



Smithsonian
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Oral history interview with Jozef and Teresa
Bakos, 1965 April 15

Contact Information

Reference Department
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560
www.aaa.si.edu/askus

Transcript

Interview

**Interview with Jozef Bakos
Conducted by Sylvia Loomis
In Santa Fe, New Mexico
April 25, 1965**

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Jozef Bakos on April 15, 1965. The interview took place in Santa Fe, New Mexico and was conducted by Sylvia Loomis for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: This is an interview with Mr. Josef Bakos, Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 15, 1968. The interviewer is Mrs. Sylvia Loomis of the Santa Fe office of the Archives of American Art. The subject to be discussed is Mr. Bakos' participation in the Federal Art Project in the 1930's and 40's. But before we discuss this, Mr. Bakos, will you tell us something about yourself? Where you were born and where you received your art education?

JOZEF BAKOS: I was born in Buffalo, New York, and do you want to know the year?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Yes, if you want to tell us.

JOZEF BAKOS: 1891, September 3rd. Then I studied nights at the Alight Art Gallery art school, and I received a scholarship there, then later I got an honorable mention in New York and later I studied privately with John Thompson, who just got back from Paris. And after that, during the first World War, he came to Denver, and shortly after that I followed him there. I was there a while and I got a job as instructor at the University of Colorado. In fact I think I was the first art instructor there.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Do you know when that was?

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh, I'd say about 1919, 1924. I had hardly finished a year there and the school was closed for a while because of the flu, and I came to look over this area here. I finished the year and came out to Santa Fe and fired with a ranger at Frijoles, and from then on I just stayed.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: So that must have been about 1920?

JOZEF BAKOS: In 190 I came to Santa Fe. I had also studied a little bit of painting in Toronto. I was living outside of Toronto with a group of young painters there and we did quite a bit of painting. In fact it was my first introduction to painting snow scenes and I enjoyed that very much.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Was there a school there, or did you have private instruction?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I wasn't exactly connected with the school but a man that was teaching in Toronto used to come weekends out to York Mills. He was a friend of John Thompson's and he told me about him, so I happened to go there.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Was Mrs. Bakos with you then?

JOZEF BAKOS: No, we didn't know each other at that time.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I suppose you met in Santa Fe?

JOZEF BAKOS: We met in Santa Fe, yes.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: What was Santa Fe like in those days?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, the town as I recall was about 7,000, extremely unique, at least it was very appealing to me as a young man. It was dependent for heating on just buying wood from the burros that were loaded there. Fifty cents a load and, well, it was just very primitive.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: What artists were here when you came?

JOZEF BAKOS: Artists just started coming in about that time. John Sloan was just about a year before me and

Randall Davey. Well, Henderson was here and I met Andrew Dasburg here. Paul Bourn (?), a nationally well-known artist, and Nordfeldt was here, and all of them just preceded me, and then at the same time Shuster came, Willard Nash, Mruk, or Murk - it was spelled both ways-- it was due to him that I came out here, he was with the Forest Service and he studied with John Thompson, and he came originally from Buffalo; and then Fremont Ellis. So I organized the Cinco Pintores group about that time. Well Gus Baumann was here. It was becoming very active. It was very alive and much more than Taos because we were called moderns then, we wouldn't be called that now, because more academic painters were in Taos.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Who were the other members of Los Cinco Pintores?

JOZEF BAKOS: Willard Hash, Will Shuster, Wladyslaw Mruk, and Fremont Ellis.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I've interviewed Mr. Shuster of the group, but I had forgotten the names of the others. Well, what was the purpose of organizing this group?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I think we were a young group and there were older painters sad, funny, it was slightly altruistic on my part. At that time the museum was kind of run by a few people and who they felt like they would let exhibit, and those they didn't -- especially the young ones -- they didn't have a chance. I happened to be in favor with them, but I still thought it wasn't fair to the others. So I think by being together it brought pressure and it got so we had our first exhibit. And another thing was Nicholas Roerich, who was an internationally well-known painter, he was here about at that time, too. And he wrote a what--do-you-call-it -- a preamble or something for our thing. And he suggested that we have an exhibition at the penitentiary. Well, that was a wonderful thing. We got national publicity with it, but we never exhibited there. But there was a lot of publicity about it. Then as a group we exhibited throughout California and different places and I think we accomplished quite a bit.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Did you exhibit in the museum, too?

