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Oral history interview with Joyce Kozloff, 2011 Jul 12-13

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a digitally recorded interview with Joyce Kozloff on 2011 July 12-13. The interview took place at Kozloff's home and studio in New York, N.Y., and was conducted by Judith Olch Richards for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project, funded by the A G Foundation.

Joyce Kozloff and Judith Olch Richards have reviewed the transcript and have made corrections and emendations. The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

JUDITH RICHARDS: This is Judith Richards interviewing Joyce Kozloff for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, disc one. This is July 12, 2011. We're at 152 Wooster Street in New York.

I'd like to start with asking you to talk about your family background, going back as far as you'd like, but certainly to your grandparents or any other relatives you –

JOYCE KOZLOFF: Okay. My mother was much closer to her family than my father was, but I think both sides of the family were relatively close, and I knew those people quite well. They were very much around and part of my childhood.

My mother's parents, Mary and Robert Rosenberg, came from Pennsylvania, but they had moved to New Jersey by the time I knew them. My grandfather, Robert Rosenberg, always said he was the first Jewish lawyer in Harrisburg. My mother was one of five children, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

MS. RICHARDS: What was –

MS. KOZLOFF: Her mother, Mary Rosenberg, played the piano, and even before she died at 101 in the nursing home, she would sit down and play her classical repertoire – in complete dementia, but that part of the brain is not affected. And I'm seeing the same thing in my mother now, who is 95. She's not in complete dementia, but she's had memory loss. But not the piano: she can sit down and sight-read anything, even if she's never seen it. And my grandmother was the same.

They were both raised in this country. They weren't Old World grandparents. [Laughs.] My grandmother was born in Harrisburg and my grandfather lived in Philadelphia, although he was born in Lithuania [then Russia].

MS. RICHARDS: So when your family came from Europe –

MS. KOZLOFF: It was the previous generation.

MS. RICHARDS: – they came to Pennsylvania?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and my grandfather went to law school — in those days it was one year, which was college and law school — and became a lawyer in Philadelphia. It was the University of Pennsylvania. But this would have been the early part of the century.

My grandmother was born in 1890 – Mary Rosenberg – and Robert Rosenberg, who was born in Vilna Gebevnia, Russia, came to the U.S. as an infant in 1882.

I don't know why he moved to Harrisburg from Philadelphia. I don't know the story of how they met. But they lived in Harrisburg, they had these five children, and I always hear about the struggles during the Depression, how hard it was for them. All five children went to Dickinson College, which they commuted to, outside of Harrisburg – not really very close, not like a suburb. It's a distance, but all five of them went there and worked their way through and commuted.

It was a very ambitious family in terms of upward mobility and education. And that family – my mother's family – there are 12 cousins, and I'm the oldest. And my –

MS. RICHARDS: In other words, the five children had 12 children.

MS. KOZLOFF: Children had 12 children. We get together, the first cousins – they're terrific people – at family events. But we used to have these Seders together, and because I was the oldest, I sometimes got to sit at the

adults' table, not the children's table.

MS. RICHARDS: So was your mother also the oldest of the five?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, my mother was the second, but she was the first to get married and have children.

MS. RICHARDS: What did she study at Dickinson?

MS. KOZLOFF: She majored in English. She's always played the piano, and she took piano lessons, but she didn't really have a career. She did a lot of community volunteer work all her life. She was a very, very active community participant in all kinds of organizations all her life, and I remember that. I remember the meetings and the arrangements for that. But she did not have a career.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you think that your social activism reflects –

MS. KOZLOFF: And my father was, too. They were both very, very active in their community.

I don't know. It's possible. I kind of never really acknowledged that.

My mother was active in the Girl Scouts and in Jewish organizations and in community, like the United Fund and cultural things. My father was the district attorney at one point, which was an office that you ran for. So he was involved in politics. He was a liberal Democrat.

MS. RICHARDS: Going back to your mother's side of the family –

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: So she went to Dickinson.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: And when – let's go back to –

MS. KOZLOFF: She met my father there.

MS. RICHARDS: Let's go back to your father's side of the family.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. My father grew up in this town called Manville, New Jersey.

MS. RICHARDS: And his name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Leonard Blumberg. B-L-U-M-B-E-R-G. And his –

MS. RICHARDS: Sorry – the name of the town?

MS. KOZLOFF: Manville. M-A-N-V-I-L-L-E.

MS. RICHARDS: Pennsylvania?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, New Jersey. I think his family lived some of the time in Manville and some of the time in Somerville, which is the county seat out there. They had a hardware store, Blumberg Hardware, in Manville. And they might have had a hardware store at one time in Somerville. There are some family trees with this information.

Anyway, he had two sisters, an older sister and a younger sister, and –

MS. RICHARDS: And what was his mother's name?

MS. KOZLOFF: His mother's name was Fanny, and his father's name was Jacob – Jake. Fanny was born in Russian [now Lithuania] in 1887. Jake was born in New York City in 1880. She was brought to New York as an infant.

My father always says he was born in Bayonne, but I don't think they lived there very long – Bayonne, New Jersey. His mother and father moved there from New York. His mother grew up on the Lower East Side. She always said she came from Delancey Street.

And his father I don't remember as well. I remember them both from my childhood, but the other three grandparents lived into my adult life, whereas the paternal grandfather died when I was in school. I was a kid in school. I remember him, but maybe not as well.

MS. RICHARDS: And your father had –

MS. KOZLOFF: Two sisters – an older sister, who just died last year at 97 – my father died last September at 95 – and a younger sister, who just turned 90, Ruth, who's very, very sharp and lives alone. Her husband died 20 years ago.

MS. RICHARDS: What's her last name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Loeb, L-O-E-B. And it was her husband, Lou Loeb, who continued the family hardware store.

MS. RICHARDS: That's Lewis, L-E-W-I-S?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, L-O-U-I-S. Continued the family hardware store in Manville, and Ruth lives in that town to this day.

Now, Manville was dominated by the world's largest asbestos factory, the Johns-Manville factory, and most of the people who lived in the town worked in the factory. It was a company town. Most of the people in the town were Polish immigrants and Catholic. So my family was more educated – and we were Jewish – than most of my classmates growing up.

MS. RICHARDS: Going back to your father –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And so he grew up there –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – and went to law school.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Then he went to Dickinson College and Dickinson Law School, where – and he met my mother. His best friend in college was my Uncle Bill, who was my mother's oldest brother. During their first year in school, my mother was a senior in high school, and Bill brought my father home to the family house for dinner – like Friday night dinner — and that's where they met.

And they were together from the time they met when she was a senior in high school, though they didn't marry until a long time after. They courted all the way through college and law school until he set up his practice and they got married. But they were together for 76 years. It's amazing, I know.

Anyway, when he finished law school, he came back to Manville and set up his law practice, and I think he was the first lawyer in that town. His partner was my Uncle Bill, Bill Rosenberg, and the firm was called Blumberg and Rosenberg.

And so Bill, who married my Aunt Yvette – Bill fought in World War II. After World War II he came back –

MS. RICHARDS: So two brothers married two sisters?

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: You said he married your aunt.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, he married – she became my aunt when he married her.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, sorry. [Laughs.]

MS. KOZLOFF: He married a woman who became my aunt [laughs] – and she was from Brooklyn. I don't remember where they met, but he fought in World War II, and after World War II he came back and they formed this firm.

And he moved to deepest New Jersey for this firm, which still has the name Blumberg and Rosenberg. My brother Bruce joined the firm, and Bill's son David joined the firm, though he's not with it anymore, and my brother Bruce died. Henry Loeb, who's the son of Ruth, is now the sole member of Blumberg and Rosenberg, and he doesn't even have one of those names.

The office is in Somerville. They had two offices – one in Manville that my father started, and then much later they opened a second office in the county seat of Somerville, and that's where it is now, the firm.

MS. RICHARDS: So your parents married before –

MS. KOZLOFF: They married in 1940. My father had polio when he was a year and a half, and my father was crippled. I mean, he had a shrunken leg, and he was an overcompensator. He wore one of those special-made shoes that was built up. And he had a very noticeable limp, but he used to run and he used to play tennis.

It's a certain type of person who went through polio, particularly in those years, and who are kind of overachievers – Type A. He swam 50 laps a day until two days before he died, because that's what they do with polio babies; they put them in the water and they swim. And wherever they went – if they traveled, if there wasn't a pool, my father wouldn't do it. He had to swim. That was the only place where he felt really free, in the water. He had very developed arms and chest. He didn't swim with his legs.

And he developed post-polio in his later years, which is a syndrome that they didn't used to know anything about. Now that polio's been basically wiped out, there won't be future generations. But what happens is that the person overcompensates all his life and puts enormous stress on the other leg. They're told, "Throw off your crutches. Don't get in a wheelchair. Walk."

Then, that's what they were told, and now the books on post-polio say that that was all counterintuitive, that really you shouldn't have put all that pressure on your legs, that you should rest and never tire yourself. And many people later in life – it could be 50, 60 – in my father's case 80 years later – start losing the ability to walk, and walking becomes harder and harder. And of course, being who he was, he resisted having the cane, and then he resisted having the walker. Then in his later years he was in a motorized scooter and he didn't walk at all. He had to be moved from the scooter to the bed to a chair. And of course, he hated that. But listen, he had a good long run. [Laughs.]

And the other thing – I wanted to talk about Manville because most of the people in the town worked in the factory, and many of them have died of asbestos-related diseases.

MS. RICHARDS: So did you grow up there?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. We grew up there.

MS. RICHARDS: When and where were you born?

MS. KOZLOFF: I was born in Somerset Hospital in Somerville, New Jersey. And I lived in –

MS. RICHARDS: In – on what date?

MS. KOZLOFF: December 14, 1942. And then my mother left the hospital and brought me to their house in Manville, where I grew up. They moved across the street at one point to a bigger house when they had two more children. It was walking distance to my elementary school and walking distance to my junior high school.

And then when I was between 12 and 13, we moved out of that town to Bridgewater Township, which is a more rural area, more beautiful. They bought a house with six acres of woods around it, a large house, and I think the school district was considered better.

I was at that point, when they moved, ready to enter high school, and I went to Bound Brook High School, which was the nearest high school to where we moved.

MS. RICHARDS: Let me ask you –

MS. KOZLOFF: So I didn't go to high school in Manville.

But I wanted to talk about the asbestos factory. It's very important to me.

Johns-Manville knew early that asbestos was dangerous, and covered it up and didn't tell people. And now there's a lot of information about that.

In my childhood, occasionally you'd see these little white flakes that looked like snowflakes falling from the sky; this is something I've talked about before. And the men who worked in certain parts of the factory were called "snowmen," because they came home covered with it. And then they'd play with their kids, and their wives would wash their clothes in the washing machine.

There are two diseases – asbestosis, which is a very slow disease, and you end up in an iron lung. It's a lung disease. And the other one is mesothelioma, which is cancer of the lining of the lungs, and it occurs 50, 60 years after exposure, and it's terminal, very fast. That's what my brother died of two years ago.

MS. RICHARDS: Was your father involved in legal cases? Or your –

MS. KOZLOFF: You see, there are class action suits with large law firms that specialize in that, but my father certainly knew people and represented people who became sick.

MS. RICHARDS: Going back to your early years before you moved –

MS. KOZLOFF: See, we never thought it would happen to us because none of us worked in the factory. But the exposure was everywhere in that town. And I could get it, too. But I don't think about it.

It was just tragic with my brother, because he was my younger brother and he was a perfectly healthy guy, and then he started having chest pains. And seven months later he was dead.

MS. RICHARDS: Wow.

MS. KOZLOFF: So he was 10 when we moved away from the town.

MS. RICHARDS: So it was just those 10 years that –

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. And my other brother was eight when we left the town.

MS. RICHARDS: While you were in the town going to elementary school, what were your favorite subjects? Was art among them?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I liked art. I was always the class artist. And I've always liked to write, too. I was encouraged to write.

But I remember on Monday afternoons – the Catholic church was across the street from my elementary school, and at two o'clock in the afternoon all the kids would go across the street for their catechism class, to the church, and I would be alone in the class with the teacher, and she'd give me crayons and paper, and I would do art. It's one of my early memories. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Were there any teachers in elementary school particularly important to you?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't remember the names of the teachers.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you ever have an opportunity to go to any museums when you were young, elementary school age?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I don't remember. There were occasional class trips into New York, but they were for more general tourist sites. My parents might have taken us to a museum once or twice, but not too much, no.

MS. RICHARDS: So when you said you were the class artist –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – do you recall that you imagined you knew what an artist was? Did you have art books or any –

MS. KOZLOFF: My mother did have some art books. And they liked art. They weren't very informed about art, but they became more so, and they liked it. I had an aunt who just died last year at 90 – my Aunt Diana in Harrisburg – she was an amateur painter.

MS. RICHARDS: What was her last name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Slotznick. S-L-O-T-Z-N-I-C-K.

And she liked art and bought art. When she died, her kids just sold this painting of hers that everyone in the family made fun of. She bought this painting of blue cows. It was a Milton Avery. [Laughs.] So she had good taste. She knew art.

MS. RICHARDS: When you were growing up, you were geographically close to your aunts and uncles.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: So you saw them. Were you known amongst your relatives as being interested in art?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I was.

MS. RICHARDS: And so did you get birthday presents that were paint sets or any of that kind of –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I don't think so. I can't remember that. I don't have a good memory of my childhood. I don't know why. And it's not because I'm getting older; I never did.

MS. RICHARDS: When you were that age – as I said, before you moved when you were 12 – were there special things you did in the summers?

MS. KOZLOFF: I never went to summer camp or anything. When I was a Brownie, I went to Brownie Day Camp because my mother was a big leader of the Girl Scout organization in the area. And I was never athletic; I never liked sports. I never wanted to do any of that stuff. And I didn't like Brownie camp. I remember when I was picked up –

MS. RICHARDS: This was a sleep-away camp.

MS. KOZLOFF: No. It was in the area. It was a day camp.

I was picked up, and someone told me I was sitting in a clump of poison ivy, and then I had poison ivy for a week and I didn't have to go back to the camp. [Laughs.]

But I was the kid who, when there was recess in school and they'd be picking the teams and there would be an odd number, I would be the one the two teams were fighting because they didn't want. And I would pray it would rain so I didn't have to go outside and do sports.

MS. RICHARDS: But you basically did well in school.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I always did very well in school. And my art was always put up on the walls. And my family saved my art. I made art for family members; I have an envelope I was given after my grandmother died of all the art I made for her that she kept. And my mother kept it.

So somewhere along the line I was encouraged. They couldn't imagine a career as an artist, but they encouraged this gift that they thought I had.

MS. RICHARDS: So now you've moved to further away –

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, you asked about summers.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: We didn't go away summers. So I mostly remember being at home, being in the backyard. I had a few friends. I wasn't one of the popular girls. I didn't have a lot of friends, but I always had a couple very good friends all the way through school.

MS. RICHARDS: Were any of them also interested in art?

MS. KOZLOFF: Later in high school. I could talk about that.

MS. RICHARDS: So tell me about the move, then, and going to that different –

MS. KOZLOFF: That was very hard for me. I was very angry at being uprooted. Now I'm so glad, but I was very angry at my parents for uprooting me, because I was at that age where my friends were very important to me. I could walk around in this town, and this was an area where you couldn't go anywhere without a car, and I didn't – I was way too young to have a driver's license. So it was a very different lifestyle.

MS. RICHARDS: And tell me again the name of that town?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, it's called Bridgewater Township.

And also I felt a little uncomfortable being in this big, grand house. I didn't feel I could bring my friends from Manville there, that I would just seem so different from everyone else.

They built a swimming pool so my father could swim there every day. And he would go to the JCC in the winter to swim.

MS. RICHARDS: And you started, I guess, junior high school there?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I started high school – my freshman year of high school — when we moved. Yes. I think.

MS. RICHARDS: You said you were 12?

MS. KOZLOFF: But I was going on 13. Yes. Because I graduated high school at 17.

MS. RICHARDS: What do you remember about high school?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, I liked high school, as it turned out. And I did have friends. It just took a while to make that transition.

But I liked it. I did take art. There was only one course in my high school called "Art." It wasn't like a special school in the city where you could take all these different things.

I did well. My English teacher encouraged my writing. I don't remember any of these people's names. I'm sorry. But I can picture her. I can visualize everybody, but I don't remember their names. She had a little face, and she had hair that stuck out like that and a twinkle in her eye. And she loved my writing. When I said I wanted to go to art school, she was very upset – I remember that – and tried to persuade me to pursue writing.

MS. RICHARDS: So you knew at some point you wanted – you thought you wanted to go to art school and be an artist.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: How did that ambition develop? Was there a teacher or anyone else who –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, it wasn't the art teacher.

MS. RICHARDS: So at that point could you –

MS. KOZLOFF: I think it was partly as a form of rebellion, because my parents didn't want me to do it. And then I became more and more stubborn that that was what I wanted to do. I think they just were conventional people in the 1950s and thought that that was a scary thing, like becoming a beatnik, and they wanted me to have a conventional life. My father once said, "If you marry a lawyer, he can join the firm."

So that was the idea: I should go to college, meet a lawyer, and bring him back there and live a life like theirs.

Anyway, we would have these big, big fights about my wanting to be an artist.

MS. RICHARDS: How do you think you conceived of what an artist's life would be? Had you become more knowledgeable about art at the time?

MS. KOZLOFF: One summer I had a friend named Bobbie Simon – Roberta Simon. I don't know what ever happened to her, but we were very good friends, and we were the arty girls. She wanted to be an actress. We commuted into the city every day that summer. I went to the Art Students League and took life drawing.

MS. RICHARDS: How old do you think you were?

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe it was between our junior and senior year or between our sophomore and junior year. I don't know. But it was a summer during high school.

She went to the Actors Studio and took acting. We would take the train, and then you'd take a ferry across, in those days, to the city. I loved the ferry. I loved being on the water. And I can't even remember – I guess we took the subway or bus or something to the Art Students League.

And then – I don't remember if we met up going back. Maybe we did.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you remember who you studied with? Was that memorable, the teachers you had?

MS. KOZLOFF: I studied with one man – he was an old man, and it was traditional life drawing with charcoal on pads of paper, and I don't remember his name.

MS. RICHARDS: With a model.

MS. KOZLOFF: With a model. I don't remember his name. I told you I have a bad memory for those years.

MS. RICHARDS: And how did you like that course?

MS. KOZLOFF: I loved it. I wasn't very good, but I just kept going and I loved it. And sometimes I remember Bobbie and I would walk around the Village and look at the bohemian people and imagine that someday we could be like that. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Okay. So you have the idea that you would go to art school when you graduated.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Right.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you have a particular art school in mind?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I applied to a bunch of them, and my parents insisted that I also apply to liberal – like Ivy League girls' schools. That's where they imagined me: at Wellesley or Mount Holyoke or Vassar, one of those schools. I really didn't want anything to do with that. And I think that the guidance counselor at my school also thought I should do that. That's what they thought in those days. You should get a liberal arts education.

And I sort of dug in that I wanted to go to art school, and I applied – my portfolio wasn't very good, because I didn't have much training. And I remember when I did go to art school, how much catching up I had to do with kids from High School of Music and Art and places like that.

And also, I didn't have any real taste. Now it would be trendy, but I made copies of pictures from women's magazines and stuff. And when I went to art school, that was just not cool.

MS. RICHARDS: Your portfolio.

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh. What happened was I have an aunt and uncle in Pittsburgh who really – to this day, I feel like they saved my life. My mother's youngest brother, Jerry – Jerome Rosenberg –

MS. RICHARDS: Jerome with a J?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes – who just turned 90. His wife, Aunt Shoshana – Jerry and Shoshana lived in Pittsburgh. Jerry taught at the University of Pittsburgh, and he was a scientist. Later he went into administration and became the dean of arts and sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. And to this day – he's 90 and he still has a job at the university. He still goes there. He walks; he plays tennis; he plays the violin. He's very sharp. He's a great guy. And so is his wife.

His wife – Shoshana – is a very smart woman also. She did fashion illustration on a freelance basis, and so she was like an artist. She was the closest thing to an artist that I knew. Later she became a docent at the Carnegie Museum.

They told my parents if I came to what was then called the Carnegie Institute of Technology, they would look over me, make sure that I would be okay. And because of them I got to go to art school. That was the compromise.

MS. RICHARDS: So that was an art school.

MS. KOZLOFF: Carnegie Institute of Technology. It's now Carnegie Mellon.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, which is a university.

MS. KOZLOFF: It's like Cooper. It has science and art. And so it has an art school – with theater, architecture, painting – painting and design, it was called – P&D, interestingly enough – sculpture, and music.

And we were all in this building. It was fun. It was this big building, the fine arts building. Each floor was a different discipline.

I actually didn't see my aunt and uncle all the time. I didn't live with them or anything. I lived on the campus. But I did see them occasionally, and they made it happen.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you start out knowing what you wanted to major in, what area, or did that take awhile?

MS. KOZLOFF: The first two years, I majored in graphic design. I felt I had to be able to have a skill. Even then I felt I had to have a marketable skill. I didn't like it and I wasn't very good at it. I remember we had to do typesetting, typography, and a whole semester you set up all these little fonts and pieces of type, and at the end of the semester you printed it. That last week I dropped it. [Laughs.] That's how much I hated it.

So the last two years I went into art education. And I didn't like that either. But I took the ed courses in the summer at Rutgers – one summer – but I had to student-teach. The last year I had to student-teach both in an elementary school and a high school in Pittsburgh. So I took painting at night with my friend, who is still my friend today. Her name was Judith Newhauser, and now her name is Judith Henry.

MS. RICHARDS: Is Newhauser N-E-W –

MS. KOZLOFF: N-E-W-H-A-U-S-E-R. That was her name.

MS. RICHARDS: And her – sorry. Her name now?

MS. KOZLOFF: Her name is Judith Henry. She lives in Williamsburg. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: So during the two years you were a graphic design –

MS. KOZLOFF: So she and I – she and I were doing the same thing. We were taking these ed courses for practical reasons – that we hated – and we were taking painting at night.

MS. RICHARDS: Throughout the four years?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no. The last year. And I remember the name of the painting teacher who was very encouraging to us. His name was Mario Fallani – F-A-L-L-A-N-I. That's probably around the time when I started doing better things. [Laughs.] I don't know what happened to him.

But the painting majors you would see around the campus, and they'd have paint all over them and they would be the real artists. I don't know what happened to most of them. But Judy and I were ed majors and –

MS. RICHARDS: During that senior year when you were painting at night –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – what was your painting like?

MS. KOZLOFF: That was really the beginning of my painting. It was oil paint and it was sort of figurative expressionistic. Maybe I would start with the model, and then I'd –

MS. RICHARDS: Is there any particular artist you think you were influenced by?

MS. KOZLOFF: I think I was influenced by German Expressionism. Max Beckmann had been at Carnegie. He had been in Pittsburgh and he had left a real legacy there. I remember Pop art was happening at the time and I was reading about it, but it didn't directly affect me. But I was aware of it. So – because I was in Carnegie from '60 to '64.

MS. RICHARDS: So –

MS. KOZLOFF: They would have the Carnegie International show every couple of years, and there would be a lot of exciting contemporary art to see. And I started to be very interested in what was going on in contemporary art.

MS. RICHARDS: Were there particular artists you remember having –

MS. KOZLOFF: There were two artists who were in my class – or one was the class before me – who are well-known. One is Mel Bochner and one is Jonathan Borofsky. But they weren't friends of mine. They were in sculpture. But they were there at the same time.

MS. RICHARDS: I don't know if, because you were an ed major, you might not have experienced something that some other women art students of that time experienced in teachers – if they were painting or sculpture majors – thinking they were really serious, not thinking they would really go on to be artists, not putting their name in for scholarships or whatever else, because they were women. Did you ever experience any of that?

MS. KOZLOFF: I wanted to be an artist, but I didn't know how to do it. I thought I had to have a way to make a living. And I wanted – oh, I mean, there are other things.

I went to Europe the summer between my junior and senior year with Judy and our other friend, whose name was Rhoda Spitz. We studied in Florence. We found this out ourselves. We studied at the University of Florence in a program for foreigners. We took history of art and we took history of Renaissance music.

There was no Italian given at the art school, but we listened to records before we went, in the dorm. And then we went there, and we stayed – I still remember where we stayed. It was in a hotel where there were a lot of students that was near the train station and the church of Santa Maria Novella.

MS. RICHARDS: Santa Maria –

MS. KOZLOFF: Santa Maria Novella, N-O-V-E-L-L-A. Now, this stuff I really remember – on the Via Nazionale – N-A-Z-I-O-N-A-L-E – I think. That's just coming out of my head. I don't know from where.

MS. RICHARDS: This is in Florence.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Yes.

Anyway, I loved it. We all loved it. We took the courses in the morning, and then we took our sketchbooks and drew all over in the afternoon.

MS. RICHARDS: I meant to ask you, were your parents paying for your education and everything, then?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: You didn't have any part-time jobs while you were going to school?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, except for the student-teaching, I didn't.

MS. RICHARDS: But I mean as an undergraduate.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I had a full scholarship when I went to graduate school. They gave them to all of us.

But anyway, yes, my parents did pay for my education.

MS. RICHARDS: So that summer in Florence was important.

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, yes. It was really important. And we all fell in love with Italian boys – men – young men. And we went out dancing every single night. It was very romantic.

I was very interested in Italian Renaissance art, and I looked at it every day, went back many times to all the churches and museums, became very familiar with it, and kept a sketchbook of drawings. And we did some traveling, too. We did some traveling in Italy and elsewhere in Europe before and after the educational program.

And it was heartbreaking, leaving. I didn't want to leave, but we did leave. None of us wanted to leave, but we did, and we went back to the last year in college. And I think that we thought that maybe we would return, but we didn't.

There were other summer jobs I had other times, though.

MS. RICHARDS: In college?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. In high school I did secretarial work in my father's office, I think two summers. He insisted that I do that. He wanted me to do that, and he also always had me keep the books.

MS. RICHARDS: He obviously trusted you, trusted your capabilities.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know.

So I remember having to type documents. You would have carbon paper and Wite-Out. And on legal documents you cannot have an error, so it was very difficult for me. And I don't know how his other secretaries felt about having me working there. I always felt a little uncomfortable. But I did that.

And then – do you want to ask me another question?

MS. RICHARDS: Summer jobs. I mean, college? You said there were some jobs you had in the summer.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I worked in summer resort hotels in Asbury Park, New Jersey, and Boothbay Harbor, Maine. I remember the last year in college, Judy and I applied for teaching jobs in the New York area. We decided we wanted to move to New York. And she got one in –

MS. RICHARDS: And was getting a teaching job a way to support yourself as an artist —

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – or to begin a career as an art teacher?

MS. KOZLOFF: I never wanted a career as an art teacher, which was part of the problem.

MS. RICHARDS: So when you envisioned coming to New York, it wasn't just to teach.

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: It was also to live as an artist?

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. Right. So what happened was – I don't know why, but we both got these teaching jobs in New Jersey. I got a teaching job in Cranford and she got one in Union. Hers was a high school job and mine was a junior high school job. And we got an apartment on 86th Street – between Amsterdam and Columbus, 124 West 86th Street.

In those days the Upper West Side was not nearly as gentrified as it is now. It was very inexpensive. The apartment that we shared was $75 a month and was very small. I had to take a subway, a train, and two buses to get to my job. [Laughs.] I had to get up at the crack of dawn, and I've never been a morning person. And I remember the other people on the subway were carrying mops and brooms. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: That was quite a commute.

MS. KOZLOFF: It was a commute. And I didn't last. I was fired. I was fired probably in the spring. I never was able to establish discipline with those junior high school kids.

MS. RICHARDS: They say it's the hardest period.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And I taught, I don't know, six or eight classes a day, and they were different groups. It was a big junior high school. In that school there were like 10 seventh grades, 10 eighth grades, from the smartest kids to the dumbest kids, and they didn't break that up for art and music.

So when you got the number 10 class in there, they were all discipline problems. They were kids with terrible self-esteem and terrible problems. And they would never sit down. They would be throwing the paint around and throwing the papier-mâché around and glopping up the sinks and running and shouting, and I – from the very beginning I couldn't establish control. I had it in some of the classes but not in a lot of them.

And it just got worse. I was young, you know? I was 21. This was my career and I was failing. I had never failed in anything before, and I was really failing big time. And the principal warned me a couple of times that I was on probation.

And then there was an accident in my class. It's such a stupid accident, but we were doing a stained glass window project with cut black construction paper and you put colored cellophane behind it. This was one of the classes where the kids would sit quietly and do projects like that. The cellophane was on cardboard rolls, and some kid blew a piece of cellophane through a cardboard roll into the ear of another kid, and the other kid – it didn't go in his ear. It just – he was paying attention to what he was doing. He didn't notice it. He fell forward onto the desk and chipped his two front teeth. His father was on the Board of Ed, and his bar mitzvah was the next week. [Laughs.] I was called in to the office of the principal and told to take my things with me and never return to that school.

MS. RICHARDS: Wow.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. That was a bad experience.

And then I went into therapy, the first time in my life. I was so depressed. I was depressed all year because I didn't want to go back into the classroom each day. And I would sit in the apartment and not be able to sleep and dread having to go to work the next morning because it was so bad.

MS. RICHARDS: Meantime, was your roommate okay with her classes?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. She, I think, did a good job. And she also met a guy.

MS. RICHARDS: But she didn't have a junior high. [Laughs.]

MS. KOZLOFF: No. But I think maybe she was better able psychologically to deal with the discipline problem.

I couldn't identify as an authority figure, and I learned that because I went into therapy. I was not emotionally prepared to do that kind of work at all.

And my roommate, Judy, met this man, who later became her husband, and started living with him. I was very lonely and very depressed. I went into therapy, which in my family was considered some kind of horrible thing.

MS. RICHARDS: Not just your family.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And I got a job at the U.N. through a friend of mine who worked at the U.N., in the population branch in the U.N. Secretariat.

MS. RICHARDS: This is more or less right after you were fired?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: So, in April, you said – May?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I don't know exactly when I got the job.

MS. RICHARDS: And that was '64. No, '65.

MS. KOZLOFF: Sixty-five. I was a file clerk. I was filing reports on population. There was going to be a big U.N. conference on population. I liked that job because it wasn't very demanding and I met interesting people from all over the world.

And I applied to graduate school that year – finally in painting, which is what I really wanted to do. And I painted in the apartment that I lived in, and I painted wherever I could all along.

MS. RICHARDS: In that first year living in New York –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I made paintings in that apartment.

MS. RICHARDS: – do you recall, on the weekends you went to galleries, museums? You started seeing what's going on in contemporary art?

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe museums. I don't think I went to galleries. And I didn't know other artists except the ones I had gone to school with.

And the third friend, Rhoda, became a schoolteacher, too. Judy and I have lost contact with her. She got accreditation to be a schoolteacher in New York. That's why we didn't teach here – you had to go get accreditation. She became a New York City art teacher. She lived at home with her parents in the Bronx, and we started to see less and less of her.

So all three of us had been art ed majors, but artist wannabes, at Carnegie-Mellon – at Carnegie Institute of Technology, which is what it was called.

MS. RICHARDS: So you said that you applied to art school. How did you decide which art school?

MS. KOZLOFF: I applied to graduate schools. Finally I figured out I couldn't do anything else; I might as well become an artist. [Laughs.]

So I applied to graduate schools, and I went around –

MS. RICHARDS: Did you have a hard time deciding which graduate school to apply to?

MS. KOZLOFF: I went around and looked at them. I wanted to be around New York. I wanted to stay in New York. I didn't get into some of the schools.

I did get into Pratt, but I remember when I went over there and I saw those small kinds of cubbyholes where the graduate students were working, I got scared. It seemed too public to me.

And I don't know where else I got in. I don't think my portfolio was terrific.

I ended up going to Columbia, but I didn't get into the graduate program. They had a program called "special students," where you could work in that program as a segue into the graduate program. But they wanted to work with you for a while because they didn't think you were ready for the graduate program. I took a chance and did that because – mainly because it was a small program. There were nine or 10 students and they each had a big enclosed studio with a door – [laughs]. And it just felt better to me.

So I did that. I worked in two galleries and – I didn't stay at the U.N. that year because that was a full-time job. So I got part-time work as a gallery girl, sitting in galleries on Madison Avenue – two of them. One was called Castellane. The main job was at Castellane.

MS. RICHARDS: How do you spell –

MS. KOZLOFF: C-A-S-T-E-L-L –

MS. RICHARDS: C-A-S?

MS. KOZLOFF: C-A-S-T-E-L-L-A-N-E.

At that time I started knowing what was going on in the art world.

MS. RICHARDS: So – sorry – you said one part-time job at Castellane –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and he farmed me out to the Spanierman Gallery sometimes. It was a gallery of American art up on Madison Avenue.

But mostly I worked there, but only a couple days a week, and the other times I was in class. And I did at that point start going to galleries and know what was going on.

MS. RICHARDS: So what did your painting look like at that point, in that first starting at Columbia?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, the previous work had been sort of expressionistic figurative, and then at Columbia I took figure drawing and figure painting. I had to take the sort of basic program. During that special student period it wasn't so much my own work. It was getting those basics down better.

MS. RICHARDS: Which you hadn't been able to get at Carnegie because you'd been doing the graphic design.

MS. KOZLOFF: I did take those basic courses in the first two years. Everybody did – design and drawing – but I didn't take painting until the senior year, at night.

So, yes. And that was good. I loved being at Columbia. It was very exciting in those years. That was during the anti-Vietnam period.

MS. RICHARDS: And you were still living in the Upper West Side?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I moved to another address on 70th Street with a different roommate.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, so you moved downtown?

MS. KOZLOFF: No – 70th Street – 70th Street between Columbus and Central Park West. I lived there for a year with this friend who worked at the U.N.

