

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

With

Marco Giovanni Brambilla

Conducted By

Shoghig K. Yepremian

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Today is November 27, 1996. My name is Shoghig Kalaydjian Yepremian. I am conducting audio histories for the City of Glendale as a Planning Division staff member. It's about 9:30 in the morning and we are sitting with a Glendale businessman and resident Marco Brambilla. This is one of the City's audio history program interviews and we will be talking to Marco about his experiences in life here in Glendale.

Shoghig Yepremian: Good morning Marco.

Marco Brambilla: Good morning.

Shoghig: How are you?

Marco: All right.

Shoghig: Marco, I sent you some sample questions about a week or 2 weeks ago.

Marco: Yes, I reviewed them.

Shoghig: And lets start with when and where you were born.

Marco: I was born in Tehran, Iran 1947.

Shoghig: Okay, and when did you come to United States?

Marco: I came to United States in 1981 from Germany. I was living in Germany at that time. And I came to this country in fact I went to the east coast, that being New York, because I had a position with the Colombia University and the University of Pennsylvania. So I was there for about 2 years, year and half actually, and then I came to California.

Shoghig: Okay, when did you leave Iran? Was it before the revolution or?

Marco: In Iran. I left Iran in 1964, 63. I went to school in Germany and then I continued my education in Italy and Germany and then for a brief period of time I was teaching. I had the chair of the Historical Preservation at the School of Architecture in Tehran. Then I left the country before the revolution.

Shoghig: So you had some work experience in Iran as a ...

Marco: Yes, three and half years. I was three and half years in Iran in an adult time.

Shoghig: Okay, did you go to school in Iran?

Marco: Well, the elementary schools.

Shoghig: Okay, and then your undergraduate or graduate schools were...

Marco: ...were all in Germany.

Shoghig: ...In Germany. Okay. So you came to Glendale directly?

Marco: From Germany.

Shoghig: From Germany.

Marco: No, I did not come ..

Shoghig: ...To New York and then...

Marco: ...To New York. I was in east coast. And then I came here after another ...I came to California for a project. The project was in Nortridge. We had a temporary office back in Nortridge area. This is in '92, end of '92 or so. At that time I stayed in Montrose because when I got here I stayed with someone until I found a place to rent. I came alone. My family was still in New Jersey. So then I have my...then I rented an apartment and that happened to be in Glendale because I looked in some areas, this was more convenient for whatever reason, and then my family joined us and from then I stayed in Glendale. Then I moved my office to Glendale.

Shoghig: What year was that?

Marco: Uh...Must have been end of '83.

Shoghig: '83, okay.

Marco: End of '83 beginning of '84. Definitely, I think about '83. And I got my first office in Glendale and the building that I was for about 12 years or so...

Shoghig: ...On Wilson.

Marco: On Wilson next to the City Hall. And the reason I took it there because it was a convenient one to have.

Shoghig: Ya, ya, close to the City Hall.

Marco: That was the reason. That was the reason.

Shoghig: Did you practice architecture in Europe, Germany?

Marco: Yes, yes. Although, I have always been also in teaching. I have always taught in various universities. So in certain points in my life I have been teaching more and practicing less and vice versa.

Shoghig: And you were teaching specifically architecture?

Marco: Correct.

Shoghig: Okay, what ...

Marco: An architectural history, architecture, and architectural preservation. These were like an mostly mine. My cup of tea.

Shoghig: Both in Germany and Italy.

Marco: And Iran.

Shoghig: Iran.

Marco: And in this country.

Shoghig: Okay. Where do you teach here? Do you currently teach?

Marco: Yes I do. But like right now I don't have a full time teaching position but I do lecture and I have like special courses and stuff like that. Most every, like in a major university from Harvard, M.I.T., you know, New York, City of New York University, Columbia, Pennsylvania. Here, I have done UCLA, Fresno. San Francisco I haven't done anything in fact.

Shoghig: It came to my attention that you have P.h.D. after your name.

Marco: Correct:

Shoghig: Do you have P.h.D?

Marco: Yes, a specialized...My P.h.D. is in fact is in Architectural Preservation and Urban Restructuring, I mean.

Shoghig: And where did you get that degree?

Marco: In Italy. Then second one which was a lighter one in Iran when I was in the country.

Shoghig: Okay, so you taught and worked in Germany, Italy, Iran, United States. What are some of your current projects? What are you working on?