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh yes, we showed quite often there.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: So there wasn't too much opposition?

JOZEF BAKOS: It loosened things up.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I see. Did you have an art school or students in connection with this?

JOZEF BAKOS: No, no.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Just to exhibit your own work and to state a philosophy, I presume? Did you have any publication at that time? You said there was a preamble that Roerich had written.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I think there was something written in E1 Palacio. I tell you who would have this, because I'm very poor at keeping things, but if there's anything that's kept, Will Shuster would have it. Have you seen him?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I talked to him and he gave us some material about his experiences during the Federal Art Project days, but I don't think he did about this.

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh, nothing about the Cinco Pintores? Well, he probably has most of it, and I think its quite an important thing because Nash passed away and so did Mruk but it's funny -- we're getting talked about more now than we did at the time.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I know it was an important movement in Santa Fe.

JOZEF BAKOS: Then shortly after that another group was started. That was started, Applegate was on the Camino -- by the way, we started building all those houses on the Camino, we all five of us built our houses up there, started the art colony there. In fact, I think we made Camino del Monte Sol. Originally that group started with eight people. There was a little rebellion in Taos. I was asked to be a member of it and someone objected that I was being too modern, so some of them withdrew from the Taos society, and that era's victor Higgins and Blumenschein -- and I guess you've heard of Blumenschein?--and Ufer, but Ufer didn't quit the Taos Society. Well, away, those three men came here and with Applegate, Baumann, Henderson, and Nordfeldt and I was asked to join. I was the youngest one of the group, so that was called the New Mexico Painters. I was secretary of that group for a while.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I didn't know about that.

JOZEF BAKOS: Now that group started exhibiting in New York City and that exhibition traveled throughout the

country at art institutes, etcetera and existed quite a few years.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Do you remember when that was forced?

JOZEF BAKOS: I would say that was formed maybe in '21, '22, shortly after the Cinco Pintores. Then later we recruited John Sloan, Andrew Dasburg, Theodore Van Soelen, and let's see, Randall Davey -- they came in later. I was secretary for a few years and then Blumenschein, and it was going along. It was supposed to follow alphabetically and Baumann took over as secretary and he absolutely fell down on it. Then a few other things happened. Dasburg won a prize at the Carnegie, a dealer picked him up in New York, and the dealer thought he should withdraw, and so things like that happened and it finally dwindled out. For a time we got very good national publicity because we exhibited throughout the whole country from coast to coast.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And I suppose the subject matter was of the Southwest?

JOZEF BAKOS: The Southwest -- that was the thing that went out -- the Southwest in painting. It didn't quite appeal too much in New York, the dealer was telling us we should paint figures or something, you know, and politics entered into it, but I think it accomplished quite a bit.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: About how long do you think that was active?

JOZEF BAKOS: That was active, oh, around about four or five years. It was very strong then and after that it kind of went out. And years later I had letters where they wanted exhibitions but -

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well., what were you doing at the time the Federal Art Project came along?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, at first during the Depression I got a job teaching at Denver and I was made full professor there two years, and then Teresa and I felt we were kind of losing out. I was just a little known throughout the country and some way or another when I got there I kind of dropped out of the picture. But we came back here, you know. Of course we were happier here, and in the meantime Randall Davey got this commission over in Colorado Springs -- the Will Rogers Memorial Tower there -- to decorate, and he asked me to help him. Well then, the project came in and I did landscape work. I was on the project for a while but not too long.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: No, I don't think you were on very long. I wanted to ask you about that place where you worked with Randall Davey. I didn't get that name. You said something about a commission there.

JOZEF BAKOS: It was at Colorado Springs.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And what was that memorial.?

JOZEF BAKOS: Will Rogers Memorial, what they call it?--Penrose Towers? Do they call it Will Rogers Towers, Teresa?

TERESA BAKOS: No, wait.

JOZEF BAKOS: William Penrose was the man who was financing it, though. His wife, I think, had a lot to do with art, and was she connected with that school? No, she was not.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And what time were you and Teresa Bakos married?

JOZEF BAKOS: Now when was it? About '22? '23?

TERESA BAKOS: I think so.

JOZEF BAKOS: About '22 or '23, yes.

TERESA BAKOS: Two years after you came here.

