THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW WITH: **FRANÇOISE BOAS (FB)**

INTERVIEWER: **SHARON ZANE (SZ)**

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BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE 1

SZ: Let me ask you when you were born, and tell me just a little bit about your background.

FB: I was born in France, in Paris, in 1931, and I stayed there until the outbreak of World War II, and then we wandered a bit and ended up in. My father was French, my mother American. In 1942 we were able to leave France and go to Portugal and catch the last boat to America with diplomatic immunity, because of my mother's nationality.

SZ: Was that typical?

FB: No, it was very lucky.

SZ: That must have been hard to be uprooted at, what, ten years of age?

FB: Yes, it was very difficult. We came to New York.

SZ: Did you have family here?

FB: My mother did. My parents used to come every year, but my two brothers and I had never been here and spoke no English. It was on June 1st, and immediately we were sent to camp, and we learned English very quickly.

SZ: To summer camp?

FB: Summer camp, yes . . . in New Hampshire. In New York, we stayed in a hotel. Actually, we lived in a hotel for seven years, thinking we'd be going back to France, which we did after France was liberated, but we only went there on vacation. My father's business was on both sides of the ocean, and he decided that since we had started an American education we should finish here. So we were here in the winter and in France during the summer.

SZ: You said it was lucky. I guess he managed to keep the business. . . .

FB: Yes, he did. It was inactive during the war and then started again afterward.

SZ: Your trip down, south and to Portugal, were you in danger at any time?

FB: I really don't remember it very well. I know that we huddled together a lot. We did have diplomatic passports, so we were safe, but it was still dangerous . . . mostly through Spain it was touch-and-go. That's how we came to America. . . . I was ten when we arrived here.

SZ: And then you entered school.

FB: Here in New York, yes.

SZ: Public school?

FB: No, private school, and learned how to spell in English. Actually, that's where my interest in art started, because my English was very bad and I couldn't write, but I had

a wonderful art teacher, Helen Farr, who later married John Sloane, and she paid a lot of attention to me.

SZ: What school was this?

FB: It was called Nightingale-Bamford.

SZ: So your interest in art. . . .

FB: It really started very young, because of this wonderful woman. I've always hoped I would bump into her but I never have—just to thank her for what she did for me.

SZ: Did you ever go looking for her?

FB: I've been to openings of [exhibitions of John Sloane's work], but I've never seen her. I probably could have done so, but she probably would not have remembered me, anyway. But she was a great influence on a little girl.

SZ: Practical art?

FB: Yes.

SZ: You can paint, draw?

FB: I used to, yes. I decided many years ago I wasn't good enough to really make it, although from what I see working for galleries. . . .

SZ: What about the other side of it, living in New York—the museums and galleries. . . .

FB: My father always took us to museums, all over the world, actually, but I was a little bored by it as a child [laughing].

SZ: As most children are.

FB: Yes.

SZ: Anything else about going to school, growing up in New York? I guess in certain ways it wasn't very different from Paris, was it?

FB: I really couldn't remember Paris very well. I became a real American teenager . . . in the '50s. And then I went off to college. I went to Goucher College, and studied in Paris for a year at the Ecole de Louvre and the Institute of Art and Archaeology there, but not very seriously.

SZ: Was that your junior year abroad?

FB: Yes.

SZ: And were you studying art?

FB: I was studying art—I majored in art.

SZ: With the notion that . . . ?

FB: With the notion that I enjoyed it, really. That was it. Though when I graduated I looked for a job. I went to The Museum of Modern Art and applied, and the personnel

manager, whose name was Althea Borden, said go out and learn shorthand and typing.

SZ: I've heard that story before [laughter].

FB: Which I did, but never very well.

SZ: Was modern art your . . . ?

FB: No, but by then my mother had died and my father had to Fifty-fourth Street and was using his apartment as an office, so I used to spend a lot of time in the Museum to get away, just as a place to be. I just used to wander through the galleries.

SZ: So you felt that you knew it.