And I was at Columbia two years, from '65 to '67. The graduate M.F.A. program wasn't that long then. So beginning as a special student – I don't know at what point I went into the M.F.A. program. I was in the M.F.A. program two years, but plus summers.

MS. RICHARDS: So it was a two-year M.F.A. program?

MS. KOZLOFF: It was a two-year MFA program. But anyway, I was only there two years. But part of it I was a special student.

There were nine painting majors, and a lot of them are still active. It was a good group.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you remember any professors who were important to you?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I remember my professors now: Stephen Greene – G-R-E-E-N-E; Theodoros Stamos; and Andre Racz – that's R-A-C-Z; and – wait a second – John Heliker – H-E-L-I-K-E-R.

Stamos mentored me. I was very lucky. I was very sad [about] what happened with the Rothko estate and all of that later. But he was great to me and to some of the other women. He liked the women students.

MS. RICHARDS: But the faculty took you all seriously, treated you –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Yes. Most of us were women, but there were a couple of guys. Betsy Damon was in that group; Judith Solodkin was in that group – S-O-L-O-D-K-I-N.

Two of the men died prematurely – Andy Jansons – J-A-N-S-O-N-S. He died in 1989. He was a member of this building co-op. And Profirio DiDonna – you remember that name? He died earlier. They were very much encouraged by the faculty, both of them, particularly by Stephen Greene.

MS. RICHARDS: So Stephen Greene was doing figurative work at that point?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, abstract – biomorphic abstract work.

MS. RICHARDS: That's right.

MS. KOZLOFF: My first crit from Stamos, he said, "Why are you doing that shit?" And I went home and cried, but I didn't cry in front of him.

He was very tough. And he was right. I don't know what I was doing, but very shortly we all – just about all of us ended up doing what was the mainstream style in New York at that time, which was hard-edge abstraction and formalist abstraction and large fields of large shapes painted one color and another shape painted another color, and very large. And that's what I did for most of my time there.

And, I don't know, through the process of osmosis, going to the galleries and the kinds of things that – we had visiting lecturers coming in – this was what we ended up doing. And it was – particularly this is what I ended up doing.

MS. RICHARDS: If you can picture the studio – the graduate studio you had — what kinds of references do you have up on the walls – postcards or posters or –

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I had – yes, I was in two different studios two different years. Because this was a program that was nomadic at Columbia. Every few years they moved it around to different buildings. So the first year we were in Low Library, the round building with a dome? We were in the rotunda.

And the following year – they created a school of the arts where the different arts programs were all put into this building, which was at 110th and Amsterdam, which had been a factory before that. And so the art school was there for a while. Later the building was somehow condemned or something, and they moved somewhere else, and they moved somewhere else. But that was where it was the second year.

I shared a studio with another artist. It was big. She was on one half and I was on the other half. And it was great because I – we were making these big paintings.

MS. RICHARDS: And you were working with oil at that time?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, acrylic.

MS. RICHARDS: So it was early in –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I switched to acrylic right away in graduate school. Everybody was using acrylic, you know?

I remember toward the beginning of my time there Stamos saying, "Go to the ladies' room and get me a stack of paper towels." So I did. And I came in, and he got down on the floor and taught me how to scumble. [Laughs.] It's one of my strongest memories.

MS. RICHARDS: Sounds like he was a great teacher.

MS. KOZLOFF: He was – he was very Greek. He had a big, black mustache and he was gay and he was very macho. And he was fun. He was fun.

Once I went to his house. I think he had a couple of us over. And he was a great cook.

MS. RICHARDS: A townhouse on the Upper West Side?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And – so you know the place?

MS. RICHARDS: I remember it being talked about, especially during the – [inaudible] Rothko estate problems.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, he had the letter inviting him to teach at Columbia framed, because he only had a high school education, and he was very proud of that. And he started collecting Art Nouveau early. He loved Art Nouveau, and it was very cheap then. And he had all these Tiffany lamps and Tiffany vases. It was amazing.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you keep in touch with him throughout the whole –

MS. KOZLOFF: For a while – no. I think he spent most of his later years in Greece – on an island off of Greece. He came to New York mostly for trials.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Once I saw him in the street years later and he just looked devastated.

But anyway, he was the person who really mentored me.

MS. RICHARDS: When you graduated –

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, when I –

[Audio break.]

[In progress] – loved my art history courses at Columbia.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh.

MS. KOZLOFF: Loved them. And we were required to take a language and we were required to take art history. You had to take French or German, and I wanted to take Italian. So I wrote a letter to the president of the university and blah, blah, blah, and I had to go through this whole process, and I ended up taking Italian. And I've been studying it ever since. I love to speak Italian. And I've spent a lot of time in Italy in my life.

But I had a wonderful young woman who taught Italian, who was great, in the Casa Italiana. It was a very small class and I did well. I liked her. She had these great shoes she bought in Italy. [Laughs.] She was American, but she was very Italian-identified and had spent a lot of time there.

And the art history courses I loved. I took a course in modern architecture with George Collins, who was a specialist in Gaudi. His Gaudi lecture was incredible. I still remember it. He had slides of the drawings and of those projects that Gaudi did with strings and weights to figure out the construction of those buildings. So he had all that material early, and explained it; he was very good with that period of late 19th-century, early 20th-century art and architecture in general. It was a course I took in the summer. I went through the summer there. And there were some architecture students taking the course. It was an interesting group and it was a great course.

The other great course I remember taking – Professor Davis – Howard Davis. It was Early Renaissance. He was famous as a lecturer, but never published.

MS. RICHARDS: Never?

MS. KOZLOFF: Or barely ever published. And that's why he wasn't known beyond his students.

He was kind of like an aesthete. He was very thin and totally in love with the work. I took the Venetian Renaissance with him. He started with the very early, almost primitive painters. And the course was going on, and he wasn't getting as close to the major masters as he was supposed to. At the last course, he spoke about Jacopo Bellini, and he said, "If you want to come back an extra time during exam week, I'll do my Gentile Bellini lecture." And we all came back.

MS. RICHARDS: You mentioned that you were a TA at Columbia?

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh. I thought you said you were a teaching assistant somewhere.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no.

No, it wasn't Gentile Bellini. It was Giovanni Bellini. And it was very long. It was like four hours long, and we all stood up and applauded at the end.

MS. RICHARDS: Was this around the time that you met Max [Kozloff]?

MS. KOZLOFF: I met Max while I was at Columbia, during my last semester. He knew Stephen Greene, and there was a pizzeria called V&T's on Amsterdam Avenue between –

MS. RICHARDS: Say that name again?

MS. KOZLOFF: V&T's.

MS. RICHARDS: V – two letters, V and T?

MS. KOZLOFF: V&T. It might still be there for all I know. It was an Italian restaurant but mostly a pizzeria. It was on Amsterdam Avenue between 110th and 111th. Max lived on 106th and Broadway in those years, and he would sometimes eat in V&T's. And he ran into Stephen Greene, and Stephen Greene said, "I want to bring you up to the studios to see the work of my graduate students."

I'm sure he wanted to show Max the work of the guys. But anyway, that's neither here nor there. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: At that point what was Max doing?

MS. KOZLOFF: He was writing for the *Nation* and *Artforum*. And he –

MS. RICHARDS: So that's why he would be interested in seeing that work.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And he was teaching, too. He was writing art criticism. I think he may have written about Steve; they knew each other.

And he came around to the studios and looked at the work. Then the next day he came back to my studio, and I was working, and he said, "I have a question I'd like to ask you." I didn't think I could answer it. And I said, "I don't know if I can answer it." And he said, "Would you like to have lunch with me?" [Laughs.] So that's how I met Max. And Stephen Greene always took credit for it.

MS. RICHARDS: So were there particular – were any of those –

MS. KOZLOFF: And we got married six months after we met.

MS. RICHARDS: I said that you got married in '67 and you graduated in '67.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I got my M.F.A., I got married, and I terminated therapy all within a few weeks of each other. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: It makes sense.

MS. KOZLOFF: And then I had a nervous breakdown, but – [laughs].

MS. RICHARDS: So when you graduated, did you stay in the same apartment?

MS. KOZLOFF: I moved into Max's apartment. My second year at Columbia my roommate was Judith Solodkin, and we lived in an apartment on Riverside Drive at about 117th Street. It was nice. It was very nice. But toward the end of that time I was sort of living with Max, and that's where we lived after we got married.

MS. RICHARDS: So your parents had the realization that you weren't going to marry a lawyer who was going to join the firm?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, but they liked him. They always liked him. By that time, it was clear that I was going to be an artist. And he was 10 years older and he had some status in his profession and he was Jewish, which surprised them and pleased them.

MS. RICHARDS: So at that point when you graduated, you were living with Max, you were looking for a studio situation or was there space in the place you lived?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, I immediately got a studio, which was Miriam Schapiro's studio, because she and Paul [Brach] moved to California to teach at UCSD [University of California, San Diego]. They were among Max's best friends. At the moment that I was leaving graduate school they were leaving for California and she needed someone to turn her studio over to. It was on the Upper West Side. And I got her studio. It was on Broadway between 70th and 71st Street. That's a studio building. I don't know if it still is, but for many, many years, for decades, it had been a studio building. You were supposed to only have a studio, though some people lived there. You weren't supposed to.

It was great because I could just walk down Broadway from 106th to 70th, or I could take the Broadway bus.

MS. RICHARDS: Were you, in a way, subletting it because she thought she'd be coming back to it?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, she turned it over to me. But this is what it was: it was the front part of a cloisonné workshop, which was run by Robert Kulicke.

MS. RICHARDS: Who did framing – Kulicke?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. K-U-L-I-C-K-E. He had these classes in cloisonné. And Mimi [Miriam] had taken classes there. But the front part of the studio they rented to her, and I got that part from her.

MS. RICHARDS: Was that front part – were there windows or were there not?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, windows, right onto Broadway. Big windows. It was great. It was great. And it was an

adequate scale, you know? I loved it. I loved it.

And I liked having the people working in the cloisonné workshop next to me. I'd close my door, but I'd walk through, and I got to know some of them. I always sort of wanted to do it, but knowing how obsessive I am, I was afraid that if I ever got caught up in that, I'd never make anything bigger than, like, two inches square, you know? [Laughs.] So I never did it.

But I like cloisonné. I like it to this day. I know how it's done. I watched them do it.

I had that studio from '67 to '74, until we moved down here. And I would have stayed there but –

MS. RICHARDS: So you were living with Max on Amsterdam?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. We lived at 106th and Broadway.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh.

MS. KOZLOFF: He had lived at 106th and Broadway for some years, and then I moved in with him and lived with him there from '67 to '74.

We lived in two apartments in that building. After our son Nikolas was born, we moved to another apartment that had another bedroom, and that second apartment was beautiful. It was on the 16th floor and it looked straight down Broadway. I remember watching a peace march going down Broadway.

But the reason we moved was the cloisonné workshop told me that they needed the whole space, and they gave me six months to leave. I didn't have a lease or anything. And there weren't any studios on the Upper West Side. I really looked. And then we started thinking about moving downtown.

MS. RICHARDS: Was he associated with the University of Columbia or any uptown –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no.

MS. RICHARDS: So he didn't have to stay uptown.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no. Neither of us ever had permanent academic associations, but we always taught around a lot.

MS. RICHARDS: We'll get to that.

MS. KOZLOFF: But Max, too. And Max didn't finish his Ph.D. He dropped out.

MS. RICHARDS: In those early years, late ‘60s, while you were still on the Upper West Side, how was your painting evolving? Do you recall what ideas you were dealing with?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, when Nik was born –

MS. RICHARDS: And when was Nik born?

MS. KOZLOFF: Nineteen sixty-nine.

MS. RICHARDS: And his name is Nikolas?

MS. KOZLOFF: N-I-K-O-L-A-S.

In 1969 I took a studio in the building for a while, so that when he was asleep and Max was working, I could go down and work. It was kind of like a little maid's room on the second floor – small. And then later I went back to my studio on Broadway and 70th. I don't think I was there very long – maybe six months – in that little studio.

But after Nik was born, there was a change in my work. I stopped doing those large hard-edge paintings. First of all, I had this little space. And I felt that my time was different – and I've had this conversation with other women – like you had to use it differently. I started doing these paintings that were kind of like backgammon boards, kind of like striations. And I really think that was the beginning of my own work.

MS. RICHARDS: Where did those forms come from? Where did the imagery –

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. I don't know.

MS. RICHARDS: Were you doing drawings?

MS. KOZLOFF: I thought of it as abstraction, but it was more intricate. And I started painting not so hard-edged, started letting the brushstrokes show and making it more tactile. But using acrylic – never with impasto.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you recall if you began those paintings with sketches, with drawings?

MS. KOZLOFF: More subtle colors, more subtle – no. No.

MS. RICHARDS: You just began right on the canvas.

MS. KOZLOFF: I drew on the canvas with charcoal – charcoal pencil — and then I filled in the shapes. And those were the beginning of the first work that I showed.

MS. RICHARDS: When you look back and think about the colors, the palettes you were using –

MS. KOZLOFF: They were much more muted and subtle and varied.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you have any idea why that was, what kind of influences or ideas were affecting those color choices?

MS. KOZLOFF: I think part of it was Max, to be honest. I don't think I've ever said that before, but he loves color, and he really didn't like those hard-edge paintings at all. He was always saying, "Color, color." And I had color. I didn't know what he was talking about. And then I sort of got it.

Then also things in the world, traveling mostly, affected me very much. I tried to get color ideas from experiences in the world – not that I was painting in a realist way, but that I would take those sensations of color and light and try and work them into these abstract paintings.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you, in fact, travel when Nik was an infant?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Sometimes we traveled with him, and sometimes we left him with my parents. I've always traveled. It's always been very important to me.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, yes. I can –

MS. KOZLOFF: But, yes. Sometimes – so it depended.

MS. RICHARDS: I know that in 1970, so right after Nik was born, you went to California.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. We made two trips before he was born that were important in the development of my work. In '67 we went to Spain and Portugal. It was our honeymoon, and we went to Seville, Granada, and Cordova. That did not directly influence my work for many years, but it stayed in my mind – the Mudéjar [Moorish], Hispano-Moresque [pottery], which I love to this day.

MS. RICHARDS: Spell that – Mudéjar.

MS. KOZLOFF: M-U-D-E-J-A-R,

MS. RICHARDS: I can get it from your website, too.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know if it's on my website.

MS. RICHARDS: You have a work of that title.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. I don't think so.

MS. RICHARDS: Okay. Something similar. I'm misremembering.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't think so. Might be similar.

MS. RICHARDS: And the other style you mentioned besides Mudéjar?

MS. KOZLOFF: Hispano-Moresque.

[Telephone rings.]

MS. RICHARDS: I'll pause this.

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, I'm not going to answer it. You turned it off?

[Audio break.]

[In progress] – it didn't immediately affect my work.

MS. RICHARDS: It didn't.

MS. KOZLOFF: But I just loved it. I just loved it.

This was our honeymoon, and we spent a long time in Portugal. We drove up the coast, and we looked at the Manueline-style architecture, which is also very ornate.

MS. RICHARDS: The what?

MS. KOZLOFF: Manueline. Named after the King Manuel, M-A-N-U-E-L? You'd have to look it up because it's been a long time since I've said that word.

But then we found a small town – Max had a deadline on a book in September, and we met a Swedish man in a Chinese restaurant in Lisbon and fell into conversation with him, and he told us that this town was very beautiful and very quiet and there are no foreign tourists there, only Portuguese tourists on the coast, and it would be very inexpensive. And we went there – Viana do Castelo.

V-I-A-N-A D-O C-A-S-T-E-L-O.

But that was hard for me because I didn't have a project and I didn't have a studio, and we were living in a little hotel room.

MS. RICHARDS: How long were you there?

MS. KOZLOFF: Most of the summer. I had a sketchbook, but I wasn't very motivated. And I just felt I didn't know anyone. We tried to learn a little Portuguese — I had had Spanish in high school — but it was lonely. And I don't think honeymoons are always what they're cracked up to be, you know? [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Well, that was more than a honeymoon.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Suddenly you're with this person that you committed the rest of your life to, and what happened to your old life, you know? [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: So did you finally find a solution to what to do with yourself for three months?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know if it was three months. Maybe it was two months. No, but then we came back and I reentered my life in New York.

I had applied for college teaching jobs while I was at Columbia, and I had gone to the CAA and put myself on the meat market. And I didn't get anything.

But then a few people helped me get little teaching jobs here and there. Right from the beginning May Stevens, who you mentioned before, gave me her jobs at the School of Visual Arts for a year because she got a job teaching at Cornell. She didn't teach painting in the painting department. She taught it in the – I think the illustration department. So one was teaching painting to non-painting majors. And the other one was the first course in feminist art, which she had proposed, but then I taught it.

MS. RICHARDS: What year was that?

MS. KOZLOFF: I think it was '73.

MS. RICHARDS: So that was after you came back from California.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Yes. It was very early.

MS. RICHARDS: Seventy-three.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. So it was supposed to be a seminar, but like 65 people signed up for it because it was that moment when that was happening. I remember standing in front of this room of – how could you teach a seminar? It was like you had to teach a lecture course.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: I thought it was all women, but recently I was teaching at the Vermont Studio Center and this

man who's my age told me he was in that class. He told me there were a few guys in the back. [They laugh.]

MS. RICHARDS: A few.

MS. KOZLOFF: So I brought in different women to speak different weeks, and we went to studios, and I did slide lectures. And May also gave me –

MS. RICHARDS: This is at SVA?

MS. KOZLOFF: At SVA. And May also gave me her course at Queens College, the year before, 1972, in the ACE program [Adult Collegiate Education], which was a program for adults over 30.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: It was an honors program. It was very competitive to get into. It was taught by three people, and she had taught it for years. I taught it that one year for her. Three people taught it – someone taught music, someone taught literature, and someone taught art, together as a team. We were all under 30, and the students were all women over 30.

The man was a fiction writer and the woman was – and I'm no longer in touch with them and I don't remember their names – was a musician. It was three hours, every Friday.

And you tried to time it so that if you were teaching a certain time period, the music, literature, and art would be from that period. We started from ancient times and were – it was a year-long thing and we were supposed to come up to the present. And I tell you, that's when I learned my art history. I felt as long as I could be one week ahead of the students, I was fine.

When you teach art history, you learn it in a different way than when you're a student. And I really enjoyed that. And I also learned a lot about literature and music.

So she gave me that job.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Going back to –

MS. KOZLOFF: And Phoebe Helman, who died a long time ago, who was married to Jack Sonenberg – H-E-L-M-A-N – she got me a job earlier, when I was first married, teaching art in a cultural center in Scarsdale.

MS. RICHARDS: That's not on your resume.

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: [Laughs.] That's – [inaudible].

MS. KOZLOFF: But the Queens College thing –

MS. RICHARDS: Queens is the first one – '72. And then after that is SVA, '73. I mean in the academic year.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay – '72, '73. Right. Okay.

MS. RICHARDS: Let me go – should we go to L.A. at this point?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, Okay. Whatever. We're not getting very far. Is this what happens? [They laugh.]

MS. RICHARDS: Sometimes. [They laugh.]

So you went to L.A. because Max had a job?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. At CalArts – the first year. It wasn't in the campus in Valencia. That first year it was in a temporary quarters in Burbank, which had been a convent.

It was very wild at that time. I wasn't out there, but he would tell me there were – everybody was swimming nude in the swimming pool and smoking grass, and it was that counterculture time in California.

MS. RICHARDS: How did you feel about going out there, following him?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, I was miserable. I had a toddler. Everyone I knew was in New York, and I was making work that I was engaged with, and I had a certain balance in my life, and this was very wrenching. But it turned out to be great.

MS. RICHARDS: Where did you actually live there?

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Well, the first month we lived in Silver Lake. My father had an older sister, Harriet, who lived on that street.

MS. RICHARDS: What was her last name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Chertkoff. C-H-E-R-T-K-O-F-F. She died last year at 97. But she and I had a big fight, and I hadn't spoken to her since 1970.

And my father said, "Well, Harriet does real estate. She'll find you a place to live." And I said, "I want a place that's very safe for Nik. I want a place where there's at least a room or a garage or something that I can turn into a studio. And I'd love to be near the ocean."

So she found us a house down the block from her, which had no studio, was very unsafe – it was on the edge of a cliff that went down to the freeway and no little fence or anything. It was owned by an older woman who lived there alone who was away or something. And it was nowhere near the ocean. So it was just all wrong. But I guess she had a fantasy about having this family come. She was in California all those years very far from her family. She had two sons.

But we didn't get along at all. She was a Reaganite; she thought I was a hippie. And just before I arrived were the Manson murders – one of them was right there in that street. [They laugh.]

MS. RICHARDS: So she –

MS. KOZLOFF: So it was a recipe for disaster.

MS. RICHARDS: She couldn't get anyone else in that house.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. Or – yes. Anyway.

So we moved after a month. And that place was furnished, which was great. We moved into an unfurnished apartment near the beach in Ocean Park, on Ashland Avenue. We just got some basic furniture and put it in there, and I turned the bedroom into a studio. And it was a great year as it turned out.

MS. RICHARDS: How did that happen?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, it was all because of feminism.

MS. RICHARDS: How did you make those connections?

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Well –

MS. RICHARDS: We'll speak a little about this. I know you've been interviewed before.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, a lot. This week especially.

MS. RICHARDS: So what – you could –

MS. KOZLOFF: Well – so I was a faculty wife, and I didn't have any employment, and I didn't have any friends. We were invited to a faculty party at the beginning of the year at Allan Kaprow's house. And I remember Judy Chicago coming over to me and saying, "You've got to get rid of that name," because I had taken Max's name. [Laughs.] It was a very awkward party.

But I met this woman named Phyllis Stein, who came out with her husband, and she was a faculty wife with a little child also. And her husband, Maurice Stein – Maury – was a philosopher – a kind of counterculture philosopher – and he was the chair of Critical Studies. Max was brought to teach in Critical Studies, but through Paul Brach.

And Phyllis said, "I'm going to start a consciousness-raising group. Would you like to be in it?" I said, "What's that?" And she told me. They were living in Santa Monica, the same general area where I was. And she went to the women's center in Santa Monica and found a list of women who wanted to join a consciousness-raising group.

MS. RICHARDS: There was a women's center in Santa Monica.

MS. KOZLOFF: Evidently – or somewhere. There were lists of people who wanted to form consciousness-raising groups, and she formed the group out of those names, who lived in our area. And none of them were in art.

They were women of different ages and doing different kinds of work and different family situations, all of whom were ready to do consciousness-raising. It was very radicalizing very, very fast. And it was, for everybody.

It just threw my whole world up into a kind of turmoil – made me question everything about my life. And my marriage became rather rocky, and so did everybody else's. [Laughs.]

Mimi and Paul were living in Brentwood, and we would see them. Peter, their son, was still living with them. [He later changed his name to Peter Blackhawk von Brandenburg.] We would see them quite frequently. And she somehow met Judy Chicago – she was teaching at CalArts, as was Paul – and started having these conversations with Judy about feminism. Judy was doing her thing in Fresno. I never went to Fresno that year or had any contact with that program except when Mimi told me about it.

And then one day Mimi invited me to a brunch at June Wayne's. This is the story I've told many times. But at the brunch I met Clare Spark, who had a program on Pacifica Radio called *The Sour Apple Tree,* about the arts. And I met Beverly O'Neill who was an art historian; she later became the provost at CalArts.

MS. RICHARDS: Is that N-E-I-L?

MS. KOZLOFF: N-E-I-L-L, I think – O-apostrophe –

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, with two Ls?

MS. KOZLOFF: Her husband, Pat O'Neill, was an avant-garde filmmaker – Patrick O'Neill.

And I met Moira Roth, who was at that time married to Bill Roth and living in Santa Monica. But they all became friends good friends. Judy Chicago was there. And there was one more woman there whose name I don't remember. She was an older woman, a friend of June's, who was, I think, a sociologist.

And at that brunch everybody talked about the feminist project they were initiating, whether it was an educational project or a research project. I didn't have a project. And Mimi made a confrontation with me. She – now, I remember her yelling at me, but it may have been the way I heard it at the time. "You talk about consciousness-raising all the time, but you don't do anything. What are you going to do?" I didn't know anyone there but her and I felt humiliated. And "I'm tired of hearing – all talk and no action. I'm tired of this."

And so I said, "What can I do?" And somebody said or I said, "Well, you'll organize the women artists of Los Angeles." [Laughs.]

Well, I didn't know any except the ones that were there. And I never had organized anything. I was not an organizer ever before in my life. I would go to peace demonstrations. I was very much involved in the peace movement, but not in a leadership role.

Anyway, they gave me names. And by the time I left there I had a long list of names to call.

MS. RICHARDS: Women artists.

MS. KOZLOFF: – of women artists in Los Angeles.

MS. RICHARDS: The greater Los Angeles area, including Santa Monica.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Yes, yes. And they would give me more names. By the end I think I called 60 names, 65 names. I can't remember. And many of them came to this first meeting, which was in my apartment, all crowded, standing around because we didn't have that many chairs. It was a very exciting meeting. A lot of people remember it. And we named it the Los Angeles Council of Women Artists.

Many of the women in the room didn't know the others were artists. They knew them as the partners of male artists. And when we went around and people said their name, and some of these women said their real name, not their husband's name, that was like a big moment for them. Because I remember – Luchita Hurtado still talks about that. She was married to Lee Mullican. L-U-C-H-I-T-A H-U-R-T-A-D-O. And she said –

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, H-U-R –

MS. KOZLOFF: She said, "I am Luchita Hurtado," and everybody knew her as Luchita Mullican.

Anyway, I did not change my name. [Laughs.] I didn't really like my maiden name that much. I liked my married name better. [Laughs.] I don't know. I didn't change my name, but a lot of the women were doing that at that time.

Anyway, at the meeting someone brought the cover of the *Art and Technology* show catalogue [1971], which was a very big show in the planning for many years in Los Angeles.

MS. RICHARDS: At LACMA [Los Angeles County Museum of Art].

MS. KOZLOFF: At LACMA.

And the cover was a grid with men's faces on it – with all the artists. That was the red flag, and that's why we took on LACMA. The women were very angry about that.

And a lot of consciousness-raising groups came out of that larger group. Some of them existed for decades, became support communities. Many of the women that came out of that group later formed the Women's Building and Women's Space and some of those other things.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: But that was the first group in Los Angeles – women artists' group in Los Angeles.

I never did CR [consciousness-raising] with artists, actually, but many of my friends did, because there were artists' groups that my friends were in, there and in New York. But when I came back to New York, I went into a consciousness-raising group in my neighborhood with some women in my building and my neighborhood because I wanted to continue the process. A number of us had young children.

MS. RICHARDS: I want to go back just a – I understand that before you went to L.A., you looked for a gallery –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. You saw that story?

MS. RICHARDS: – and you actually succeeded in arranging a show at Tibor de Nagy.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: So I just wanted to ask you about that.

MS. KOZLOFF: This was what happened. I knew we were leaving. Max had taken the job. And I had never taken my work around. I was out of graduate school for three years.

MS. RICHARDS: When you knew you were leaving, you knew it was just a one-year –

MS. KOZLOFF: Not necessarily. It was a one-year appointment, but we might have stayed. It was Max's choice not to stay. But we were leaving. And we did come back to that apartment. We did sublet it to a friend of ours.

So I decided I have to take my slides around now because I'm leaving and I don't know when I'll ever come back. I remember getting a babysitter so I could go out and take my slides around.

MS. RICHARDS: And that's a very scary endeavor.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you have art friends or other people who sort of said, "Joyce, this is the time to do this," and, "Let's brainstorm about where to go."

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't remember. I don't think anybody gave me contacts or leads. I went cold.

MS. RICHARDS: You had a lot of confidence to do that.

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe. Maybe. I just went in with my slides. I think that's what you did in those days. And they would say they weren't looking. And I kept going around and they kept saying they weren't looking.

And I was in that building that Tibor was in – I had gone to Fischbach and they said they weren't looking. And I wasn't even planning to go to Tibor's because I didn't think my abstract work fit in with what he showed, but I had paid a babysitter, I had the time, so I went in there.

And he said, "Sit down."

MS. RICHARDS: Who is he?

MS. KOZLOFF: Tibor. He was the only one there, and he was this Hungarian gentleman. He was older – maybe – if I thought about how old he was, it wouldn't – but then he seemed like an older man, and very elegant. And he

held the slides up to the light, and he said, "When can I come to your studio?" And I said, "When do you want to come?" He said, "How about tomorrow or the next day?" And I said, "Maybe the next day."

My studio at that time was in that little room – that little dark room without any windows — and the ceiling was like this, so you had to scrunch to get in there.

But anyway, what I found out – or maybe he told me – was that his longtime director, John Bernard Myers, had left the previous week, and he had always run the gallery. Tibor was a banker. Tibor had been at the bank all those years, and I guess was just retiring and wanting to be part of the gallery. I guess the two of them weren't working out together, and John Bernard Myers had taken the whole stable with him. And it was June and he didn't have any artists for the next season. None. None.

MS. RICHARDS: Myers took all of the artists?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. They went with him. They didn't know Tibor.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: Tibor was in the background. They didn't know him. They went with the person they knew who was –

MS. RICHARDS: He's a banker.

MS. KOZLOFF: I never really knew John Bernard Myers, but he was evidently a very charismatic man and very connected with all these artists in many ways.

So he was looking, and when he came to my studio, I didn't have a complete show. He said, "Do you want September or October?" [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Talk about –

MS. KOZLOFF: And I said –

MS. RICHARDS: Talk about timing.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And I said, "October." And that's why I had to have a studio in California, to paint the second half of my show. I painted it in the bedroom in Santa Monica.

There was a division in that show. There were the New York paintings and the California paintings. And the California paintings had a different kind – to me, at least — when I look at them, they have different feeling, a different light to them. And they were very much about sensation in a way.

And that's how I got my gallery. I remember telling other artists, "Go over there. He's looking." If they waited six months or a year, he already had his artists.

MS. RICHARDS: Did anyone who you told go there and get that connection?

MS. KOZLOFF: I was influential in getting a couple people into Tibor's in the early years, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you recall who?

MS. KOZLOFF: One was Gilah Hirsch, who was a friend from L.A. But she only had one show there. It didn't work out.

MS. RICHARDS: Is that H-I-R-S-C-H?

MS. KOZLOFF: H-I-R-S-C-H. G-I-L-A-H.

Maybe she had two shows there. I don't know. But I was influential in introducing her and her work to Tibor. And I think I was influential with Jacqueline Gourevitch, too.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you know –

MS. KOZLOFF: J-A-C-K-Q-U-E-L-I-N-E G-O-U-R-E-V-I-T-C-H.

And then later in the ‘70s I was influential in getting two of the Pattern painters into the gallery: Richard Kalina – K-A-L-I-N-A – and Tony Robbin — R-O-B-B-I-N.

Actually it was Holly Solomon who was – she didn't want all the Pattern painters. She went up to Tibor's and said, "You have to."

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, so you went to L.A., you finished the paintings, they were shipped –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – and then you flew back for the opening.

MS. KOZLOFF: I flew back for the opening. That's right, in October.

MS. RICHARDS: So that was quite an amazing accomplishment.

MS. KOZLOFF: I was pretty young, too, you know?

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, that's what I mean.

MS. KOZLOFF: So I would have been 27. Twenty-seven?

MS. RICHARDS: Well, if the show was in the fall and your birthday isn't until December –

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: – you were 27.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. Yes.

I'd never been in a group show – except a student show – ever, anywhere. I had no track record. And I showed with Tibor, averaging every year and a half, until I left in 1981.

MS. RICHARDS: I'm going to get to talking about all of that.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Yes. I showed with him all through the ‘70s.

MS. RICHARDS: I read you talking about the influence of California on your work and the light and the landscape. Is that the year when you also went to New Mexico?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I went to New Mexico in '72. But that came about because at that very first meeting, June Wayne wandered into my bedroom and looked at my paintings. After the meeting, she came over to me and said, "Do you want to go to Tamarind?" And I said, "Well, what's Tamarind?" And she says, "It's a two-month residency to do lithographs in Albuquerque, New Mexico." And I said, "I can't leave my family."

Then I told that to my CR group and they started shouting at me. They said, "You get on the phone and you call that woman and you say you're doing it." So I did.

MS. RICHARDS: And what did Max do?

MS. KOZLOFF: Actually, they came out. Not the first week; I got settled and then they came out. I was supposed to find an apartment, and in those days they didn't rent apartments to people with children or animals in New Mexico, so we lived in a motel. It had a little kitchen.

MS. RICHARDS: Wow. So who did you work with at Tamarind in New Mexico?

MS. KOZLOFF: I worked with Garo Antreasian. You know how to spell that?

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: And the printers that you work with actually are in training. You want to know who some of those were? John Maggio, Chris Cordes, Bruce Porter, and a young six-foot-tall woman, Mary Sundstrom.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you work with Bud Shark? I don't remember if he was there.

MS. KOZLOFF: No. No. No. We hung out with Chris often.

MS. RICHARDS: At that point were you –

MS. KOZLOFF: They were young and they were in training and they were very good, and I worked very closely with them.

MS. RICHARDS: You hadn't done any work in lithography before –

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: – so you were learning –

MS. KOZLOFF: Except as a student at Carnegie. And I think I got a C. That's the one time I ever, ever contested a grade. I worked really hard at Carnegie in printmaking, and he gave me a low grade. I don't know what it was – I think it was a C – and I contested it, and he wouldn't change it. [Laughs.]

Anyway, that was the only time I had ever done lithography.

And it was very intense, working in Tamarind for those two months – very wonderful experience. And on the weekends we would go out to the pueblos to see the Indian dances and take Nik with us.