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes, about '23, I would say.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: It was quite a long time ago to remember the dates. Well, who approached you about becoming involved with the project, do you remember?

JOZEF BAKOS: I don't know. Baumann was head of it for a while, but there was an awful lot of dissension, so who was appointed later was ---?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Vernon Hunter.

JOZEF BAKOS: Vernon Hunter. Yes. And he was extremely successful in handling the artist. He was awfully nice

to work with, too.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, everybody spoke very highly of him.

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes, he had a nice cooperative way and he knew how to get the most out of people. In fact, I think he was extremely successful and I was delighted to work with him.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I know that Gus Baumann was the supervisor of it during the Public Works of Art period, and that was in 1934. Then that closed down and the WPA art project, the Federal Art Project, started.

JOZEF BAKOS: Is that how it happened?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: That's right -- in 1935 -- and that was when Vernon Hunter was appointed director for New Mexico, so I didn't think that you had anything to do with it during the days that Mr. Baumann was the director.

JOZEF BAKOS: No, no, I didn't work under him at all.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And you were an easel painter then, on that project?

JOZEF BAKOS: I was what?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Easel painter.

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes, yes. I tried for some of the decorations but I didn't seem to succeed.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: The murals?

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And were you allowed freedom of expression?

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh, very much so. I'll tell you how nice they were about it. I did a watercolor and --Cutting's sister -- I never knew her and I don't think she'd ever been here -- what was it? --New York or something, the watercolor show? Or Washington, D.C? I don't know, but she saw the watercolor and it belonged to the Project, but she bought it from the Project, then paid me for it, and you know, that was something extra. I felt that was unusually nice.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And also unusual because ---

JOZEF BAKOS: Also unusual --

SYLVIA LOOMIS: -- because these paintings were allocated to public buildings.

JOZEF BAKOS: That's right. But this money was turned over to me and they told who bought it, too. I didn't know Cutting either. (Senator Bronson Cutting of New Mexico)

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Do you know what happened to any of the rest of your work?

JOZEF BAKOS: One of the best things that I ever did, and I was a little disappointed -- someone apparently has it in their house and it shouldn't be in their house. It was done of the cathedral, and Vernon had it unusually nicely framed and when I saw it some years later at the State capitol I was so surprised because I didn't know I had painted it. I just loved that watercolor. Then later somebody told me that they had it at home, and I said, "Well, you have no right to have that painting." I hope that it comes back to the public, whoever has it.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, that's another reason for this survey that the Archives of American art is making, because they have also discovered that a good deal of the work of artists that was done during that period has gone into private hands, which is not legal.

JOZEF BAKOS: I'd be glad to have that watercolor back and buy it for what they paid for it; well, I didn't because I was on the monthly payroll.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Yes, but they've found that sometimes the artists have become famous now and they found works of theirs in the basements of museums, various places where they were just stored, and people have taken them out and sold them, and so we're trying to trace down as many as possible of the works of art that were done during that period.

JOZEF BAKOS: Isn't that interesting.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: That is interesting.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I think it would be worthwhile to mention that.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Yes, I think so, too. You don't know who it was?

JOZEF BAKOS: Someone working in the State Capitol. I don't know, I really can't tell you. But I don't think it would be too much trouble to trace it, because that was there for a long time.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I know that Fremont Ellis had a couple of paintings in the old Governor's Mansion and those were returned to the Museum [of New Mexico] when the new Governor's Mansion was built, so they have those in the Museum now. If anything did happen that paintings were removed from a public building they should have gone to a museum or some public repository. But they didn't always do that. Well, how did you feel about the project generally?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well., I think it was a godsend in a way. Of course, you see in the beginning of it I had a job, but when I came back I didn't, and I think it was a wonderful thing. Of course, there's a lot of opinions that happened about it, and I think Teresa [Bakos] has an opinion about it.. One of the things that .happened was that a lot of people that weren't artists got on the project and maybe that had something to do with the ultra-modern movement because people who were selling shoelaces became all of a sudden artists. Things like that happened, but I think when they get enough of the public money I think that those kinds of things will slip in.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Tell, that was the unfortunate part of it -- that it had to be a relief measure.

JOZEF BAKOS: But even with the unfortunate part, it was worth it. It gave a chance to a lot of people because you were not inhibited in any way.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And it gave you an opportunity to continue painting when you otherwise would have had to go into something else, perhaps, in order to earn a living during that difficult time. Well, how do you think your fellow artists felt about it?