FB: Yes, and I always thought it was a beautiful place.

SZ: What year did you graduate from Goucher College?

FB: Fifty-three.

SZ: So was the Modern the only museum that you . . . ?

FB: I wasn't seriously . . . I didn't know what I wanted to do. It was either advertising or . . . there were not that many openings for women those days, but I ended up in publishing.

SZ: What about that piece of advice, to learn shorthand?

FB: You really couldn't get a job unless you had those skills.

SZ: So that was just accepted?

FB: Yes. I went to a terrible school where I played hooky most of the time. I met a nice woman who still is a friend, and we used to go to the movies in the afternoon, we were just so bored with what they were teaching. But I did get a job.

SZ: After you did that?

FB: Yes. It didn't last very long because they realized I didn't really know . . . I was secretary to the publicity director at Harcourt Brace. She was a very nice woman and didn't want to fire me, so she put me, which was very exciting, in charge of Carl Sandburg, who was revising one of his volumes and was very old at the time and smoked a lot of cigars, and they were afraid that he would set fire to the building. So I sat with him [laughter]. He sang ballads to me, and we had a good time. Then I went back to Europe for a while, came back and had a more serious job, with another publisher, in the production and art department.

SZ: And that means what, exactly?

FB: I was a galley clerk. The proofs would come in in the morning and I would take them to the editors and send them to the authors. In the afternoon I would do the reverse. But I learned a lot. All the designers sat in one room and they used to give me little extra jobs to teach me how to design. That lasted two years, and then I was hired by another publisher as an art director. I stayed with them for six years and quit and did a little freelance work, until one day I had a call from The Museum of Modern Art, because I'd

worked with a young poet who had a friend who was a designer at the Museum, and they had been looking for someone to take over Frances Pernas's job. So Frances called me said, "Would you come in?" And I did.

SZ: So it had nothing to do with that initial contact [with the Museum].

FB: Absolutely not. There was another woman on Frances's staff who knew of me as an art director because I worked with her brother-in-law.

SZ: She retired in 1960 as I remember. Is that right?

FB: I started in '62. They'd been looking for a long, long time. I really wasn't that interested. I thought it was much too big a job for me in a way. I did not feel qualified, but they talked me into it.

SZ: What was your first impression?

FB: It was in December and very, very cold and snowing, and I didn't even get dressed for the interview, which I've told many people and they don't believe it. I put one of my mother's old fur coats over a short nightgown and went and talked to them. I had to go talk to Monroe Wheeler and his office was so hot and he kept asking me to take my coat off [laughter]. And so I went home and then Frances called me. She said, "We're of the impression you weren't interested. Would you have lunch with me?" Then we talked seriously. It was too good an opportunity to turn down.

SZ: They wanted you because of . . . ?

FB: I think they were impressed by my name more than anything else. The French, and

[Franz] Boas, who was an anthropologist, was really it. And I think most of the Publications managers had been named Frances before, so I sort of fit in. There was a Frances before Frances Pernas [laughter]. But it wasn't really based on my qualifications.

SZ: So Boas, is that your family?

FB: Distant, but I never knew him.

SZ: That's an interesting presumption. You said at first you felt the job was too big, but it was appealing.

FB: I didn't know where I was going, and either I was going to make it or fail and why not give it a try. Knowing two of the people in the department certainly helped. The third one, whose name was Tom Brady, had been offered the job but he didn't want the responsibility, but he had all the knowledge. He was wonderful; he really taught me everything—all three of them were wonderful to me. There was Tom Brady, Susan Draper, and Jules Perlmutter. We had a very good time for a couple of years and I think did a good job. Life was much simpler at the Museum in those days.

SZ: Tell me a little bit about it. First of all, tell me about Monroe Wheeler. He still had a position of . . . .