There was an older couple there in New Mexico – the artist Charles Maddox – M-A-D-D-O-X – and his wife, Dorothy – Charlie and Dorothy. They were kind of grandparental, and they loved and knew the Southwest. And they would –

MS. RICHARDS: Did they live out in Corrales?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, they lived in Albuquerque, but other faculty members lived in Corrales. They were great. He'd send up hot air balloons, and he loved – he was great with kids. They knew where all the dances and all the pueblos were. We'd go out with them on the weekends.

Yes. And I liked the printers very much and –

MS. RICHARDS: When you went back after that summer –

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, I had a very important experience.

MS. RICHARDS: In L.A. You went back to L.A. –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, in New Mexico.

MS. RICHARDS: Or you went from there –

MS. KOZLOFF: In New Mexico. Oh, I can't remember the name of the guy who's the director of the program.

MS. RICHARDS: Of Tamarind or University of –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, Tamarind.

MS. RICHARDS: Wasn't Garo Antreasian the –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, he wasn't the director.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh. It's on the tip of my tongue.

MS. KOZLOFF: It'll come to both of us [Clinton Adams].

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Anyway, as soon as I arrived, I asked everybody at Tamarind and in the art department at the University of New Mexico, because they were connected, if anybody knew Georgia O'Keeffe. I wanted to meet Georgia O'Keeffe. I had this young artist's thing about seeking a role model. And none of them did.

Then I found someone who knew her, who was the wife of the director of Tamarind. She was a social worker who traveled around the state, and when she went to Abiquiu, she would see Georgia O'Keeffe, who was quietly doing public works there. I remember she bought the basketball uniforms for the local team – things like that.

And so once every few months, Mary would go there and she would visit with Georgia.

MS. RICHARDS: And we'll be thinking of Mary's last name [Adams].

MS. KOZLOFF: It was my last week at Tamarind, and we were under a lot of pressure to finish these prints.

I want to say something about the prints.

She called me up and she said, "I'm going tomorrow," so I called in sick or something. I remember it was – it had rained, and so the earth – the earth was very deep, rich brown. We went to her house, and we had lunch with her and her younger sister from Beverly Hills. And somebody –

MS. RICHARDS: Georgia's younger sister?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And maybe a friend of Georgia's, too.

So it was all women at the table. And the food was beautiful. It was all from their garden. It was chicken and salad, and prepared with fresh herbs. The women who were serving us worked for her. She was sharp as a whip. She did not take us into the studio. A recent painting was hanging behind us and it was one of those big rocks. She was talking about, with great gleam and pleasure in her eye, torturing [collector Joseph] Hirshhorn in a negotiation to sell him some Arthur Doves from 1913 that she had. And we saw them. They were little paintings that were side by side.

She didn't talk about art. They were all talking about these subjects I knew nothing about – gardening, farming, camping. And she was about to go to Ghost Ranch. Just as soon as the weather got warm, she would go to Ghost Ranch, which didn't have electricity, but this was the main house. It was very simple and very beautiful.

And I remember when we left, she was standing in the gate, and I decided to hold that memory of what she looked like. Her hair was pulled back. She had a high white blouse and black – you see the pictures of black jacket and skirt and – very, very austere.

MS. RICHARDS: Great.

MS. KOZLOFF: At one point Mary said, "Joyce is an artist." And she said to me, "How do you prime your canvas?" And I didn't. I worked on unprimed canvas. And I said, "I don't prime it."

She lost interest in me after that. They did like five or six layers of priming and sanding, and no one could touch her paintings unless they had white gloves on. She told me all that. She said, "How do you know whether it will last?" And of course, with acrylic paint we didn't know in those days.

MS. RICHARDS: Were there any other artists in the Santa Fe-Taos area at that point who you got to meet that winter?

MS. KOZLOFF: No – well, unless they were connected with the university. Yes, I met the ones that were connected with Tamarind and the university. But no, I didn't seek anyone else out in that way. And I've never done that again in my life. Afterward – years later — I felt like, what, was I crazy?

MS. RICHARDS: No.

MS. KOZLOFF: Bothering this woman – why did she meet me? But I think a lot of people do that.

She didn't have a telephone, so she was hard to reach, but people knew how to reach her and she was not out of touch. She asked me about Barbara Rose, I remember, who was a friend of hers. Maybe she had written on her. And there was a P.O. Box. She came to New York once or twice a year. She knew what was going on.

Anyway, that's not about me. That's –

MS. RICHARDS: That's about you.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: So you wanted to talk about the printmaking.

MS. KOZLOFF: See, that was after feminism – that role model thing was something we all talked about.

Well, those prints were very important in the direction my work took. So I did studies for every single one of them. There were six of them, and they were named after pueblos that I visited: *Acoma*, *Laguna*, *Isleta*. They have the striations like my paintings – kind of – my paintings were starting to look like – almost like cutaways into the earth, striations.

But for the prints, I wanted many, many, many colors. So in my mind, to keep the passages distinct, which I was doing in black on the litho stone – to make the passages look like different colors, I started making them with different stipples and dots and crosshatchings and strokes, so that each passage had a different type of texture on it, which I hadn't really quite been doing in the paintings before. But that was really a kind of thing so I could remember the different colors. I'd have to do many litho stones to have all the colors. And we got up to 29

colors in those prints, and it was –

MS. RICHARDS: Twenty-nine stones?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, not –

[END DISC 1]

MS. RICHARDS: This is Judith Richards interviewing Joyce Kozloff on July 12, 2011, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, disc two.

MS. KOZLOFF: July 12 is my father's birthday, and this is the first July 12th we are not celebrating it, because he died this year. I thought of that when you said it before.

Anyway, back to the lithographs, so they were in many colors. And I was told that the contract they made after that had what they refer to – what's now called the "Kozloff clause" – because it's –

MS. RICHARDS: Tamarind.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, so that if you have more than a certain number of colors, they charge you. [They laugh.] But anyway, I was never charged extra for my colors. And they were young printers. I was young. And we figured out – and what we didn't know – we didn't have 29 litho stones. Well, maybe we had up to six or seven per print. But the different colors, I separated on different parts of the stones.

So you'd color the green in one corner and the red – with little rollers in different corners. And in any case, when it printed, I not only got color, but I got all this variety and tactility and surface, which I liked. And it was also very airy, with the white of the paper coming through, rather than solid. And I took that back to New York and to the paintings.

MS. RICHARDS: So did you end up with a set of lithographs?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And you had editioned each one?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, each one. They do editions of 20. So it's not a large edition. I did six while I was there. And they're all 18 by 24. But when I came back and I did large paintings in my studio, I started applying the different kinds of brushstrokes to each passage and breaking them up and stroking them and stippling them and dotting them and crosshatching them.

In the next year or two, in my paintings, there was a lot of evocation of the Southwest – the land, the culture, the light. There were two paintings before I call myself a Pattern painter in which some of these textures and repeated strokes actually became patterns.

But they're confined to certain passages, and they're not taken from outside sources. They're just from the way I'm making the marks on the canvas, but they have some feeling of some of the kinds of patterning in Southwest native culture. And those paintings are called *Enchanted Mesa* and *Buffalo Dance* [1973]. *Buffalo Dance* is actually owned by the Brooklyn Museum.

MS. RICHARDS: Were those '73 or '72?

MS. KOZLOFF: Something like that, yes – should be '73. And then I decided to explore pattern, but it just kind of evolved that way. That's when it happened. So those two months in New Mexico were really fabulous.

MS. RICHARDS: There's also works you did soon after that were influenced by a trip to Mexico.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, that was the following year. That was '73. We spent the summer there. Max was researching the Mexican mural painters. He had been teaching a workshop in criticism at the AFA, American Federation of the Arts, and one of his students was Hayden Herrera. Her mother lived in Mexico. And he mentioned he wanted to go down there to do the research while people were still alive who could remember that time.

And she said, "Well, my mother and her husband have this house in Tepoztlán, and they're usually not there in the summertime, so maybe I can arrange for you to rent it," which we did. It was beautiful, and we spent the summer there. And Max would often go into Mexico City to do research.

But we had a rented car, and I had Nikolas with me. We used to drive out to see various pre-Columbian sites,

some of which were small and not so well known, and others which were major. That was just the point at which I said, "Okay, I'm going to look at pattern." I really was not educated in anything about the decorative arts.

MS. RICHARDS: When you thought about focusing in that way on pattern —

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] It was a very conscious choice.

MS. RICHARDS: – was there part of you that was also consciously saying you were going to do that regardless of the fact that there was going to be criticism that it wasn't something that was the right thing to do in terms of the art world at that moment, and that you knew you were going to be going against some kind of tide? Or were there, in fact, other artists you knew who were also interested in that who could be supportive?

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, there's a couple of things. There's a couple of things. One thing I flashed on, which I never talk about, is my mother always did embroidery. She did it from packages. She was very, very skilled, and she was always looking for ones that had very complicated stitches and imagery.

So she always did needlepoint. She did all the chairs in our dining room, and pillows and napkins and tablecloths. Everything in our house, she had embroidered. And she also framed ones on the walls. So she was always doing that. She never liked to have time that wasn't used, so if she took my brother for his football practice, when she'd sit in the car, she'd be embroidering.

She taught me how to sew. I know how to sew. But I never followed up on that, and I always thought I rejected that kind of suburban, not-professional lifestyle, but now I can see that that kind of intricacy and concentration and craft was something that I grew up with.

But anyway, to go back to this, in 1971, in Los Angeles, I have this friend, Gilah Hirsch – very good friend, painter – and we were working on a project together, which never came to fruition, about the language in art history and art criticism. It was during the consciousness-raising, and we started looking at gender stereotypes.

I remember going through magazines and underlining words like "tough," "potent," "strong," "pretty," "decorative," "sweet," and how words which, in fact, were descriptive became values, and how if a word was used about the work, whether it was about a man or a woman, that had a masculine intonation, that was generally a positive review. But if you were called one of these feminine words, that was not a good thing.

And one of the big no-nos was "decorative." As soon as I realized that, I was liberated from it, because when I was in school in the '60s, you did not want to be called "decorative." So then I realized, Well, what does that word mean? What are the decorative arts? They are the arts that were anonymously done by women and by people of color and people of other cultures and people who were outside of the mainstream of art history.

I had to really start looking and learning about that stuff, and at that point I embraced the word. I decided I was going to make it as decorative as I possibly could. And so then I stopped worrying about it. I really did stop worrying about it. The discussion about the language began in 1970, but it didn't really start to enter the work until '72 and '73.

And some of the other decorative artists in my group had been doing it earlier – not necessarily showing it, but doing it earlier than I was. I was showing it earlier than some of the others because I already had a gallery. And it was not easy for Tibor to get with the new program. I sent up my first full-fledged Pattern painting, which is called *Three Facades*, and it's based on tile facades.

MS. RICHARDS: And that's 1973.

MS. KOZLOFF: Nineteen seventy-three. It's based on tile facades of churches – Churrigueresque churches in Mexico. See, that summer, I kept a sketchbook, and everywhere I went, I drew the patterns. I just drew them in pencil in my sketchbook, and then I took them back to the house we were living in. And at night – because I've always been a nocturnal – I had larger sheets of paper, 22 by 30, and I made watercolor elaborations of the patterns from the sketchbooks – watercolor and colored pencil. I started them there, and I finished them when I came home to New York.

And then when I came home, I started doing these larger paintings of acrylic on canvas from these same patterns that were in that sketchbook. So that was the kind of resource, that sketchbook. And then I looked for other things, too. But the first one that I did, called *Three Facades* – the first one that I did that was really out-and-out – people thought it looked like a quilt, but it actually came from these different tiled exteriors.

These Churrigueresque churches in Mexico, they're 18th century. They're very elaborate. And they have Spanish origins, as well as indigenous Mexican origins. That's what I like – that crazy kind of mix – and they're very horror vacui on the interiors, very elaborate on the interiors. But it was the tile facades that interested me.

So I do this painting, *Three Facades*, and with some other paintings, they were sent up to Tibor's. It wasn't for a show. It was between a show. I guess sometimes I'd send new work. And he told me that Clement Greenberg had come in and saw that painting and said it looked like ladies' embroidery. And Tibor's voice was shaking when he said that to me. He was so terrified of Greenberg. And he sent the painting back.

MS. RICHARDS: Is this *Three Facades*?

MS. KOZLOFF: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] But then, when I had my next show, I put it in the show, and Tibor didn't say anything. So it went up there, it came back, and it went back up there again. And in fact, it was one of the more – some of the other paintings in that series were sort of half and half, you know, but that one was really straight out there. And I thought it was very funny when he told me that story. It didn't bother me at all.

MS. RICHARDS: Because at that point, you didn't take Clement Greenberg's opinion seriously?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I thought it was a kind of badge of honor. I loved it. But he wielded a lot of power in the gallery world, still, even in 1973, '74, and particularly with the Tibor de Nagy Gallery.

MS. RICHARDS: Well, it sounds like since he had been a banker, he may not have been so secure in his opinions about art.

MS. KOZLOFF: He came from the Hungarian aristocracy, and if it hadn't been for World War II, he would have been still in his castle. Yes, quite a life story. Someone should write a book about it.

MS. RICHARDS: So after the summer in Mexico and the influence of that, then you, I think, start becoming interested in other patterns, like Islamic.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And there were two books that you did.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and I don't –

MS. RICHARDS: *If I Were a Botanist* and *If I Were An Astronomer* [1977].

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and they're lost.

MS. RICHARDS: But it was at the beginning of collage in your work. Talk about how that evolved.

MS. KOZLOFF: Again, it has to do with printmaking. I did these three prints at Solo Press with Judith Solodkin, who had been my roommate in graduate school. And then she went to Tamarind; she was the first woman who became a Tamarind master printer. It was a very arduous program, and every other woman who had ever tried didn't make it through. And of course, some of the men didn't make it through, either. But Judith made it through, and she came home. She hung up a sign on her door that said, "Solo." She had a little, tiny apartment on Eighth Avenue, and she had a press in there.

MS. RICHARDS: Eighth Avenue and what?

MS. KOZLOFF: In the 20s. It was around the corner from Louise Bourgeois. She worked with Louise all her life, until Louise died.

But anyway, so I got a grant – a CAPS [New York State Council for the Arts Creative Artists Public Service] grant — in printmaking, and I wanted to do more lithographs. I did this series called *Pictures and Borders* with Judith, based on Islamic patterns.

Well, okay, the Islamic – going back a minute – so I started with the Mexican patterns, but I became interested in patterns in general. And I started looking. I started going to the Cooper-Hewitt and the Met and looking at books and acquiring books and, when I traveled, focusing on the decorative arts.

Islamic patterns interested me. Well, I was doing geometric patterning. There's floral and there's geometric, basically, and mine was always – in those years – based on geometry. And the most complex and interesting was Islamic. So naturally that's where I gravitated. I never invented my own patterns like some of the others. They were all appropriated. And the Islamic pattern is a kind of geometry.

I was never particularly good or interested in math, but because of the prohibition against imagery, it became this highly developed form of calligraphy and geometry. And the geometric patterns – those interlocking star patterns – are built on several layers of grids – a vertical/horizontal and a diagonal grid – so that you can move these lines back and forth in space through these different grids. And that really interested me, because the

more simple, repetitive pattern, I got bored with.

MS. RICHARDS: When you thought of repetitive pattern, did you think about what Sol LeWitt was doing, as well, and other conceptual artists who were going through a kind of a system of repetition – and sometimes geometric?

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Well, yes. I grew up with geometrical abstraction and Minimalism, but I was not a Minimalist. My impulse was to keep putting more stuff in, not to simplify.

MS. RICHARDS: But there was, obviously, this previous experience of –

MS. KOZLOFF: I came out of all of that, yes, absolutely.

MS. RICHARDS: – of that kind of involvement – intellectual involvement – having a kind of validity.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Yes. So I started buying books on geometrical – on Islamic art, and there were a lot of them at that time. The Islamic wing opened at the Met in 1975, and it just blew my mind and some of my colleagues — we would go there, and there were a lot of books on Islamic patterning that were coming out. And I bought them all, and I copied my sources from them, but I also understood how they were put together.

Now, a lot of it was for tile work in mosques – and carved wood and other kinds of things. But to make it into a painting that interested me, I wanted a lot of variation, not just repetition. So I would push the colors around and try and kind of make a field that you could enter and move through. I wanted to hold the viewer there so that you didn't just think you saw it and walked away.

And the paintings got very large, little by little. They became almost an architectural scale. The last group were 15 feet long. They were horizontal, so that if you wanted to look at it, you had to move along it, and I've said this before, but for me, it was like I wanted the travel metaphor – like walking through the streets of a city and –

MS. RICHARDS: We're talking about *Striped Cathedral*, 1977?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I could be talking about any of the paintings during that period.

MS. RICHARDS: From '74 –

MS. KOZLOFF: Seventy-five, '76, '77, '78.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't have everything on my website. I have examples of everything. But yes, that would be one. That would be one of them. So that it would be like my remembering my experience of traveling in Turkey or Morocco, for instance, and you'd be walking through the streets, and then you'd turn a bend, and then all of a sudden there would be this richly ornamented gate or wall or something. So I wanted that – that you were walking along and then you came upon this experience. And so these paintings had passages in them – these horizontal paintings – with different events.

Well, what was your question?

MS. RICHARDS: You've answered it, but there were two things I wanted to ask you about in this regard. So let's say, going back to the date of 1975 –

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, I must have jumped ahead.

MS. RICHARDS: No, that's all right. Why don't you talk about the formation of the Pattern and Decoration group.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, but just to go back with the work, the first ones – the first group –

MS. RICHARDS: I asked you about Islamic involvement and interest.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, so the first show I had, the paintings were mostly from the Mexican sources. There may have been – I'm trying to remember. I had several Pattern paintings shown at Tibor's. There may have been one or two that had Islamic motifs in them. And then I started doing it in drawing, first, and lithography, isolating some of these Islamic patterns and working with them.

And you asked me about the collage, and that was when – always, when you do lithographs, especially when they're so many colors and so complicated, there are rejects – overprinted, underprinted, off-register. Judith

would give them to me and I would cut them up and make collages.

So I would recombine these patterns and make new patterns. I made little collages, and I made, for each of the three in the series Pictures and Borders, one large one, which I would think of like a carpet, perhaps, or at painting scale but large, and it had a different feel than a painting.

MS. RICHARDS: All collage on paper.

MS. KOZLOFF: Collage on paper that I would work back into with color pencil or watercolor, and it would kind of hang. It had a wavy quality because I wasn't so good at gluing. It had a feeling of being a textile, and I liked that. So that was when the collage began. There's always been an element of collage in my work – if not literal collage then metaphorical collage of putting things together that maybe wouldn't necessarily go together.

MS. RICHARDS: But at that point, the only collage elements you were using were your own –

MS. KOZLOFF: In the beginning. In the beginning, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – prints.

MS. KOZLOFF: And I think for a long time, actually. It was like a recycling, which I think a lot of artists do in one way or another. Waste not, want not, you know. Nothing went to waste. Even to this day – because I still work with Judith – she always saves me the leftovers and – like cooking. Yes, so that was why I got into the Islamic, and that's why we went to Morocco in 1975, I think. And we went to Turkey in 1978.

MS. RICHARDS: You and Max?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, very much to look at the mosques and to look at the madrassas [schools] and all of the ornamented buildings. Since then, I've been to Tunisia. I've been to Egypt. I've been to Iran and India.

And then people would criticize me. They'd say, "When you make this work, what does it have to do with Islam? What does it have to do with religion?" And I would say, "Nothing." I've never been interested in religion or spirituality or any of that, my own or anyone else's. I just gravitate toward things that appeal to me visually or interest me. But they do have cultural resonance and they do have meaning in the culture.

MS. RICHARDS: Was there ever a struggle in those years with the idea that you were excluding a kind of emotional reality, or something that maybe some other artists would put into their work, but because you were so involved in the pattern and taking patterns, appropriating patterns – not creating your own patterns – that, where was the room for your own personal expression, quote-unquote?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I got a lot of different kinds of criticism. When Pattern painting became hot, we got positive press and we got very negative press, because a lot was being written about us. And one of the things that was very painful for me was being called a cultural imperialist. It never occurred to me.

I thought I was making an homage to other cultures, but it could be read as taking from them, and being a white Western artist taking from them. And that was said a lot. I had to defend myself against that, and it was very difficult to defend myself. I was so unprepared. I don't remember being criticized for not being emotional enough.

MS. RICHARDS: I wasn't saying you were being criticized. I'm saying, do you have an internal struggle yourself?

MS. KOZLOFF: Question – because I grew up with Minimalism, this was actually much more expressive than Minimalism. Maybe it wasn't expressionism, but expressionism wasn't so much happening. That would be in the '80s. So I don't think it was so much that.

And then the other thing was, I was making paintings, and at a certain point when people were interested in us, I was giving lectures at schools – like, say, between maybe '74 and '78 – around the country. And I would show slides of all the Pattern painters and myself, and I'd talk about it.

There would be people who were in crafts – students and teachers – standing up and saying, "You're just taking from craft media and making high art. And if you really want to break" – because we had this rhetoric about breaking down the hierarchy between high art and craft, and we were interested in that, passionately interested in that. And I can talk about that.

I heard it over and over again. At first, I was very hurt because I thought I was breaking down the barriers and crossing over. But they would say, "Oh, yeah, you're very privileged. You're in the art world. You're a high artist. And you're just taking from us. If you really want to break down the hierarchies, why aren't you weaving baskets or making pottery or sewing?" And then I sort of felt like I had to put up or shut up.

MS. RICHARDS: Was it a conscious goal that you had, as an artist, to break new ground?

MS. KOZLOFF: I think so, yes. I do. When we had our meetings of the Pattern and Decoration group, which began in '75, when Miriam returned to New York from California. She knew Bob Zakanitch in California – he'd been teaching at UCSD for a while as a visitor, and they'd had some conversations, the two of them, about decoration.

And she'd had conversations with me about it over the years and was very encouraging. So they planned this meeting, and it was at Bob Zakanitch's loft. I had never met him before. He invited Bob Kushner, who says he wasn't there, but I think he was.

MS. RICHARDS: I read a couple of different versions of the people there.

MS. KOZLOFF: I know. So maybe he was at the next one. But Bob Zakanitch invited Tony Robbin, who was definitely there, and Amy Goldin, who was definitely there. And Mimi invited me, and Amy Goldin had been teaching at UCSD.

There was a big UCSD connection. Kim MacConnel and Bob Kushner were students of Amy's at UCSD. Mimi had taught there. Bob Zakanitch had taught there. Amy had taught there. And they weren't necessarily in dialogue with one another. Mimi was not close with Bob Kushner, Kim, and Amy. That was a separate discussion.

MS. RICHARDS: And Valerie Jaudon?

MS. KOZLOFF: Later – a little later.

MS. RICHARDS: Later? Okay, because –

MS. KOZLOFF: But not much later.

MS. RICHARDS: So she wasn't one of the founders?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. But interestingly enough, there had been a –

MS. RICHARDS: And Ned Smyth?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no. There had been a panel before our meeting – "Artists Talk on Art" – about pattern painting – not pattern and decoration, pattern painting. And I had not attended it, but I heard about it. Valerie was on that, a guy named Mario Yrissary – Y-R-I-S-S-A-R-Y moderated.

MS. RICHARDS: Wait, Y-R-

MS. KOZLOFF: I-S-S-A-R-Y. He showed at Ivan Karp's, at OK Harris, and he was an interesting artist who, at some point, just dropped out. But there were a group of them that had a panel about pattern painting. And then these two groups came together – we had a meeting of a different group, but they had some contact with some of the people in the other group and either had attended the panel or knew about it.

Anyway, our group was kind of California/bicoastal connections. And I always felt that California – all that tie-dye and counterculture stuff — had something to do with it, and the times that we had lived in, and the fact that the men in this group were not your traditional, macho guys. They were just not. They weren't at all macho, and each in their own ways kind of female-identified. I hope that doesn't insult anybody. I'm not even talking about their sexual preferences – just in what they liked and how they made their art and what they wanted to express. So it was great, and I never felt any hierarchy between the men and the women, and that was very unusual. It just didn't exist.

Amy was writing about traditional art, folk art, Islamic art, and trying to find a language to deal with those things, which didn't exist in art criticism – struggling with it. And she would show us her writing for feedback, and she would look at our work. She was a very smart woman. She died in 1978 of cancer. But during those early years, and particularly for Bob and Kim, she was really their mentor. She was extremely important. Bob Kushner and Kim MacConnel. I barely know Kim MacConnel because he lives in California, and I only met him a few times. But Bob Kushner is, like, my best friend, and we talk all the time.

Anyway, so that was the most exciting meeting. It was like three hours, and we just all talked and we found that we had certain things in common. One was that we were in this recoil against the mainstream of the art world as it was then, and then the other was that each of us had had some experience in traveling or living in other parts of the world that was transformative.

Tony Robbin's father was a diplomat, and he'd lived in Iran and Japan. And Bob Kushner and Amy Goldin had

traveled in Afghanistan and Iran for a couple months together, particularly looking at carpets and looking at all the decorative arts. And Bob Zakanitch and Mimi talked about their backgrounds; their grandmothers and their references were very domestic and personal. And Mimi and I came from feminism, and I had my own travel stories, too. And I guess you've read some of this before.

MS. RICHARDS: Some.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, but I remember Mimi said she traveled by taking the escalators up and down in Bloomingdale's. [They laugh.] And Bob Zakanitch talked about the wallpaper and tablecloths in his grandmother's house and all that kind of stuff, which he loved.

It was great, and then we had another meeting – and then, by the second or third meeting, we had twice as many people. So all the people that had been on that panel came to the next meeting or the subsequent meeting. That was Valerie Jaudon, Mario Yrissary. I think Nina Yankowitz came.

MS. RICHARDS: Who was that?

MS. KOZLOFF: Nina Yankowitz – Y-A-N-K-O-W-I-T-Z – to one of those meetings. I can find you the names of some of the others, but I don't have them off the top of my head. And I didn't necessarily have the same connection to all those people. There was a man named Kendall Shaw.

MS. RICHARDS: You mentioned him.

MS. KOZLOFF: Anyway, within a short amount of time, there were a lot of Pattern painters. By '78, John Perreault did a show at PS1 with, like, 45 artists in it. And once it was in the art magazines, they were doing it in the art schools all over the country.

But there were a lot of people in the art world that hated it, always. Holly Solomon was the primary promoter, and many of the artists were in her gallery. I was never in her gallery. But a lot of people didn't like her.

MS. RICHARDS: There was a show called *10 Approaches to the Decorative*.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: At the Alexandra Gallery.

MS. KOZLOFF: Alessandra Gallery – Tony Alessandra – A-L-E-S-S-A-N-D-R-A – which was in SoHo. It was curated by Jane Kaufman, whom he represented. It was a good show, and it was the first decorative show. It was 10 artists. If you want, I can look at the list.

MS. RICHARDS: It was in '76, I think.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and Jeff Perrone wrote about it in *Artforum*, so it came out – the whole thing came out at that time. It included George Sugarman, and it included John Torreano. It included Jane, me.

It may have included Barbara Kruger, who was doing decorative work at that time. Very few people know that. And it was good decorative work. It was all sewn and encrusted with sequins and tassels and stuff. But maybe it didn't include her. Maybe it didn't include her, but I know that she showed at the Tony Alessandra Gallery at that point, or I saw her work there. It included Arlene Slavin and Tony Robbin.

MS. RICHARDS: And Zakanitch.

MS. KOZLOFF: And Bob Zakanitch. It did not include the Holly Solomon group.

MS. RICHARDS: In those early years –

MS. KOZLOFF: And we had a handout, which was like a manifesto, at that show.

MS. RICHARDS: Why?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. Each of us wrote a statement, and it was a handout.

MS. RICHARDS: And you called it a manifesto.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I'm calling it a manifesto. But it was a handout, and I think that it was very smart, because the press realized that we were a group of people that had a point of view and were using provocative language. What I wrote for that has been republished. Irving Sandler has republished it a couple of times.

It was based on a piece by Ad Reinhardt called *On Negation* [poem]. Ad Reinhardt came to speak to us when I was in graduate school. He was dressed in black, like a monk, and I think he read it. And it's all the things you take out of art – this piece, *On Negation*. And I wrote a counterpiece called *Negating the Negative* with these lists of all these things I wanted to put back into art.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you feel that – when you used the word "manifesto" –

MS. KOZLOFF: It's on my website.

MS. RICHARDS: – did you feel that the group needed to have that kind of unified communication?

MS. KOZLOFF: It was very un-unified, actually. Barbara Zucker was in that show, too. We were all very different. We just had certain concerns and interests in common. Aesthetically, we were very different.

MS. RICHARDS: Just to change gears just a bit, but at the same time, could you talk about your involvement with *Heresies* [feminist *journal*, 1977-92] – founding that, and what that was and why –

MS. KOZLOFF: That was around the same time.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, '75. The group forming was '75. I know that Alessandra show was '76, but then going back to '75, *Heresies* –

MS. KOZLOFF: I think the show may have been, like, December of '75 – the Alessandra show – or it was early '76. I don't know. See, the thing was, because I'd had a gallery since 1970, I'd put some of that work out. I think Holly Solomon opened that season, and that was when all those other artists began to show. I mean, they knew about one another, but they weren't as visible in the art world.

But I can tell you – I don't think she would mind – Valerie came up to me at the first meeting that she attended and said, "I saw your show, and I hated it." And I said, "Why?" And she said, "Too many different things going on." And now, that's about a difference between her and me up to this day. I mean, every show I ever have is criticized for having too many different things in it, but that was the first time anyone ever said it to me. My dealer tells me that. She says, "I can't brand you." And I just can't help it. I'm too restless. I don't have the discipline to stick with any one thing that long.

MS. RICHARDS: That was particularly perceptive of her then – Valerie.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, oh, she's very smart. Yes, and she's a really good artist. And we're very different. But that was the first – and I remember it. She probably doesn't, but I remember it because that was the first time anyone ever said it to me.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you think it was helpful in any way?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know that I can change who I am, you know?

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] So going back to *Heresies* –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, so I was in close contact with the women in California, and some of them to this day. Even though I was only there '70 to '71, it was a very intense moment. So I knew about all the things going on there. And Sheila de Bretteville was a very good friend.

MS. RICHARDS: Sorry, Sheila what?

MS. KOZLOFF: S-H-E-I-L-A D-E B-R-E-T-T-E-V-I-L-L-E. Sheila is now and has been for 20 years the chair of the design department at Yale. She was one of the founders of the Women's Building. We spent a summer in Italy with Sheila and her husband, Peter, and her son, when the boys were young. And I knew all about the foundation of the –

MS. RICHARDS: Was Peter's last name the same as hers?

MS. KOZLOFF: — de Bretteville, yes. I knew all about what was going on in terms of the formation of the Women's Building and the school and *Chrysalis* magazine, and we were doing all the same things here. We didn't have an institution like they did. New York is different. And coming back from the women's movement in L.A. to New York, it never had quite the same – maybe it's like first times or something. For me, it just never was quite the same.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you have a theory about why that happened in L.A. and not here?

MS. KOZLOFF: The Women's Building?

MS. RICHARDS: The whole concentration of energy on that – at that moment on that subject.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. Well, first of all – I'm just guessing now – the art schools are very important there – the exhibitions that happen in art schools, the networks of relationships that develop in the art schools. There are a lot of very good ones out there. And here, we have the art world. We have the gallery system.

MS. RICHARDS: Museums, of which there were none then.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, there was the –

MS. RICHARDS: Norton Simon.

MS. KOZLOFF: Norton Simon and – LACMA –

MS. RICHARDS: Just barely.

MS. KOZLOFF: So you could build your institutions out there, in a way. And the gallery scene was much smaller than here. I don't know. Or sometimes maybe it's just the energy and chemistry of people. But there was a feminist art school started here. I never had anything to do with it.

But *Heresies* – I was one of the founding members. Mimi and I had talked about it, and other people had talked about making – there were other feminist art magazines at that time. There was the *Feminist Art Journal*, which predated us, and *Women Artists Newsletter*. They were mostly monographic articles about women artists.

Heresies' focus was on ideas that women artists were interested in, which was quite different. Those other magazines were very important, that they happened. My next-door neighbor, Michelle Stuart, and I were doing the laundry, and we had this idea there should be a magazine generated by women artists.

MS. RICHARDS: And you were living here. You said you moved here in '74.

MS. KOZLOFF: That was here. I moved here in '74. So this was '75. Actually, we moved here a lot because of Michelle, who had been a friend of Max's before I even knew Max and had lived on the Upper West Side. And then in 1970, when this building was co-opped, she was one of the original members of the building.

MS. RICHARDS: That's an early date for a SoHo co-op, isn't it?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, there were earlier ones, but that was early. And so she lived here with her then-husband, and we were friends with them. We were looking for a loft downtown, and we'd been to a party at this loft in the early '70s, so I knew this loft. I'd been here once. And she kept telling us that she could hear this couple yelling through the walls, and they were going to break up and this loft was going to be on the market. [They laugh.]

MS. RICHARDS: Talk about insider information. [They laugh.]

MS. KOZLOFF: It was insider information. It really was. And we didn't like anything else we saw as much, and then it happened. They broke up and they put their loft on the market, and we bought it.

MS. RICHARDS: So this building had a C of O [Certificate of Occupancy]? You could sell it? It wasn't an artists-only, or was it?

MS. KOZLOFF: It was an AIR [Artist in Residence], yes.

MS. RICHARDS: So they had to sell it to an artist.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. Who else would buy it in 1974?

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: It was a doll factory, originally, and even when I moved in, in '74, I would still find little plastic arms and legs behind my radiators and stuff – pink ones and brown ones. Anyway –

MS. RICHARDS: So you and Michelle were folding the laundry –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and we were talking about – I think it was her idea – making a magazine like this. So we invited a bunch of women — and this loft used to be configured differently; the table used to be over there — and I remember sitting around the table. And I don't know, maybe there were 15 women. And we were talking about – we did all this stuff earlier, and there were the artist-curated shows and there were the co-op galleries,

and –

MS. RICHARDS: And you had invested time in writing about art, as well, right?