Marco: Professionally what we do now is...We have been doing in recent years mostly either high end large scale residential custom design in a project. And these are like a large scale houses mostly. When I say larger scale, like a 10,000 square feet or more. A lot of custom design and an interior and coordination and stuff goes in to that. That's the body of work that we do and then next to that in more and more we have been doing commercial projects, specialized commercial projects. We have done a lot of restaurants. We have done 4 or 5 in Glendale but also in another places. I am just coming from the Johnny Rockets project in Burbank.

Shoghig: Oh, okay.

Marco: ...that's in the Mall.

Shoghig: And most of the projects are based in Los Angeles area or...

Marco: Most of them are in the Los Angeles area. We do have an office in San Francisco. We used to have a lot of projects in Northern California. We don't have so many right now. Although I have couple of project in the Napa Valley. I try to keep them alive because it's nice place to go.

Shoghig: Ya, and, but the most of your time is spent in Glendale office and not in Northern California.

Marco: Yes, that's correct.

shoghig: Okay. When you first came to Glendale what was your first impression of Glendale as a community to work in or live in?

Marco: California was a disaster. I was coming from a very metropolitan environment, I mean all my life I lived like in Rome, in Munich, New York and then like I'm in California I was lost. I mean, the distances, the scenery everything was different. I mean, there is no urban downtown buzzing and buzzing. So that was like I mean ...

Shoghig: Like a shock.

Marco: ...Ya, Glendale was like an a the worse bedroom community that I could envision all my life. What I liked of course, here was definitely it's a beautiful country, I mean, beautiful state so that I liked that very much. The weather was wonderful and it was nice to be in this area but as cities go I mean Glendale was certainly not my ideal living environment. I mean, all my life I have been in like very crowded metropolitan areas. The 10 million is the minimum, I mean you know so Glendale was in a way...

Shoghig: Hustle Bustle. Typical European cities.

Marco: So Glendale was a near experience in fact for me.

Shoghig: Ya. What about the things that you disliked about Glendale, or currently dislike about Glendale?

Marco: It was not too much of disliking than but learning what are the benefits of Glendale. By the same token that I was telling you I never lived in a larger space again in my life. My parents home was very-very large. But by the same token it was in the middle of a busiest downtown street and that was an another environment. Here like you have a backyard. I mean, I never had a backyard per say. If you had a backyard it was parked with 25 cars. So I think there is a like a certain qualities of life are totally different and I have to discover them myself. Because I personally was never exposed to that kind of living. And once I did, I enjoyed that.

Shoghig: You are adjusted.

Marco: Not only adjusted. I think there is a lot of benefits, it's a lot of good living if you so well, and that I liked.

Shoghig: And when did you start participating in local government? How did the interest begin, why and for what reason?

Marco: Actually, I can tell that quite precisely. With the preamble that I need to mention that all my life I had been always a very active person regardless in what country and what community I have been living. Here what triggered this was when the moratorium was imposed

upon the apartment building constructions...

Shoghig: Right.

Marco: ...I had no property and I had no major condominium, or apartment projects in Glendale. In fact, at that time I had barely any projects in Glendale because most of my work was maybe in Los Angeles but very little in Glendale. I had no natural links with the architects that were in Glendale and with the developer base that was in Glendale. I was really excluded from that circle if so you will. But what happened when the pressures were put upon developers blow off where the money is involved or a lot of people all of sudden I found myself as a spokesperson for first you know small group of architects and then the developers. As such, in a very short period of time I became a representative of a technical, let's say, aspect of this of the buckle at the time. From there I got very much involved with the Chamber of Commerce and tried to work on, again, on improving the existing codes and requirements, and etc.

Shoghig: This was end of 80s.

Marco: This is mid 80s. This is mid 80s. Then of course the moratorium took another turn. It became... it was a political issue, it was a code issue, it was a quality issue, and it was the wrong decision. I still think it was the wrong decision by the council at the time, and it was proved to be illegal because you know some developers filed a law suite and I had nothing to do with that portion because I had no property and no files in fact. I mean, I was just on the other side I would say, and what happened is then you know that eventually died down. I mean finished, some projects were completed, some forfeit. And since then I became quite visible in the community. I guess if you are working hard you are always asked to do more so what can I say.

Shoghig: And at one time you were involved with the Chamber of Commerce. What position were you...?