FB: He was certainly not very interested in the publications. He wanted them to be done . . . he was there if you needed help, mostly financial help. When you went over a budget he was wonderful at raising funds. The curators always wanted more than was allowed in the way of color, and somehow Monroe could always raise money—almost always—he was wonderful at that. But he wasn't interested in the day-to-day. He just

wanted things to run smoothly and get done. He was always there to back me up when I needed it. I met with him almost every morning, but never about anything. It was just. . . .

SZ: He was a presence?

FB: Yes.

SZ: And how was he?

FB: He was charming, but certainly of no help at all, except as I've just mentioned. He had wonderful taste. Occasionally he would look at a layout and say, "That's beautiful," or "I don't really like that." I don't think he ever read anything we did. He was already getting on in years then. I think he was awfully social, so that's really what counted in his life, who he had dinner with, who he was going to have lunch with. He was charming. I adored him, and he was very good to me. He had complete confidence in me and introduced me to a lot of people. He sent me to Europe, always with letters of introduction.

SZ: What about Alfred Barr?

FB: Alfred Barr was even more on the decline when I got there. I know that he never produced much with me, and I maybe pushed him a little hard at the beginning and then I understood that it never would happen. I just used to sit with him. I worked on a volume that you probably have heard about, PASIT/MoMA. . . . I used to just sit with him and hardly anything got done. We'd look at pages, sit for what seemed like hours. Eventually, I thought it was going to get going because his staff was involved, and we even started to print it, there was a place in Scotland I went to and ran a few forms.

Frances Pernas had worked on it for several years. I worked on it for seven years, and then it was finally published about seven years after I left. He was very nice to me, always very flattering, but he was not the intellect that he had been.

SZ: Who were some of the people you really enjoyed interfacing with? The department heads, for instance.

FB: When I first worked there, Peter Selz and Bill Seitz were there. I worked very closely with them, and successfully, I think. John Szarkowski taught me a lot about how to look at things and how to print them. Those were the outstanding ones.

SZ: He was new.

FB: Yes. He started off at the same time I did, so that we had some affinity. Arthur Drexler I enjoyed working with. He was very difficult, but he was a great talent. He also had trouble producing.

SZ: So how did you handle that?

FB: Just patience and not pushing too hard but every day. It didn't always work and things sometimes came out after exhibitions. But he was a great, great mind.

SZ: Great mind in what way?

FB: He just saw things in a completely different way. He could express them but he had trouble writing them down.

SZ: What would happen to you in a situation like that, where you were in the middle? There

were expectations as to when something would be produced and also what it would cost to do that, and then you would have someone like Arthur who was notorious for being late and causing overruns and stuff.

FB: I was very lucky. René d'Harnoncourt, who really should be on top of the list, always backed me up and always if things didn't get done, or forgave the department, because he knew what the problems were and it didn't really matter that much. He always had his door open if you had trouble. It was a very friendly place the first few years I was there. Every door was open. Then, as it grew and grew it got less and less so.

SZ: The first big thing you were there for was the 1964 expansion.

FB: Yes, and the Publications department kept being moved further and further away from the curatorial departments, and therefore we lost contact.

SZ: You mean physically?

FB: Physically, and access as well. That's one thing I fought every time they moved us further and further away. I said it just can't work.

SZ: What would you say were some of the alarms that went off that just showed you that things were changing in this way? I guess the expansion was one.

FB: The expansion was one and the expansion of personnel, too. As it affected Publications, they wanted the publications to be moneymakers, which they had not been. They were supported by Membership who used to give them away and therefore we had big runs, and the price per copy was affordable. Then they decided

they wanted to make money and they brought in other people. Mike Gladstone was brought in, supposedly to make it more commercial, and he just didn't get along with anyone and didn't last very long. Then they brought in a man who had been an editor at the Metropolitan Museum, his name was Gray Williams, and he didn't get along with anyone either, so that didn't work out. I don't think they brought anybody in until Dick Oldenburg came, and that was after I left.

SZ: Gray Williams—he had a reputation.

FB: He was a good editor, but he certainly was not a publisher.