MS. KOZLOFF: A little bit, not much. Not much. Anyway –

MS. RICHARDS: Or edited publications? I have some notes about –

MS. KOZLOFF: With my students, my students. So Lucy was there.

MS. RICHARDS: Lucy Lippard.

MS. KOZLOFF: Lucy Lippard was there. I think Ellen Lanyon was there – I don't know why – visiting from Chicago. I don't know why I think so. She lived in Chicago then. Mimi was there. Joan Semmel was there. Joan Snyder might have been there. I can't remember everyone that was there. Michelle invited some of the people. I invited some of the people.

MS. RICHARDS: Mary Beth Edelson?

MS. KOZLOFF: She may have been there. She recently had moved to New York from Washington, where she was very active. Anyway, I don't remember who all was there. I gave my *Heresies* archive to the feminist archive at Rutgers.

But there were all these ideas put out. Some people wanted to start a school, and some people wanted to start a magazine, and some people didn't want to do either, and some people wanted to do both.

So I ended up working on the magazine, which didn't have a name at that point. But some of the women were involved in both. And so those who wanted to start a magazine, we started to call separate meetings and invite other people in who wanted to work with us. That was the beginning of *Heresies*. We met for a long time before we ever put out a magazine, hashing out ideas and stuff. It was very exciting. It was a great group.

MS. RICHARDS: And you were willing to take time away from your studio practice to be involved in this magazine?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, we all did. I remember that some of us had young children – four of us had young children: Lucy, Harmony Hammond, Mary Beth, and me. We had a weekend retreat at Joan Snyder's farm and we brought our children with us. And we got a lot done –

MS. RICHARDS: Was that when she had the farm on Long Island?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, Martins Creek – in Pennsylvania.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, right.

MS. KOZLOFF: Where Larry still lives –

MS. RICHARD: Larry Fink, her ex-husband.

MS. KOZLOFF: Martins Creek? Yes. There were two of those retreats, but I wasn't at the second one. I was away. I was traveling a lot in those years.

But the first one, each of us told our life story, and it was taped. I don't know what happened to the tape. Since we had a whole weekend, we allowed as much time as people needed. Some of it was very emotional, but it was a real bonding experience. And then we divided into work committees. We had the distribution committee, the mailing committee, the design committee, the – I don't know.

MS. RICHARDS: Editorial?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, no because each issue had a separate editorial group. We came up with this very complicated structure – which was not efficient, but it was exciting – so that it was going to be an issue-oriented magazine. There were subjects that each of us in that group of 21 had a passionate interest in.

So those became the first five or six issues. And whoever from the collective wanted to work on those issues could, and outside women who were not in the mother collective, the publishing collective, came in and worked. So I worked on only one issue, *Women's Traditional Arts*, which was the fourth issue.

The first issue was a political issue. The second issue was *Communications and Space Among Women*. The third issue was *Lesbian Art and Artists*, then *Women's Traditional Arts*. And there was the *Great Goddess* fifth.

But there were – those issues all came out of the mother collective. And sometimes there were more, and sometimes less, members of the mother collective on issues, but in the beginning, we had to have at least one on an issue.

Later, outside groups came to us. Like, the architecture and the music issues, for instance, were done largely by outside groups, though the mother collective did a lot of the publication work on it. And these were very – the issue I worked on, we worked on it for a year. That's how long people would work on it. Even though it was a quarterly, we never brought out four a year – maybe once.

And my group would be meeting a couple times a week on our issue, and every piece that came in, we all read and we all discussed. It wasn't like there was an editor; there were seven of us. And we got, I don't know, 150 documents. First, we did our outreach; and then we'd read them; and then we'd fight about them; and then we'd edit them; and then we'd re-edit them; and then we'd fight about them some more.

MS. RICHARDS: Everything by committee?

MS. KOZLOFF: Everybody looked at everything. Everybody looked at everything. And there were big fights because there were pieces that some people wanted and other people didn't want. And then we would ask them to rewrite them, and we still wouldn't like them. Same thing with the visuals. So that's what it was like. But I was only involved – I left after three years.

MS. RICHARDS: Why did you leave?

MS. KOZLOFF: I burned out. I left after our issue came out. And I always do that, I have to say. All the groups I've been in, I've been involved in the early years, and then I quit. I don't know why. It's my pattern. I love the early stages.

MS. RICHARDS: Maybe that's when you're most effective.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. I can't stick – I can't slog it out after a while, especially when there are interpersonal problems. I can't deal with it. And also, I get restless and then I say, "Oh, I'm not doing my own work. I can't do this anymore." So I leave.

MS. RICHARDS: Right. Maybe it's a good time to stop right now.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay – didn't get that far.

MS. RICHARDS: Actually, no, I still have a little more. If it's okay with you, talk, at some point – it could be now because it's a relatively short subject, or it could be later – about being married to another artist. Max switched to being a photographer around this time. And questions about that – is that – okay –

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, okay.

MS. RICHARDS: I wanted to ask you just a bit about being married to another artist. While Max started out as a critic and art historian, he –

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, Max was – no, Max was always an artist. Max went to the University of Chicago, Chicago Art Institute, and IIT [Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago] and was quite serious about his painting when he was young, and paints to this day. Though he's never really shown his painting, it's important to him, and he gets great pleasure from it. But he became known as a writer, and that became his professional work and took over a great deal of his life.

And then at a certain point, his interest and his writing – his critical writing — was more and more on photography and less and less on other art forms, and he started doing more and more photography. In the beginning, when I first knew him, it was mostly just tourist photography, but then he became a street photographer. And what happened was, the reason he began showing it, was Valerie Jaudon was here one day, and Max showed her his photographs, which were very small. They were this big.

MS. RICHARDS: They look like – what you're indicating is like a Polaroid or a three by five.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, maybe a little bigger than that, but they were printed in a drugstore, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Three by five, these days.

MS. KOZLOFF: These little photographs, and they were of store windows around Lower Manhattan. I remember he spread them all over the kitchen table, like playing cards or something – and she really liked them. She sent Holly Solomon over, and she really liked them.

She gave him a show, and he started having a career as a photographer, which continues and — he never stopped painting, and now he's actually spending more time painting than photographing, at this point. So I'm used to his being an artist, though I don't know – I feel that my art career sort of overshadowed his. And I have a little guilt about that.

MS. RICHARDS: Have you critiqued each other's work?

MS. KOZLOFF: He critiques mine more than I critique his. He never shows me his writing until he's written the final draft, is ready to send it in. And I can comment on it, but it's sort of a done deal.

And I do look at his paintings and make comments, but I ask him to look at my work and give me feedback. I think it's been very good for me. I don't, now, anymore, do it all that often. But he was always very critical, didn't pull his punches. And so in a way, whatever I got out in the world, I was prepared for.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you have a complete open-door policy, as it were, that he could just come into the studio anytime, or did he know that he would wait to be invited?

MS. KOZLOFF: He can come in anytime, but usually, I will say, "I want to show you this. I want your feedback." I don't always take his feedback, but I listen to it. Very often, when I'm doing something new, he doesn't really like it, and then he comes around or gets persuaded. But sometimes I hear what he says, that there's something wrong, and I know I have to do something more, but I don't know what, and then I –

MS. RICHARDS: So he doesn't know exactly what, but he's giving you a hint that there's something to look at.

MS. KOZLOFF: Not necessarily. Well, if something is bothering him or he doesn't like something, I will look at it again, because he knows my work so well and I do value his opinion. And I'll say, "No, I want it that way." But maybe three days later, I'll say, "Maybe I should do something else to it," and I might not have felt that way if I hadn't had his critical eye.

MS. RICHARDS: There have been a few joint exhibitions – not exactly collaborations, I guess, but exhibitions – one that started in, I think, 1978, this first one at the University of New Mexico. [It was in the art building's gallery.] Were you very open to the idea, or did it take some –

MS. KOZLOFF: I liked it. I was actually always more open to the idea than he was. He was always a little reluctant.

MS. RICHARDS: I mean, there's issues. There's, what's the point of a show just because you're married, or that maybe it's to compare, and maybe you wouldn't want to be compared to each other.

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] The show we had – the traveling show called *Crossed Purposes* – that was later.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, that was – right, this was 1998.

MS. KOZLOFF: But that was something that we initiated, and we organized the tour. Basically, I did. I really wanted to do it. It was Moira Roth, my friend, who did the interviews with us who really urged us to do this. She could really see certain connections, and she persuaded me. And that show had a lot of emphasis on travel. It was my first bodies of mapping work and Max's street photographs in other places.

I think it may have been a problem. I never want to be viewed as a tourist artist, and I don't think Max does, either. It traveled, and it got a lot of press in different places, and it was interesting press. We weren't put down for it, but I started to feel that there was too much emphasis – people were seeing it mostly being about travel and –

MS. RICHARDS: As a kind of a privileged sort of situation?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I don't think anyone wrote that, but I became a little uncomfortable in that being the primary content, because it really isn't for me.

MS. RICHARDS: But Moira links the two of you through that theme, is that right? When I remember the catalogue, that was a link.

MS. KOZLOFF: That was one of the themes, but she asked us about other things, too. She's a very good interviewer, and she knew us so well for so long. We edited those with her. The one that was hard to do was the joint interview that she did with us. Vicki Goldberg also did a joint interview with us, once, and that was very hard, for me at least – and then editing it later.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you think, though, that you learned something about your own work, that it was valuable, in some sense, to see in the –

MS. KOZLOFF: I think it was valuable, and I think –

MS. RICHARDS: – juxtaposed to Max's.

MS. KOZLOFF: I think there are very many connections in our work. When you live with somebody that long, then there's a kind of density and a kind of layering and a kind of richness of color, just in the aesthetics of the work, that you can connect.

MS. RICHARDS: Okay, this is a good spot to stop for the day.

[Audio break.]

MS. RICHARDS: This is Judith Richards interviewing Joyce Kozloff on July 13, 2011, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. And this is the continuation of disc two.

MS. KOZLOFF: So I started to think about the challenge that was being raised that I wasn't really breaking down the hierarchy between high art and craft. So I thought I should learn a little bit about craft media and get my toes wet. I had a fine arts training; I had no background in craft. I flunked ceramics in art school because I couldn't throw on the wheel, and that was what you had to do.

I had to take that as part of my art ed training. I had to take a course in metal, jewelry, and another course – a semester in each – in ceramics. You had to master throwing on the wheel. And he had this shelf called "rejected for obvious reasons," and those were the pots that he wouldn't fire. By the end of the semester, it was lined with my efforts. Yes, that was not a good experience, but anyway, so much of my sources for my paintings were ceramics – were tiles on facades in many different countries.

And I loved the – I don't know what it is. It's not so much the clay. I don't make things with clay. It's surface to paint on. But what I loved was the glazes – the luminosity and the depth – and the brilliance of them. So Max and I went to teach at the University of New Mexico in 1978, and it was the spring semester.

MS. RICHARDS: How did that come up? Did you know other people –

MS. KOZLOFF: We were hired by Nicholas Cikovsky, who was the chairman of the art department.

MS. RICHARDS: Cikovsky?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, it's C-I-K-O-V-S-K-Y. But it was wonderful because it was the only time we were both hired to teach at the same place at the same salary at the same time. And it was not so easy for Nik to be taken out of school in the middle of the year and brought there, but we did. We did that, and I decided I would start working in ceramics there.

I started working in the ceramics room with the teacher, whose name was Roger Sweet, S-W-E-E-T. He was a young guy. He had long hair and rode a motorcycle. It was like a crossover, because I was going from high art to craft, and he was going from craft to high art.

Under the Sandia Mountains outside of Albuquerque is, like, the world's largest deposit of nuclear waste. There's a nuclear museum there, and he was fascinated by that. And he was building out of brick – brick is ceramics – he was building a bomb shelter. He was doing a conceptual piece, and I wanted to do very, kind of, folkloric stuff.

So he made it very simple for me. He said, "I don't have to teach you how to mix glazes and clay and all that stuff and first-year ceramics." He said, "Use the commercial glazes that the hobbyists use." And we made – in the metal shop there, he helped me have these templates made for the shapes, which were hexagons and stars that were metal, and you cut them out like cookie cutters. And so we did that.

And then I was making these little star and hexagon cookies in the ceramics room, which was the basement of the fine arts building, and firing them and glazing them with these commercial glazes out of these little jars, which came in hundreds of colors — I got them from a ceramics store there — and they'd be fired.

My students were graduate students and advanced undergraduate students in painting. They all had their studios, and I was giving them critiques. I was also teaching a feminist course there, so I had a lot of students I was involved with. They knew, if they wanted to find me, that I was in the ceramics room all the time.

And these accrued until I had boxes of them to take back to New York, which became the beginning of the floor

piece. I remember once, Nick Cikovsky found me there in the ceramics room and said, "Don't let the students see you doing this." There was such a bias against craft.

MS. RICHARDS: The floor piece you mentioned was part of *An Interior Decorated* [installation, Tibor de Nagy Gallery, 1978-79].

MS. KOZLOFF: *An Interior Decorated*, yes, yes. But in any case, it was somehow beneath contempt to be doing something like that, for a New York painter. That was interesting. And a number of my students were doing very feminist work, very interesting work.

Then I came back to New York, and I had these boxes of these tiles. I didn't actually know what form they were going to take in the beginning. And then I started going to cooking supply stores and buying all kinds of cookie cutters, all kinds of shapes – mostly geometrical shapes, but sometimes other shapes – because the pilasters in that installation, each one of them is different. Each one of them has different-shaped tiles and different imagery painted on it.

MS. RICHARDS: Going back for a second, when you're talking about that installation, was it when you were in the basement doing the tiles in New Mexico – did you conceive of the parts of that installation?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I wanted to do an installation. I think that the parts maybe weren't all worked out, but I liked the idea of making this provocation of alluding to interior decoration. After a while, I realized that all my models for my paintings were decorated rooms, whether they were in mosques or cathedrals or other kinds of public spaces, and I wanted to make a room.

I wanted to fully decorate it. Originally, I had this idea of a silk ceiling based on Islamic star patterns, but would look like the sky because it would have these little silvery stars in it. And I went down to Philadelphia, to the Fabric Workshop [Fabric Workshop and Museum], and proposed it to –

MS. RICHARDS: Was this the first time you had been there?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Some of my friends had worked there. She would actually approach people to work there, but I –

MS. RICHARDS: You're talking about Kippy Stroud [Fabric Workshop Director].

MS. KOZLOFF: Kippy Stroud. I decided to approach her because I wanted to do this. And so I went down there, and I told her this idea. And it became modified, eventually. That would have been a lot of printing for them to do, and maybe not the most practical thing. And then what would you do with the light fixtures at the Tiber de Nagy Gallery and everything?

MS. RICHARDS: You were imagining this space at the gallery?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. It was going to be my next show at the gallery. And so they ended up being on the walls, not on the ceiling. So it was thinking about the room: thinking about the ceiling, thinking about the floor, and thinking about the walls. That was the first room I did it. I later did it in three different, other spaces, and adapted it to the spaces. That was interesting for me because I had never done anything off the canvas.

MS. RICHARDS: So you're saying when you came back to New York, you were going to cooking stores, kitchen supply stores, looking for cookie-cutter shapes?

MS. KOZLOFF: Cookie cutters, right.

MS. RICHARDS: Were there other sources that you pulled from for that piece?

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, the floor piece – what I painted on these little shapes – the stars are about four inches across, and the hexagons are about two inches across, so they're small, but they're all painted. I painted motifs from the decorative arts of, I don't know, 20 or 30 different cultures. I just had books and copied them out of books, and it just accrued. Eventually, there were boxes and boxes and boxes of them.

MS. RICHARDS: What was your idea behind pulling from many, many cultures in this one, rather than one or two or three – but bringing so many different sources together?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. Maybe I finished with one and then I went on to the next. I don't know.

MS. RICHARDS: The best of each one?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I mean, I had to paint a lot of images. And I love the idea of pulling together diverse things.

I always have.

So then I didn't quite know about the form. Now, from a distance, I could critique it. I ideally thought of the floor inserted into a floor so that one could walk right across it. For a temporary, three-week gallery installation, that wasn't possible – to rip up the floor – and he had a carpet on the floor.

So I built a little platform; it's about four inches high. He wanted me to build a platform because he didn't want people walking on it and tripping on it, and with a platform, they wouldn't. Someone with high heels, if they tripped, they could sue the gallery or something, so – and it was made in sections on wood panels.

I always use the analogy of the dining room table, where you pull it out and put the sections in. So it was shown in different configurations, depending on the size and shape of the room. There are these different wood panels, and they fit together. And then I would use a caulk in between them so I could pull it apart afterward – a caulk that didn't fully dry. But how I did them was I made these crude cookie-cutter tiles, that weren't crude because I wanted that look; that was just the best I could do.

MS. RICHARDS: Where did you find to fire them in Manhattan?

MS. KOZLOFF: Originally, I took them to a woman who had a kiln on the Bowery, and then I bought a kiln.

MS. RICHARDS: Was there a place on La Guardia Place?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I bought glazes there. I bought all my ceramics supplies there. I bought my clay and my glazes there. And I may have fired there, but pretty shortly after I got back, I bought an electric kiln and did it at home. So I made it on this raised platform, and the platform came apart, too. The piece is in a museum in Germany, and I think it's in crates in storage. I doubt if it's ever shown. But I did install it there, and it was installed there for a while.

MS. RICHARDS: What museum is that?

MS. KOZLOFF: The Neue Galerie/Sammlung Ludwig in Aachen, Germany. But they built a new building since then, and I think it may have stayed installed in the old building. I would doubt whether it was reinstalled in the new building. But in any case, they own it, and they own some of the other parts to the installation – a few. The pilasters and silks were all sold to different people.

Ideally, if I were in a position to have kept it together, I would have. But I really wasn't. The gallery wanted to sell, and people wanted to buy them. It got a lot of publicity. So I have a list of where they are, but they're all over the place.

So then I was having conversations with an architect –

MS. RICHARDS: I'm sorry, that show was in 1980, then?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, 1979, but it traveled.

MS. RICHARDS: I wanted to ask you about the installation at the Whitney Biennial that you were in, in 1979.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, the installation at Tibor's was in 1979, and – just, let's talk about *An Interior Decorated*. Then it went to the Everson Museum, and then it went to the Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Everson is in Syracuse, New York. And then it went to the Renwick at the Smithsonian in Washington.

Each room, the floor piece was reconfigured. At the Mint, which was a long, narrow room, it was twice as long and half as wide as at Tibor's and the Renwick. And at the Everson, it was not the complete piece because the room was small. So it has that option. It has that flexibility to it. I was very interested in actually working with the room. In the Everson, I chose this small, intimate room. I could have been in a painting gallery, but it was the ceramics gallery, and it had benches around the side where they would put the pots.

Now, they didn't have the pots during my installation, but part of the piece were these lithographs I did with Judith at Solo on Chinese silk paper from Chinatown. And we lined the benches like a wainscot in that room. And I did a wainscot on one of the walls at Tibor's, and also at the Renwick.

MS. RICHARDS: In tile?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, with these lithographs on silk. Not at the Mint. There were spaces that could be utilized that way in those rooms, and then there were the long hanging pieces and the square hanging pieces that were two sizes that I did at the Fabric Workshop, where I went twice.

I went once, and I did the square ones. They're about five feet square. They're panels of patterns that we printed and sewed together in different combinations. And we printed them in different-color inks on different-color fabric, so there's variation. No two are alike. But the motifs are the same.

MS. RICHARDS: And that was a good experience, working at the Fabric Workshop?

MS. KOZLOFF: That was great. It was great.

MS. RICHARDS: Was there a particular person you worked with there?

MS. KOZLOFF: Kathy Halton, a wonderful person I worked with there. I remember sitting on the tables at night, when all the printers left, and touching up. It was very intense. It was around the clock.

And then we did the long ones, and they went from floor to ceiling in the gallery. They were designed to do that. That was around the time of the King Tut show at the Met, and I called those *Tut's Wallpaper*, those pieces. And between all the silks, the square ones and the long ones – the square ones don't have a title – there are these pilasters. Altogether, I made about 25 pilasters. I can show you one that's here. I own one if you want to see it.

So each of the pilasters is different. They're different combinations of shapes, and they're painted with different kinds of motifs. I saw the whole show as an anthology or a compilation of the decorative arts, an homage to the decorative arts. It was very ambitious, actually. The installation – the first one at Tibor's – one of the problems was the dark carpet underneath the floor piece.

Anyway, it was okay. The reason I did the pilasters one foot short of the height of the ceiling of the gallery came out of a conversation with an architectural historian friend, Robert Jensen – J-E-N-S-E-N. He was talking about ornament, and I was very interested in what's the difference between ornament and decoration. Ornament is more of an architectural term.

We were talking about this installation and brainstorming about it, and he said, "Well, you don't want to imply that it's structural, and if it doesn't go all the way up to the ceiling, it won't look like it's holding up the walls. So it's clearly decorative." So that's what I did. They're eight feet tall, and I guess the gallery ceilings may have been nine feet tall. Then I adapted them to different rooms and different heights.

But as I just told you, there's a channel routed out of the back of them. They're mounted on wood. They're mounted on plywood, actually, and then a little peg would be put on the wall and they would be just hung on it. It was very important to me that they be flat against the wall – that they not hang like on a picture hook, or something. So the arrangement of the pilasters and the silks varied according to the room.

But my original idea was that I wanted to have this feeling of flickering light. I was thinking of the Alhambra – the way the light comes in through the perforated-wood carved doors and the carved stucco work and things like that. So I used a lot of luster glazes, which are iridescent, metallic glazes. And I also printed with a lot of metallic and iridescent inks on the silk.

I wanted to have this shimmery quality; that was a very important goal. It started with the idea of the ceiling piece that I never did.

And it got reviewed everywhere. Some were positive and some were very negative. It really hit a nerve – and in fact, some of the criticism was very brutal, and I actually went back into therapy around that time and started dealing with it. It was really hard.

MS. RICHARDS: What was the nature of the negative criticism that was so painful?

MS. KOZLOFF: I'd have to reread it. I have deliberately not read it all this time. But there was one piece by Donald Kuspit, which not only criticized me, it criticized several others, attacking decorative feminism as not being true feminism, from almost a moral point of view. He was supporting another kind of feminist art. And he's a man – [laughs] – and it sort of put up a barrier between women artists who were feminists, who were friends, who were being lined up with opposing ideologies.

And I never really felt that way, actually. I always felt very interested and supportive of all different kinds of feminist art – wouldn't want everybody to make the same kind of art. But then it was also attacked for being – there was another piece, by Corinne Robbins, who had supported Pattern painting, but she felt — I can't remember her words and I may be misquoting them – but it had become, I don't know, somehow trivialized and decadent.

She talked about Patsy Norvell's etched-glass pieces and Jane Kaufman's beaded screens and my tiles, that all of this was – not high art. [Laughs.] But these weren't just reviews - I had negative reviews, definitely - these were

whole articles. And I think that always happens when something becomes touted and mainstream, and then there are people who are going to line up against you, too. But we were young. We weren't prepared for it.

First of all, I think we were more comfortable being on the outside and feeling like we were making a provocation. And then all of a sudden, there were lots of shows and people writing about it. It happened very fast, and then it was over very fast. It lasted only for a couple of years, and so we weren't prepared for it to happen. And of course, we were not prepared for it to be over, either. That's the way it is. I'm sure this has happened to many other groups, and it's just natural. It's sort of this cycle.

But it was a very complicated time. There were a lot of deadlines and pressures. I started having studio assistants working in my studio. There was a time when I was making all these cookie cutters and tiles and firing them when it was almost like a little cottage industry. And I had a family, and people were coming and going, and I was firing at night. I was firing around the clock. I was very excited by what I was doing, and I was not prepared for being attacked to the extent that I was. But one survives, and sometimes you actually can learn from that.

MS. RICHARDS: How was the experience of being in that Whitney Biennial, and how did that happen?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, well, I'd been in the 1972 painting annual, so it wasn't the first time. A couple of the Pattern artists were in that 1979 Biennial. And for the Biennial, the curator, Barbara Haskell, who came to my studio, had the idea of putting together these large collages and pilasters. Or I did, or something.

For some reason, she didn't want the elements from *An Interior Decorated*, except the pilasters. Or maybe they weren't available. I don't remember. I don't remember how it came together, but I think she wanted those large collage pieces, and maybe I wanted it to be a more architectural wall. And maybe I suggested adding some of the pilasters to it. I can't remember.

MS. RICHARDS: Overall, were you pleased with the –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And the response?

MS. KOZLOFF: I think it was good. It was mentioned in a number of the reviews of it. And I did those kinds of one-wall installations in other museum shows around that time with various elements that I had.

MS. RICHARDS: You also started, right after that, around 1980, doing – there were a few collaborations.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Clayworks, Betty Woodman, and then there was the quilt.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, I can tell you about both of those projects.

MS. RICHARDS: Were those important –

MS. KOZLOFF: At the time, they were very important, because it was more about extending into the decorative arts. There was this project called *The Artist and the Quilt* [1983] that was initiated by some women in Washington – a woman named Charlotte Robinson. Something like 20 artists were partnered with quilt makers.

MS. RICHARDS: This is Washington, D.C.

MS. KOZLOFF: Washington, D.C. But the show traveled all over the country, and there was a book. I worked with a wonderful quilt maker named Patricia Newkirk, who subsequently died of breast cancer. But it was a very positive experience. I did the study, which was actually based on Islamic star patterns, but it's similar to certain American quilts. And in fact, my quilt was more traditional-looking than most of the others, if you look up that project.

I went down to the Washington area, where Pat lived – the quilter – and we went to fabric stores. I chose a whole lot of fabrics for her to work from, calicos and ginghams, and so they were like American fabrics but very small patterns. It was a pieced quilt, and she worked for a year on it. There are two of them, the one that's part of the project. The project ended up in some public collection. I forget. And I own the other one. I actually commissioned her to make me one, and I'm happy to have it.

And the collaboration with Betty Woodman: Betty Woodman and George Woodman, initially, lived in Boulder, Colorado, and were on the faculty at the University of Colorado. I did a visiting artist gig there in 1978, and Betty and I became friendly and –

MS. RICHARDS: University of Colorado, Boulder.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes – for a week. And she said to me, "Would you like to do a collaboration?" It was her idea. And I said, "Sure," and then it happened two years later at a place that she found in New York called Clayworks, which was on Bond Street. It's not there anymore. The idea was that she would make the shapes and I would decorate them.

At that time, George was painting her pots, and so it was a natural thing for her to think about. Maybe she had begun, by 1980, to paint her own pots. I painted them with Islamic patterns, but she made the shapes. But we had discussions about it. She kind of modified the shapes she was working with to make more faceted surfaces for me to paint. And the clay was moist enough that I could incise into them, which I did.

Betty works very fast and I work very slow. And Betty works on the wheel. These pots were coming off the wheel, and I was sitting there, painting the first one, and they were lining up on a table behind me. I felt like I was in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. And I was lying awake, not being able to sleep at night, worrying about how I could possibly ever catch up with her.

Every day, there were more and more and more. Finally, one day, I went in and I said to her, "Betty, I'm not going to be able to paint all these pots." And she said, "Don't worry about it. The ones you don't paint, I'll paint." And that's what happened, and we ended up with pitchers, cups and saucers, trays and vases. And we had a show at my gallery, at Tibor de Nagy Gallery, in early 1981.

It also had a tile wainscot piece of mine and some of Betty's own pots, in addition to the collaboration. It was a small gallery on the floor below their main gallery that Tibor had for a short amount of time. So it was just perfect. And then we never worked together again. But she also did a collaboration with Cynthia Carlson at that time, I think also at Clayworks. That's all I have to say about that.

MS. RICHARDS: Around that time, you were exploring all these different ways of working, and I think maybe the next major project was called *Visionary Ornament* [1986]. Maybe not, but you did a series of watercolor –

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, but let me just say something: I did my last painting on canvas in 1977. It was called *a maze,* and it's six by 15 feet, which was the size of the last couple of large paintings I did. I did a lot of work on paper over the years, but somehow painting on canvas had become, for me and for some other feminists, associated with the history of Western, male art.

And even though I love painting, and that's what I was trained to do, I stopped doing it. And I got further and further away from it during the years I was doing public art, as well. I didn't do another painting on canvas until 1997, which was 20 years later. I had one more canvas in my studio, which was 78 inches by 78 inches, and it was there for years. And then I knew I wasn't going to do it, and I gave it to my upstairs neighbor, Diana Kurz.

Some years later, she gave it back to me. It wasn't the right size for her. I painted it in 1997. Anyway, I worked in many, many, many different media over the years. I don't like to define myself by media. I just like to say I'm a visual artist. But I seem to be doing a lot of painting now.

MS. RICHARDS: There's a lot of painting going on now, as well.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. I always used a brush. I painted on every single tile. And in my public art, too, I painted on every single tile. I don't think people necessarily realize that, because a lot of public art is fabricated by outside people.

MS. RICHARDS: This is around the time when public art projects began for you.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, right.

MS. RICHARDS: The San Francisco Airport was '83.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, but I got the Harvard Square commission in 1979 [*New England Decorative Arts*]. See, some of these projects go on for years and years and years. So the first project I did was Harvard Square, but it wasn't completed until after several of the others.

MS. RICHARDS: Till '85.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. And you want me to tell you how that happened, or did you want to talk about something else?

MS. RICHARDS: No, no, no. I wanted to go into the whole period of time when you were working on commissions, even though it overlaps with other work we haven't spoken about yet.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. So what happened was I got a form in the mail, which they probably sent out to thousands of artists.

MS. RICHARDS: This is the Harvard Square.

MS. KOZLOFF: They were starting a new transit art program in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Arts on the Line. And that was the first transit art program in the country. Now there are many of them. The woman who created it is Jennifer Dowley – D-O-W-L-E-Y – who later went to the NEA. They asked artists to send in slides, so I sent in slides of my tile work.

I forgot about it, and I don't know, six months or a year later or something, I got a letter that I was a finalist for Harvard Square. What they did, what's traditionally done in public art, is you're given a fee to make a proposal. A certain number of artists make a proposal, and they choose the winner. So I had a lot of advice from this architectural friend, Robert Jensen, and Valerie Jaudon, who had been working in architects' offices. She worked for Mitchell Giurgola – M-I-T-C-H-E-L-L, G-I-U-R-G-O-L-A. And both of them –

MS. RICHARDS: Sorry, G-I-U-R-

MS. KOZLOFF: G-O-L-A. Both of them gave me very, very good advice. So I made a model. And I did this same method forever – for 20 years. I would find an architectural student. I'd put up a sign at, usually at Cooper, and give them the floor plans, blueprints, and they would make me a model – a three-dimensional model, a cheap model in cardboard.

And then I would imagine moving through that space, because I would look at those floor plans and I couldn't visualize the space. Later, I learned how, but not in the beginning. And so it was just a mystery to me until I saw the model. And then I would sort of imagine myself this little person moving through the space and what you could see from different vantage points.

MS. RICHARDS: And these were spaces that didn't exist yet.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. I mean, sometimes they did, but in the case of Harvard Square, no; they were building the transit system.

Then I would make watercolor studies, and I would take them to the xerox store and have them reduced down to that scale and put them in the model. I'd make them at a scale I could work at.

So for Harvard Square, in which the piece is 83 feet long, the original drawing was 83 inches long, to scale for that wall. And then I had it reduced down to put into the model. And that was essentially my presentation. What Valerie told me, which was great psychology, is that what architects have against artists is we have so much freedom and they have to compromise so much.

I was given a budget. I had to make a budget. For me, that was always very hard in the early years – to anticipate all the costs. So you have to make a budget, and you have to stay within the amount of money that they're given. And you have to work within the space and all of that.

So she said, "If you say to them, 'I designed this piece for 65 feet long because there isn't enough money in the budget, but ideally, it should be 83 feet long because that's the size of the wall,' they'll say, 'Wow, this woman is really willing to compromise.'" And so that's what I did. I was very nervous. I had never done this before.

I presented the proposal, and in the room were the architects, representatives of the Harvard Square community, and arts specialists, and the people from the art commission.

The architects started looking at the model when I said that, and they said, "Let's see if we can figure out how to give her the rest of the wall." And I was, like, having to hold back my laughter. She was so smart. And in fact, it is 83 feet long. But later, I had a lot of problems with the architects. I don't think I should go into the stories about each project.

MS. RICHARDS: But pick exemplary ones.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Well, but this was the first one. Sometimes the relationships with the architects were great. They were real collaborations. Sometimes I had to struggle against someone who really didn't want any art there or who had a different aesthetic and was stuck with me because I was chosen.

Sometimes, the administrator facilitated things so that I didn't really have to deal with all the people involved. And other times they obstructed the process, and I had to get around them. So it really varied. I think of myself as someone who's easy to get along with, but not when someone gets in the way of my work. I just lose it. I go ballistic. I had some of the worst fights in my life doing public art. I don't even really like to think about it.

But in Harvard Square, Jennifer was so wonderful, and she walked me through that – and I'm sure, every other artist. And so I was chosen for the project. And the tiles were made. I painted them, but I didn't make them. They are octagons and notched crosses and squares, and they interlock. There are two different patterns that break up through it – two different patterns, each made of two different shapes.

So there are about eight different passages in that piece. They were made by a woman in Boulder, Colorado, who Betty found for me, who had a small ceramics factory. And they were perfect. I sent her my diagrams, and she had to make – like, in the corners and where different things interlocked – these different kinds of shapes. She sent them to me. They were numbered. They were boxed. They were perfectly flat. And she also made the tiles for me for another project – for the Wilmington project.