JOZEF BAKOS: Tell. I guess every time you can eat you feel happier, you know. Most of the painters do not make a living out of painting, you know -- they struggle some other way. I know most of the time I was making doors and making furniture and carving things, and it's very difficult to make a living out of painting. Some painters are more popular than others. I think some get more publicity and what not, and are more fortunate but in general, why the artist paints, I don't know. It's just like why a person preaches, you know, "Hey just do it."

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Maybe this would be a good time for you, Mrs. Bakos, to tell us how you felt about the project?

TERESA BAKOS: Well, I'm a little reluctant to tell exactly how I felt about it.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, tell it.

TERESA BAKOS: I didn't think it was a very good thing. I thought that it sort of cheapened art and I don't think we've ever quite recovered from that.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, that's an interesting commentary.

JOZEF BAKOS: I think so.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Because a good many people have felt it gave great impetus to American art because it did give the opportunity for artists to develop themselves and to go on painting.

TERESA BAKOS: Yes. Well, that's very true, but I think so many people who really knew nothing about painting at all painted, and I never felt it was a very good thing.

JOZEF BAKOS: Let me interrupt a little bit. Albert Droll who was a generation ahead of us, you know -- I remember at that time I had a little exhibit at La Fonda and he was a nationally well-known painter, he was one of the first painters to paint the Test. The western skies weren't known around New York. He said, "You know, you fellows don't have a chance like we have." My gosh, we get as much as 5,000 for 4 painting! -- in those days, you know. Well, I remember I was trying to sell my monotypes at ten, fifteen dollars at La Fonda, and they were good monotypes, but I think what Teresa said was true. It cheapened art and I think everybody paints now. I remember a couple of doctors once at a dinner and they thought they were going to paint, and so I said, "I think I'm going to start taking appendixes out." You couldn't very well get a chance at an appendix, you know, but they would take a chance at painting. But Bruce was quite a wonderful man, and I followed what he was doing. Tie was a retired wealthy man. He got into painting and became successful in painting and I think it was due to him and to that man in Buffalo, New fork, that had lots to do with starting the Art Project. I met that

painter - what was his name? He was mentioned -- it was an Italian name, he was one of the first ones on the ideas are valuable.

TERESA BAKOS: Is this in connection with what they're trying to do now? What the government's trying to do?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: No, or if it were it would be entirely incidental.

JOZEF BAKOS: Is there any way that the government can use something of this, or that you hope to have the government use it?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, it's quite possible that they will, because this will be published as a survey called The New Deal and the Arts, and I think through the accomplishments of these projects it may help to inspire either some similar action or at least the establishment of a Fine Arts Commission in Washington, or will help the artist and give him recognition, which he has not had on a national scale up to this point.

JOZEF BAKOS: Now I was impressed. I haven't seen Guaymas for about ten years, you know, Guaymas in Mexico, and going through Nogales, which is such a neglected place, to see that wonderful modern sculpture and then the modern architecture, not that I'm interested in modern, but anyway something beautiful, the railroad station there then in Hermosillo. I was so impressed by the way of laying out the streets, gardens, flowers, and a little bit of sculpture here and there. Guaymas was the same way, a lot of poverty but they have such a great civic thing, and all we do is to see those junk yards along the road. We don't make any effort towards civic beautification, and I think there's a lot of room for artists. There's always squabbles among artists but even in squabbling, there's always something worthwhile coming out. I'd like to see much more of that. I think there's no question about it, art has gotten into a kind of politics, and it has gotten one-sided, and I remember John Moan said -- and it's worthwhile quoting him - "That at one time," he said, "Modern art was good medicine but now it's poison."

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I suppose you know they set up a Fine Arts Commission here in New Mexico?

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes. I quit that group, I mean I was a member of it -- what was the name or it?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Artist's Equity?

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes. Artist's Equity. But you see again, right away, here was trouble -- Artist's Equity does not represent everybody. But again, I'm glad there's something that's organized that can take it up. And that's where every organization helps, I mean, say a group whether it's the Cinco Pintores, or what -- the little while that existed was worth its while and I think any organization is fine. I'm all for it. Even if they fall apart they do their part for the time being.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: They speak for the artists in a coordinated ways and it does help them, I think. Well, you feel then that this project might have had an offset on the standards of art in America, is that true?