Marco: I have always been involved with the Chamber of Commerce. In fact, one of my primary goals was and still is to work on legislation that is affecting the construction industry at large in this community. And the vehicle to do that was the committee called the Housing and Urban Development Committee of the Chamber which I chaired for 3 years.

Shoghig: What year was that?

Marco: If you look up some of this blacks I guess this must have been end of 80s beginning of 90s, 89, 90, 91 I will assume something like that. And I was the vice president for a couple of years and then I was elected the president of the Chamber in '93 and tried to do what I felt was best for the community, tried very much to bring the Chamber and the City government very close together which I think is very important because ultimately you are working all for the same goal there is no difference in the ultimate wish list. The only difference maybe in decision making and I would think this is the way to do it and you will think that is not the way to do it.

Shoghig: Every decision impacts the committee.

Marco: Correct. But in that sense I mean you are working for the betterment of the quality of life and prosperity of the community, I mean. We may disagree on technicalities but we then we disagree in our office in many things but the ultimate goals stays the same. So after I became the president of course my term was finished sort of traditional that you phase out a little and make room for others so that like next president is not incumbered with your presence or overwhelming input. Of course, you are always in a counsel of the past presidents. You do certain things and you may get from time to time more involved in certain activities or decisions which I do. Again, we are strongly participating again in legislation that is affecting the code sections being with the Planning or with the Permit Services Center. So that is an angle that I keep doing.

Shoghig: Okay, lets see. Do you currently live in Glendale?

Marco: Yes, I have always lived in Glendale, in California. Say for few days you know upon my arrival from the airport I was taken to Montrose where I stayed for a few days and then as soon as I rented the place and then I have been always in Glendale.

Shoghig: Why did you come to Montrose? Did you know people?

Marco: Yes there were somebody who hosted me like for a few days.

Shoghig: Okay. What about family. Tell me about your background. Your last name is Brambilla.

Marco: My family is Italian-Armenian.

Shoghig: Your father is Italian...

Marco: ...Italian. Has the name. My mother is Armenian. They met in Iran so that's how I was born in Iran. None of my parents are Iranians per say. None of them was ever born in Iran. None of them lived long enough in Iran. But in fact there were born outside of the country from other place.

Shoghig: So your mom is not Iranian born.

Marco: Is not Iranian-Armenian. No, my mother could not speak persian or a decent armenian where she came.

Shoghig: Where did she come?

Marco: Russia.

Shoghig: Russia, okay.

Marco: So in any event I was born there and that's all my background is and I have very...

Shoghig: There is brothers.

Marco: I have one sister. She is in New York, New Jersey. And in fact our family is relatively small because you know we have lost most of the contact with the Italian side of the family. We have very little family to start with in Iran. So some through ramifications and intermarriages or so but we don't have a big family to start with, a few them are here in California. Some of them are throughout the world I mean not many do.

Shoghig: And your parents live in California?

Marco: Yes. Both my parents are in California.

Shoghig: Where did you get the interest of architecture? I wonder if your father had some influence.

Marco: No, no, no, not at all. I have always been interested in doing things that you would create. That has been always maybe a desire. But architecture was not my

first choice. I think medicine was something that I was supposed to do. I mean, I grew up, went through college and I knew I was going to be a doctor and then the last years of my high school years I said, do I really want to do that? So it was a very difficult decision. In fact, I was not sure what branch of the arts I wanted to do and I started with archeology. Then archeology was not active enough for me I mean. I think I was looking for more active roles in my profession. So then I expanded that into architecture...

Shoghig: uh...

Marco: ...and I studied, I started, I finished my high school in Germany and started to go...I went to Paris for one semester and then I came back to Munich because I was having too much fun in Paris I guess.

Shoghig: Ya (laugh)

Marco: It's true. Then I went to University in Germany and then little while later I started architecture in Rome. I was not sure whether I really wanted that or I wanted this. This was more academic, more philosophic, more theory related. That what I was doing that in Germany. Architecture in Italy at the time was very flamboyant, very future oriented,...

Shoghig: Perfect place to study architecture.

Marco: So it is. It really is, still is. So there are two completely different schools of architecture in Germany and Italy. It supposed to be two different approaches. So for about a year I kept two schools parallel. I was living on a train. I was literally like sleeping on train going to class in Germany, passing an exam and then go and sleep in another train and going to class in Rome. And of course after a while this was impossible and I had to make a decision now which one do you wanna keep really alive. And that's what I did.