MS. RICHARDS: Her name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Garet Wohl, Brimstone Tileworks. She later went to architecture school, herself. But so they were made by this woman, and then they were painted and glazed and fired in my studio. And my studio assistants were helping me put the clear glaze over the top and load and unload the kiln. It was a big piece.

But the difficulty there was with the architects, who – first of all, they didn't want me on the wall I chose. I saw the models for the station at the first visit and immediately saw the wall that I wanted. It's a curved wall. It's a pedestrian ramp between the buses and the subway trains. And they wanted my piece to be what you face from the platform waiting for the trains, so the trains would be going past it.

I didn't want that wall. First of all, I thought it would get dirty. Second of all, I thought it would always be obstructed. And this other wall, which was this beautiful, curved wall on this ramp, would only have pedestrians going up and down, and it was interesting to me because you're close to it at the beginning, and then as you go down the ramp, it's way above your head. But there's another ramp on the other side of it that goes up, so as you go up the other ramp, you're closer to it again.

So the detail in the piece has to do with how close or how far the viewer is. And I presented it. The wall was beige. And it was beige, plain tiles. It didn't have a red line through it. This was the red line station. The other walls had a red line through them, and I didn't want a red line through my artwork. So that's another reason I chose this wall. It's all coming back to me as I'm talking to you.

Then I designed this piece called *New England Decorative Arts*, which was highly colorful, which has these different passages. One is quilts; one is bowsprits; one is sailing boats; one is gravestones. And in a meeting with them I'll never forget, with Jennifer, they said, "Well, we think you should change the color of the mural." And I said, "What color do you think it should be?" And they said, "Beige." So basically, they wanted it to disappear into the wall and go away. But they didn't have their way. It's a station that thousands of people go through every day, and it's a very public piece. And I'm proud of it.

MS. RICHARDS: I want to ask you some general questions about all these commissions you did – I think 15 or 16 – for 20 years, '83 to '03.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: What did you hope the public response would be, and how much were you thinking about that when you were creating them?

MS. KOZLOFF: Very much, very much. It was part of my political stance. I wanted to reach a broader audience than the people who go to art galleries and museums. I really loved the idea of making art in a place for everybody.

MS. RICHARDS: Is that what kept you going despite all the difficulties of doing all these commissions?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, well, also the opportunity to make things on a really large scale that I could never finance myself and the challenge of working in these different kinds of spaces. I really like having parameters. And I would work from local sources, and I like that. I like all those givens and then seeing what I could do with it. And what was the other question?

MS. RICHARDS: Do you conceive of the pieces with that –

MS. KOZLOFF: So when I conceived of the piece, I tried to think about the public that would experience it. I looked at a lot of other public art that was going on, and I felt that some of it was condescending to the public. Some of it was talking down. And I didn't want to do that. But I didn't want to, also, make work that was inaccessible to people. So I tried to make work that people could enter.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you recall any works you saw that you thought were especially successful, wonderful

examples of previous public art that you learned –

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, my favorite piece is Simon Rodia's *Watts Towers* in L.A. But, no, I had lots of models. But you mean in terms of contemporary art? See, I don't know what dates things were done. One of the great pieces is Maya Lin's Vietnam War memorial. I don't know if that was finished before – around that time.

There are many pieces of public art I love, but I don't know if they were finished contemporary with what I was doing or slightly before. And also, historically, the kinds of public art in piazzas in Italy that I had grown up with.

MS. RICHARDS: Was it possible for you to anticipate correctly, in hindsight, maintenance issues and wear and tear and those kinds of things that might happen?

MS. KOZLOFF: That's one of the worst problems. These agencies, sometimes they're only set up for the one project. They're not ongoing. Sometimes they are ongoing. It's a lot sexier to raise money to create the projects than to maintain and repair them. And in a lot of places, that never happened. In Harvard Square, that beautiful, curved wall wasn't correctly engineered, so that the joints on the curves weren't in the right places and it kept cracking.

The crack would come down in a zigzag line, vertically through the tiles. There was once a really bad one, and I replaced those tiles. But if you don't take the wall apart, the crack is going to reappear. And I haven't been there in years. I'm kind of scared to go. I'm sure there are cracks in that wall, and also in Buffalo [Humboldt-Hospital Subway Station, 1984].

I kept writing this guy at the MTA who was in charge of it in Boston, over and over and over for years. I have a whole file on it about repairing the wall. Finally, I gave up. It was the same thing in Buffalo, because the project ended. One of the important things when you negotiate a contract in public art – and I always worked with Barbara Hoffman, who's my friend and —

MS. RICHARDS: An attorney?

MS. KOZLOFF: — yes, who wrote the basic artist public art contract — you always negotiate for a repair and maintenance clause. But then if there's no money later, how are you going to get them to do it? I always had it in my contracts, but it's very different in a public place than in a museum. It's not being handled with white gloves, and it's not got temperature control.

That's another thing with tiles and grout. My tiles are low-fire. That's how I could get the bright colors. They're low-fire glazes and low-fire clay, and if there's freezing and thawing, and moisture gets in, then they start to crack. I did ask about the temperature in these places, and usually there wouldn't be freezing temperatures, even if they weren't fully heated.

But anyway, if they were below ground, particularly, there shouldn't be. The problem there and in Buffalo was the engineering of the walls. I don't know about cracks in any of my other artworks. I don't go back to revisit them unless I happen to be there, and I'm never there. But I haven't heard anything about it.

MS. RICHARDS: You did a few private commissions, as well.

MS. KOZLOFF: I did a few – very few.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you seek those out, or were those –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, they came to me, usually, I guess, through the gallery. I did a bathroom ceiling on Park Avenue, and I did a fireplace for people in Cincinnati. I was in a show at the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati called *Arabesque* [1978] – an early decorative show of six artists. We each had a room. It was a wonderful experience. It was Robert Kushner, Robert Zakanitch, Kim MacConnel, Ned Smyth, me, and Barbara Schwartz. I think I got everybody.

I did my first tile installation in that show, and it's a wainscot on wood panels; later, those panels went into my floor piece.

But this couple in Cincinnati were collectors of folk art. They saw that piece and they asked me to do the fireplace, which is a piece I really like. But he died, and she's in assisted living, and I think it stayed in the house when the house was sold. It's on removable panels. And that's all. I did a small fireplace for Arlene Slavin. I have a painted screen of hers. It was a trade.

MS. RICHARDS: I want to ask you separately about the commissions in Japan and Turkey, but thinking about the American commissions, was there one in particular that you thought is the most successful, most gratifying?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, okay. Well, each one was done for different conditions and different places; half of them are hand-painted ceramic tiles, and half of them are either glass or marble mosaic -- or both glass and marble mosaic. And those, I did with mosaicists in the north of Italy in a town called Spilimbergo – S-P-I-L-I-M-B-E-R-

MS. RICHARDS: Wait, S-P-I-L-

MS. KOZLOFF: S-P-I-L-I-M-B-E-R-G-O, in the Friuli region – F-R-I-U-L-I. And that was great. I did six or seven projects with them, and those are little cut pieces of glass – the traditional mosaic that goes back thousands of years, actually, to pre-Roman times. Spilimbergo has a school where mosaics are taught. All the mosaicists in the world are trained in this town of 10,000 people, and there are a number of mosaics workshops there.

The one there had a partner, Mr. Crovatto, in Yonkers – C-R-O-V-A-T-T-O. Most people working in mosaics found their way to Mr. Crovatto in those days. Some of the work was done in Crovatto's shop in Yonkers, and some of it was done in Italy. When the projects got too big, they were done in Italy because there was a larger workforce there. I loved going to Italy to work on these projects.

The shop in Italy was run by Giovanni Travisanutto – T-R-A-V-I-S-A-N-U-T-T-O – Travisanutto Mosaics. It was him and his family and his employees. What I would do is, I would go there in the beginning. I would do these detailed watercolor studies. He would blow them up and make a to-scale cartoon, and I would adjust the cartoon till it looked right, and then he would mix the blend of colors for every passage, because that's what mosaic is. It's an optical blend.

They have thousands of colors, but if you want an area that's turquoise, there may be 30 shades of turquoise in the different bins. We'd take them out – I would choose a few. And we'd put them in another bin, and we'd shake them up and maybe add a couple flecks of red or a couple flecks of gold. And then that would be that area, and then you would go on to the next area and the next area. Then I wouldn't see it until it was finished. And they would come here and install it, and I would be there, always, at the work site.

MS. RICHARDS: Which installation are you referring to now, or more than one?

MS. KOZLOFF: Six or seven of them. The one in Buffalo is half glass mosaic and half ceramic tile. The one in San Francisco is half hand-painted ceramic tile, half glass mosaic. The one in Philadelphia is glass mosaic. Several of the ones I did in Los Angeles are glass mosaic. And that is a much more durable and permanent material than hand-painted ceramic tiles; so that was a factor. In certain situations, that was the right choice.

Sometimes, they invited you for certain projects. They wanted it. I did two projects in California [*The Gardens at Villandry with Angels for Los Angeles* and *The Gardens at Chenonceaux and Villandry with Orange Festoons for Los Angeles*, 1989; and *Underwater Landscapes*, Irwindale, CA, 1989] – two very big projects – for Home Savings of America, which had a lot of money in the late '80s and commissioned projects from artists. I worked with the art consultant Tamara Thomas. She also died.

MS. RICHARDS: For some reason, I recall that, traditionally, they had –

MS. KOZLOFF: Home Savings of America had a tradition of mosaics going back –

MS. RICHARDS: That's right, in front of every building.

MS. KOZLOFF: – in front of every bank in Southern California, going back to the 1950s, mostly created by Millard Sheets.

MS. RICHARDS: With gold in them.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, very late Art Deco, a lot of them. They wanted to update that tradition, and so I worked with them. Tamara was working with other artists for Home Savings of America. Two of them that I remember who did a lot of work with her and them were Richard Haas and Ned Smyth. She was the most wonderful person to work with. She was an intermediator, a facilitator –

[Audio break.]

MS. RICHARDS: This is Judith Richards interviewing Joyce Kozloff on July 13, 2011, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, disc three.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, so you asked me which I preferred of my public art projects. I like some from one period, some from another period.

But just to finish up about the Home Savings projects, the façades of a building in downtown Los Angeles at the corner of Seventh and Figueroa. One is on the façade of the Seventh Street side and one is on the façade of the

Figueroa Street side.

MS. RICHARDS: You have – oh, you have a Seventh and Flower Metro.

MS. KOZLOFF: I have a Metro stop under that building, coincidentally, which came through a completely other source. No, it's Figueroa and Seventh where the mosaics are. The mosaics are 10 feet wide and 40 feet high, and they're in niches above the doors, in the tradition of what they did going back to the 1920s.

The other one is in their headquarters out in Irwindale. That has a marble mosaic floor – it's a very elaborate room, space with a very high glass ceiling and there's a water wall. I have mosaics behind the water wall and flanking the water wall, glass ones.

MS. RICHARDS: It must be beautiful.

MS. KOZLOFF: And then marble mosaics on the floor – a round, circular marble mosaic piece on the floor. I sort of say those pieces were my commercial pieces, because I didn't do very much corporate work in my life. Mostly it was for public art agencies. But during that period of the late '80s, I did these few pieces.

I had much larger budgets for them than I ever had in public art. I was able to do quite elaborate projects. But my favorite public art piece that I've done is the library in Mankato, Minnesota [*Around the World on the 44th Parallel*, 1994]. I think it's the best, and it was one of the last.

MS. RICHARDS: Why is that?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, there are a lot of reasons. [They laugh.]

MS. RICHARDS: It's at Mankato State University?

MS. KOZLOFF: Mankato State University. It's probably one of the least likely for anyone to ever see that I know. But the students – there are something like 30,000 students at that school. So it's the library, and it was already built. It's Minnesota Percent for Art, but the artists were chosen after the building was built. So I did not really collaborate with the architect. I met him at the first meeting and I don't think I ever met him again.

They said I could work anywhere in the building, but they had a space that they were hoping I would work with, and I agreed with them that that would be a good space. There are these dropped bays from the mezzanine level which you can look up and see from the ground level and look down and see from the mezzanine level. It was perfect for my murals and –

MS. RICHARDS: How did you decide on the imagery for that project?

MS. KOZLOFF: It was just very straightforward. There are four bays, and each of them had four walls – each four by 17 feet.

So there are four four-by-17-foot walls in each bay, and there are four bays. So that meant that there were 16 walls. I only used the first three bays because of time, money, and content. So the last bay I didn't work in. But the subject is called *Around the World on the 44th Parallel*, which is where Mankato, Minnesota is.

I chose cities around the world. The first bay is North America; the second bay is Europe; and the third bay is Asia. There are no other continents on the 44th parallel. Because there wasn't so much local content there, I used Mankato as the starting point. It's the first city that you see when you walk in.

Then you go around North America, and you go in the next bay and you go around Europe. And so they're maps of cities in those continents, and they're hand-painted tiles. They're actually majolica, which is an overglaze.

As I went on in public art, when I worked in ceramics, more and more I worked outside my own studio. I did the Pasadena piece in Topanga Canyon. I did the Detroit piece at the Kohler factory in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

I was away from home a lot — Nik was older — I couldn't do these big pieces in my studio. So I did this piece in a place called Tile Works in East L.A. And I would like to talk about how I made the piece.

So I chose these 12 cities and I copied maps of strips of the cities. It had to be that shape, but I tried to choose strips where there were important, recognizable places or monuments. And then I wove imagery into the maps from those cities, from those cultures, usually decorative arts, sometimes popular arts, sometimes high art.

So each map has a very different character. They're made out of one-foot squares, which were pretty big for me. There was lots of space to work on. I worked with a man named Dennis Caffrey, C-A-F-F-R-E-Y, who was the owner of this factory where they make high-end tiles for Country Floors and stores like that. He has about 30

employees.

He was starting a whole section where artists would come, because they were developing the transit art program in Los Angeles, and a lot of artists wanted to work in tile. He was working with a number of people. And I heard about it – I forget. So I was there for eight or nine months, working. And he built –

MS. RICHARDS: You were in L.A. constantly for eight or nine months?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Also another time when I worked on the Pasadena project.

[Audio break.]

Well, so Dennis had a really strong ceramics background. He was a ceramist, and he'd worked in a factory in Portugal before he started this factory in L.A. He was kind of a technical genius. I learned more from him than I ever learned from anyone.

So he built eight tables, four by 17 feet. The tiles would be laid out on each table. The other four murals would be attached to a long wall he created for them.

I had some assistants helping me from art departments in local universities, one or two at a time, not a lot. I'd done the watercolor studies. I'd done the model. I brought them out there. But I knew it was going to be much more elaborate than the original studies.

MS. RICHARDS: How did you – you said you picked maps, sections of maps.

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. RICHARDS: How did you literally transfer the map information to the tile? Through projection or through –

MS. KOZLOFF: The way I always do it – no, no I make a grid on my original study and then I make the same grid in a larger scale on the artwork and I copy it square by square.

MS. RICHARDS: Or a reproduction of the artwork.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I copy it square by square, which is what I did there. And before we did each piece, Dennis and I would sit and brainstorm, and he would say, "What emotional tone do you want; what feeling do you want?" We started over each time with the character of the city, the character of the culture. And then he would figure out different kinds of processes that I had never used before.

We made sponge stamps. We made – he brought in molds that we poured, and then we made objects that we epoxied onto the murals. We used luster glazes. We used china paint and many, many other things, many other processes.

We airbrushed when we wanted a slick surface. When I wanted to do some Japanese textiles that looked like batik, he found a liquid mastic that I put down and then I brushed the glaze over it and pulled it up, so that it actually looked like batik.

Anyway, it was a really great learning experience, and I feel, technically, that's the best piece I've done. And the content is really rich. I can tell you the 12 cities.

MS. RICHARDS: And it's indoors so you may feel it's protected.

MS. KOZLOFF: It's indoors, yes. Yes, and it was fun working in a library because the librarians helped me with the research. And the art department was involved. They loved it. The librarians were involved. They loved it. It was totally positive. I didn't have those kinds of interpersonal struggles.

And when it opened, they made a big deal. They videotaped the installation. The installers were very, very good. They were up on the scaffolds on every one of these projects. I lay it out. I go and lay it out and hand it up to the installers. And they usually – they have to be union in most places. And they have to be professional.

These guys were up on the scaffold for a couple of weeks, and I was there for a couple of weeks.

So the first city in North America is Mankato, Minnesota. There aren't many big cities on the 44th parallel in North America. The others are Burlington, Vermont; Eugene, Oregon; and Toronto, Canada.

In Europe, because of the tilt of the globe, the 44th parallel goes through Italy and Southern France – the cities I chose were Florence, Italy; Ravenna, Italy; Nice, France; and Sarajevo [Bosnia and Herzegovina], which was at

that time under siege during the Bosnian war. And the cities in Asia, again, not very many major cities are around the 44th parallel, but there's Vladivostok, Russia; Sapporo, Japan; and Urumqi and Changchun, China. U-R-U-M-Q-I –

MS. RICHARDS: Just wait, wait, wait. I'm still on Sapporo. Yes, go on.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, S-A-P-P-O-R-O.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. KOZLOFF: Vladivostok, V-L-A-D-I-V-O-S-T-O-K, Changchun, C-H-A-N-G-C-H-U-N, and Urumqi, U-R-U-M-Q-I, China.

MS. RICHARDS: U-R-U-M-Q-I?

MS. KOZLOFF: Q-I, yes. It's in the Uyghur region, where there was the uprising two years ago.

MS. RICHARDS: Say the name of that region again?

MS. KOZLOFF: It's the region of the Uyghur culture – the minority culture, Muslim culture, that is in revolt against the Chinese government.

MS. RICHARDS: That's in western –

MS. KOZLOFF: Western China, yes. Both of those cities are northern cities in China. The better-known cities are too far south for the 44th parallel. But I found material for all of those places. I just feel about that piece that the content is very rich.

And it's in a library, so it's educational. There's culture. There's geography. There's history. And I hope it's used. The information desk is underneath it in the center. And I left binoculars there if anybody wants to look and find their own street in Mankato or –

MS. RICHARDS: Have you been back since 1997?

MS. KOZLOFF: I haven't, no. A few of my family members went to see it subsequently.

MS. RICHARDS: It sounds wonderful. Do you want to talk about this, even though we're out of chronology –

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: The last – or I think the last two projects, the one in Japan and Istanbul?

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, Okay. Is there anything –

MS. RICHARDS: Or one or the other, whichever.

MS. KOZLOFF: I want to talk a little, very quickly, about the Pasadena project [tilework for Plaza Las Fuentes, Pasadena, CA, 1990].

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, sure.

MS. KOZLOFF: Because that was a collaboration with the landscape architect Lawrence Halprin!

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] The landscape architect's name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Lawrence –

MS. RICHARDS: Oh.

MS. KOZLOFF: Lawrence Halprin, H-A-L-P-R-I-N, who died recently. He was a great landscape architect out of San Francisco, exactly my father's age. And the sculptor Michael Lucero and the architectural firm Moore, Ruble, Yudell, in Santa Monica.

MS. RICHARDS: Moore?

MS. KOZLOFF: As in Charles Moore. They were Charles Moore's students – at UCLA – and he set up this firm that came out of the Po-Mo, the Postmodernist movement – Moore, M-O-O-R-E, Ruble, R-U-B-L-E, Yudell, Y-U-D-E-L-L. And it was set up – this team – we worked as a team – was set up by an art consultant named Ceil Friedman, C-

E-I-L F-R-I-E-D-M-A-N.

MS. RICHARDS: And this is the –

MS. KOZLOFF: The garden.

MS. RICHARDS: Plaza –

MS. KOZLOFF: Plaza Las Fuentes. This is the largest project I did in ceramic tile and it's a very large project.

MS. RICHARDS: Who commissioned it?

MS. KOZLOFF: The developers.

MS. RICHARDS: So it's a private commission?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, but the City of Pasadena was involved too. It was approved by the City of Pasadena, their cultural civic group.

MS. RICHARDS: This is in downtown Pasadena?

MS. KOZLOFF: It's in downtown Pasadena. It's an oversized city block, and it's on an axis with City Hall, which is a beautiful neo-Palladian 1920s building. And there's water that goes through it. It's an L-shaped garden. There's a hotel, restaurants, office buildings on this large block.

And it was a kind of amenity that the architects worked with the city so that they could build there. People have lunch and it's a garden. It's a garden with water coming through it — jets of water and pools of water. And Larry Halprin was very known for his gardens – his water gardens.

And Michael Lucero makes sculpture in the fountains which are, like, bugs. One's a turtle; some of them are insects and water creatures. I tiled the walls that go in and out and around the garden.

Also there's a breezeway from the street through the buildings into the garden, and I did that wall too. When you look through the breezeway, you see into the garden and you see a fountain and you see a wall behind it, framing it with tiles. And we really worked together. Our model was the Alhambra.

And we also looked at buildings in Pasadena. Pasadena has a great architectural history. We looked at the campus of Caltech, which is kind of Romanesque Revival and has arcades, and we looked at the Craftsman buildings. We tried to make this a place where people would want to be.

Downtown Pasadena had really gone through some awful renovation in the '60s, and people were not wanting a repeat of that. So this was an attempt to do something new that had some connection to their tradition. Anyway, that's a project that I feel good about.

I fabricated that project in Topanga Canyon with a group of ceramists called Malibu Tile Works, who were recreating the Malibu tiles of the 1920s. They were a bunch of old hippies. I shouldn't say that. They were California craftsmen. I worked for eight or nine months that time there too.

I lived partly in Laurel Canyon and partly in the Marina [Marina del Ray]. I rented different places. I was there longer than I thought I would be. But we made molds for the repeat patterns, and we glazed them with different kinds of glazes. They were incredible craftsmen also. And then I painted big flowers. I painted images.

Some of the stuff in my bathroom comes from there. So I worked alongside and coordinated with them. Then it took about a month to install all of it in Pasadena. And so I'm proud of that project too.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you want to talk about the one in Japan and/or Turkey?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, okay.

MS. RICHARDS: Or we could move on.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I did two projects with César Pelli's office, both of them marble mosaic floors. One is at National Airport in Washington, and many artists were invited to do pieces for that airport. There are these round floors. You were given a size and a shape and a location. I think there are 10 or 12 of them, by different artists.

And they were executed by those mosaicists in Spilimbergo. Architect Isaac Campbell from Cesar Pelli's office asked me to do this other one in Japan.

Again, I was given a shape and a size, and they wanted – the one in Washington is a circle which is divided like a pie into four equal wedges, and there are maps of the Chesapeake Bay area over four centuries, starting from when there were Native American villages, until it became the area it is now, going through the British and then as it developed. So they wanted something that had maps in it, and the project is in a cultural center.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, in Kurayoshi [Chubu Teiju Culture Center and Museum].

MS. KOZLOFF: In Kurayoshi, Japan, which is a regional capital. Ten years earlier, the Japanese government had set aside money for cultural centers in each region. But this was somehow not done right away. And this cultural center houses a pear museum, which is complicated to explain. It's a Japanese thing. And two concert halls and a library.

This is the sort of ceremonial space. There is also a hanging sculpture by a Japanese artist whose name I don't remember. But they asked me to work with a Japanese mosaicist on it. It's kind of like a crazy quilt, which — I think of certain kimonos that are a patchwork. And that was the idea.

There are many different sections, these patches on it. It's a leaf shape. It's a room with a very high ceiling, and you can look down on it from up above or you can walk across it. It's 27 feet long. And the motifs are from old maps of Japan.

Some of them are from textiles, Japanese textiles. The Japanese architect Hiro Otsuji, who I worked with in César Pelli's office in Tokyo, found me these old maps, which I could not find here, and sent me copies of them. And they're beautiful. They're completely different from Western maps. They went back hundreds of years. So I used those.

The textile motifs – I think he may have found me those, too, and I found some in books. They're not necessarily from that region. But they told me I had to have certain local sites in the maps, which I did.

And then I went, as I would in Italy, to work with the Japanese mosaicist Kudo Haruya; he doesn't speak English and I don't speak Japanese. But he was trained in Italy. So we communicated in Italian. Our Italian was kind of on the same level, which is sort of so-so.

And it was the same process. I mean, when I was there. We worked it out in the beginning, and then I left, and I have never seen the piece finished, though I have pictures of it. I've never been back, but maybe someday.

MS. RICHARDS: What part of Japan is that?

MS. KOZLOFF: It's in Tottori Prefecture, which is not a place that's frequently visited by tourists.

MS. RICHARDS: What – geographically what part of Japan?

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, so you're on the main island, and it's west.

MS. RICHARDS: Southwest?

MS. KOZLOFF: Southwest, yes. It's famous for its dunes. There was a famous movie called *Woman in the Dunes*. But I didn't see the dunes when I was there. [Laughs.] Anyway, so when I got there, he said, "We don't have the time or budget to do this whole thing in marble mosaic." There was a deadline on it.

And he said, "I also work in sandblasted marble, and I'd like to do part of it in sandblasted marble." And he showed me some examples. He taught in the university there, and he had this huge shop in the university, this huge facility with this enormous sandblasting machine that he was very proud of. It was very much more advanced than anything in Italy or anything here.

The sandblasted passages were the textiles. The passages that were the maps were the cut, tiny pieces of marble mosaic. That's what's very labor intensive and expensive to do. The sandblast is just a sheet and you sandblast the motif. So you get a whitish color in the stone.

We chose all the stones, all the colors of the stones, and we chose all the stones for the mosaic. And it turned out much better, I think, because I love when you combine different things.

So you had these surfaces that had two very different looks juxtaposed against each other. That was his idea. I never would have thought of it. He did it for practical reasons, but aesthetically it looked really beautiful.

MS. RICHARDS: Was it more difficult to approach a piece in a culture that you weren't as familiar with?

MS. KOZLOFF: I'd never been to Japan. I love that culture from afar, and I loved being there for that period of

time.

MS. RICHARDS: It sounds like such a terrific idea that in your telling it just springs up.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: But did you labor a long time to figure out how to approach this?

MS. KOZLOFF: I did a number of different studies, I remember. I think it was finding the right maps. And I did a quarter-scale study, which is large. I did it in color pencil, which kind of has the tactility of the stone, to get a feel of what it would look like. I'm satisfied with the way it looks in pictures, but I haven't actually seen it.

MS. RICHARDS: It sounds like over the course of the time you've been involved in the commissions, you haven't encountered a situation that some artists have had, where the building is going to be torn down or it's going to be redone, and the new owners want to destroy or move or change the –

MS. KOZLOFF: I haven't had that happen. I've had other things happen, and I had some things happen in my last couple of projects which made me not want to do public art anymore. I had to extricate myself slowly, because these things go on over years.

MS. RICHARDS: These are political issues –

MS. KOZLOFF: Different kinds of issues that never came up before, I think starting in the '90s, or maybe I was ready – it was a combination. But sorry, I lost my train of thought.

MS. RICHARDS: We're talking about your evolution away from public projects, new issues that came up.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, but there was something I was going to say before that.

MS. RICHARDS: Political content or political problem, censorship issues.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Oh, did I ever have that happen. Yes. There was a project that lasted too long, and it was for the Los Angeles subway. I got the commission in 1985, and half of it was installed in '91, and the other half in '93 [*The Movies: Fantasies,*1991; *The Movies: Spectacles*, 1993]. It's in two sections. There are two lines in the subway station. One line opened in '91 and one line opened in '93.

My original proposal had been a model and studies. I had gone out there and I had presented it to a committee. But then it was on hold for five years. I'm sure there were all kinds of reasons that the process was delayed. And by the end of the five years, there was a whole new structure set up there with a different administrator and different committees.

But they had to do the projects that had been chosen earlier that were lined up to go. And then they were also working toward new projects and new lines. So I think that was partly the background of it, that the situation was one that predated the people who were then there. And in my original proposal, over the years my content changed. And the original proposal –

MS. RICHARDS: Because you chose to change it?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, it's like I was in a different place by then. Or I developed it, I should say. The original project was two feet high, one side, and 110 feet long.

The other one is two feet high and 98 feet long. And it was like a film strip at eye level. And the motifs were to come from the movies. I just wanted to say how my public art changed over the years.

The beginning, it was much more like pattern painting. It was much more on a grid with decorative motifs. And then as I went on, and my work and my ideas changed, there were other kinds of narratives that entered into it and other kinds of juxtapositions of almost surreal things that wouldn't go together and more imagery – recognizable imagery.

And I wasn't so much – I got bored. People wanted me to display the decorative arts of their city. And I didn't want to do the same thing over and over again. I remember having a battle in Detroit about that. I had a slightly different idea from what the administrator had seen me do in other places.

In any case, starting with the ones in Detroit and Philadelphia, I was working with other kinds of narrative in the work ["*D*" *Is For Detroit*, Detroit Financial Station, 1985; Galla Placidia in Philadelphia; and *Tokapi Pullman*, Suburban Station, Philadelphia]. I didn't do the work for L.A. until maybe 1990. They didn't give me money and a final contract for five years. There was a design contract originally. But then all of a sudden one day I got the

go-ahead to do this thing.

I was going to do this content from the movies, and it's called *The Movies: Fantasies, The Movies: Spectacles*. *The Movies: Fantasies* was supposed to be about science-fiction and horror films and things like that, and *Spectacles* was supposed to be like musicals and big splashy films. The *Fantasies* would be mostly black and white, and *Spectacles* would be mostly color. I did it because it was Los Angeles and the movies. That's straightforward.

So what I ended up doing in the *Fantasies* is I broke it down into 10, what I call, chapters. And you walk through it. The first one is flying monsters, and then there's swimming monsters, and then there's stalking monsters, and then there's monsters that look like apes, and then there's hairy monsters, like werewolves.

They kind of evolve and come onto land. Then there's vampires and robots, and it ends with space flight, outer space. So that was installed in '91. And actually, it's interesting. I didn't have any problem at that time that it was installed. It got press in Los Angeles. It's popular. It's funny, and people go by and recognize the films.

As I went along, I was crowding more and more and more imagery into it, which tends to happen to me on projects. They get denser as I go along. So by the final one, they're all these – this pile-up of characters. I see it as a kind of rogue's gallery of weird characters. And I started also thinking about what does that mean.

I didn't read about them – I never went to those kinds of films. I got them from books, stills in books, books of horror films or slasher films. But the phobias and fears of different time periods are manifest in these kinds of films, whether it was a time when there was a fear of nuclear holocaust or there was a fear of environmental strangeness. So you could see that.

But then the other side – so that was installed in '91. And it was so detailed. I painted every single tile, like a painting. I did those here. I bought these tiles from a commercial company. And I underglazed and glazed them and fired them here in my own studio.

Then I was late. It wasn't in time for the grand opening of the line. And they were pretty pissed at me. In '93, I was late again, but later. And I've never been late for anything in my life ever. But this piece was so time-consuming, and I was working around the clock.

To get my payments, I would take slides of it in progress and send it to them, and I'd get these payments. *Spectacles* I broke into four sections: it was earth, fire, water, air. They were just simple things. For air I had dancers leaping up into the air, dancing on the ceiling, sort of against gravity. And under fire, it had a narrative.

It started with people firing guns, and they were women. They were gun molls from early films. And then there was candlelight and then there were bonfires. Then there were big explosions and wars. It took that trajectory, and the use of the word "fire." And it ended with giant conflagrations, like the burning of Atlanta in *Gone with the Wind*.

So I send it to them and I get a phone call from the administrator, who I had been in a women's group with in New York and we were friendly. And I said, "I'm sorry I'm late," and she says, "That's nothing. We have a much more serious problem." And I said, "What?" She said, "You can't put this up in Los Angeles." It was right after the Rodney King riots. "What were you thinking?"

And I was stupefied. I'd been working on this for eight years. It never occurred to me that I was doing anything that was not – that would be a problem.

There are these big billboards on Sunset Boulevard with these very violent images. These tiles are one foot square. They're the size of an old TV set in black and white. And she said, "We can't put that up here."

MS. RICHARDS: Do you know her name?

MS. KOZLOFF: Jessica Cusick, C-U-S-I-C-K. Anyway, we got into a battle, and Barbara Hoffman, my lawyer, was negotiating with the lawyers of the City of Los Angeles over what to do. And Jessica told me on the telephone, "You have three options. One is," – she really wanted to give me a kill fee and I could take it away and do whatever I want with it.

MS. RICHARDS: And they would get another artist?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I guess.

MS. RICHARDS: Or not have art?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. That wasn't my problem. I was not going for that option. The other was I could

change that section, I guess. And then the third one, if I wanted to go ahead with it, I would have to get into a struggle with them, which I did. And I developed an eye infection and I became temporarily blind during that period.

I was so upset. I don't know if it was a coincidence, but I always associate those two things. An eye infection and I couldn't be in sunlight; I couldn't be near any light at home, and I was being treated at the eye-ear hospital.

They had to put steroids in my eyes, and it went on for a couple of weeks. And finally, I had to go out to L.A. to meet with the remaining members of the initial committee and Jessica, and look at these slides and discuss it.

Jessica was showing these images as completely unacceptable. There was another image, from maybe *Birth of a Nation,* of a hooded figure that looked like the Ku Klux Klan, though I'm not sure if it was. And then there were these women pointing guns. It was Bette Davis and Marlene Dietrich.

So we presented it. And the only two members of the initial committee who came were Betye Saar and Alan Sieroty, S-I-E-R-O-T-Y, who was pretty old by then.

He was a lawyer who had been a California state senator and assemblyman. And he was involved with the art world. I think he collected art and was one of these arts enthusiasts and supporters.

MS. RICHARDS: Advocate.

MS. KOZLOFF: Advocates, and I presented the work, and Betye was uncomfortable with the hooded figure. Jessica clearly didn't want any of it to go up. Alan didn't say anything. I looked at him and I just thought, "Oh, my God." He turned to Jessica. He said, "There's a word that starts with C and I'm going to use it – censorship."

