

The 60's: A decade of possibilities

Jennifer Dickson – Clip 3

We didn't realize what a magical period it was. I like to compare the sixties with this decade in the new part of this century. We are now absolutely strangled, crippled and paralyzed by bureaucracy. I would say this is our art form at the moment if you could consider it an art form. Then everything was possible. Trudeau was Prime Minister. I remember what it was like to come here as an immigrant with a young Prime Minister who was interested in building a nation. There was money and there was the will to spend it in creative ways. We didn't have ourselves much money but it was always possible to find an organization or body that would get behind you if you had a creative idea. So you got a feeling of Yes! Let's try it, Let's do it! We were coming together as groups. I think one of my main memories of the sixties that I'd like to share with you was, we were in Montreal during the FLQ crisis and by then I was teaching and working at the Saidye Bronfman Centre in the printmaking studio, which was a wonderful facility. The night of the murder of Laporte the RCMP went to Mrs. Saidye Bronfman and said look, we'd really like it if you stayed home to-night, we really don't want the anxiety, because there had been a bomb threat made against the centre. Saidye looked at the RCMP and she said it's my centre, it's Jennifer's opening, I'm going. We were amazed that night at the

solidarity that was expressed. So many of the Quebecois artists came, were there at the opening itself, it was really important to be physically present. Coming to Canada as an immigrant was a wonderful experience, I think because we came to Quebec. We were accepted into a family.