TERESA BAKOS: Well, I feel that way. I don't know that Joe does, but I do.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I don't think we have standards. Things are changing so rapidly, we have Expressionism and all the different movements, then we have pop art and the last thing now we have is op art, so I think we're classifying them -- the dresses are getting shorter all the time, and the exposure's not always the best!

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, that's one way of looking at it, certainly.

JOZEF BAKOS: Some of it's alright.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I feel that the standards have degenerated very much.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, it's difficult. You see, you always have to be flexible about the thing. Just as soon as you set up standards it becomes academic, so you have to always have that little leeway, what is a standard? You know it's very difficult.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well the artist should have opportunity to experiment, be free to experiment, but I still feel that it should be based on good painting techniques.

JOZEF BAKOS: In many ways, I'll tell you, some of the ultramodern painting, some of it is extremely good. I've seen some of it and there's no question that some of the other stuff has been dead, but you just can't say that to take the middle course is the answer, either. In other words, I'm tolerant of it. The only thing I don't like to see is anything dominating and wiping something else out. I mean, just like communism is going to wipe out capitalism, and you know all communists are capitalists, in a way, to me. I had so many years of teaching that you cannot impose you've got to know how to draw and I would say to my students that painting is just like

flirting, you never know how you're going to come up.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Just give a few pointers as to how to do it best?

JOZEF BAKOS: So to academize the thing would be almost contrary to myself

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, do you feel that this movement, or this tendency, has helped to shift the art movement from France to America?

JOZEF BAKOS: I think that our abstract painting has maybe, yes. Of course, everybody still thinks Picasso, Picasso, Picasso. I get a little tired of that because, we're just hingeing too much on one person and again it becomes czar-like. The thing is that just as soon as a movement comes into being people that are in it just absolutely ignore everything that has been happening now -- what did I say to you, Teresa, the other day driving the car? Everything is loud, jazzy, screaming and there is no repose. You know, Whistler is a very tame painter and I'm myself a turbulent painter, but I'd like to see something peaceful. My lord, you got to be screaming? You know, you take in your own voice, why it is no voice any more, you don't hear anything but a squawk on the radio, and you just get irritated, and I think that's all the way through the painting. Everybody flashing, scratching, jumping and spitting on it to get an effect, you know. There's nothing reposeful or beautifully applied.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I think that is true. It may be they're just trying to get attention.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, you're right. I think so.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: What offset do you think this has had on your own work?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I think it was very bad for me because I think I would have liked to go into it myself, but I'm just stubborn enough now that I don't want to be with everybody, so I think it's just stubborn. I've done abstract in the '20s, in fact exhibited in Chicago. Of course, in the first place, I like being out of doors. I'm a great believer, I like to paint out of doors so I enjoy pretty much too interpret nature in my own ways, so it's very selfish about it in that way, and I'm not interested too much in any of the movements. I'm interested to look at it, I think, I look at more paintings than most painters. I know some painters -- if it isn't like their own work they don't care about it, but it's terribly impressed by everybody else's work.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And you are still painting, aren't you?

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes, and being a teacher so many years I was convinced that you have to keep your eyes open, and the idea was not so much to impose upon a student as to extract out of a student. There's too much imposition, you know.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I know that is a tendency of the academic type art teacher. In fact, one of my teachers back at Pratt Institute and the Art Student League would try to impose their own techniques on the student instead of developing them.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, just the opposite harmed, too. Some students hate to have a sheet of notes to learn their scales, but in art now, I mean all of a sudden we just go by a feeling. Well, my gosh, I think some of the feeling ought to be in Las Vegas (mental hospital) but, what was the point I'm trying to make at that? You have to give some hint of something -there's such a thing as values in certain drawings -- but some of those students left and went to some of the colleges where these youngsters were art teachers. It seems to me like a trick that they get into teaching -they were all abstract, and they laughed at the things the students brought in. It's just like if I would laugh at your child that he learned the ABC's -- how stupid that he learned the ABCs and you're going to say "You shouldn't do that," I mean, there you've got another imposition, from the other side. I think I'm talking too much.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: No, you're not -- this is an interview with you and I want to hear everything you have to say as the subject. You must feel completely free. (Mr. Bakos interrupted the interview to get a news report clipping from a New York paper.-- just outside of Buffalo -and of an interview that he had with its reporter. He is going to let us borrow it to microfilm and return it him) Will you tell us what you think is significant in these interviews Mr. Bakos?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I'd have to read that and I don't want to be reading it, see. One of the things that struck me was the point about observation. Of course, art -- everything that's on canvas-- is nothing but your observation, I mean you're expressing yourself, and at the same time we're trained as landscape painters, we are trained for a certain observation that you develop, so that's the reason I think that maybe the people who do study painting will get something out of it that they will develop to see. I still believe about eighty per cent of the people don't see. I mean they don't get any perception with their eyes, and they take things for granted. You'd be surprised about some things that happen to ourselves. Why, the thing that happened to me was when I was trying to get a