SZ: You mentioned before that Publications started to be looked at much more in terms of the bottom line, which I guess a lot of things at the Museum started to carry that burden, so I don't know if you were ever in on discussions about which shows would get catalogues and which shows would not.

FB: Yes, I used to go to all those meetings, but it was a sort of vanity publishing still when I was there. The stronger the curator or guest curator the more likely he was to get a catalogue with a lot of color. They were not scholarly volumes when I was there as they are now. But they were educational and, I think, beautifully designed.

SZ: Those are exhibition catalogues. What about some of the internal publications like the members' newsletter.

FB: That was in a different department. I was strictly books and catalogues. I was also involved with the Junior Council and all the Christmas cards and the little gifts, little gadgets, and that was fun, working with the artists and developing objects.

SZ: What kind of input would you have as to which designs would be chosen?

FB: As much as anybody who was on the committee.

SZ: So it would be a curator, it would be you. . . .

FB: And the women and men on the Junior Council, and they were very active in those days.

SZ: And some of those people were?

FB: I can't remember names, but they were good.

SZ: Is your memory that that went very smoothly? There wasn't a lot of conflict between what, say, somebody on the Junior Council might want and what a curator might want?

FB: No, because everybody was friendly. Those were the days when you had tea, and if you had problems you just had tea and discussed them. They were really quite wonderful years, the first three-quarters of them, I would say.

SZ: And then?

FB: And then René d'Harnoncourt retired and they brought in Bates Lowry, and that was the end of my liking the institution, because he did not like what I was doing but couldn't tell me what was wrong, and that's when I resigned.

SZ: He couldn't articulate it?

FB: No. He wanted things to be different but he couldn't give a direction, and he had a woman as his advisor, Irene Gordon—I don't know if you've come across her—she, I think, was a terrible influence on him. He wanted to shake up the entire department. He wanted to put design in a different department, he wanted to break it apart. We'd all worked so closely together, I didn't think I could work under those circumstances—that *it* would work under those circumstances.

SZ: Had your department grown considerably by that time?

FB: Not considerably. There were still two designers. Helen Franc was never really part of the department but certainly had a presence now and then; she did a lot of editing. We added an editor, Harriet Schoenholz Bee. I think I probably had two assistants in production. It had grown, yes. . . . Ethel Shein was brought in by Mike Gladstone. She was more on the commercial end of it, certainly not in the concept and production of catalogues. I don't know what she did, exactly, but it had nothing to do with me.

SZ: So you really had one or two editors, that was it?

FB: At first we had none, because I had two assistants who were very good as copy editors, first Tom Brady and then there was Jerry Matherly. Whenever we needed outside help we just would freelance it. And Helen was always in there; even if she wasn't asked she would pick up a manuscript and next day it would come back with all sorts of comments on it. There was sort of a silent acceptance of it. She loved to work at night, so it didn't disturb anyone, and certainly what she contributed was very wonderful.

SZ: Her book [*An Invitation to See: 125 Paintings from The Museum of Modern Art*, 1973] came after you?

FB: Yes, but we did the machine show catalogue [*The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age,* 1968, MoMA Exh. #877], and she was the editor of that and worked with Pontus Hultén, so she was brought in when there were major projects, she was brought in officially, but she was never part of the department. René d'Harnoncourt knew how difficult she was and didn't impose her full-time on anyone.

SZ: She had been an employee.

FB: Yes, but she was never really part of any department, and to this day she's still involved.

SZ: I see her there in the library.

FB: She's always bringing me back into things. Once or twice a year she invites me to a lunch to celebrate somebody's birthday.

SZ: Is that nice for you, to keep that connection?

FB: Yes. I made a lot of very good friends.

SZ: Who you still have.

FB: Yes.

SZ: So you were gone by the time there were all these labor problems in the Museum.

FB: We were all terribly underpaid and really didn't complain all that much about that.

SZ: Wasn't it true at that time that, although it was changing, that most people who came to work there came with independent means?

