG: Yeah, and that’s another thing too, that -- that there shouldn’t be something [27:00] that’s too low for you to do and -- I mean look it, we saw Eileen was using Goo Gone on the white books not that long ago, down on Green Street, when she came to visit.

SICULAR: Creating portfolios.

STEINBERG: And we’re talking about only like, six, seven years ago.

M1: Oh.

STEINBERG: So. Do you remember that? Because I used to see her do it. (laughs) So that’s a good example. Yeah.

M1: Well, what’s next for you?
STEINBERG: Interesting. I’m not quite sure. I mean, what would be next for -- I would really start to like painting, like art, like oils and stuff. Yeah.

M1: Do you feel that’s an innate passion that you have?

STEINBERG: Yeah.

M1: And you sort of transferred it into styling? That’s your --

STEINBERG: Sure, it’s all related. Yeah, absolutely, yeah. (laughs) Yeah.

M1: Well, I mean, I think it’s very fascinating, what you do, and it’s -- I think the modeling industry can’t, you know, be as glamorous or exiting without the stylists. [28:00]

STEINBERG: Yeah, yeah, it’s true. I mean, there’s -- have been some wonderful stylists though, when I was really young that I used to really look up to, like amazingly talented people.

M1: You ever thought of writing a book about this?

STEINBERG: Well, yeah, about the industry.

M1: Or do people write books about being a stylist? I don’t --

STEINBERG: I think it’s more so the industry. It would have to be the whole industry, believe me, not just stylists.

No.

M1: Very fascinating. Thank you for taking the time.

STEINBERG: Thank you.
SICULAR: Any last thoughts?

STEINBERG: No, no, not that I could think of. (laughs) No. But, happy birthday Eileen and Carmen.

M1: Is there anything you’d like to say to maybe somebody who wants to be a stylist in the future? Somebody --

STEINBERG: The only thing, like I said before, is they have to -- they have to make -- do research into what area they’d like to be in; the magazines, the catalogue, they have to -- and they have to go with the best. They have to be around the best and start at the bottom if they have no experience because if that person really has a fashion sense, the people around them -- they’re going to pick up [29:00] on it right away. That’s what the key. If they’re not talent -- if it’s not there, they won’t pick up on it. But if it’s there -- and they’ll -- and they’ll promote them very quickly.

M1: Well.

STEINBERG: Yeah.

M1: All right. [Glad we could have you]; that was very good.

SICULAR: Thank you.

STEINBERG: All right. [30:00]

END OF AUDIO FILE