car license. What shape, what's the symbol? I didn't know, and here I'm a painter, I'm bragging about something that I failed on.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, that wasn't nature. Wasn't something you were studying.

JOZEF BAKOS: But maybe if you think that you want to take something out of this that might be of interest to you, you can introduce it. The thing that I have to mention is about this soil because you know how barren it is over here, and everything's so lush over there.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I'll read this through and maybe I can get some quotes from it in addition to what you've already told us, but I do think it is the responsibility of the artist to interpret nature and life around him, and so this is a point that is well taken, to observe nature.

JOZEF BAKOS: I think that architects dominate things now. I think years ago the artists dominated the architect, sad now the architect tells the artist what he should do, sad this and that, and I think there's room, for the artist more in everyday life. And I think we're making an effort with furniture and this and that, but I think there's more room for beauty. These shacks, prefabricated shacks have no individuality at all. We measured our streets so far, put in a sewer line, and thirty foot lots, and no space in between lots, and everything is premeditated and dumped on us, and pay six per cent and go ahead.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Yes, this conformity certainly is unfortunate.

JOZEF BAKOS: And I think we're developing more leisure. We have more leisure because our machinery is doing things - _ and it's amazing what we're doing -and now what are we going to be doing with the pachucos! How are we going to direct them so we make citizens out of them instead of bums? And maybe through art we might direct in some way, I don't know.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Let's hope so.

JOZEF BAKOS: Of course, people are always talking about the artist being eccentric, but I'm beginning to think that the public is more eccentric than the artist.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, when you see what the ancestors of these so-called pachucos did in New Mexico in centuries past -- in their beautiful santes and their wood carvings and that sort of thing --it's a shame that they don't develop some of that at this time, or that it's not encouraged.

JOZEF BAKOS: I think we've got to learn how to make use of our extra time and we're getting more time on hand.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Are there other comments that you would like to make about that particular period in your life with the Federal Arts Project -- I mean the transition from what you did before into what you did later?

JOZEF BAKOS: I don't know what you're saying. Before the Art Project, what do you mean?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, that was when you were painting with these two groups and---

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh yes. Well, don't forget it was always a constant struggle for existence. In fact, with the exception of Nash (Nash was sponsored by a wealthy man), we were just slightly envious because he could paint when we had to work. I did carpenter work and Shuster did iron work and then we'd paint. And I'll never forget, years ago Robert Reed, a well-known, nationally-known painter, came to our studio. Shuster had a blacksmith's apron on and I had my carpenter's apron on and he came to the studio, and he had a flower and took that flower and threw it on the floor and stepped on it. He felt we looked a little too real.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Too much like the typical artist.

JOZEF BAKOS: Very well-known portrait painter Robert Reed -- nationally known for the Great Egg, you knew. But it was his reaction of real life, but I think we envied his way of living because he had it a little easier.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, after the Federal Art Project were you able to continue to support yourself by your painting?

JOZEF BAKOS: No.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: You still had to go back to teaching and other types of work?

JOZEF BAKOS: I depended absolutely on teaching, and I think that most of the painters that exist do depend on teaching.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: They have to do something else? Well, we have some more time on our tape so I wonder, Teresa Bakos, if you would tell us something about yourself? You're a well-known artist in your own right and even though you were not on the Federal Art Project we'd like to know something about you. Where were you born?

TERESA BAKOS: Well, I was born in Nervi, Italy and I have never studied painting. I was a musician before I started to paint and then I gave that up and gave my time to painting.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: When did you come to Santa Fe first?

TERESA BAKOS: I think it was...

