

Transcript of edited excerpts.  
TKACZ, VIRLANA

"My name is Virlana Tkacz, most people call me Virlana Tkacz [different pronunciation], or something like that... I've lived most of my life in New York and Newark.

Neighborhood's really different. It was a really rough neighborhood then. In the Sixties, there was a neighborhood with two worlds that walked past each other, that didn't see each other—totally didn't see each other. I remember coming to visit when I was young. My grandfather's sister lived on St. Mark's. And we were all dressed up, Easter clothes, all this kind of stuff, patent leather shoes. My mother was herding all of us in. And the neighbors across the hall opened the door, and there's a bunch of kids living there, obviously, like hippies.

I had never seen hippies before. They had a mattress on the floor, and there was like nothing else in the house. And I thought, [whispering] what is that? And they walked around barefoot, had long hair, and I was very interested. [laughs] I had never seen anything like that. Not in Newark—[there were] other things in Newark.

And then I started noticing them on the street—and this is like [19]66, something like that. But the other Ukrainians didn't see them. They were invisible to them. And same thing— the Ukrainians, the little ladies with their mink [trimmed coats], and the hats, totally invisible to the hippies. They did not see them. [laughs] It's amazing. The other thing is the old ladies would not see us, the Ukraine children. If you weren't presentable for the community, if you wore jeans, suddenly you disappeared. They didn't notice you. It was a very interesting thing."