Shoghig: Do you speak several languages?

Marco: Yes.

Shoghig: Which are...

Marco: Of course I speak like you know German, and Italian and French and you know Armenian, Persian and like an ...

Shoghig: Multi-lingual.

Marco: I have learned probably you know 25-30 languages in my life but of course like you don't speak all of them.

Shoghig: Right. If you don't speak you loose it. When did you start participating in city board and commission? Board of Zoning Adjustment was your first Board to participate?

Marco: On a board bases, yes. I was approached an early years of Design Review Board to be on that board. I had mix feelings about it. I really did not want that much to do that. So then I think the Board of Zoning Adjustments was the next one. I did not want to be also on the Planning Commission. This is mostly both for mostly because of the number of projects that I had at the time. It was that if I wanted to be in the Design Review Board at that time, I have so many Design Review with projects. But somehow like in a more...

Shoghig: Yes, it's conflict of interest.

Marco: This was difficult, was more difficult. And Planning was the same because I was working with the number of developers for subdivisional plan that could have gone to the Planning. I really didn't want to be there. But BZA has the advantage of a) you get specific cases of variances and these are not necessarily current projects. Everything on the Planning that I was involved with was new projects but here you get like you know someone has to do the fence around his house and front setback and that ends up. It's not necessarily something that I need to be there. So it was a lesser element of conflict of interest and I felt that was good one to be on. I got involved with the City quite early on two levels both on elections on the political side of it. And on the technical aspects I already mentioned in working with the City senior staff in establishing legislation codes and etc. that are beneficial and not beneficial for one interest group but beneficial in the sense that is the right thing for this City. And that has been going on from my early days of being in Glendale lets say. So those were the two levels that I have already strong interaction. And third level came you know with the variety of programs that the City of Glendale has from time to time. One was, what was that called like, the cultural diversity program where you

know there were special programs you could go through that, meet with the other people and discuss common issues that was one. Then you know the Alex Theater was another, Strategic Plan is another...these are issues that are not necessarily commissions. But we started on the "Alex" like a five, six years ago. The "Alex" was an operating movie theater at the time. So definitely there was a City involvement but, I mean, it was not an official position so I guess that's how it developed. I happened to involved from quiet a few of them.

Shoghig: And of course you're involved with the Neighborhood Task Force?

Marco: Not with the Neighborhood Task Force, no I am not.

Shoghig: Greater Downtown Strategic Plan.

Marco: Yes, and I have been, for example again, one of the core group of individuals who started it. I mean literally from the first meeting on. From the very first meeting where it was funded by the partners. That's how it started. And I have been on every leadership group of that committee until you know I have been looking with desire to the time that it will be dismissed. But it has been delayed and delayed so hopefully it does happen now. Another words I have been involved with a lot of programs that were City oriented, City sponsored, City related, but not necessarily official positions.

Shoghig: Right.

Marco: The only official position that I can think of with the City is my position with the BZA.

Shoghig: Right. And how long have you been on BZA now?

Marco: Three, four years.

Shoghig: Ya. Are you interested in participating in other commissions, boards after BZA?

Marco: Absolutely, I think you have to. Because if you believe in what you are doing and if you don't you shouldn't do anyway. So if you do believe in what you are doing I think it's the right think that you make yourself available. At times, I have spent literally 60% of my time for community affairs and 40% for my business and

that is not an exaggeration and considering that I have like an 80-90 hour weeks. This is a considerable amount of time. So sometime you can not just afford it to do. But absolutely yes I mean I will stay available to whatever I can give to the community. And I will continue doing it.

Shoghig: What about outside of City government? What are some of the organizations you belong to or participate. It can be Armenian or not Armenian.

Marco: Well there is... Of course, outside Glendale there is good bunch of professional and academia related organizations that I belong and from time to time I am more active in one or the other. In fact, the reason I scheduled it today because I flew back yesterday from a symposium which was in Rhode Island and we were having something in the Brown University. So I am quite active in those fields and again sometimes you get very active on something and you know sometimes you concentrate on other issues. But there are at least seven, eight major organizations national and international that I belong and I do three or four of them are Armenian. In fact, one of the things we just put together is a program on research in Armenian architecture. We organized an exhibition last year, if you recall on Brand Boulevard, about architectural monuments of the Nagorno Karabagh region and there were like three, four conference series. The head of that expedition happened to be in California and we invited him to come and he gave those speeches and we had banquets and programs. That was in Glendale Central Library. Quite well attended. The exhibition was very interesting and the fact that I would like to do I have the material I would like circulate them to the schools. So that it is one thing. I have been involved recently with Agha Khan program for Islamic architecture. I wrote, I was their consultant for some time, and I wrote a program for architectural education in the muslim world. That's another one. I have completed that now so I moving on to other things.