FB: I tried always to hire people who had been scholarship students, because I felt they made better workers, but it was also a wonderful stepping stone, once you had that, doors opened. . . .

SZ: I was thinking that because who else could really afford to work there?

FB: Life in New York was not as expensive as it is now. I had an apartment on Eighty-first Street where I paid $45 a month.

SZ: It doesn't sound like much now [laughing].

FB: It was just within my means. But there were also a lot of advantages, for me at any rate. Since we did a lot of printing in Europe I was able to combine vacations and work, so that helped. There were advantages.

SZ: Was that something that you arranged?

FB: I sort of at first inherited the printers from Frances Pernas. There was a wonderful German printer, Brüder Hartmann, Fritz Hartmann, and he did great, great work. But then technology changed and America was more advanced, with new methods. I did more and more in this country. But when I first went there, the Europeans were much better printers.

SZ: What were some of the books you worked on that you particularly liked or that gave

you some sort of experience that was memorable?

FB: Jackson Pollock's drawings book which Bernice Rose wrote [*Jackson Pollock: Works on Paper*, 1969, MoMA Exh. #824], a Rodin catalogue—I'd have to look on my shelf [*Rodin*, by Albert Elsen, 1963, MoMA Exh. #721]. . . . One thing that Monroe was involved in, the poems of Marianne Moore—it was illustrated by Robert Andrew Parker [*Eight Poems*, 1962]. Have you ever seen that volume? Working with her was quite a lovely experience. I don't know if you've heard the story about that book. It was printed, and it's beautiful, and handpainted by Robert Andrew Parker, and when it finally came out somebody noticed that a stanza was missing. So I had to call her, and she said, "It will make it more valuable" [laughter]. It's a beautiful book. Another person I should have mentioned posthumously is Frank O'Hara and the volume we did in his memory was a labor of love and a beautiful volume [*In Memory of My Feelings*, by Frank O'Hara, 1967].

SZ: He was a favorite of yours?

FB: Yes. He was also extremely difficult and never was there on time when he should have been, but in the end he always came through. It was a very sad end.

SZ: Actually, in your short years there you had a few of them—Frank O'Hara, then with René.

FB: Bill Lieberman was always quite wonderful to me.

SZ: How was he to work with?

FB: Impossible [laughter]. But when I left the Museum he was the only one who helped me

out, which surprises me to this day. Whenever I meet him I'm always surprised. He sent me to Europe to do two things: to look at the Brancusi Archives, to get to know the heirs, sort of little French bourgeois, and to charm Mme. Kandinsky, hoping that the Museum could get something out of her. I don't think I was successful at either, but I enjoyed meeting them. I came back with notes and notes on the Brancusi archives, but by that time Bill was about to leave the Museum and he really was not interested.

SZ: He left in '79, I think.

FB: This was in '70 or '71, and he sort of lost interest.

SZ: He was having his own difficulties.

FB: Yes.

SZ: How was he as a writer?

FB: I think he was a very talented writer. He never wrote very long essays, but whatever he wrote was just beautiful. Same thing with Arthur Drexler. Even Alfred Barr when he was able to write was very short and very much to the point. Mrs. Barr I should mention too. I worked with her . . . on a volume about Medardo Rosso. She did not like me at first, until she found out that I had been in France during World War II, and then she just adored me [laughing]. After that we were, not friends, but warm.

SZ: She's been portrayed in different places as difficult in that way, but I imagine she was in a difficult position.

FB: Yes, and I hear that Victoria Barr is writing a book on her parents. A lot of people are

waiting to see what it says.

SZ: You mentioned Peter Selz and Bill Seitz before. I guess you didn't have anything to compare it to, but how did they work as a twosome?

FB: They didn't really work as a twosome. I think they were quite separate. They each had their own interests. They must have sat down and decided who was going to do what. They were not there very long while I was there, but they did some very good exhibitions.

SZ: You were really there for years of change.