I'll never forget it. So what we did was I changed two tiles, because Barbara said, "You have to allow them to save face." And I substituted for those women with guns the final scene from *Dr. Strangelove,* which is Slim Pickens riding on two atomic bombs. That's what I did. And it's there to this day.

MS. RICHARDS: And the hooded figure?

MS. KOZLOFF: It went out with the gun molls.

MS. RICHARDS: Did they understand when you were seeing projected images that these would only be one foot – I mean, that was challenging –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. Jessica had been caught in the crossfire during the riots in L.A. in her neighborhood. It was shortly before that. I think she was very traumatized by that, and I can understand. I feel bad about the whole thing. What can I say?

But I have heard from the person who subsequently was administrator of the program that they take people on tours of all the art in the subways — and now they have a lot — and this is the most popular piece. This has never been told to me about any of my other projects. It's just imagery that people like, you know?

MS. RICHARDS: Right, right. So you evolved, you mentioned, out of doing commissions gradually, as they expired.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, this experience was something that just took a lot out of me. The other one was – I have to talk about that in more depth later maybe – was the Riverside South project in New York.

MS. RICHARDS: The Riverside what?

MS. KOZLOFF: Riverside South project in New York.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: For different reasons, and I just felt as though –

MS. RICHARDS: It didn't happen.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. But I didn't want to use that much time of the rest of my life on things that involved these kinds of battles and didn't happen.

And there was another part of it. I had a lot of ideas for art that I never got to, because these projects would take over my life for a year, each one of them. And I realized that if I didn't stop doing them, I would never do

these other ideas that were starting to mount up in my head.

Over the years, I was doing the public art. The only other art I usually did were small works on paper. I did a couple of bodies of those over the years. And they were a relief because they were much more personal and imitate.

MS. RICHARDS: Like the Patterns of Desire series [1990]?

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. But I had these other ideas of things I wanted to do, and I had to clear off these projects. Some of them took a while to finish. I've never said I will never do that again, but I'm out of that world. Nobody comes to me to do anything anymore, and I don't apply for things. There are artists who actively apply for things, which I never did. I was very lucky. Once I got one or two, they came to me.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: And I would take them. I never turned anything down, and I made a living that way. And so I've done more teaching and more gallery art in this century than I had done since the '70s.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, let's go back to, then, the studio work.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, right.

MS. RICHARDS: And touch on, especially, the Patterns of Desire, of which *Pornament is a Crime* was part?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, the original title of the series was Pornament is Crime. But when it was published by Hudson Hills Press –

MS. RICHARDS: In the book.

MS. KOZLOFF: The book. Paul Anbinder, who was the publisher, was a lovely man. I took this book to many publishers. He was the only one willing to do it. But he said, "If the title of the book is *Pornament is Crime*, a lot of bookstores won't display it. So I'd like to change the title, and he chose *Patterns of Desire*.

And I've since found out that publishers have the right to title books in most cases, unless you're some kind of a literary superstar. But it was okay with me.

But I showed the work as *Pornament is Crime,* and that's a play on the Adolf Loos famous essay "Ornament is Crime," which was written in 1910, 1909 ["Ornament and Crime," 1908]. It was a manifesto for the Modernist movement against the excesses of Viennese ornament. And it's very funny and very outrageous.

So it was a play on that. And why I did those? Okay, we're in the late '80s. I still really feel like my lifetime subject has been decoration and ornament, and that I found it when I was young, and that it just never stops revealing things to me but that it had to be revitalized in some way for people to want to look at it again. No one was interested anymore.

MS. RICHARDS: Are you talking about your work or Pattern and Decoration?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I mean that idea. There actually are a lot of decorative artists since then. It's been absorbed into the culture. But it didn't have an edge anymore. It didn't make you look at things in a new way, myself either. So one day I had the idea of making this crossbreed between ornament and pornography.

I started looking at the pornography of all different cultures, which is also not a high art and also has its conventions. And certain cultures really developed it, particularly the Indians and the Japanese. They're the best by far.

So I started making these watercolors. They're 22 inches square – putting all these different things in the pot, these images from pornography from different cultures and ornament from different –

MS. RICHARDS: So through painting and collage?

MS. KOZLOFF: There's no collage. They're watercolors. They're all painted, and they're painted from all different sources. They're all painted from things I like. I get these ideas, and I was working on public art projects. This was kind of my safety valve. I'd be in some city working on a big project, and then at night I would work on these.

MS. RICHARDS: And this went over 1987 and '88?

MS. KOZLOFF: Eighty-eight, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And there was a total of 32.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: You decided at one point, "Okay, I'm done"?

MS. KOZLOFF: I covered what I wanted to cover. I didn't want to repeat myself. I wanted a lot of variation, and then there were things like once I had a religious text – Christian religious text – I had to have a Hebrew religious text; I had to have a Muslim religious text.

I didn't want to use the Japanese and Indians all the time. So I had to find things from other cultures. At the very end – very, very end – I found some Thai pornament, which I think is pretty rare, which I used in the very last page.

At that point, the kinds of things I might have worried about when I was young, I didn't care. I didn't care if it was politically correct at all. I just wanted to do it.

MS. RICHARDS: When you were conceiving of each of those 32 –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: — did you begin with many drawings, sketches –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no.

MS. RICHARDS: Figuring out how these pieces would fit together?

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: Just worked directly on the final piece of paper?

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, right. I had it in my head. I found the sources. I had it in my head what I wanted it to look like. I don't do a lot of preparatory studies ever.

MS. RICHARDS: Is that because it's just so much more enjoyable to work directly?

MS. KOZLOFF: There's no reason to do it. It's just like extra work. Why do it twice? I don't know. As I went along, I kept having more and more ideas, and I was very amused by it. When I showed it to people, I was always relieved when they laughed, because if they didn't laugh, there would be this awkwardness.

They were meant to be funny. Women got them quicker than men, but some men got them. So I took it around to something like 35 publishers. I didn't know it was going to be a book, and all three of my artist's books I didn't know they were going to be books. I was just doing them.

MS. RICHARDS: How did it end up coming to you?

MS. KOZLOFF: So I had this pile of them and then I showed them to friends. And my friend Judy Henry, my oldest friend, was a book designer. She worked at Knopf and Abrams, and then she became the art director of Time-Life Books.

She said, "Joyce, this should be a book." And she gave me the names of people in publishing. And I called. I went to their offices with these watercolors in a portfolio and showed it to them — usually it was a young woman — and I put them on the floor. And this was not what they usually did in their office.

MS. RICHARDS: Were you presenting it to go with a text that you would pick or they would pick?

MS. KOZLOFF: I didn't have a text yet. I just had the images. But they all said, "You made my day. This is really fun to look at, but I'm sorry we don't do this." But then they gave me other names. And in the end, when I took it to Paul, he didn't laugh.

He was expressionless. He looked through it and I said to myself, "Oh, my God, get me out of here." And then he looked at me and said, "These look like Kozloffs," telling me that he knew my work. And he said he wanted to do it. So that was what happened.

MS. RICHARDS: How did you decide on what text to have with it?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, we talked about text, and so I went to Linda – Linda Nochlin.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: And her text is absolutely brilliant I think. She's always brilliant, but I love what she wrote. She was a friend. I didn't know whether she would agree to do it, but she was my first choice.

And that series was shown in five different cities. None of it has ever been shown in any museum or public place, but it was shown in commercial galleries in Los Angeles, in –

MS. RICHARDS: This whole series together of 32?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and each time it was shown, it got a lot of very interesting criticism. I have more interesting criticism on that body of work than anything I've ever done. And it was written about in the magazines. It was written about in the local newspapers, in all these different cities.

I think it's because – well, people are interested in sex. But I think it's partly because of Linda's essay, which started a very interesting dialogue. I don't know that I've ever told that to Linda.

But there was a very interesting, smart piece in *Artforum* by Peggy Phelan – P-H-E-L-A-N. She's a writer on performance, talks about the performative aspect of the events in these watercolors ["Crimes of Passion," *Artforum*, May 1990]. It was stuff I had never thought about. And usually when your shows are reviewed, you get the press release back.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: You don't get independent, interesting ideas. And across the board, on this body of work, I did. It's never happened since, to that extent. There have been very good things written since, but not in that kind of collective way. So I really thank Linda for that. And my other two books came about much more quickly.

Getting the first one published was really a process. But it wasn't like taking your slides to galleries and getting rejected. I kind of let it roll off of me because I was in another world, and most of them, for one reason or another, really couldn't publish this book. And it didn't matter.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

Now, I want to move to another sort of chapter coming up soon –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, right.

MS. RICHARDS: – which was maps coming into your work.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Well, it wasn't right away but –

MS. RICHARDS: A few years later, in '93?

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: Although you could talk about something in between if you wanted to.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Well, the body of work I call Visionary Ornament –

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Those are watercolors that I did in the middle '80s. Same thing, I needed to do some work that wasn't for the public art. And those were hybrids. Like – there were subway stations crossbred with old – other buildings from other times.

MS. RICHARDS: I love the one that was at Union Square.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. So anyway, that's all.

MS. RICHARDS: But you were doing that while these commissions are going on, I understand.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. I didn't have very many gallery shows. I don't know if you want to know my history. I left Tibor in –

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. I have a whole section to talk about galleries, and that's going to come up very shortly.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay.

MS. RICHARDS: Probably right after we talk about the beginning of the mapping.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. Well, it came about – there is one map in the Pornament series and it's over there. It's based on an Albrecht Durer cosmological chart of the heavens. And it has Mongolian pornography – people on horseback having sex riding through the celestial chart.

That was my first mapping piece. [Laughs.] It was just one piece in a series. I've always liked maps, but lots of people do. Lots of artists are working with maps.

MS. RICHARDS: And have been.

MS. KOZLOFF: And have been. But on every public art project, your starting place would be these diagrams, which are essentially a map of the building or the site. And I always thought of them as a structure to weave content and imagery into the surface, but I didn't make the leap that that was a way of thinking in my private work as well.

I wasn't doing that much private work anyway. But it started to clarify itself on the Riverside South project. The Riverside South project was a project for the development of what was formerly the freight rail yards along the river from 59th Street to 72nd Street, from the Hudson River to Amsterdam Avenue.

The rail yards were abandoned or closed in the early part of the 20th century. Every architect and every planner had done designs for it. It was prime New York City property.

MS. RICHARDS: This is now Trump property.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. So they brought together a team – in 1991 – of architects and planners and artists to do a plan for that area.

MS. RICHARDS: Who was "they"?

MS. KOZLOFF: It was a consortium of seven community groups: the Riverside South Municipal Arts Society, Parks Council, Regional Plan Association, Riverside Park Fund, Westpride, and the Trump organization.

MS. RICHARDS: Because they owned some of the land?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. The group of artists changed slightly, but the final group of artists was Mary Miss, Mel Chin, Fred Wilson, and me.

The architects were Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, specifically Marilyn Jordan Taylor and David Childs. And the landscape architect was Michael Van Valkenburgh, from Harvard, from Cambridge, Massachusetts.

There was another architect, Paul Willen, W-I-L-L-E-N, who did the original plan and was the community's architect. We worked together for a year. We had an office in Skidmore's building.

MS. RICHARDS: Let me go over these. So we've got Mary Miss, Mel Chin, Fred Wilson, and yourself. We've got Marilyn Jordan Taylor, David Childs, Michael Van Valkenburgh.

MS. KOZLOFF: Michael Van Valkenburgh.

MS. RICHARDS: And Paul Willen.

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] We worked together for a year. We had an office in the SOM building and we had many meetings elsewhere. We had a lot of meetings at this table in my house.

MS. RICHARDS: Just curious, were you compensated in some way for all of the time?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. We received salaries. And we had to come up with final drawings and models. We did many presentations to community groups, to city agencies and it went through a process, a review process. We worked together. We had environmental advisors. We had community people giving us advice and input.

We came up with some really great ideas that had to do with the shaping of the land and with integrating it into the community. There's a street back there called Freedom Place, which is a small street. People don't know about it.

It's named Freedom Place because one of the people who died in the Freedom Rides in Mississippi – [Andrew] Goodman – lived there. His mother still lived there. And she had gotten a little plaque put into the street, but

you don't see it unless you're looking for it.

Fred and I were working on making that street dramatize the history of the Civil Rights Movement. Mary and Mel were more involved in the shaping of the land and the park.

One of the things that was very important to us was holding onto the old piers from the rail yards, which were like archeological relics. They were disintegrating and they were beautiful to us. In any case, we came –

[Audio break.]

– up with this plan and we were presenting it to different groups. And I remember the day when Richard Kahan, who was chair of the Riverside South Planning Corporation, the driving force behind the project —

MS. RICHARDS: K-A-H-N?

MS. KOZLOFF: K-A-H-A-N, who in fact employed all of us — and he was behind the development of Battery Park City earlier. But I remember the phone call he made to me, on the verge of tears. He had been at the municipal committee presenting this. And he said, "We lost the piers."

And I said, "I'm taking my name off of it." And then the other three artists took their names off of it.

MS. RICHARDS: It meant that much, losing the piers.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: They are still rotting – a couple of them.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, well, the last one I think, just went.

MS. RICHARDS: The one with the railroad, with the –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: There's one that's incorporated into the –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I know there's one that they kept. But anyway, I said, "That's a deal breaker," because all of our ideas were about the industrial past. It was very central to the whole thing.

MS. RICHARDS: So then what happened to the – because you took –

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, other people worked on it. Other artists worked on it, and other architects, and some of the same people worked on it subsequently. And it is what it is. Very little of what we worked on is there. And I didn't feel badly about working in public art because it didn't happen.

I was sorry it didn't happen. But I think we were naïve. We were used to selling the project. And I realized I couldn't spend a whole year of my life again not being in my own studio. I learned about sewage systems. I learned about transportation systems. It was a great experience.

There are artists who work on these municipal projects. That's their work. They do it their whole life. Mary does it and she does great stuff. But it wasn't for me. I needed to be a more private artist again after that. It was disappointing.

But I remember before it all started, before we were on the team, when we were invited to be on the team, the people from Skidmore were doing a presentation to the community on the West Side of their beginning of the project, which was the buildings and –

MS. RICHARDS: The apartment towers.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, which are much larger than they were even then, before any designing of the park had happened. And the community was up in arms. And I went with my son to that.

My son said to me, "Mom, I think you're on the wrong side." [Laughs.] And he was right. But it was very seductive to get involved in something on that scale. But never again.

MS. RICHARDS: So you moved back to the studio.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, right.

MS. RICHARDS: And you were talking about the fact that the maps started by the fact that you were using –

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, on Riverside South, the architects and sculptors were making models of the space. I was working flat on paper. And I found myself, on the diagrams that they were making for what they wanted to do and for what had existed previously, painting over them and into them with ideas, trying to image the ideas that everybody had two-dimensionally.

And one day it clicked that this might be an interesting procedure in my own work. I liked the drawings that I did for that project. And I liked doing them. It was fun. And so I went to Bellagio, to the Rockefeller Center in Bellagio [Italy].

MS. RICHARDS: That was in '92, a wonderful opportunity.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, that was a wonderful opportunity. I've been to a lot of wonderful residencies. I love to do that. I took the atlas from their library, and during the time I was there, I copied onto 22-by-30-inch watercolor paper.

MS. RICHARDS: Using any technical or mechanical means, or just copying by visually?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, gridding it, copying it square by square, maps of eight cities which had meaning for me. I'd lived there. I'd traveled there. And I copied them. Literally, I didn't do anything to them. I just copied them out of the atlas and I –

MS. RICHARDS: In pencil?

MS. KOZLOFF: In pencil, and then I watercolored them but with just the colors that were in the atlas. Then I came home, and I had to work on the L.A. project, and I put them in a drawer. They were in a drawer for a year. After I finished the L.A. project, I took them out.

I made my first conscious mapping piece, which was *Los Angeles Becoming Mexico City Becoming Los Angeles* [1993]. I always speak of the first piece in a series as the pilot piece. I talk that way to my students. That's really the hard one, but it's the one in which the whole concept comes together, because I do work in series.

So that was something that evolved by cutting up and combining different maps and lots of other stuff, and collaging and painting. And that was a process I used subsequently in a whole group of things.

[Audio break.]

All right, so then for some years in the '90s, I did maps about cities, starting with those initial drawings and then cutting them up and combining them and adding more maps to them and collage in which I sort of created hybrids from combinations of different cities.

I think I said that *L.A. Becoming Mexico City Becoming L.A.* was the pilot. I did that piece right after the experience with the public art project in Los Angeles. I remember flying over Los Angeles very, very low. Or I think the whole flight home – I was going back and forth to Los Angeles a lot at that time. And sometimes when you fly low and you look at the cities, you just see the lights of the roads at night. And so I did that in the map of Los Angeles. I painted out what I had done underneath from the atlas in black.

And I just let the lines of the streets, which were essentially the freeways, show. So it kind of looked like jewelry, because initially it was painted in this sort of golden buff color from the atlas. And I really liked that.

Then I cut up the maps of Mexico City and Los Angeles, and recombined them, because in my time, first having gone to Los Angeles in 1970 and then being back there over the years working on public art projects and being in residence there in different parts of the city at different times, I saw how the city had changed and how whole parts of the city could have been Mexico.

I worked in East L.A. on one of my projects, on the Mankato project. And so I wanted to talk about the coming together – the uneasy coming together — of two different cultures in that piece. And then I brought in all kinds of motifs – Mexican and American motifs.

Imperial Cities [1994] is the same kind of idea, with European cities that are cut up and recombined. *The British Were Here, The French Were Here, The Spanish Were Here* [all 1995] are cities around the world that were colonized by those European countries.

And they have funny things in them. They're very encrusted with all kinds of stuff. They're all horizontal, and I always think of them as being read from left to right, as a narrative. They didn't start out as horizontal. They started out on 22-by-30-inch watercolor paper.

But I kept adding and adding as I went along and as I told my story. Those were studio art, and that was when I returned to exhibiting more regularly in galleries and making work at more of a domestic scale rather than a public scale.

MS. RICHARDS: Then in '95 you made a really huge piece, not gargantuan, but 60 by 112, *Calvino'sCities on the Amazon*.

MS. KOZLOFF: That's not – yes. Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: I want to ask you about how that –

MS. KOZLOFF: I did two works about rivers, *Calvino'sCities on the Amazon* and *Mekong and memory* [1996].

[Audio break.]

Yes, after the pieces that were about cities, in the late '90s I did a number of works about bodies of water, about rivers and oceans – so the first one was *Calvino's Cities on the Amazon*. I did a lot of it at the Djerassi Foundation when I was in residence there in [Woodside] California.

I was there for a month, and I continued working on the inserts later. But I think I did the whole overall map there and many of the inserts. So this is a piece I'd thought about for a very long time. Actually, Max had been given the book close to 20 years before, when it first came out, a gift from Rudolf Baranik and May Stevens.

I had read it and read it and always thought about it. And it turns out – I didn't know this, but many artists have worked with that book. It's such a visual book – *Invisible Cities* by Italo Calvino [1972]. I later found out – a friend of mine who's an architect said, "Oh, that old chestnut. It's taught in architecture schools as a semester-long project." So the book – you know the book? Oh, okay. It's very –

MS. RICHARDS: Even if I know it –

MS. KOZLOFF: All right. It's a short book and it has short chapters between one and three pages long. The structure of the book is that Marco Polo is in the court of Kublai Khan and every night he tells Kublai – tells the great Khan — a story about a city in his kingdom, which he has traversed and Khan has not. He makes them up.

And they have elements of real places. They're very, very visual and they're very wonderful. And all of a sudden I realized it – each city has the name of a woman.

And I began to realize that these are in many ways male fantasies. And there is this other male fantasy of going down the Amazon, right? So somehow I collapsed those two ideas together, even though *Invisible Cities* takes place in Asia, not in South America.

My son was living in South America and I was getting a lot of reports about his life in South America. So, of course, that affected me as well. And I just wanted to somehow make all these very visual descriptions come alive.

I made this large map of the Amazon River and its tributaries, and the names of all the tributaries and the rivers were on the map, but not the names of cities or borders between countries. So it's basically a map of the waterways. And I inserted into it –

MS. RICHARDS: Based on where the rivers actually are?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I copied it from a real map and blew it up. I remember being in that studio at the Djerassi and having this large roll of paper and pinning it to the wall and gridding it and copying the map and painting it in watercolor. And then I cut out the river and glued it on. All the rivers are glued on. But the landforms are painted.

I mean, what's glued on is painted too. Then I cut out these four-by-four-inch squares, and on each one of them I wrote a name of one of the cities, and I made some sort of imagery that came out of the little description of that city. And I realized much later that they were kind of like tiles. There are 56 cities.

Each one of them is named after a woman. I was there in the country and I had brought some source material with me and some books. That's what I used. And I cut up postcards and found material, whatever I could find.

MS. RICHARDS: And what about the videotape that accompanies it?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, no, it's not a videotape. It's an audiotape.

MS. RICHARDS: Audiotape, sorry. Yes, audiotape.

MS. KOZLOFF: There's an accompanying audiotape in which my son read from the book. I went through the book and excerpted a section from each city. So he will say the name of the city, and then he will read that section and then the name of the next city and read that section. It's an hour and a half.

MS. RICHARDS: And how does a viewer combine the experience of looking at the piece with the audio?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, when I showed it in galleries — and it was in the traveling show I had with Max, which went to many different places [*Crossed Purposes: Joyce & Max Kozloff*, 1998-2000] — I had a little ledge with a tape recorder on it and earplugs so people could listen to it.

And nobody ever did. The other one – *Mekong and memory* – has a seven-hour audiotape that goes with it. I mean, people do not want to stand in a gallery and listen for a long time.

MS. RICHARDS: And what is the seven-hour audiotape of that one?

MS. KOZLOFF: The other one, *Mekong and memory*, it's a book called *Sorrows of War* by Bao Ninh, B-A-O N-I-N-H [*The Sorrow of War: A Novel of North Vietnam*, 1996].

MS. RICHARDS: Sorry, what?

MS. KOZLOFF: *Sorrows of War* by Bao Ninh, B-A-O N-I-N-H. He was a North Vietnamese soldier for 10 years during the war with the U.S., and just about everybody around him died. He survived and wrote this book which is probably the best-known Vietnamese book about the war.

I actually bought a copy of it when we were in Vietnam in 1996, sold on the street and it was just like a xerox copy. It's very moving. And I was again going to excerpt from it. But I couldn't figure out what to excerpt, so I read the whole book.

I did it in a sound lab on Broadway. I had reserved that sound lab for a certain number of hours and days. And I had a terrible cold so I sound very nasal on it. But no one ever listened anyway.

MS. RICHARDS: How did that make you –

MS. KOZLOFF: Those were my most literary pieces. I don't usually make art about books, but I made those two pieces and maybe one other.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you expect people to listen to those, and that hearing it would be an important part of their understanding?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know.

MS. RICHARDS: Maybe you weren't sure they would get it if they didn't listen.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, it could have been playing in the gallery. But the galleries didn't want to listen to that. They wanted people to turn it on and listen quietly themselves. But I think – now, with *Calvino's Cities on the Amazon*, the book came first. The book came later with *Mekong and memory*. The idea of adding the book to it came later.

I kept wanting to enlarge that piece. That piece was a long, horizontal collage, 13 feet long. And it was an old piece which wasn't successful, which I had done in my P&D period, a collage from some of my Crown Point etchings, the rejects, which had floral and plant imagery in them. So it was like a very decorative floral collage that I worked back into.

But I just wasn't ever satisfied with it. And I didn't ever show it. It was rolled up in my studio. It was a horizontal, but the Mekong River is vertical. The Mekong River runs up through Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, up into China. It looks vertical; we think of it as vertical.

But my ceilings in my studio aren't 13 feet. So that's why I made the canopy on the top with part of it. So the piece goes up the wall, and then it sort of cantilevered out into your space. And it also evoked, I think, some of the throne rooms at the palaces in Hue that I visited. So that's how the structure came about.

But first, the piece I reworked entirely. I cut out the rivers, as I had for the Amazon, and glued them down, the Mekong and its tributaries. And then I had brought back all of the stuff from Vietnam – paper, glittery, shiny paper, ornaments, and postcards of temples and things. And I added them. And it became a very dense piece.

I had it in my studio when friends came to visit – and I thought it had an element of tragedy to it, but nobody saw that. It was really, for me, about death and resurgence. I never did antiwar protest art during the war. Many of my friends did, but I never did. And I never dealt with the subject of Vietnam. That's the only time I ever did.

It was because I went there. You think you know a place from the movies and from the media, and it wasn't the place that was in my memory bank by 1996. It wasn't the place that we saw every night on television during the war. It was a young country and it was a country on a whole different course. I wanted to convey this memory and time.

And people just thought it was really beautiful. That was what everybody said. So that's why I made the two tile pilasters on either side, to link it to the war years. And that was probably just about the end of my work in ceramics.

But I'd been used to painting movie imagery. The pilasters had the same one-foot-square tiles of stills from movies that were made during those years – the years of the American war in Vietnam.

Those movies were not about the war. The movies about the war were made later. But they were movies that, for me and my generation, might evoke that time, that time of violence and conflict. Those were kind of iconic movies of that time. So for me, by putting those flanking the map, I brought the U.S. into the piece, which was called *Mekong and memory*. And that wasn't enough.

Then I had to do the audiotape. And I don't know, I have that piece in storage in my studio. I don't know if it meant as much to other people as it does to me.

MS. RICHARDS: So if you exhibit it again, you may or may not include the audio portion.

MS. KOZLOFF: I haven't thought about it. It traveled in *Crossed Purposes*, the show I had with Max, which traveled to nine difference places. And it always had the audio tapes with it. They have now been transcribed into contemporary digital technology. So I don't know.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Shortly thereafter, you spent a summer in Skowhegan. I guess it was summer '98.

MS. KOZLOFF: Teaching, yes. Right.

MS. RICHARDS: And I understand that you immediately started working with the person who could teach you fresco technique.

MS. KOZLOFF: Daniel Bozhkov.

MS. RICHARDS: Where did that desire to learn fresco come from, and did you envision how you would use it before you even learned it?

MS. KOZLOFF: I always wanted to learn fresco. I still would like to do a public, large fresco in that tradition. It just never happened. In fact, I've suggested it several times and they've said, "No, no." They want tile and mosaic because they think it's more permanent, which it isn't necessarily. It just depends on the conditions.

But in any case, I've never had that opportunity and I may never have that opportunity. It's taught in very, very few places. Skowhegan has always taught fresco. And most of the people who do fresco in the U.S. learned it at Skowhegan. The man who was teaching it then was Daniel Bozhkov, B-O-Z-H-K-O-V.

Daniel is an avant-garde performance-installation artist. But he's from Bulgaria and growing up at the academy he learned fresco and egg tempera and all those traditional techniques. He's a very wonderful, charismatic teacher. And he has a great wealth of knowledge and technical expertise about fresco. Daniel is not still teaching there — he's turned it over to someone else. I was very lucky to study with him.

I knew that they taught fresco there. And I knew that I was going to study it. I had almost taken a fresco course at night at the New School a couple of years before. And then for some reason I had to go away and I wasn't able to do it. But there is someone who teaches it there.

Anyway, the subject matter of the frescoes – before I went to Skowhegan, there was a show at Japan Society on European maps of Japan from the 16th to the 19th century [1994]. It was a big show and there's a catalogue, which I bought. Every single map was different. And none of them were correct. Some of them were absolutely hilarious. And I thought that was an interesting idea to play with.

So the way Daniel teaches fresco is everybody works on eight-inch-by-10-inch panels, because you can't do that much that fast, especially when you're a novice. So I started working on eight-inch-by-10-inch panels. And I've

never worked any bigger. So in the end, I did about 70 of them. I did about 15 in Skowhegan and the rest –

MS. RICHARDS: Seventy-two.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay, so I did about 15 or 20 of them at Skowhegan and the rest at my studio at home in New York, where I set up the whole production, which is very messy and time-consuming, when I came home, because I wanted to continue the series, which I called Knowledge[1998-2000].

I started with the maps of Japan. They were all very different. And then it occurred to me that if they got Japan wrong, they probably got everything else wrong.

So I started looking at maps from that time period of other places. And in fact, they had the same kind of errors. First of all, these maps were usually European maps, though later I started looking at Asian maps, too, which had a whole other set of errors, or to our eyes — to our modern eyes — conventions.

But the European maps were often done by cartographers that were on the ships during the Age of Discovery, during the period of European global colonization. That was very, very important, to map the places and claim them. Then they'd come home with their drawings, and engravings would be made, and they'd be circulated. And the errors would be repeated. Then they'd be copied in another country, and they'd repeat it in another language, and there would be more linguistic errors.

So I started looking at books on cartography, and you'd see the same maps. And they got worse as they went along, rather than better. It's hilarious, really. But it made me think that knowledge is so arbitrary, because that was the best knowledge of its time. And what we call knowledge today is the best knowledge of our time.

So that's really what I was getting at. Then I tried to make the series as diverse as I could. I tried to get maps from different cultures and different languages. And when I showed the series at DC Moore [Gallery], the first time I showed it — because I've shown it since in a number of places — I clustered them on the wall like walking around the world.

So if you started in Asia, then you moved across the Pacific, and then you'd be in the Americas, et cetera. I wanted the visitor to the gallery to walk through like moving around the world. And the fresco medium – what I love about the fresco medium, which I also like about tiles too – is that it's not something hanging on the wall. It is the wall.

It's an architectural material. I always wanted to get away from pictures hanging on the wall, though in the end that's what happens. I always want to insert it into the wall, but most people don't want to cut a hole in their wall.

So the Knowledge series extended into six or seven small globes, which are also called *Knowledge*. And by that time, I was at the American Academy in Rome. A lot of my projects were generated during these many residencies I've had. I get so much more work done at these places. And I had the idea –

MS. RICHARDS: I read somewhere about how you had tried to get to the American Academy repeatedly.

MS. KOZLOFF: For 32 years.

MS. RICHARDS: [Laughs.] And you were finally accepted.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: Maybe that was the perfect time to go.

MS. KOZLOFF: I went in 1999. I think it would have been the perfect time whenever I went. I didn't apply every year – every five or six years I would apply. But I had never been a finalist before either. So it was great. I think you just have to have a jury that likes your work.

MS. RICHARDS: People who recommend you, I believe, or –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, no, but –

MS. RICHARDS: — support you.

MS. KOZLOFF: Because I was on the jury the year after. We chose by the slides. Now, it would be by the –

MS. RICHARDS: JPEGs.

MS. KOZLOFF: By the JPEGs, but at that time it was by the slides. We didn't even read the letters of recommendation. There were too many. We chose by the art that we liked. Then they have finalists, and they bring them in.

And that's very important, more important for a residency program than almost any other kind of grant, because it's a community and you live together for a year. So if you have eight finalists and you're picking four people and you interview someone who's crazy, that might affect your decision. [Laughs.] And it happens, evidently.

MS. RICHARDS: If you can tell in an interview.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Anyway, so I was a finalist and I had never been before. And when they interviewed me, I blurted out that I'd been applying for 32 years, because I knew that I applied first when I was a graduate student in 1967. And it was 1999.

MS. RICHARDS: Ninety-nine.

MS. KOZLOFF: So it was 32 years. And I noticed a sort of jaw-drop among some of the people sitting there, one of whom probably wasn't 32. [Laughs.] And then I said to myself, "I'm never going to get this. I really made a mistake." But I did.

MS. RICHARDS: So anyway, you had started these globes before you even went.

MS. KOZLOFF: No. No, but I had prepared for them.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh.

MS. KOZLOFF: I bought these globes on sale after Christmas from Rand McNally, saw them in the window, these small-scale, tabletop globes. I knew I wanted to do something with them, so I brought them with me to Rome. And there was one big one, which was my son's childhood globe.

MS. RICHARDS: By big, do you mean the standard, about 12-inch?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, this big. But then there were these littler ones. Okay, so then I had the six little ones and the one big one. And I brought them to Rome with me. The first couple I plastered, because I was thinking it was an extension of the frescoes.

So I covered them with plaster. I put rope on them first to hold the plaster, as you would with a fresco, and I plastered them. But I let them dry. I didn't work on them wet because I didn't think I could do that and keep turning it. It's hard enough on a flat surface. So it's like a fresco secco.

And about halfway through the series, I said to myself, "Why do I need this plaster?" So I just gessoed them and painted them. And the ones that are done with plaster are heavy, and you have to pack them very carefully because they could break. But anyway, half of them are plastered over and half of them aren't.

You can't tell the difference by looking at them. They're painted in water-based media – acrylic and watercolor. All my stuff is water-based. I like the transparency of water-based media, whether it's fresco or watercolor or acrylic, which I really water down.

MS. RICHARDS: How did you actually transfer the image of the maps onto this sphere?

MS. KOZLOFF: Copied them, copied them.

MS. RICHARDS: Someplace I read, someone used the word "projection." Was that wrong?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I never used a projector. People always told me to, and once I bought a – what do you call it – overhead projector.

MS. RICHARDS: Or just a projector.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know, some kind of a projector. And I tried it and I didn't like it and I gave it away. It would get very hot, and you had to use it at night when it was pitch dark. Maybe the technology is better. But it was a big drag and I got rid of it very quickly.

So, no, I just copy it. I thought, "Maybe you could stretch these images around a curved surface." The first one I did is the famous medieval Hereford map. And I had half of it dark, like the Earth fell off.

MS. RICHARDS: So you were able to get a reproduction of any map you wanted?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, in books, in books.

MS. RICHARDS: And blow it up to larger or smaller?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, sometimes I took it to the xerox place and had them enlarge it or make it smaller. And sometimes I did it directly from the books, if it was my book. I got very cavalier about cutting and drawing on pages of books. In the beginning I was hesitant, but no more.