Shoghig: You have interest in Islamic architecture and Armenian architecture, and modern...

Marco: My specialty, my specialty is the Islamic architecture and Armenian architecture of the medieval times, specifically 11th to 14th century and I have written lecture you know, done things on that as part of it. That's my specialty.

Shoghig: Marco you gave me a tour of your office today. How many employees do you have currently in this office?

Marco: Well, it has been you know going up and down with the economy. The most I had 25-30 and at the least I had none.

Shoghig: Ya. (laugh)

Marco: I guess like you know half. It has been varying. For the last four, five years we have been quite stable with the number around ten.

Shoghig: Ten, total. Do you see your company growing any further than what it is?

Marco: More than growing I would like to be more specialized. I don't try for indefinite growth. That is not my forte here. What we need to have is...big-big problem we have, that is not related to us essentially, but you know throughout construction industry, is lack of quality. One case that is very actual right now I mean. We have designed a building, this happens to be in Glendale, and the building is built 95% to how it looks on paper but in reality doesn't look like it and the essence of that is the quality control and the small decisions. I mean if a tile is like 14" by 14" instead of 18" by 18" this makes that much of deference but probably not but yet but the end it does. So that hurts us. I had another project in Glendale that we designed and I felt it was a wonderful project and when they built that they changed a little bit here a little bit there and at the end it was like you know I did not recognize it. So what I really would like to do is to be able to keep control over the projects and that requires of course another approach. I mean another words you are not mass producing new plans just because you just do not have the time so you need to concentrate on things that you have already in place. That is basically what I would rather do. That is very true by the way for single family residences. I have done number of very large scale houses where there is a lot of detail and that required that I be there that's why I am not often here because I need to be there like in a for long hours and then you know a) you design the marble on the floor but then you work around it and make sure that the craftsmen are doing it the way they are supposed to and you supervise them and guide them so

that the end result looks like your design on paper and that is what I think is you know finding also in market niche for us.

Shoghig: More hands on you know to go....

Marco: We need to hand held a project from start to the end. Whatever we do because sometimes we are not allow too because you know there is...The contractor tells you I don't want to see your face.

Shoghig: Right.

Marco: So you know that's very difficult or the owner says like an I paid you, do I owe anything and then go away and there is nothing you can do. But you know you try to keep control over the project so that like an at the end you improve the project also as it grows. An architectural building something is not only on paper it's also like a child in a way you know need to be taking care of until such time as it matures let's say, as it completed in the case of the buildings.

Shoghig: What about in terms of specializing in certain type of architecture you don't intend to do that...

Marco: Yes, one of the things I enjoy doing a lot of creative stuff. And those things you do with night clubs, restaurants, things that are little bit unusual...

Shoghig: More modern type typically or...

Marco: Well, I mean I did the "Aoba" for example on Brand and I love that project because I think you know I did this so I have to but the same token I enjoyed very much doing it and I knew a lot about Japan and it's culture and ...but literally I flew to San Francisco on several occasions to buy stuff for them and to design things around the stuff that I bought and hopefully it makes it, you know it's felt by people so. That was a Japanese Restaurant and the modern thing. But I am doing two now, one is almost completed and is more in a French subdued, French style or approach. That has come out very nicely, it is very impressive and we have done for example we design all the lighting pictures because the space is too big, and there was not much you could do with. So we ended up by... you know you need to give some character to that place, so that's what we did. Today I was thinking about another project similar to

this what I am going to do with that. So that's you know...that definitely is one of our specialties. I like doing that. We have done number of clubs type of you know projects so I think really crazy stuff. So that was very much fun. I'll still like to do high quality houses. I really like that because you are building the house with that particular family with their particular life style, with their particular requirements. I mean I have done house for an individual whose architectural program for a 5,000 square foot home consistent of 2 rooms. Like 3,000 square feet for my office and like an 2,000 square feet for my bedroom. I don't need any other rooms including kitchen. I don't cook.

