

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW
with SAMUEL LEVE

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for the

RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT
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SL: (Sings) "Ballad for Americans." Paul Robeson sang it. So I designed something for that. I designed an Uncle Sam, you see. Uncle Sam comes apart at the hips and this turns and this becomes a map of the United States. Now, I used it later for—I used it later... let me show you what I used it for. I used it later. And ... don't make fun of me.. It's in there. I'll bring it in here. I did a job for Ike Eisenhower at the time I was working for Fred Waring. I was doing his television show. Fred Waring was a very close friend of Ike Eisenhower so I did a show for Ike. I designed it. The first year at the White House. It was a beautiful show. Nixon walked in. The show was scheduled to be put on at Hershey, Pennsylvania, at 7:00 that night, 7;30. We had been working on that show for nine months on and off because we were doing a television show. But we planned it, you know, and we sent stuff to Hershey and built some stuff here and sent it down. We worked at it for nine months. Thursday morning, the day of the show, in walked Nixon. He was Vice President then. "Fred, Mr. Nixon."

"I'm very happy to see you, Mr. Nixon."

He calls him Fred. Fred is older. But he calls himself "Mr. Nixon," you know. "What can I do for you?" Fred is shaken really. This guy's gonna come in and upset our show. And I was—beside designing the show, I also lighted it. I was already in the booth talking to a stagehand, getting ourselves--I hear—the whole place was filled with mikes open, sound. I hear Fred saying, "You see that curly-headed guy up there on that platform?" And I look. He says, "His name is Sam. Go up and see him; he's got a job for you." Now I'm burdened with him. Well, I made him sit and sit and sit and sit. And finally he got up and said, "Sam, it looks like I'm in your way." He finally caught on. This was in 1953. In 1971 I get a call from the White House, "Mr. Leve, Are you the designer of a theatre?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Nixon wants to talk to you."

I said, "Excuse me," Because I don't believe these people. You know, all kinds of crazy guys call you. "I'm just out of a shower. Would you mind? I'll call you right back. Got to dry myself." I called back the White

House and sure enough. Nixon's on the phone. He wants me to do a job for him like I did for Ike Eisenhower. He says, "Go to Chicago." You see, I worked in

Chicago too which is very good. "At McCormick Place. The Milk Producers are producing a show and I want you to go and design it, you know, good." So I took that very thing, same thing. This is done by the Milk Producers.

You see, President Nixon. Chicago Milk Producers. Associated Milk Producers, 1971. They gave him \$4 million, you know.

So again I did it, Uncle Sam. He loved it. And then this turns around and this now I put it into states, you see. And then the states--now, since the Milk Producers did it, the stage becomes a cow. (Laugh)

JO: Brought that cow on the stage.

SL: It certainly did. You couldn't hear Nixon's speech. Later on he said, "You know that goddamned thing of yours ruined my speech."

I said, "You wanted it, didn't you?" (Laugh)

Milk Producers. So you see

Anyway, so this we did. Anyway, this started at the Federal Theatre Project.

This is why I show it to you. I have a few models of stuff. You notice my voice already modulated because I heard I'm on. When we worked on Federal

Theatre, there was a dance which was quite popular, "The Suzy Q." You know that?

JO: I've heard of it.

SL: "Suzy Q exactly this, you see. Uncle Sam is dancing "The Suzy Q" (laugh) for that same show, for that same Sing For Your Supper, "The Suzy Q." One hand is up in the air, you see? "Suzy Q."

This was a show Jiggins of Jigginstown and I'll show it to you in one of those magazines. I have a lot of magazines. Do you have that in your collection?

JO: Yes.

SL: Jiggins of Jigginstown. And this was something extraordinarily beautiful, this show. Oh, yes, we'll come back to that. I have some programs for you, but I can't give it to you because these are the only ones I have. If you want to reproduce them, you may.

JO: Okay.

SL: This is the Studio Theatre at which we did Tobias and the Angel. Now let me show you Tobias and the Angel. Now this had many phases. It was done at the Provincetown Playhouse, a very tiny little stage. This is this side and the top rolled down and I placed the different pieces in front. I don't have any other pictures but this was again, it was a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful production, Tobias and the Angel. I have notices, I have it in a book. I took out a book of critics. Would you like to see that, too?

JO: Yeah, if you can show it to me and I can probably just copy down--

SL: Of course. Now then we did Cherokee Night. These are my drawings which I made for the show and this was also something I made to reproduce in the-- for reproduction purposes. As you see, it's exactly the same thing only I coordinated it so it could be produced much better. And here are some photographs of that show. That's in this room and this is outside. That's this one. You notice the photographs--these drawings I made before the show.

And this is the interior in that set. This is the exterior of this set and this, Tobias and the Angel. Do you have these programs?

JO; Some of them. I think that we have Cherokee Night.

SL: Cherokee Night. The Big Blow. Do you have this one?

JO: No.

SL; The Big Blow was again catapulted to great heights on Federal Theatre Project.

I used two units. Yes, this unit and that unit. This is a wagon. Now what happened to those pictures?

JO: I must have some of Big Blow. Yeah.

SL: That's right. They're my--exactly. Beautiful. Where did you get them?

JO: Oh, we have lots of photos. I don't know. What I could do is find out-

if you don't have some of these, I could find out if we have duplicates and send you some,

SL: Oh, beautiful. Let me see what you have there. Don't mix them up with mine.

I don't have that picture. That picture would be beautiful. You see, I placed a unit in front of that. I dropped the tops, you see. I dropped the top and placed a unit in front of that. And this is Big Blow. This is this show, yes.

JO: This goes back to Tobias.

SL: **No**. It's the same set but a different photograph. And that's the interior.

Beautiful. That's right. Now, I have a sketch of The Big Blow. What's that?