One of them, which is a famous old – very old map of the roads of Rome, a Roman map which is very, very, very, very, very long – the Tabula Peutingeriana — I sort of wrapped it around the globe. And then another one I found in a book – some of the old maps have kind of an oblong shape, as if they would go on a globe.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: So that one I was able to wrap around. So I did it in different ways. That was at the drawing stage. Those were really a challenge.

MS. RICHARDS: I've seen pictures of some of them, and you can see some of the bases are different. Were you just trying to find globes wherever you could find them?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, actually –

MS. RICHARDS: Or did you create your own bases?

MS. KOZLOFF: The bases are from the Rand McNally store. But then before I showed them, I had them cast in white porcelain, because the ones from the Rand McNally store are kind of crappy looking. They look like wood but they were plastic. I don't have photographs of all of them with the porcelain. So sometimes you see in the photograph the one or the other.

MS. RICHARDS: You changed the bases so they were all the same.

MS. KOZLOFF: They were all the same. They were all white, and when I showed them at DC Moore the first time, and every time after when I could, I showed them on columns.

MS. RICHARDS: One per column?

MS. KOZLOFF: One per column. First, at the American Academy in Rome, they were on ancient Roman columns that they had in their lobby. I loved it.

They looked great on them, inside the arches around the cortile, the center, kind of cloister area. We placed these columns with the globes over them. And then whenever I had an opportunity to have a column-like pedestal, I've used it.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you want them each to be displayed singly?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, so that they're at eye level.

MS. RICHARDS: And so that you can see all around.

MS. KOZLOFF: And you can turn them. That's another thing. People don't like to interact with art. You can put up a sign and say turn them, but people won't.

MS. RICHARDS: You don't mind if they're touched?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I don't. But people don't want to do that. Like my cradle, it always says, "Rock the cradle," and nobody wants to do that [*Rocking the Cradle*, 2003].

MS. RICHARDS: Do you have the feeling that you need to have a certain –

MS. KOZLOFF: If I stand there and do it, I might encourage other people.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Do you feel that, when you have these displayed, that you need to have a certain number of them together to make the whole experience convey the meaning that you were after, not just one globe in an exhibition?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I think the Knowledge series in general – there have been a few globes or a few frescoes shown in group shows, certainly. But the more you have, the more you do make this point about, "Hey, these maps are all wrong."

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, yes. This was about –

MS. KOZLOFF: For instance, if I have a cluster of six or seven maps of a continent – say, South America – and each one is a completely different shape, I would think that people would get the point.

MS. RICHARDS: Have you been able to keep any of them together as a group when they were purchased?

MS. KOZLOFF: A big group. The first purchase we made of them – almost the first purchase – was to Sloan-Kettering Medical Center [Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center]. They bought 13, something like that. And that made me very happy. They were building a new outpatient building for people who came in for chemo and left. It's in a waiting room on one of the floors.

MS. RICHARDS: So you've seen it?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I went up to see it. And people did buy a couple very often. They weren't very expensive and they do look good together. So it wasn't uncommon for people to buy a couple, two or three usually.

MS. RICHARDS: I want to, before we go on — we're up to about 2000 – talk about working methods a bit. You talked a lot about how you conceived your works, and we've covered some of this.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, though I'm not so good at technical. I tend to go for help and rely on other people because I'm not very intuitive about materials.

MS. RICHARDS: But I was struck by the fact that you keep finding new areas to learn.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And collaborate with experts.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, uh-huh. [Affirmative.]

MS. RICHARDS: Is there anything more you would want to say about how you research each subject?

MS. KOZLOFF: See, research is sort of a glorification. [They laugh.] I'm not really a researcher. I don't think of it as research. But I don't know, something catches my eye or my interest –

MS. RICHARDS: Is there – how much –

MS. KOZLOFF: And sometimes it's through travel and sometimes it's just something that crosses my path. And then I start looking for more of those or –

MS. RICHARDS: You've talked about there's a quote in an essay by Eleanor Munro about how you're a –

MS. KOZLOFF: That's a very good essay ["Joyce Kozloff Exterior and Interior Cartographies," 2006.]

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, yes, and she says, quoting you, "I'm an appropriator. All my imagery is lifted but then reconfigured, reimagined, recontextualized, operating on a prayer that it will become a new way of looking at the world," which kind of goes along with your saying that you just work directly. You don't do advance sketches or drawings.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I did for the public art projects.

MS. RICHARDS: Right, of course.

MS. KOZLOFF: Partly because I was required to.

MS. RICHARDS: Right, right but I'm talking about the studio work.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: But so in a way you're saying your imagination kicks in, and on the other hand you're saying you're limiting your imagination by appropriating. You kind of put those two things in separate areas.

So the question is, where does intuition come into play? Where a free flow of imagination – how does that work with the sense that you're always reimagining appropriated material so that you've got this basic material that you didn't invent.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right. I always say I'm only as good as my sources. And there was a time when – this is going –

MS. RICHARDS: And this also connects to using accidents and mistakes that that kind of –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, well, this is actually going back to the '70s when I was told, "No, no, you're bad for appropriating from other cultures." And then I realized that I'm Jewish, and there was a ban among Orthodox Jews, among the religious, against any kind of imagery.

MS. RICHARDS: You think that you inherited that?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, but if I had to not appropriate from other cultures and stick with my own, I wouldn't have very much. I would really be bereft. It became much more of a verbal than a visual culture as a result, I believe, until recent times.

MS. RICHARDS: You talked also about working with series.

MS. KOZLOFF: That's not answering your question. People say to me, "Why don't you make up imaginary maps of imaginary worlds, not starting from any outside source?" I've been asked that question a lot. I don't know how to do that. That isn't what triggers me into an idea.

And sometimes there have been times in my life when my ideas were way ahead of my ability and time to execute them. I had all these ideas and no time to do them, especially when I was doing the public art. And in a way, that's good.

But in a way it's terrible. And other times when I was waiting around for an idea, which is also pretty terrible, because I don't have that kind of studio practice where you go in and you just get to work.

MS. RICHARDS: What do you do when you sit there thinking, "I don't have any ideas?"

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I usually am looking for sources.

MS. RICHARDS: So the process of research, however you define that –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: – fills the gaps, sort of keeps you moving along.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I think so. Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: So you never have a situation where you finish with a work and you just don't know what you're going to do at all.

MS. KOZLOFF: Sometimes after a show you just feel burned out. And if I have the opportunity to travel, that's always been a trigger for me and –

MS. RICHARDS: Just working in series seems to be connected in some way to this process that you were talking about, because when you're working in a series, you always know – until the series is over – what you're going to do next.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, it really helps. It really helps to be able to go into the studio and plug in every day into an ongoing project. I really like that.

MS. RICHARDS: Does that connect at all to your moving from the Minimalists who worked in series or any other kind – or the traditions that you've researched? Why do you think that you're interested in working in a series?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. I've done some pieces that are just singular but not too much.

MS. RICHARDS: Does it go along with this sense you have that you just want to keep putting more and more into something, and then it doesn't fit; you have to do another one and another one because you just have so much material?

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, yes. It is like using up the leftovers. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: When you've started a work, do you know already what size and what the scale will be? Do you envision how it's going to be installed so you can think about that from the very beginning?

MS. KOZLOFF: Very often, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: It's part of the whole conceptualization of a piece?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Scale is very important to me. I like the large public scale and I like a very small intimate scale. I'm not good at the in-between scale, the sort of over-the-couch, living room scale. I've never been good at that. And every gallery I've ever been with, "Can't you make a three-by-four-foot painting?" [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: But you've been kind enough to sell parts.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, because they wouldn't keep me if I didn't have something to sell.

MS. RICHARDS: It sounds like also you're working at, in a way, one thing at a time; even though you've got leftovers and you've got pieces right behind you, right in front of you, you're still working on one thing at a time.

MS. KOZLOFF: I do work on pretty much one thing [at] a time, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Even though it might be part of a larger –

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and I have studio assistants when I'm doing stuff that's very labor intensive. But I can't really let anyone paint my stuff or draw my stuff. In some of the series there was a lot of process that I could farm out. And I've had wonderful studio assistants. I've been very lucky. And they go on with their lives.

MS. RICHARDS: Where do you usually get them?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. They come into my life. The last one, who's now going to graduate school, Morgan Levy, is the stepdaughter of a very old friend of mine, Carrie Rickey.

MS. RICHARDS: L-E-V-Y?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. C-A-R-R-I-E R-I-C-K-E-Y, and I've known her since she was five years old. She worked for me for a couple of years. She did my website. She did my digital archive database. It was amazing. She helped me with these recent posters – all the digital work on the posters that I did. And my book *China is Near* [2010], all the printing and scanning for that.

MS. RICHARDS: When you're involved in series, is it a struggle to decide, this is the end; this is the last piece? Is that an issue or –

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I know. I know when I'm through. I know I'm scraping the barrel. [They laugh.] That means I have to stop.

MS. RICHARDS: So you're saying, yes, when you feel that there isn't enough material left.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you like to have past work in the studio to refer to, or you could just easily send it out to the gallery if you had a place to send it immediately?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I keep stuff on the walls. But it doesn't usually go back more than a couple of years. I keep replacing it as I update it. So I don't have [work] hanging on my studio walls work from before the last four or five years, at the longest.

MS. RICHARDS: I think at some point, while you said you don't do preparatory sketches, drawings –

MS. KOZLOFF: Not usually.

MS. RICHARDS: — you said something about sketchbooks, and I wondered if you have kept diaries or visual diaries or anything along over the years.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no. I feel as if I should have but I didn't. I did some sketchbooks very early. I did one sketchbook for the Harvard Square project and one for the Wilmington project [*Homage to Frank Furness*, Wilmington, Delaware, train station, 1984],because I would go down to those cities and sketch the buildings and use that material – never for any of the other projects.

And when I was young and traveled, like when I was a student, I'd have sketchbooks. I don't have any since – since then, no. And I never kept a diary.

But I've always written these long travel letters home. I would send them to my family when I was young and later to other family members and friends. And people always said, "You should keep these."

But I didn't have them. The people who got them had them. I didn't make copies of them. They were written in my handwriting. But since I've been on the computer, when I've been traveling since 1999, I've kept a file of

those travel letters or little travelogues about the place.

And then in my mother's house, she never threw anything out. I found those old letters and I typed them, and they're in that computer folder too. I think that someday I might like to do something with it. I don't know what.

MS. RICHARDS: That's great.

MS. KOZLOFF: So in a way my diary is more written than visual.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: I never carried a camera. I bought my first camera two years ago to take photographs in Chinatown for my *China is Near* project. That was my first camera, a digital camera, just a little point-and-shoot.

MS. RICHARDS: Wow. You mentioned, when we were talking about the Pornament series, humor, and there are other instances in your work, various humor.

MS. KOZLOFF: I think there's a lot of humor in my work. But people don't always see it.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you consciously – what's your relationship with humor? Do you seek it out in other people's work? Do you try to insert it in your work? Is it something that you would like to use and do use?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, in short. I don't know that people always see it, but I amuse myself as I'm working. If I do something that amuses me, I don't know if it's going to amuse other people. And I love art that's funny. I really do. I don't think there's enough funny art. I think there's this –

MS. RICHARDS: It's sad that it's underappreciated, humor in art.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I think there's a kind of grim attitude that some people have about art, that it has to be serious with a capital S. And that's one of the things I rejected, along with the ban on decoration. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: When you've made your work, have you always thought about archival issues, that you were using materials that would survive and that would age well, that wouldn't crack and fall apart?

MS. KOZLOFF: It became an issue in the period in the '90s when I was doing those collages. The gallery raised it and certain collectors raised it, about the paper kind of waving, the way that happens when you glue one paper on top of another.

So my friend Judith Solodkin gave me some instructions, because you're supposed to use a certain kind of glue which is archival, and you're supposed to glue the papers down so that the grain is going against the grain, one paper against the grain of the other paper.

MS. RICHARDS: So they adhere better?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, so that they lie flat. And I didn't know any of that. And I have to say, I don't always do it. But I know about it. And then you have to weight it a certain way. So you weight it with one book going this way and one book going this way and one book going this way. There's a whole thing.

Also, in my collecting of collage material and collaging onto the artworks, I used things that were paper that wasn't acid-free. So I found out that there's a substance you can buy from Talas, the paper conservation place, which you spray the paper to deacidify it.

And now I religiously do that whenever I use any questionable paper. But I think that there's still – in galleries and museums — a lot of concern about anything on paper, because I get questions about that.

MS. RICHARDS: Slightly different subject, titling your work, all the titles seem straightforward.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Is that an issue? Does the title kind of come into your mind while you're actually making the piece or even –

MS. KOZLOFF: Sometimes before, sometimes during, sometimes after. But the titles are important. I guess they are for all artists

MS. RICHARDS: Well, sometimes there's whole groups –

MS. KOZLOFF: People question me about the punctuation –

[END DISC 3]

MS. RICHARDS: This is Judith Richards interviewing Joyce Kozloff on July 13, 2011, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, disc four.

We were talking about titles and titling.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay. The thing I get questioned on is the capitalization and punctuation in my titles.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, and there are two titles where there's no caps. They're phrases.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, there are more than two.

MS. RICHARDS: Or two I came across.

MS. KOZLOFF: And they think I'm making a mistake. People are always correcting my titles and I'm having to recorrect them. I don't know. Those decisions are part of the title, as far as I'm concerned.

MS. RICHARDS: So you feel strongly that they be followed exactly.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. The piece right now, I had the title before I began it, the piece I'm working on in my studio right now.

MS. RICHARDS: We'll get to that. Do you – some studio issues – obviously, here, and I guess elsewhere we've talked about it. You've been able to have a studio in the same place as you live.

MS. KOZLOFF: Most of the time, sometimes not. Because I work in different kinds of –

[Telephone interruption.]

MS. RICHARDS: Also about your studio, do you find that you want to work with a consistent light, whether it's natural light or artificial light, a combination of the both, or does it not matter at all?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't think I'm as fussy about that as some artists because I've worked in so many different places and different situations.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, and residencies you had. And what about music and sound?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't have any. I've never been able to listen to the radio or listen to music while I'm making my art. I sort of wish I could turn it on. It's not that it bothers me, but I tune it out very quickly. I'm in my own head. And that's the only noise I listen to. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: You said that you're not –

MS. KOZLOFF: I'm a computer addict. I'm online a lot. So if I want to take a break, if my back starts to hurt or something, I'm online.

MS. RICHARDS: Have you ever thought of moving the computer – do you want to move the computer out of your studio if you could?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, I like it.

MS. RICHARDS: So it's not really a distraction enough.

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I've sometimes had studio assistants who had the radio on or music on, sometimes with a headset or sometimes on. It doesn't bother me. I just don't pay much attention to it.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] You said at one point you're not a morning person. Do you have a certain routine though?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, I am now. But not by nature. I come from a family of nocturnals. I like to work at night. But I'm up in the morning too.

MS. RICHARDS: So you're basically working every day, some days?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't have regular hours. I work when I can. It doesn't matter, day, night.

MS. RICHARDS: And you said you don't often have assistants. Well, you don't have assistants to do the actual handwork of your work.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, right.

MS. RICHARDS: But you have someone now who handles paperwork?

MS. KOZLOFF: I've never had anyone to do my secretarial work. I probably should, but I never have. But a lot of that computer work in this last period was done by Morgan. She's leaving. Maybe I'll hire somebody else, maybe not for a while. And since all that work is now done –

MS. RICHARDS: All the work for the website?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, it can be updated, and she can update it from a distance and the digital archive and database.

MS. RICHARDS: Does that mean you've – she helped you, or you had organized your archives beforehand, that that's all up to date?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, she scanned all the slides and transparencies. And then we tweaked them in Photoshop and I put all the information in. There's a digital page for each. A lot of artists are doing that now. But I hadn't.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, it's very important.

MS. KOZLOFF: So it's done. And to keep it up isn't a huge thing as compared with all the back work going back to the '60s that we did.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: Same thing with the website.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. So you went through to see that you had all the articles that had been written, reviews, updated the bibliography.

MS. KOZLOFF: We didn't put all of that on. We have a complete bibliography and biography. We didn't scan all the articles, but they're listed.

MS. RICHARDS: No, I know. But they're listed.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Speaking of criticism, I have a couple of questions in that area. You talked about how negative press affected you. Have you ever responded, written back, called someone who you felt misunderstood your work?

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe; if I did, I can't remember. Perhaps a few times, but not for many, many years.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you –

MS. KOZLOFF: And I've hardly ever responded to anyone who wrote about it at all. I might have thanked – briefly thanked — someone who wrote something that I thought was very acutely observed.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] When you were involved in the mid- to later '70s in [the] Pattern and Decoration group or however you want to phrase it, it sounds like you didn't mind being labeled in that way.

MS. KOZLOFF: We chose the name.

MS. RICHARDS: So it was positive?

MS. KOZLOFF: It was a little awkward, but there were people who were more involved with pattern and people who were more involved with decoration. So we couldn't choose one or the other. So it was a combination.

MS. RICHARDS: And also you were put into numerous women's shows.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Especially in the early years.

MS. KOZLOFF: Up to this day.

MS. RICHARDS: Up to this day.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Is that ever an issue for you, or it doesn't really matter what –

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I guess the goal was to be somehow eventually integrated. The recent ones, in the last five or six years have been a kind of looking back at the '70s, for the most part. So I think it's fine.

I'm glad whenever I'm included. There are people who I think should be included who are not always included, and that makes me feel sad. The way history rewrites itself and some people are seen as iconic and other people just sort of disappear, and we've seen that happen.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: So I feel like I'm still a contender. [Laughs.] That's enough for me, as long as I'm still a contender. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Your work has been shown, of course, across the U.S., but also in various cities abroad. Is there a difference in the critical response, or even maybe the public response, that you know about, to your work outside the U.S.?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I haven't had much of a career outside the U.S. I've been shown in this or that show over the years. Some of them were important shows. I've even had some solo shows abroad. But I never felt that it had any traction or it built into anything.

I really feel that my career, such as it is, has been a more local career rather than an international career like people are having now these days. I just haven't had that kind of support and that kind of connections.

Was the work seen differently? The country I've shown most in abroad is Italy. And I did notice when I showed my globe *Targets* [2000] in Rome, the Italians got it right away.

And it wasn't complete. I didn't complete it there. I completed it in New York. It was this walk-in globe, and it was two-thirds finished. There were empty holes in it where sections weren't completed when I exhibited it there. It was the group show of the fellows at the end of the year at the American Academy.

And then I showed it in many places afterwards. I showed it in Venice and Genoa later. The Italians loved that piece because it's anti-American.

MS. RICHARDS: Go on.

MS. KOZLOFF: I remember this one guy was very funny who went in the piece. It was a piece about all the places the U.S. has bombed. And he's going, "Bravo, bravo" – [they laugh] – whereas when I've shown it in the U.S., I have to have a wall plaque that lists the dates and the countries and explains it.

Americans do not know that we've bombed all those countries and do not take the same delight in that piece that the Italians do. But then when I showed work in Venice which dealt with the history of European colonialism, Italians were not so interested in that, didn't like it.

MS. RICHARDS: Interesting.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, because it was in the Arsenale in Venice in a building that was an old shipyard. And from which all those ships sailed to colonize the world. They either went from Genoa or Venice. I had *Targets* in that piece, and they went right for *Targets*. They loved it, and they wouldn't look at the other stuff.

MS. RICHARDS: We'll talk about the work *Targets*.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, these are the only real examples I can think of that were different from a response you would get here, that were clearly about the politics of another culture.

MS. RICHARDS: When you've had reviews wherever — or I should say this is about public reception — is it important to you that people read the work the way you intended? Do you enjoy different readings? Do you feel that the work has a specific reading that viewers should get?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, it's interesting when people have different readings and say things that surprise me that I

never thought of. However, I have all of this stuff that I say about the work.

MS. RICHARDS: What do you mean stuff? Written materials?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, my gallery asks me to write down all my sources and ideas for pieces because they like to tell people who ask. And I appreciate that about them. So I do that before every show and they have it on hand. And I walk them through the gallery and tell them about each piece, everyone who works there.

So they're all very well informed, and I presume they do it with their other artists. But if I'm not there, if someone else isn't there saying all that stuff, and someone just walks in and walks around and leaves, they're not going to necessarily see my scenario.

I sometimes wonder about that, because would they ever know all that unless it was told to them just from standing there and looking at the work without any outside cues?

And the other problem that I have, which I've always had – and I think it's really been a very big problem – people expect political art to have a certain look – black and white, expressionistic.

Traditionally, if work is about war or some of the issues that I've been dealing with, particularly in this decade, they don't expect it to look like my work looks, because I have this decorative aesthetic.

And it's a dissonant experience, I think. Most people don't necessarily see the content because they see that it looks like a big, colorful, all-over painting perhaps. And I put a demand on a viewer to get up close and graze and look at all of the stuff that's going on in it.

And most people don't want to take the time to do that, especially if they don't like the aesthetic. A lot of people in the art world don't like color.

MS. RICHARDS: Or the opposite. [Laughs.] They don't like black and white. Have you had made available the texts that you've written about the work to the gallery visitor either as a handout or on the wall?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: You do that?

MS. KOZLOFF: Usually it's a handout.

MS. RICHARDS: So a person, if they choose, could –

MS. KOZLOFF: Can ask and can read, and I'm sure many people do.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you ever want to put it on the wall, or you feel that's not appropriate?

MS. KOZLOFF: I've had things on walls in some shows occasionally, not always.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you prefer one way or the other?

MS. KOZLOFF: It depends on the piece. I always put that text up when I show *Targets* in America. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Speaking about exhibitions, let's move to your experience with galleries.

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, God.

MS. RICHARDS: We talked about how your first show at Tibor –

MS. KOZLOFF: Do you want the truth?

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, absolutely. We talked about your first show at Tibor de Nagy. That was in 1970. So we were talking – I was saying that you had your first show. We talked about that in 1970 which was –

MS. KOZLOFF: I think what happened –

MS. RICHARDS: And you kept showing there.

MS. KOZLOFF: I kept showing there.

MS. RICHARDS: Until '81.

MS. KOZLOFF: Until '81.

MS. RICHARDS: Had quite a few shows during that period of time.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: And how did that –

MS. KOZLOFF: When I look back over my career, I think I may have made some mistakes. But I started feeling as if that really wasn't the right gallery for me.

MS. RICHARDS: What were you after?

MS. KOZLOFF: I saw how Holly Solomon's Pattern and Decoration artists were starting to have careers in Europe because she actively went there and made those connections, and that didn't happen for me or the other Pattern and Decoration painters at Tibor's. And it's funny because it had already peaked. But maybe I didn't quite realize that.

And so I thought it was time to move on, even though I liked him very much. I remember there was a kind of key moment. I went in the gallery, and he was looking at an *Artforum* with a quizzical expression on his face.

And he looked up at me and he said, "What's the difference between a videotape and a movie?" And I said, "You watch a video on a TV screen." And he said, "Oh." And I walked out of there and I said, "I've got to get out of here." [Laughs.] Isn't that crazy?

MS. RICHARDS: Well, it depends what you're after, what you expect of your dealer.

MS. KOZLOFF: I just think I felt he was not sufficiently actively engaged beyond being there in his gallery and showing his artists and selling to his clients, that he didn't have a larger picture. So I left. I did not leave for another gallery. But he thought I did. And I didn't. I didn't want to do that.

MS. RICHARDS: Why did he think you did?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I'll tell you what happened. I heard this from other people. He was very hurt. He had a whole history of artists leaving him. He used to tell me about that history, about how all of them, as they became successful, had left him. It was a litany. It was the story of his gallery, the way he would present it.

And I didn't want to end up doing it too. But then I did. And I felt so bad about it that I never went in there very much ever afterward. I felt so terrible, so guilty to have hurt him. But it seemed like I should do that and that's why I did it, for myself. And then I started approaching different galleries and trying to figure out what to do. I didn't have a place to go to.

But I had been working with Barbara Gladstone, who was a print publisher. She had published some of my prints. Then she opened a gallery with Diane Villani called Gladstone Villiani on 57th Street, which was mostly a prints and works on paper gallery. She was ambitious and she was moving on. And then she opened a larger gallery.

And so that was the gallery I ended up going with. I think because I'd had this working relation with her before, Tibor probably assumed that I had made a decision to go with her. But I hadn't. I had actually approached other people before her.

MS. RICHARDS: It, obviously to me, wouldn't feel less painful for him whether you left him to go to another gallery. You left him because you wanted to leave. You were leaving.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, it's like leaving a marriage for another man versus leaving the marriage and then later meeting someone else. It's different, Okay? [Laughs.] Leaving because it was time to leave for your own reasons, which is why I left.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Barbara was just starting out. She wasn't the first person I spoke to. But I remember saying at that time, "I just went from the hopelessly out of date to the obnoxiously up to the minute."

MS. RICHARDS: Which also made you uncomfortable?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I –

MS. RICHARDS: Insecure?

MS. KOZLOFF: So I showed with Barbara from '81 to '90, but I hardly showed there because I was mostly doing public art.

MS. RICHARDS: And in fact, that last show I saw on your bio in terms of a solo show was '85.

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Yes. And it wasn't really a problem, because I was away doing these big projects, and I shared my commission on them with her. I always assumed when I was ready to have a show, I would have a show. And the show I had in '85 was a small show in the back room of watercolors. It was fine.

I think she and her gallery were happy to do it, and it got some press, and there were some sales, and I was content with it.

Then the next time I had a body of work to show were the *Pornaments*. And I had found Paul Anbinder. He was producing the book. I said, "There will be a show when the book comes out," to him, assuming that there would be.

And every time I brought it up with her or tried to get her attention or tried to meet with her, she wasn't available. Finally, we had lunch and she said, "I can't visualize those works on the walls of my gallery." So that was the end of the relationship. It was one of the most devastating things in my professional life.

MS. RICHARDS: Now, this may be naïve, but could she or you have said, "Okay, I won't show these here," or "I won't —" – she wouldn't show them; "We'll wait until the next body of work?"

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. Maybe I didn't handle it right. I don't know. But I wanted to have the show when the book was coming out.

So I remember saying to Allan Schwartzman, who had been her director, and that relationship had ended – I think she fired him or somehow let him go. And Barbara – I don't want to say that she didn't want to show it because it was pornographic because I don't really believe that. I don't think it was –

MS. RICHARDS: Sure, it might have been something else.

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't think it was a censorship issue. I think she was changing her gallery and letting go of most of the people she'd represented in the '80s and taking on new people. And she just didn't want to show me anymore.

I've never discussed it with her. I've never really talked to her since. And we were friends. We had a friendly relationship, at least in the beginning. Her gallery was downstairs in this building for many years.

Anyway, I said to Allan, "I'm so humiliated. I don't want anyone to know this happened."

And he said, "You have to tell everyone. You're completely wrong. If you want to show that work, you have to tell everyone and say you need to find a place to show it, not necessarily a gallery to represent you but a place to show it, and put the word out in the community." And he said he would help me. And he did.

He took the portfolio to a couple of places for me, including Lorence-Monk [Gallery], where it was shown. They were a gallery that specialized in works on paper. They were a very good gallery. And they didn't represent all the people whose works they showed. Some of the shows were curated.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: There were people that they regularly showed, but this was the kind of thing they would do, a one-time project. We never discussed anything more ongoing. But it was a beautiful show.

MS. RICHARDS: That was in 1990.

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] It was when the book came out. Barbara never came to see it.

MS. RICHARDS: That you know of, or you know for sure she didn't?

MS. KOZLOFF: That I know of. And I was still, technically, represented by her.

MS. RICHARDS: What do you mean technically?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I hadn't officially left and she hadn't – my stuff was still with her.

MS. RICHARDS: So that conversation at lunch wasn't an official ending?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, but it really was, you know. I hadn't gotten my stuff back from the gallery. She hadn't asked me to take it back. But I had the show at Lorence-Monk. It was very well reviewed and I'm glad I did it. I liked Susan Lorence and Bob Monk.

I showed it in a number of other cities. And then I did, after the show, write Barbara a letter that, clearly, we weren't going to be working together anymore. And she returned my work to me. And I did not look for another gallery until, like, 1995.

MS. RICHARDS: There's something called –

MS. KOZLOFF: I was looking –

MS. RICHARDS: – 152 Wooster Space – I mean, this is 152 Wooster. There was a space called 152 Wooster?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, there was always a gallery down there, and there were times in between. They were always leaving in the middle of the night and not paying the rent. And there was always –

MS. RICHARDS: And you said your building collects that rent, so that you would suffer the consequences.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. Now the businesses downstairs are real businesses. But these art galleries were always coming and going. And there were times in between when there was no one in the space. So I had a show in that space downstairs of my piece for L.A. before I sent it to L.A., the monster piece, *Fantasies*.

It was somebody's idea – it's a very lively piece, that piece. It was all over the floor of my studio, and someone said, "You know, it's going to Los Angeles and no one in New York will ever see it. Don't you want to make it available to people?"

So I put it up in the space downstairs for a week I think, or I don't know how long, and with Velcro, just how I always put the tiles up. My friend Barbara Pollack was doing PR at that time, and she did the PR. We got a ton of PR on that show. And so I was glad I did that.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and I didn't have a gallery at the time.

MS. RICHARDS: Right. So you're looking for a gallery and –

MS. KOZLOFF: I didn't look for a gallery –

MS. RICHARDS: I know that you had a show at Midtown Payson in '95.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, that was the gallery that became DC Moore.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, right.

MS. KOZLOFF: So I didn't look for a gallery at all until '95. I was licking my wounds. I was really, really hurt by what happened with Gladstone.

MS. RICHARDS: You were still involved with the commissions too.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. And then I started having these watercolor collage pieces building up in my studio with no place to show them. So I decided, "Okay, I have to try and find a gallery."

I didn't want – couldn't go cold, but I contacted any dealers that I had had some contact with: maybe I was in a group show; maybe I had a friend who showed there, who knew me, if they were a gallery that I thought I would like to show in. And some of them wrote that they weren't interested or said they weren't interested. And then there were some that made studio visits and nothing happened.

And then I went to L.A. to work on the Mankato piece. And as I said, I was gone for many months. And I kind of forgot about it. One of the people who came to my studio was Bridget Moore. She was the director at the Midtown Payson gallery. And that was not a gallery that I would have thought of or that I would have contacted.

But my friend Bob Kushner had started to work with her. He was moving away from Holly Solomon and he liked her very much. I said, "I've never been there." That gallery had been in existence since the 1930s. I had never been there. They represented all these American Scene artists, and it just wasn't something that was on my

radar. But she came, and she was nice.

I didn't think she was particularly interested. And even among the people who came, she didn't seem particularly interested. She wasn't rude or anything, but I didn't have a feeling like this was a great studio visit or anything. And I forgot about it. And I went away.

I can still remember: it's around March and I'm in the factory – the tile factory in Los Angeles – and I got a phone call from her. I had to remember who she was.

And she said, "I have an unexpected opening next month in my gallery, and I've been thinking about your work ever since I came to your studio. I've given it a lot of thought, and I was wondering if you would like to have a show."

It was a total shock. And I said, "Sure." It had been the Midtown Gallery originally. Then it became the Midtown Payson Gallery. The backer was a man named John Payson, a very wealthy man from Florida. He had a gallery in Florida as well. I never met him really.

But I showed all of those pieces, *The British Were Here, The Spanish Were Here, The French Were Here, Imperial Cities, Los Angeles Becoming Mexico City,* and I also showed three of the Mankato panels on Velcro before we installed them, right before we installed them. We brought them to New York, and some models. And I think it was a beautifully installed show.

About a month later, two months later, the gallery closed. Payson pulled out and assumed that that was the end of it and really confined himself now to Florida. Bridget and the other director – Ed Deluca – and a third member of the staff who didn't stay with them very long said, "We have all these artists. We know all the collectors. Maybe we can start our own gallery."

And that became DC Moore. I ended up going with them, and I've been with them ever since. This is the longest I've ever been with a gallery. It's, what, 16 years?

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, 1996 was the inaugural show.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: But I say that the 1995 was.

MS. RICHARDS: So 16 years.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, since the Midtown Payson show, it's 16 years.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. KOZLOFF: And I think it's been a good relationship. I'm not an easy sell. I don't really have a market. They sell things, but –

MS. RICHARDS: Do you think that what you've wanted from a dealer has changed over the years, or has it always been everything? [Laughs.]

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, like everybody – to be fully honest, I'd like to have an international career. I'd like to be in more museum collections. I'd like to be in more important shows, of course; same things as everybody else, right?

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] Do you –

MS. KOZLOFF: I mean, she's not one of the really big players. She's certainly a well-respected gallery and she works very hard. One thing I have to say about all three of my dealers – Tibor, Barbara and Bridget – when they get paid, I get paid. I've never had that experience that so many artists have had of –

MS. RICHARDS: Has it been important to you to feel that you're part of a community in terms of the other artists in the gallery, and I know that's changed over the years. The art world has changed.

MS. KOZLOFF: No. It's never been that important to me. I've always had communities. So the gallery never was the center of my life in any of my galleries, though I've known other artists in each of the galleries. I'm not one of those artists that goes to all the gallery's openings. I go if it's a show of a friend of mine.

MS. RICHARDS: Even in the days in the '70s at Tibor, with Tibor?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, yes. I wasn't –

MS. RICHARDS: When you've had shows, have you wanted to get involved in drafting the press release and deciding what's on the invitation?

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, yes, very much so.

MS. RICHARDS: Those kinds of marketing?

MS. KOZLOFF: Very much so. I probably drive them crazy. I rewrite every press release. [Laughs.] I'm very involved in the design of ads and of announcements.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you have any involvement in the decisions about who will buy things, who will buy work?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. That part I leave up to them. Pricing and selling I leave up to them. That is what I cannot do. Anyone who's ever – and there's hardly been any who've ever come to my studio who wanted to buy something — I'd talk them out of it or I gave it to them. I can't do it. I can't close a deal.