Shoghig: Ya (laugh)

Marco: ...So we have to fight to put a small kitchen. I don't cook so you know what's the point of wasting the spaces, and I don't have a dining so no dining table, no living room because the guy was an a workaholic and he had a huge room with a huge desk and he was working from his home and whenever people came went that room that ...

Shoghig: That's all he needed.

Marco: That was the end of story. So he had a big bedroom and a big one room. So these are like an a very special projects.

Shoghig: Do you feel pressure in terms of what the clients wants verses what your way of designing?

Marco: Not too much. Not too much. I mean you know there is never a client comes and says I have no idea just do whatever you wanna do. It is in your learn to take the most important requests from the client and then transform it into something that is doable. Very seldom you will find the client that is totally absurd. But that's really doesn't happen to often.

Shoghig: Ya. Marco, who would you say is your favorite architect? Can be modern or...

Marco: I grew up in a very special time frame in terms of like a what was discussed at the time and a number of architectural "great architects" did not realize a lot of their work and there were more on theory than on paper. Generally speaking for the architectural tendency for the last I say 15-20 years it has been a

chaos. It is a very mediocre architecture throughout. I mean that is really on international level and it doesn't matter where you are the best architects the best architectural projects are the fake once. This is Las Vegas type where you know it's so well done. It's totally stupid but it is extremely well done. I mean you know nobody could do it any better. But that is not architectural projected in the future, just like an image building. So if you take that out my... I wrote an article about Mendelson, he was a German architect. He has very sensitive design. I liked it very much. There was an Italian guy Santalia that I liked very much. I worked for one of my teachers that I respected very much and I worked for him for some time, not as an architect by the way but I was his assistant for some time, was a very charismatic designer I mean extremely rich in ideas and really projecting it to avant-garde type of a project. His name was Sacropanti. Other than that, there are more great architects today that have not realized the work. I mean they have won a lot of competitions but have built very little. The more successful architects are the guys who are getting the contracts for the larger projects and very often their projects is not really that impressive. There are some nice projects that is good to look at, but architecture right now is in crisis. You know, we don't know where we are going. Everybody is going the certain direction...

Shoghig: No direction, ya.

Marco: And you know maybe that is good I don't know. But there is not a lot of quality products being created.

Shoghig: What do you think about Frank Lloyd Wright type architecture?

Marco: Well I mean, these are like the pillars of you know, extremely intelligent people. Specifically in Southern California for example Noitra has done some beautiful houses. It's very simple. I mean you need to think about like an 1,800 square feet very plain, but extremely well thought, well design, very clean houses. That is not being done at all. If you do modern today you need to have 8,000 cubes coming from all the corners and the walls need to be like an a metal and skew and maybe that's what...maybe then you have done it. That is one way. The other is you do the mansion whatever that is fake, Roman, Italian, Greek, it doesn't matter I mean something fake and if you do well at the end of the

fake thing that you have done well fake thing. That is the majority of them. But you know, Frank Lloyd Wright and all the various greats of the early 20th century they had an architectural theory and that's why there was a handwriting that was continued and that's why we are saying we are in chaos. Because you know one client wants typically this and, the other client wants this and the City of Glendale says you can not use green on the street, so what do you do I mean you have...

Shoghig: Doesn't leave them for creativity.

Marco: It does not...that is not the right way of saying that. I think what it does it promotes mediocrity. Because if you are a genius you will find the way to do that. But if you are half a genius then you will do like a more likely a mediocre thing, you know, breaking the barrier.

Shoghig: Right, right.

Marco: ...I mean we had some world renown architects to couple of projects in Glendale and you know Design Review Board will say well you know this is not compatible with the house like down ...So you know sometimes it's good. In fact, I supported the Design Review Board but that is a decision to be made do you want to have a decent streetscape that is mediocre, or you wanna take the chance as have like you know hundred buildings that are a disaster and maybe two that are world class.

Shoghig: Marco, what about the family. Are you married...?

Marco: I am married. I have wife and a daughter. She is 22, she is going to UCLA...

Shoghig: Wow. What is she studying?

Marco: She just completed her double major and probably she will going into law, or business law or something like that.

Shoghig: Okay. So you have not influenced her. (laugh)

Marco: I tried to influence her not to do architecture.