JOZEF BAKOS: You came before I was here.

TERESA BAKOS: Well, on vacations, yes.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Where did you live in the United States before you came here?

TERESA BAKOS: Well, I lived in San Francisco and ---

JOZEF BAKOS: You lived in different places - El Paso, Boston ...

TERESA BAKOS: Well yes, but mostly in San Francisco, and then my father died in Europe and I was on my way to Europe with my two small sons and I saw an exhibition of paintings in Chicago and one of Joe's paintings called "My Garden", I liked it very much, and some friends who were professors in an Eastern college said, "We know him and why don't we go out to Santa Fe?" because I had about two weeks before I was to sail with my sane for Europe. So we got on the train -- I think it was the next morning -- and came to Santa Fe, and then about two months later Joe and I were married.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Mutual admiration. That was nice. Well, I know you've exhibited a great deal in Santa Fe.

TERESA BAKOS: Not a great deal, not a great deal.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I've seen many of your paintings and have admired them very much.

TERESA BAKOS: Well, thank you so much.

JOZEF BAKOS: I'd like to put in a word, not because she's my wife, but I think about her painting there in no influence of any kind, it's just being herself, and I really think she's the most original painter we have in the South-west .

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, there in a spontaneity and there is the originality that I think is very outstanding.

TERESA BAKOS: Well thank you.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Would you like to say something more about what you think of the modern trends in art?

TERESA BAKOS: I think much of it is excellent.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Which type do you like?

TERESA BAKOS: Well, I don't think there's any particular type.

JOZEF BAKOS: That's a good answer.

TERESA BAKOS: Yes, because I think that painting is good whether it's an abstraction or whatever it is.

JOZEF BAKOS: John Dorman, her son, is an abstract painter and he's just a natural. He designed cars at the age of ten, twelve -- all the modern trends they are using now -- he sold some to a magazine when he was in high school. Well, anyway you keep on talking now.

TERESA BAKOS: Well, and some of it I think is really quite dreadful.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And you say you think that some of this quite dreadful art might have stemmed from the days of the Federal Art Project?

TERESA BAKOS: I rather think so, maybe not, but it seems to me it encouraged people to paint whether they knew anything about it or not. And I think you have to have some background.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, let's see, are there any other comments that you would like to make?

TERESA BAKOS: No, I don't think so.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I think it's amazing that you, without having any formal art study, have this feeling of such discipline in your painting. Can you account for that?

TERESA BAKOS: Well, I don't know. I was brought up with painting and always knew paintings. And in my family there was always much talk about it - I don't know.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I don't see any influence in your work of Mr. Bakos' techniques. I think it's quite remarkable that you could be so closely associated and not be influenced by him.

TERESA BAKOS: No, I don't think we are, and I don't think John was, either.

JOZEF BAKOS: No, he's entirely different, he's very abstract.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I'm very grateful to both of you for these two very interesting interviews and we will take very precious care of this newspaper clipping. Mr. Bakos. I saw that you had some other papers there. Is there anything else that we could borrow? Catalogues, or anything?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I painted cattle for quite a while and that was a lot of fun.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: How did you get involved in painting cattle?

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh, I painted about twenty-two registered bulls.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Was that for any special commission?

JOZEF BAKOS: Yes. And I had a wonderful time doing that because I had to do portrait of them and not only that, I had to do them with their faults. The man didn't want them to be smoothed out like they do in photographs and the retouch method, so it was just by accident I got into that and I suppose it was one of the best things I've done in painting. I really enjoyed it.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: What period was that?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, that was quite a few years ago. Well, I must have been painting for eight or nine years.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: And when was it?

JOZEF BAKOS: About six years ago.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: So it was in the '50s?

JOZEF BAKOS: It's very hard for me to give you the exact years. There may be something in that magazine.

TERESA BAKOS: That Hereford Journal brochure -- I think that would give some dates.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Will you tell us about your experience in painting these bulls?

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, the first time I took some watercolors up in Texas and got over in the corral and there were five of those bulls. So I started in and the first thing they started crowding on me, and those heads looked so tremendous that I stepped up on to that rail and gradually got out. So after that I got so I sketched and then I used some snapshots of them. I made drawings, in part, and I also made notations of their characteristics. And, as I said, the man wanted these cattle painted as they were because he used them for breeding and he wanted them, as he called it, "in their working clothes." And some of those were worth as much - I'd say one of those bulls brought \$30,000. But I think he had the second largest ranch in the United States.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Where was this located?