MS. RICHARDS: Have you ever put any restrictions on the sale of your work, that it can't be resold or that you need to be asked whether it would be in an exhibition –

MS. KOZLOFF: I have sometimes said, "Please tell them that we would like to be able to borrow works if they're going to be in an exhibition." But I'm not in such a good position to make those kinds of demands.

MS. RICHARDS: Have you wanted to have a say in what kinds of exhibitions, the context that your work is seen in, in terms of thematic shows where a curator might contact the gallery, obviously in cases where you know it's being considered, and you express reservations or ask that it not be included in a show because you don't want your work to be seen?

MS. KOZLOFF: They usually always tell me. They usually always tell me so-and-so came, and I always want to do everything. I'm not that particular. There are some times when they've said, "We don't think you should do this because they're not paying for the trucking and insurance or something," and so I say, "Okay."

They don't want the work to be mishandled. And that's mainly the issue, not the other artists who are in the show or the title of the show. For them, it's more about how the work is going to be handled.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Have there been specific exhibitions, either solo or group, that have been particularly important? I'm thinking about the show *Drawings: The Pluralist Decade* that was in Venice – the Venice Biennale in 1980 — or maybe your mid-career traveling retrospective [*Joyce Kozloff: Visionary Ornament*, 1986-87].

MS. KOZLOFF: It was very nice to be included in that *Drawings* show at the Venice Biennale. But it was a big group show. I don't think it did much for me professionally. It was curated by Janet Kardon, who was at the ICA in Philadelphia, and she's shown it in Philadelphia also. And it was very nice to be included.

MS. RICHARDS: And it toured in Europe too.

MS. KOZLOFF: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Yes, the other thing that I didn't talk about was the change that happened around '80, '81 in the art world with the return of Neo-Expressionism, which was a very male thing. It kind of wiped out a lot of the things that happened in the '70s for a period of years. Now there's a reinvestigation.

MS. RICHARDS: A long time.

MS. KOZLOFF: For a long time. And it was, like, our team, the Germans, our team, the Italians, our team, the Americans. And they were all guys.

And something like the decorative was just wiped out by that, both in Europe and in America. I was less hurt than some of the other artists because I was involved in doing public art, and I was so busy and so engaged that I could almost pretend it wasn't happening.

But I did hear my colleagues suffering, and if I had continued making paintings and showing them, I'm sure I would have suffered myself. I think there have been long-term repercussions that we've all felt.

I still think that having been associated with that movement is a negative for a lot of people in the art world. And a lot of people, if they hear my name or they hear the name of any number of the others, they get a take,

which is based on what we did in the '70s.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: And many of them just never liked it and still don't like it.

MS. RICHARDS: But, of course, you and other artists who were part of that group have had your work evolve and move in many different ways.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, but some people aren't aware of that, or they can't see beyond that, or they don't care. And then that might be true about anything. But I just wanted to say that I do think it was a very exciting moment, and it propelled us into a lot more visibility. But there was an enormous backlash as well. And I don't think it's ever completely ended.

MS. RICHARDS: Are there other –

MS. KOZLOFF: Do you think I'm right?

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay.

MS. RICHARDS: And it's not just Pattern and Decoration that that's happened to.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: As things evolve more and more quickly —

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes.

MS. RICHARDS: — things are thrown out, at least temporarily.

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] There has been a lot of reexamination of '70s feminist art but not very much of Pattern and Decoration. That's still not appealing to people.

I think at this moment there's a lot of interest in art about the body, gender, sexuality, role play, those aspects of feminist art and the artists who were doing that, who were pioneering among the women artists.

MS. RICHARDS: When we were talking about the early years, we were talking about people you knew and other artists with whom you felt connected. We didn't bring that up again so much in the '80s or the '90s.

By the time we get to around 2000, or maybe in the '90s, were there other artists who'd come into your circle who were important to you, who were influential in one way or another?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I still have friendships with people from those other periods. As I've gotten involved in different groups, I make new friends, and I've been in a lot of different kinds of groups over the years. During the public art years, particularly working on collaborative projects, some of those people became my friends.

[Audio break.]

In this century I've been active in the antiwar movement and in a group called Artists Against the War. It's a whole new group of friends as a result, terrific friends, mostly younger than me, which I like. I also have friendships with some former students and studio assistants who eventually became colleagues.

MS. RICHARDS: Uh-huh. [Affirmative.] Have you noticed any influence of your work or any aspect of your work on those younger artists or any other groups of younger –

MS. KOZLOFF: There's a lot of mapping work out there now. Now, I can't say it's my influence. I think that the idea is very pervasive at this moment. I've been in a lot of group mapping shows. And there have been a lot of group mapping shows that I haven't been in. I go to the galleries and I see it. I see it in the art schools.

It's one of many things that are going on at this moment. It is one of the ways in which we receive information in the modern world, in the modern digital world. And everybody does it differently and for different reasons. And now there are some books about artists mapping. And I don't know if I'm influencing them or they're influencing me or we're all looking at the same sources at the same time. I can't say. I don't know.

MS. RICHARDS: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.] You're living –

MS. KOZLOFF: But I don't feel like I'm working in a vacuum, alone. I feel like I'm part of a – I wouldn't call it a movement. And unlike the P&D, I don't know these people. I've met very few of them, even though some of them I've been in a number of group shows with. So maybe they know each other. But I don't know them.

MS. RICHARDS: For example, does any name come to your mind?

MS. KOZLOFF: Some who are especially interesting: Paula Scher, Nina Katchadourian, Guillemo Kuitca, Ingrid Calame, Kim Jones, Mark Bradford.

MS. RICHARDS: You're right here in the middle of SoHo, and obviously, the art world has changed tremendously, and SoHo has changed. How do you feel about the changes that have happened over the decades in terms of your –

MS. KOZLOFF: I'm living in the middle of a shopping mall.

MS. RICHARDS: [Laughs.] Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, it didn't happen overnight. It happened gradually and incrementally, and we were all aware that it was happening. I kept thinking, well, this neighborhood is trendy now, but then they'll move on and they'll discover another area that will be trendy.

But that isn't exactly what happens. Once it comes, it doesn't really go away. It just gets worse and worse. [Laughs.] But I love my loft, and if you don't go out on a Saturday afternoon, you're not going to get stampeded.

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: Try not to go out on a Saturday afternoon.

MS. RICHARDS: Right. I know you see lots of art. Are there particular things in the museums or galleries that you're drawn to now, looking at?

MS. KOZLOFF: I never know. I was in Paris for three weeks this spring, and I saw two shows of contemporary art that I absolutely was blown away by. One was the Anish Kapoor at the Grand Palais, which you've probably seen pictures of. It's totally amazing to be inside of it and walk around it.

And the other one was a video show by Aernout Mik, the Dutch artist. There were seven pieces, each in a different room. He really has a connection to all kinds of very immediate, global issues.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Do you remember where that was exhibited?

MS. KOZLOFF: At the Jeu de Paume. Neither of those have anything to do with my work particularly. That's the way it's always been with me. In fact, I'm probably more critical of work that's closer to mine.

One of the problems with these group mapping shows is everything starts to look the same after a while. It was the same with the decorative shows. They really have to be well curated.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. Picking up from where we left off when we were talking about your work last, which is around 2000, around 2001 you did a series called Spheres of Influence.

MS. KOZLOFF: It was a painting [*Spheres of Influence,* 2001].

MS. RICHARDS: A painting, I mean. But there were 12 panels.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right.

MS. RICHARDS: And I wanted to ask you about the evolution of that. Of course, it came from the mapping and the globes.

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, well that's a pair. There are two paintings: *Spheres of Influence* and *Dark and Light Continents* [2002].

MS. RICHARDS: Right.

MS. KOZLOFF: Both have the same form. And I had had an idea which ended up –

MS. RICHARDS: Which were quite huge and stunning.

MS. KOZLOFF: They're 16 feet long.

MS. RICHARDS: I wanted to ask you how you came to create that form and kind of slice the globe up.

MS. KOZLOFF: Those are like the gores of a globe. You find diagrams like that in old mapping books that have the shape of these gores, which, when cut out and glued down onto a globe, form the image of the world.

Some ideas I have I never end up doing, or I don't do them in the form I originally had. I always thought I would do a celestial and a terrestrial globe, because in Italy, in the old palazzos, in the library – and there's always a library – there are two huge globes. One is of the night sky and one is of the Earth. It's just classic. You always see that. So I always thought I'd do a second big globe, a second big globe like *Targets*. But I never did. But I've done the celestial globe in different ways.

So this pair – *Spheres of Influence* is the terrestrial and *Dark and Light Continents* is the celestial. *Spheres of Influence* is these odd-shaped canvases side by side, and it's a big map spread across it of the Mediterranean and the countries around the Mediterranean.

While I was at the American Academy in Rome, there was a geographer/cartographer, Richard Talbert, who was creating the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, which was something like 12 years in the works and 90 scholars around the world working on it. I bought it as soon as it came out. It's a very large, oversized atlas.

It's all the knowledge we have about the Greco-Roman world. What I noticed, looking through it, is all the most densely populated areas then are the most densely populated areas now. And many of them were the most contested areas then and are the most contested areas now. So I spread this imagery across these gores, across this space, across these canvases.

I thought it would be continuous, but it wasn't, because there would have been too much water. So I didn't put in all the areas. But it starts in the left with Italy, and it ends on the far right in the Middle East.

Mostly it's the countries around the Mediterranean. And then I projected over it from contemporary tactical pilotage charts, which are aerial charts made by the U.S. government, at the same scale information – contemporary information — over the same areas. So that's what the piece is. And I had used those tactical pilotage charts to make the globe, to make *Targets* as well. Does this make any sense?

MS. RICHARDS: But I thought you did *Targets* – when did you do *Targets*?

MS. KOZLOFF: Earlier, '99, 2000.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, right, we didn't talk about that.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: But in any case, now we're talking about these.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: And it's in warm colors. The other one, which is the same shape and size, is in very dark colors, the one that's called *Dark and Light Continents*.

Someone sent me an image, which is now very familiar on the Internet, a satellite photograph looking down at the Earth, which shows which parts of the Earth are most brightly lit at night.

And basically, it's the northern continents and maybe the rim of some of the other parts of the world. And so that was the imagery that I spread across the second one. The little dots of light are all across America and Europe, mostly, and a few other places. And they're crosshatches, like pixels off the Internet.

Then I put another layer over it. I always had two layers. The other layer is from 16th-century celestial maps of the night sky, of the constellations. But I didn't put the animals in. I just put the stars in. So the stars that you see on that map are the stars of the night sky. My idea for that piece was that you were looking at the Earth through the stars, from outer space.

So anyway, I did do my celestial and terrestrial globes. It's like you took the globes and you flattened them and mushed them up against the wall.

MS. RICHARDS: And they're about the scale as the maps were inside *Targets*.

MS. KOZLOFF: Probably.

MS. RICHARDS: *Targets* is about nine feet?

MS. KOZLOFF: It's nine feet in diameter.

MS. RICHARDS: And this is 96 inches, which is eight feet.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, maybe a similar scale.

MS. RICHARDS: So if you could turn *Targets* inside out, in a way, and form it –

MS. KOZLOFF: Right, right.

MS. RICHARDS: Were you pleased with the relationship between the two pieces and the way they looked?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. They really look good together.

MS. RICHARDS: Are they still together?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. *Spheres of Influence* is on extended loan to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. *Dark and Light Continents* is permanently installed at the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan.

I did two more artists' books – *Boys' Art* [2003] and *China is Near* [2010]. And as with *Pornament*, I didn't know they were books when I started them. It was a series of drawings that ended up as a book. *Boys' Art*, I was in residency at the Bogliasco Foundation in the fall of 2001.

MS. RICHARDS: What foundation was that?

MS. KOZLOFF: Bogliasco, B-O-G-L-I-A-S-C-O. I think it's called the Liguria Foundation [Liguria Study Center for the Arts and Humanities]. But it's in Bogliasco, Italy, near Genoa, on the Mediterranean. It's very beautiful. Max and I arrived there on the morning of September the 11, 2001. I was there for nine weeks. And I had planned on doing a series of maps of the sites of battles.

I had brought some of the sources with me, and others I found in books in their library. I brought the paper. I was going to do it in watercolor, colored pencil, the usual media, but my boxes didn't arrive for a couple of weeks. So I started doing pencil drawings because they had pencils in their office. I could have gone into Genoa and bought more art supplies, but I didn't.

So I did these pencil drawings. I hadn't done pencil drawings since I was a kid, as art with just regular yellow pencils. I got really into it and it felt like being in a sanctuary. It was so beautiful there, and all the reports from downtown Manhattan of how horrible it was here. And so I did a series of 24 of them. They're little pencil drawings, very, very intricate.

It was very satisfying sitting in that studio with the shutters that opened out, and you saw this view of the Mediterranean through the window. It was in a grove of olive trees. It was just the best.

I came home with them, and I had them all over my wall. I showed them to some of my friends, and they'd go, "Uh, so," like, all I did was just copy these things in pencil. It wasn't enough. But I don't always realize that myself.

And then one day I found myself pulling down Nik's childhood drawings of the battles of the superheroes. I had five boxes of them. And they were large. They were done in magic marker and crayon, different things. They were done over a period of years and they're not dated.

I took them to the local copy shop and had them reduced down and made them very small and cut them up and started collaging them into these drawings of the sites of battles. And I called the series *Boys' Art*.

I remembered how my brother, when I was a child, had made these intricate drawings of naval battles and other kinds of battles. And no one in the family had them, though recently my brother died and my sister-in-law just found some of them.

But I would have used those too. I didn't use the actual drawings; I used xerox copies of them. But it was about all my life being around boys who did these drawings of battles. And then both my brother and my son became pacifists once they got past adolescence. But this was some developmental stage.

Then I asked my friends who had boys that were that age at that time, and they were playing videogames. They weren't drawing. So it seems as though this may not be so prevalent in this time that we're living in, but certainly in the time that I grew up.

So that's why it's called *Boys' Art,* and in admiration of drawings of my son's, which are terrific – we used to have them all over the walls. He's never done any drawing since.

And I started looking at other kinds of sources, like Old Master paintings and popular culture, and xeroxing those down into tiny little creatures, cutting them out, and gluing them on.

And then, like with *Pornament*, people said, "This should be a book." And, "Oh, yeah, this could be a book," same kind of thing. And again, my friend Judy said, "Why don't you take it to D.A.P. [Distributed Art Publishers.]?" D.A.P. is primarily a distributor. They publish very few books. But she said that she thought they would be very interested in it. And I had *Pornament*.

So it was much easier this time. I wrote to D.A.P. on a Saturday and I took it to the local post office, which isn't there anymore, and sent it book rate on Saturday afternoon to D.A.P., which is in my neighborhood. It's on Spring Street and Sixth.

I said, "This is the book I did 10 years ago, and now I have a new body of work," and I said what it was, "And if you'd be interested, I'd love to show it to you." Well, Monday morning someone called me. A young editor, Donna Wingate, called me and said, "Would you bring it over today, because we have a meeting of our board tomorrow and I just really like the idea."

MS. RICHARDS: They actually got it in one day, basically.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, so weird, the postal system. Sometimes it takes three weeks. Sometimes it takes five hours. It's in the same postal zip code. So it's possible. And that's what happened. I took it over there and she said, "Do you mind if we keep it here until tomorrow?"

She called me after the meeting and said, "We want to publish and distribute it." It was just the easiest thing in the world. It was the opposite of *Pornament*, which I took around for a year to 35 publishers.

They decided it should be the exact scale of the drawings, that they couldn't be reduced anymore. So it's an oversized book, which was probably a total folly for them because it's too big to be displayed in bookstores, and it was a very expensive book. But they said they were proud of it.

I didn't design the book. They had their own designer. And they talked about very elaborate things. They wanted it to look like an old atlas. They were going to have leather binding and a string that tied around it. It still has slightly that look. And they've embossed that little creature of my son's on the cover.

Then in the back flap, in 50 of them, there is a hand-colored and collaged etching. Those were sold for more. We sold some of them but not a lot of them. They're signed and it's a limited edition. But it's a regular print. I was on press outside of Verona with their printer. They work with different printers.

This is the high-end one for very specialized books, and a lovely guy, Massimo Tonolli at Trifolio — he was so perfectionistic that you can almost not tell the difference between the drawings and the pages in the book.

So it was a totally wonderful experience. I can't believe it, actually – perfect. And then D.A.P. has distributed two more books of mine. They distribute *CO+ORDINATES* [2009], which was the catalogue for the Dickinson show [Joyce Kozloff: *Co+Ordinates*, Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, 2008], and they distribute *China is Near,* because they're Charta's distributor.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you want to talk about *China is Near* then?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. That is the last one that I did, and I showed it last October at DC Moore.

MS. RICHARDS: That came out in '10.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Again, I'm not sure how it started to happen. But I had planned a trip on the Silk Route with two women friends. I'd been fantasizing about going on the Silk Route all my life. But I cancelled because of my brother's illness, and then found myself in New York.

We were going to go to Western China. We weren't going to go into Afghanistan. It's too dangerous now. But we were going to go as far as Kashgar, which is on the border of China and Afghanistan. And anyway, *China is Near* is about the Chinatown which is a few blocks from my house, since I didn't go to China that year – I've never been to the real China.

I love Chinatown. And that summer I just went all the time, every day, and I took pictures with the first camera I've ever bought. And the only pictures I've ever taken, because I've never taken any more since then. I was photographing kitsch. And actually a big inspiration for that project was the book *Gomorrah* [2008], about the Neapolitan Mafia – the Camorra.

MS. RICHARDS: And the book is called *Camorra*?

MS. KOZLOFF: *Gomorrah*, G-O-M-O-R-R-A-H. A film was made about it.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: The opening passage is one of the most horrific things that I've ever read. It's almost operatic. It's almost like Dante's *Inferno*. All the things that are sold all over the world made in China go through the Bay of Naples, which is controlled by the Mafia.

And this book is about the extent of Mafia influence and crime, which is totally pervasive, centered there in Naples but globally. The opening sequence – I shouldn't tell the whole story but – are these containers going through the Bay of Naples.

They move them very fast. And they're full of everything. It's not just the things you think the Mafia is moving. It's everything, including trafficking human beings. One container opens and all these dead bodies fall out. So how does this connect with my book? In my mind, reading that book was a triggering point about globalization.

[Audio break.]

So I was photographing all this kitsch in Chinatown. I didn't end up using that Mafia information in the book. I wanted to, but nobody got the connection. If it had been about New York Harbor, it would have made more sense to people.

Naples, Chinatown, I wrote some material about it in the beginning and nobody got it. But for me, that was where the whole idea came from. And so I've been to Chinatowns everywhere.

There are Chinatowns everywhere in the world. I was just in one in Madrid, and I was in two in Paris, because I sort of seek them out. But during the time that I made that book, I didn't take photographs in all of them.

In my lifetime, I've been to the Chinatown in Honolulu, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas. But when I did the book, I photographed in the Chinatowns in Brooklyn, Queens, in Manhattan, and the Chinatowns in Oakland and San Francisco, because we visited Max's family in the Bay Area. And it was enough, because it's the same stuff everywhere.

MS. RICHARDS: And you'd pair the photographs?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. Well, at the same time, I was copying these old maps of the Silk Route. And then I started adding a lot of collage material to them — that I found in Chinatown, that my parents had brought back decades ago from China, that other friends started to give me. And this kind of cut-paper imagery, which is a Chinese craft really, a Chinese art form. Often the imagery is very kitschy and degraded. But the craft is amazing.

So I had these photographs. But I really did the drawings first. I did the map drawings, and then I went on Google and I downloaded maps of every place in the world called China. So I have China, Uzbekistan; China, Mexico; China, Louisiana; whatever. And then I collaged onto those and I collaged onto my drawings.

When I showed this material to my friend Barbara Pollack, who has spent a great deal of time in China and she's been writing about Chinese art and about China, she said, "Joyce, this material is sentimental and archaic. When you go to Beijing and Shanghai," she said, "what you see is cell phones and computers and all this electronic stuff."

And I said, "Oh, you mean like Canal Street?" She said, "Yeah, but like a hundred times over. You don't see little kitschy artifacts. This is from another time." And I said, "Oh." So then I bought a camera, and I started going to Canal Street and photographing — and Mott Street.

And then I went further afield, all over the Chinatowns of New York. And that became part of the project. That made it somehow more contemporary, I guess, though I still think to the Chinese it would look like some funny world.

MS. RICHARDS: Kitschy, yes, because it's not all about kitsch there.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, but Chinatown is not China. Chinatown is another culture. Chinatown was invented after the

earthquake in San Francisco when they had to rebuild. The Chinese community wanted to be a tourist mecca and wanted to be less discriminated against.

So they created this place that people wanted to come to and liked, and it was successful. And it's been imitated all over the world. And now they're building Chinatowns in China, I've heard. [Laughs.] Like a theme park.

MS. RICHARDS: Really?

MS. KOZLOFF: Mm-hmm. [Affirmative.]

MS. RICHARDS: Prerevolutionary China or which China?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. But I heard that they're making a Chinatown somewhere in China.

MS. RICHARDS: So you said that you took all those photographs, and you haven't photographed since.

MS. KOZLOFF: No.

MS. RICHARDS: Did that book and that body of work lead you into something you're working on now?

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe. My husband's a photographer. We traveled over the years. I like to remember what I remember. I don't really want to look at the world through a camera. At least that's what I used to say. But it may be that I'm just a technophobe, which I am. If I wanted a picture of something, I'd ask him to take a picture of it. But we didn't always travel together.

I was on a trip during the year of the American Academy in Rome. A group of us went on a trip to Tunisia. One of my fellow fellows was an archaeologist who'd been working there for 20, 25 years. And she led this trip. It was three weeks.

There were 21 of us on a bus, mostly going to archaeological sites all over Tunisia. Twenty people had cameras. I didn't. I figured there would be so many people taking so many pictures, if I wanted a picture, I could get a picture.

MS. RICHARDS: Did you get any of those pictures?

MS. KOZLOFF: I didn't want them. [Laughs.] The people were sending them to me. I looked at them and I trashed them.

MS. RICHARDS: Right before you did *China is Near*, you worked on the series of round *tondi* series [2007-10].

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, not only before.

MS. RICHARDS: Several years before.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes. But I'm thinking it is during, overlapping. .Those bodies of work overlapped.

MS. RICHARDS: Do those bodies of work relate more than to what you're thinking about and doing now?

MS. KOZLOFF: I don't know. The tondos – in Italian, *tondi* – I had this idea from conversations with my son, who said – because I was very preoccupied with aerial war in this time period – that wars in the future would be fought in space, that all the countries are developing that technology, what in the Reagan era was referred to as "Star Wars."

And I said, "Well, good, not so many civilians will die," and he said, "You don't know what the environmental impact of that is going to be." So then I started thinking, being in the peace movement and being in a group that did actions that took a visual form and trying to have an impact, we're always reacting after the fact.

There's a war and then we demonstrate, and nobody cares anyway. Is there a way of being proactive and imagining something before it happens, and giving form to it? And I don't think the tondos really did that. But that was what generated the idea. So I went on Google Maps, and I was looking for pictures of the tracks of satellites in space.

The tondos in the first layer are charts of the heavens from 1600, with the animals and the Biblical characters and the star formations. And then the second layer are the tracks of satellites in space over it, as though you're looking through them.

But what I really wanted to depict was being up in space looking down on the Earth through the satellites, and all

I could find was the opposite, pictures of the Earth with the satellites going around us. So I couldn't quite find what I was looking for.

In any case, that's what the tondos are and that's why they're round. Then *Revolver* [2008], which is the largest, 96 inches in diameter, turns; I have a motor in the wall. It's not an electric motor. You give it a little push and it turns for a couple of minutes. And it turns fast. If you stand there looking at it, you get rather dizzy.

MS. RICHARDS: Was that intentional?

MS. KOZLOFF: No, no. [They laugh.]

MS. RICHARDS: You don't really care about making someone dizzy.

MS. KOZLOFF: Well no, I didn't expect that. I didn't. Just like I didn't expect the echo in *Targets*. It just happened. I could talk about the two of them together, *Revolver* and *Targets*, because this is kind of another pair. *Targets* is the big globe that you walk into and the door closes behind you.

MS. RICHARDS: In 2000.

MS. KOZLOFF: That I did in 2000. It has aerial maps of all the places in the world the U.S. bombed from 1945 to 2000. They're shown at different vantage points, like an airplane at different angles. So some of them are upside down. Some are right side up. Some are sideways, in terms of the view of the map. They are sections of maps of places where these bombings took place. So it's not a map of the whole world. Each section is a different location.

Anyway, I didn't know that if you walk into a shape like that, there's an amplification of sound. I created it at the American Academy. And a friend who was an architect said, "Of course, that was predictable." But I didn't know.

For me, it was a gift. The husband and wife who were the woodworkers who constructed it had a very small shop. So they constructed a few sections at a time and would bring them to me, and we kept adding and adding. And there are two layers.

There are 12 sections on the bottom and 12 sections on top, because they had a very low shop. So they built a bowl of the ones on the bottom, and then they brought them up in sections. And when that much was built and you stood in it, there was an echo. It was a total surprise. And then the second ones went up over and it was an even stronger echo.

So some people, when they go inside of it, get a little spooked and have to leave. They feel claustrophobic from being surrounded, with the door closed and the sound. And if two or three people – it can accommodate maybe four people – if they start to talk, then all the voices are amplified.

The one time I showed *Revolver* and *Targets* together was at Dickinson College. I really loved it because both of them have a physical effect on you. *Revolver* makes you dizzy and *Targets* makes you claustrophobic. [Laughs.]

Revolver has four celestial maps. It's a circle that's divided in four sections. Two of them are based on ancient Chinese star charts, and two of them are based on ancient Arabic star charts. I did that because all my earlier cosmological pieces were based on European sources. So I sought those out. And in the Arabic sections, they're images. So the star charts, like ours with the bear and the bull and all these things, they have their characters, but the Chinese ones just had the stars and Chinese letters.

So I decided to add contemporary imagery. What I put in those two sections, which you don't see right away, especially if it's turning fast, are these very scary monsters, which are from children's war toys. I've been working with these children's war toys in some of my other work. They're called "Warhammer." And Bridget, my dealer, told me about them because her son was 12, 13 and interested in it. It's something that 12-, 13-year-old boys love.

There's a store on Eighth Street, and they have all these little soldiers, but not like the toy soldiers I remember from my childhood. They're fantasy creatures. They're monsters with huge weapons. They're very scary. And the boys paint them and arrange them in these formations.

I always feel weird going in that store because it's filled with these adolescent boys, and then I come in. And I buy the catalogues and I use the imagery. So those monsters are turning in *Revolver*.

MS. RICHARDS: Does that continue today? Are you working with that imagery now?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. But I might again. I used it in the American Historyseries [2004] for the first time, after Bridget told me about it. The only time I used it was in the American History series and then again in *Revolver*. If I show you a picture, you would see it. But you have to kind of clue into it.

MS. RICHARDS: Yes. So what have you done since *China is Near*? What have you been working on since then?

MS. KOZLOFF: Well, I did that series of paintings about wars in the Middle East, those big paintings that were in my show. They were simultaneous to *China is Near*. I'm working on a piece now. The working title is *JEEZ,* and it's about Jesus.

MS. RICHARDS: In what regard is it about Jesus?

MS. KOZLOFF: [Laughs.] You didn't expect me to say that, did you?

MS. RICHARDS: No. [They laugh.]

MS. KOZLOFF: I haven't found religion. This again is circumstantial. At my show last fall, a woman named Marcia Kupfer came, and we met and we talked.

MS. RICHARDS: Kupfer?

MS. KOZLOFF: K-U-P-F-E-R. She had given a talk during my show at Dickinson, but I wasn't there. The curator, Phil Earenfight, had brought her there. She is a scholar of medieval maps and so is he. She is an independent scholar, not university-affiliated.

She specializes in these medieval world maps that I've worked with a little bit but not a lot, which are round, and they are very wrong, of course, but they encompass what was known of the world at that time. And they have all kinds of Biblical stories in them.

There are two most famous. One is the Hereford Map, which was English, and one was the Ebstorf Map, which was German. I did a globe based on the Hereford Map, H-E-R-E-F-O-R-D. I never worked with the Ebstorf Map, though I knew it from books and I liked it very much. I never had a good enough illustration to work with it.

She's been working on that map and had this idea of curating a show of three artists who have worked with medieval maps. One is Grayson Perry. Do you know who he is?

MS. RICHARDS: Yes, yes, English, yes.

MS. KOZLOFF: He's the English cross-dressing artist who won the Turner Prize. And he's worked with that map. The other one is Gulammohammed Sheikh, an Indian artist from Baroda in his late 70s, very well known in India, who has also worked on it. Both of them worked with these medieval maps by introducing contemporary subject matter into them and personal subject matter and subject matter specific to their cultures.

So I didn't know what to do after my show, and I thought, "Well, maybe I'll work with the Ebstorf Map too. She doesn't have an institution and this show may never happen. But she's written an interesting proposal and sent it around, and if that show comes off, then I'll have this piece, and if not, I'll show it somewhere else."

The original piece was 12 feet in diameter. And I decided to make it to scale. So I am making it to scale in 36 two-by-two-foot panels, which is much more manageable for me, and also because my ceiling isn't high enough for the complete piece.

And the body of Christ is the core of this map. You might not see it right away, but the head of Jesus is at the top. The hands are on the sides and the feet are at the bottom. I went on Google and I typed in "Jesus Christ images," and I got hundreds of them.

MS. RICHARDS: Thousands.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, and I started printing them out. And I'm going to paint him all over it. And that's the piece. And I don't know why except that Jesus Christ has been around me all my life, everywhere you look.

MS. RICHARDS: So you're going to use the map.

MS. KOZLOFF: I'm painting it right now, yes.

MS. RICHARDS: Painting the map. How big is the original map?

MS. KOZLOFF: Twelve feet in diameter.

MS. RICHARDS: Oh, I see.

MS. KOZLOFF: It was destroyed in World War II. The church in Germany was bombed. It doesn't exist anymore. But they have copies of it and photographs of it. And she gave me a very good copy of it which now I'm using. I gridded it and I copied it, like I always do.

MS. RICHARDS: What would you say are your biggest challenges right now to work, to any aspect of your work as an artist? Has that changed over the years?

MS. KOZLOFF: This piece is just really fun. I'm having so much fun. It's physically challenging because I have a bad back. But it's easier to work on the two-foot panels. To do the upper sections I'm standing on a stepladder.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you find over the years that you work more quickly or more slowly or the same? Some artists have commented one way and some the other.

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, I don't know. I always feel I'm very, very slow. People tell me they think I'm productive, but I feel I'm very slow. I don't know what I did all winter until I started this piece. I can't tell you what I did. I worked on a poster which involved real research. I can show it to you.

MS. RICHARDS: There you go. That's what you did.

MS. KOZLOFF: And it took all winter somehow, just a poster.

MS. RICHARDS: Are there certain issues or ideas that you're involved in in this new work called *JEEZ* that you know are really the driving force, why this work is fascinating and fun?

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe it goes back to my childhood when all the other kids went off to catechism. I don't know. [Laughs.]

MS. RICHARDS: Is there kind of a –

MS. KOZLOFF: I have to tell you there's one thing I'm worried about. For 20 years, there's a woman who comes every Sunday who's Brazilian who cleans my loft. And she is religious. And I have a Pilates teacher who gives a Pilates class in my studio Wednesday evenings with –

MS. RICHARDS: For other people as well?

MS. KOZLOFF: Yes, five women. And she's religious too. And I'm afraid – I'm just doing the basic map. I haven't started to put the heads of Jesus on it yet. I'm afraid of offending these two women who I love. I don't care about what the art world says. They'll say what they say. You can't control that. But I don't want to offend these two women.

MS. RICHARDS: What do you think you can do about that to address that?

MS. KOZLOFF: Someone said put a cover over it.

MS. RICHARDS: Do you think that just talking to them about it would help?

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe they won't be offended. Maybe they won't notice it. Maybe they'll love it. But maybe they'll be offended. My only concern actually is about Felice and Mary.

MS. RICHARDS: So you're not worried about any other people later being offended by it.

MS. KOZLOFF: No, uh-uh. No, I don't worry about that anymore. When you think you're going to offend people, you don't, and when you don't think you're going to offend people, you do. That's my experience.

MS. RICHARDS: Is there any kind of –

MS. KOZLOFF: Oh, for instance like in *Pornament*, in *Patterns of Desire*, there's a page from the Koran with a man fucking a donkey. It was right after the Salman Rushdie fatwa. And Paul Anbinder said, "I would like you to take this page out." And I said, "I can't do that."

He left it in and nothing happened. Nobody ever got offended by anything in that book ever, or if they did, I didn't hear about it, whereas other things that I thought were completely inoffensive did provoke people. So what do you know?

MS. RICHARDS: At this point, is there a dream project, a project that you've always wanted to do and you're still looking forward to doing or trying to find a way to do?

MS. KOZLOFF: No. I've had dream projects in the past and then I sort of forgot about them. I don't know if I'll ever do any more globes. That was something of a certain moment, and now it's passing.

I had an idea of doing one in Rockefeller Center because of that globe – the Atlas holding up the world there. And I think I proposed it to Public Art Fund or Creative Time, and I didn't get a response. So then I forgot about it. But that would have been fun.

MS. RICHARDS: So maybe doing another public project that's the right one is something that you'd –

MS. KOZLOFF: Maybe, maybe.

MS. RICHARDS: Is there anything else that you want to talk about? Okay, well it's been great. Thank you.

MS. KOZLOFF: You're welcome.

MS. RICHARDS: A good place to end.

MS. KOZLOFF: Okay.

[END OF INTERVIEW.]

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