Shoghig: Ya, not to do. (laugh). Okay Marco, what's the future for you? Where is Marco Brambilla the next 5-10 years?

Marco: Who knows. Who knows. Of course, business will be

still a strong component of my life simply because I can afford not to. Definitely, I will have to continue and finish some publications some stuff that I have like wearing my other hat per say. And maybe get into the mid-life crises and do something really crazy, why not.

Shoghig: Ya, and continue participating in local government, hopefully.

Marco: I will to some degree I will always be. I have impression to be more active on the political side of the industry, the biggest ambition I have, so.

Shoghig: Okay. Any other final comments.

Marco: You know more about me now than I do ... (laugh)

Shoghig: Do you wanna mention something that I don't know or that's relevant to this interview?

Marco: Well I think maybe one thing I can bring up is that there is a definite change in this community and I guess what I tried also the other day at the Strategic Downtown Planning to say is that you need to have control over that as much as possible. Glendale is changing not only because people in Glendale and the demographic is changing because you know the world changes, Southern California changes. (interruption)

Marco: Would you care tea, coffee, whenever...

Shoghig: No, Marco no.

Marco: So one of the things that I guess we need to do with this is of course Glendale. We always mentioned that there is a change in demographics. There always will be changes in demographics.

Shoghig: Oh, ya.

Marco: You know, we happened to have more Middle Eastern. In Monterey park has got like an a more Chinese and China Town has gotten more Vietnamese.

Marco: They do that. That is natural. But there are good values in Glendale that sometimes you are not aware until you loose them and I think it is very important that we maintain some of those. By the same token, you don't want to be in a position to be so conservative as

to not allow for any change to occur. In order to preserve something good you need to go through the change even to preserve it you have to go through the evolution, and I guess that is what intellectually I think is intriguing for me and anything I can do for practically to make it happen, I will. That's why I got involved on all those thing that I felt were in a way marking and setting the pace for the future. I felt very strongly about the "Alex". We had a meeting yesterday and in fact we were nominating our next chair. I felt that Glendale needed to break the barrier and be someone within the Southern California cities. Financially we are. But we are not seen as such. We are seen as the weakest, the less exuberant and one with no pizzazz. Between Glendale, Burbank and Pasadena and North Hollywood will overtake us if we don't do things about it. Because you know every... in West Hollywood has already **downed** a niche for themselves. For Beverly Hills doing, West L.A. is doing other things. So you need to promote that and in order to do that there are some key points in my mind that needs to happen. You can't have a Brand Boulevard with stores and say I'm the financial center in Southern California. You know, you are not... I don't believe you, maybe the numbers are right but I just don't believe you. So I guess, there are extremely good quality of life values in Glendale. Those for families, for safety, for you know the beauty of the hills, the residential packets, the diversity of various residential facilities that we can provide. And then by the same token, we need to go into the next century and for that we need water, power, police, police, clean streets stuff like that. So in order to that you need to have a thriving business community. You need to try to attract businesses to this community and keep them. Now certain businesses we will never be able to attract because we don't have the land big enough for that. So I think what I am...my interest in the community is to have a vision for this various growths of the future and have a handle over them so that you are not forcing to doing thing that you don't want to and as such sort of complete that. That is basically what I will do.

Shoghig: More active role rather than reactive.

Marco: Definitely active. But not only active in just participating in the process but forming a strategy, forming a future. I think that is what the leadership in Glendale should do regardless from where there are

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW - MARCO BRAMBILLA

coming from the government, business, the various City departments or various non-profit organizations. That is what I guess in my mind is important to have. Then you have a goal and even you reach 50% of that in the next 10 years is better than going down.

Shoghig: Right, right.

Marco: So that is my Glendale comments.

Shoghig: Very good Marco.

Marco: So what do I get in return for sharing my life with you? Would you like to tell me all your life story? (laugh)

Shoghig: We are documenting. (laugh). That will be another interview.

Marco: Okay.

Shoghig: Thank you Marco very much for this opportunity...

Marco: My pleasure.

Shoghig: ...and sharing your valuable time but it is also important for the City and the community...

Marco: Sure is. It sure is.

Shoghig: So I appreciate your effort in excepting this interview.

Marco: My pleasure. Good luck to you.

Shoghig: Thank you.

Marco: And I really think it is an important one.

Shoghig: Yes. Thank you very much.

Marco: You are welcome.