JOZEF BAKOS: It was located in the Panhandle in Texas - Chilworth, Wellington, and a few towns there, and then at one time he got interested in raising some of these calves for the poor ranchers, like Ford did with the cheaper cars, you know, a hundred dollars to get a young bull is very cheap. Some of those bulls are very expensive. So that was a very interesting experience. I remember one of the interesting things that he did was he brought his top herdsman to my studio one time when I was painting a bull, and he looked at that bull and said that was a picture of a certain bull, and then he went on the other side of the canvas - he wanted to see what the other side was like! So, on the next one, I painted the same bull on two sides. But there was an approach of good training where you could not be emotional about these things. I mean you could put emotion into the work

all right, but the bull had to be recognized by its portrait, and I'll tell you they could tell it, they knew the cow by the way I did the calander. I had one cow and I painted ten of them and the man said, "I can't understand where that cow came from." I had introduced this from another painting. Pinky Lewis was the man that raised high-bred cattle along Colorado Springs. He used to buy the bulls from there and then send them down to Texas.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, did he recognize it after you identified it?

JOZEF BAKOS: Oh, yes. But that's the reason I think there is a chance for the artist. I also painted some oil drawings because this man had oil. He had sixteen oil rigs right north of Chama. He was an extremely wealthy man, but when he came to deal with pictures he was an awful hard man to deal with. He was too tight. He would pay thirty-five dollars for a room for you, but when he came to a painting he would haggle. But I enjoyed him very much. I had the time of my life with him.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Have you had any other interesting special assignments like that?

JOZEF BAKOS: I also did for him -- I had a commission to do a lot of watercolor landscapes of the ranch. And also he had a place here north of Chama--those oil wells were there, but there were a lot of deer on the place and they brought wild turkeys from Texas and introduced them there, and he kept that place, no dogs were allowed, no hunting. It was a beautiful place. I did a lot of landscapes for him, and they've all been distributed all through the family, so it was a very interesting assignment and he gave me all the liberty to paint any way I wanted to. He didn't want me to paint a bull lying down, but I did one lying down and it was the most popular picture. By the way, all those paintings are now at the Hereford Association in Kansas City. The whole collection was given to them after he died. So I think that I did something in life, anyway, and we had something to study. Kind of a Remington in bulls.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, I think that was another advantage of the Federal Art Project, it was almost the last of the period of regional painting. You know so much of that was regional which went out of date right after the war, so we have these wonderful documentary paintings.

JOZEF BAKOS: They say art is universal, but it's not universal as you think, any more than food is universal. You know you can't any more take a sirloin steak down to the tropics, I mean things are individual. Locality has got something to do with it, and if we were going to press things out so everything's going to be alike, it's going to be pretty sad.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I think so. And there's so much variety now in the different cultures of the world and localities.

JOZEF BAKOS: I mean, it's all right to say "you-all" once in a while, have a good Brooklyn accent, and even my Polish accent, and I think it gives a little spine to things. I'm reading a book now by a Chinese written about San Francisco. His name is -- Oh, gosh -- it's worthwhile because he's a great artist and he's written many -- now this is about San Francisco and it's so interesting and I'm so interested in the thing. I paint atmosphere in the distance, he paints it in the foreground. These are all his illustrations and his poetry. I think there's a book for everybody -for artists to read and for the public to read. I never can remember the name.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, it looks like a very interesting one and you can see the influence of the Chinese in his paintings.

JOZEF BAKOS: Now that's painting -- that's where Chinese painting comes into it. I mean no abstract painter would be able to do that, but beautifully. Mirage scene at Twin Peaks. A pet skunk! He has a great sense of humor, but his observation is terrific. He was the governor of one of the provinces during the other regime in China and, of course, it's since gone communistic and he's out of there, but he's written on London, on Paris. He's written many books.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: It's nice to see the influence of the Chinese in his painting.

JOZEF BAKOS: Well, I guess you can close up the deal now, huh?

SYLVIA LOOMIS: Well, again, I thank you and Mrs. Bakos very much.

TERESA BAKOS: Well, thank you so much and it was such a pleasure to meet you.

SYLVIA LOOMIS: I've enjoyed it very so much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