FB: Yes. It didn't affect me as much as it affected the people who had been there before, because it was all new to me anyway. I know Alicia Legg and all of Alfred's staff were very upset always. Another person who was very helpful to me was Sarah Rubenstein. She used to help me a lot in making out budgets and advising me how to cover myself, or cover the department. She was treasurer, I think, but quite powerful at one point.

SZ: It's interesting, because a lot of the focus of the power was male-oriented for a long time.

FB: She was really in charge of the purse strings, and I think she had René d'Harnoncourt's ear, which must have helped her.

SZ: What was she like as a person?

FB: Extremely efficient, good with numbers, a little bit hard but very kind. I think she either liked you or didn't like you. I still see her occasionally at the A&P in East Hampton.

She's a nice old lady.

SZ: Actually, the woman who had her position before, the person was a woman also—Ione Sutton.

FB: No, that was before my time.

SZ: You said that you really made some lifelong friends. How would you describe the social atmosphere among the employees there then?

FB: It could be all-encompassing, which I did not want, and some people's lives were just totally the Museum. I did go to dinners here and there. There was a lot of official entertaining, and in my position I had to go to a lot of dinner parties. I'm told by some people that I was not that friendly when I was there but that after I left we all became better friends, because I always tried to keep a distance; I don't know whether it was intentional or not. But there certainly . . . tea was very important. You just would go up [to] the Members' Dining Room.

SZ: And it was important to . . . ?

FB: Just to know what was going on. If you were having a problem with something, it was a break in the day where you could do it on a friendly basis rather than a professional one.

SZ: Did you have a lot of contact with trustees?

FB: With very few.

SZ: Did your department have a trustee committee?

FB: We had a trustee, and it was Ivan Chermayeff. I had known him before. When I was in publishing, when he was first starting out and so was I, I had turned down one of his book jackets, and I don't think he ever forgave me for that and we never liked each other. But it really did not affect me, because Monroe Wheeler was there and he always protected us. When Ivan redesigned the Museum image, I suppose we had to accept his style, which was perfectly good. But I really had very little contact with trustees.

END TAPE 1, SIDE 1

BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE 2

SZ: What was your least favorite part of the job or the experience?

FB: I can't think of one. I think the least favorite was at the end, when things were falling apart as far as I was concerned and I knew I'd lost control of the values which I thought were important. But up to then, it was hard work, very nervous work, having to meet deadlines, but I also had wonderful printers working for me who taught me a lot. Because the Museum was so important, so prestigious, they were willing to do anything, to do it right, and at the right price, like working hard to meet deadlines when they were impossible to meet.

SZ: We got off-track anyway. You were telling me about the books that you liked.

FB: I've kept most of the ones that I like. I could go through them. . . . They all have a little bit of memory, not as books themselves but they remind me of what went into them.

SZ: And the shows? Did you enjoy the shows?

FB: When you're so involved so many months ahead. . . . I think the Picasso show, the Picasso sculpture show, was a beautiful show and also a beautiful book and beautifully installed. But that was near the end. . . . *The Sculpture of Picasso* —that's a wonderful book [Roland Penrose, 1967, MoMA Exh. #841]. Jackson Pollock I mentioned. The Rodin, Albert Elsen's book—that was a beautiful book too. *Mark Tobey*, that's a nice book . . . by Bill Seitz [1962, MoMA Exh. #710]. *Turner*—I went to England to work on that; that was Monroe's idea [*Turner: Imagination and Reality*, by Lawrence Gowing, with Foreword and Introduction by Monroe Wheeler, 1966, MoMA Exh. #794]. He made me stay in London and work at the Tate on this slim volume. It was nice being there. I could go on. The books I've kept are the books that were part of me, books that I really like. There's a de Kooning that's nice, too [*Willem de Kooning*, by Thomas B. Hess, 1968, MoMA Exh. #884].

SZ: Do you ever sit down and just open up one of them?

FB: Yes, of course. Not very often, but sometimes. *Nakian*, that was a nice book [by Frank O'Hara, 1966, MoMA Exh. #799]. The *Nolde* [*Emile Nolde*, by Peter Selz, 1966, MoMA Exh. #719]. . . . They're slim volumes, but quite. . . . This is a beautiful book . . .

SZ: I see your taste does run to modern art.

FB: They formed my taste. I sort of think of the Museum as a graduate school I went to. It taught me a lot about art and it taught me a lot about how to get along with people [because] there were such a variety of people, brilliant people, difficult people, people I respected. It was very hard landing into the other world afterwards, after having been

spoiled by the level that I had worked with.

SZ: Which I'll ask you about in a minute. It reminds me that Nelson Rockefeller is always quoted as saying, "I learned everything I needed to know about politics at The Museum of Modern Art."

FB: It's true. I worked with him, too. I don't know why, but I spent a lot of time in his homes, checking color, and when he was governor I produced his Christmas cards, so I got to know his staff quite well.

SZ: So there was a real connection.

FB: Yes.

SZ: What color would you have been checking?

FB: I can't remember, but I know. . . . Maybe I started the catalogue of his collection. I can't remember. But I know I spent a lot of time there.

SZ: I think you might have. That was in 1969, that show.

FB: I don't know.

SZ: What was he like?

FB: Charming. A lot of these men liked women, whether they were gay or not.

SZ: They were charming?

FB: Yes.

SZ: That's a whole other topic. You said before that Lowry, that things were happening, the standards were changing or were being lowered, things you didn't like. . . .

FB: I don't know that they were being lowered. They wanted change, and I didn't understand what the change was going to be.

SZ: Did you see afterwards what that was?

FB: It never came about. They wanted to publish a book and I knew it couldn't be done in time and they went behind my back, bought paper, and started to work on it, but it was never done. They were asking for the impossible.

SZ: In terms of deadline?

FB: Deadline, size, magnitude, things that weren't written yet. It was just . . . it was nothing you could really point to and grab onto. I don't know how long he was there; I think it was less than a year.

SZ: It was a little bit more, but not much.

FB: After I left the Museum I went to Europe on sort of an assignment, and I remember sitting in a public park reading *Time* magazine and reading about his dismissal. I just couldn't get over it. If I had been more patient, I would probably be retiring from the Museum now. No, I don't think I would have lasted. It just grew and grew. It's an enormous job, for whomever has my job now.

SZ: I guess Osa can manage it. What did you do?

FB: I was asked to help a man who was half-English, half-American, who was going to do something with UNESCO, and he asked me to come to Europe, which I was planning to do anyway—my father still had an apartment in Paris—and I worked in the art library of UNESCO and tried to put some sense into it and went to England a few times to discuss things, but it never worked up to anything. And then Bill Lieberman . . . Bernice Rose was coming to France to interview Calder and she didn't want to drive in France, and I'm a very good French driver, so I drove her to Calder and we had a very good time. Then I worked in the Brancusi Archives and had tea with Mme. Kandinsky, and then I came back to America.

SZ: And you've been doing this . . . ?

FB: I started to work with one of the designers who had worked with me at the Museum, Joe del Valle. That didn't work out very well. And then a printer talked me into coming and helping him with the gallery catalogues part-time, and that just grew and grew.

SZ: And that's what you do now.

FB: Yes, but with different people. You've gone through my whole life.

SZ: Yes, I have. I'll just try to think. . . . You knew a lot of people!

FB: Yes, I did.

SZ: What about the Film department?

FB: I had very little to do with them. Occasionally they published little pamphlets. I remember working with Peter Bogdanovich when he was still terribly young and a brat. He had gone to school with one of my brothers and I had to sort of slap him down and say, "You're just like everybody else." I didn't realize how big he was going to become. I really can't remember anything much, just little things here and there.

SZ: I guess that is the thing about the place, the people you run into and the things you're exposed to. I think that's it. I can't think of anything else—unless you can.

FB: No. I'm surprised that I remembered as much as I have.

END TAPE 1, SIDE 2

END INTERVIEW