JO; It says, "Big Blow," Is that the indoors area?

SL; Well, yes, I forgot. That's Big Blow. Of course it is.

JO; You can have that one. These are the sets.

SL; Yes. This is just the exterior. You see, I want to show you how these things--I used two units. I don't have the model, two units. Now this is a car being

driven on. This is a car; you have that car over there. Now this unit and that unit get together and now the unit is over here and one unit is here, you see?

JO: Yes.

SL: Then both units are together now which make this set. Now here this unit is off here as the house and this is the tent scene that I showed you. And the big blow, the storm comes and we had--in this set we put in a fulcrum in here and the guy stepped on it and the whole house seemed to shake and fell apart. I mean, the two units came apart, and it was very exciting to see the thunderstorm. Now, if you want this, you may have it for a copy of these drawings. Or maybe it's not interesting for you.

JO: No, it is, very much so.

SL: Now, you photograph it, but I got to get it back.

JO: Right.

SL: No question?

JO: No question.

SL: Okay. Because these things get lost. They get lost and nothing happens later on so I'll loan it to you.

JO: Okay. I'd very much like to make maybe I can just simply--

SL: Xerox it?

JO: --do it down here at the Lincoln Center. I'll see if I can just do it down there. I was thinking of the problem of getting it back.

SL: The Lincoln Center today may be open. I don't know. Okay, but I must get it back because it's the only thing I have now. **So** I'll leave this with you on here. Now Cherokee Night. I have a model which really came off beautifully. I used these three units. Do you see the interior? Now then, when we get around to

the other piece for the exterior, this turned around and this matched--came off and matched over there with the, you know. And then behind the exterior, a very tiny stage but it just came off beautifully if you turned around. And then I had another scene in this direction and that's the way it worked.

Imagine, this is 40 years old. Now I have these magazines. You say you have them? If you have them all, then here is that Tobias. I have some duplicates, but if you have them, there's no sense--

JO; I know we have those.

SL: You probably have more than I have. And then there are some more of some period.

JO; Oh, It Can't Happen Here.

SL; It Can't Happen Here. You probably saw that, too.

JO; You did the one over in Brooklyn?

SL: Brooklyn, right. Oh, Jiggins of Jigginstown. I met Mr. Atkinson, again at little party. Albert Hirschfeld invited me to his home. He and Atkinson were good friends. And this hurt me because it wasn't reproduced well. The colors were terrible. I didn't like it at all but it was a very--

JO: You haven't got it framed though. (Laugh)

SL; But you got a frame.

JO; Yeah. I got a picture of that. (Laugh) That's what you do with it when the colors are bad.

SL: Because you see the photograph of that is when it was done without the color.

It turned out much better. I didn't want the color, I didn't like the color arrangements or whatever it is. You see, it looks better without the color because they didn't reproduce the color well. This was The Revolt of the Beavers.

So I met Mr. Atkinson after having given me a wonderful writeup and then he-- this is again. Here you see how I jam it into the corner, the model. Did I

look like that then? I don't know. This guy did a great job, Nat Karson. Oh, look at that costume! Committed suicide. Couldn't take it. He couldn't take it. Now there's something wrong with these guys who can't take it. Any guy who'll take his own life. An animal won't commit suicide. But he was brilliant. Something wrong with him. I guess it was that kind of brilliant that knocks you off kilter and then you go haywire.

So I meet Atkinson at Albert Hirschfeld's place. He introduced me as his old what-do-you-call-it, "all these years you never, never dropped me a note."

And I said, "Mr. Atkinson, I'm terribly sorry you misconstrued my lack of writing but to me it's by design. Because I believe my job is to work and your job is to criticize my work. Once you and I become palsy-walsy, you can't criticize my work any longer. You're affected by my personality. I want to be kept a name on a program and I want to retain it as such."

Mr. Atkinson voted me best designer of the year. (Laugh) And I meant every word of it. It's true. But Atkinson was wonderful about the Federal Theatre Project. He was a real Democrat, a real, you know. They fought him all the way down the line. He argued. Congress sent him notes, wrote him letters. Why, he's the voice of the Communists. "Well," he said, "you give me a play about the Republican Party and if it's a good play, I'll give it that kind of writeup." (Laugh) Occasionally, I say, quite by accident somehow one guy gets to the floor, it belongs to him, and he saves the situation. You won't be aware of it as much as I am because I'm terribly involved. You see, that's the Torah, Do you know what the Torah is? That Torah was rescued from the Warsaw ghetto, the guys who ran from Hitler Germany and came to Palestine and all this and that, How come I got it? In 1947 and 1948 I was forging passports

for the people who were—they told me then, "Keep your mouth shut because if you talk, somebody'll come up and kill you." But it's now 28 or 30 years, you know, okay.

JO: Were you in this country doing it? For people to go?

SL: I was in this country. They contacted me, you know. They needed help and I say if I were younger, I would be a soldier because this is the very basis of my existence. You guys again don't know how we Jews, we Jewish immigrants respected America. My parents were Greek-American patriots. Thanksgiving Day became a religious holiday in our home like Yam Kippur, beautiful. You had to be home for dinner, you know. I mean, you guys take it for granted. Anyway, I was up to something when I lost it but it doesn't matter. Oh, yes. Zionism is equated with racism. I mean, this is the biggest hope that ever happened to me. And this is actually criminal for democracies to be kicked around by countries which two or three generations ago were cannibals. Those guys are dictating to England, which in the 12th century instituted the Magna Carta that an individual can take government to justice? England? I'm not talking about America now, an America who set up the Bill of Rights 200 years ago. But England 700 years ago came through with the Magna Carta. They are going to tell England how to behave through Jewish rules? It's criminal. Also, they are going to tell us Jews who, 3500 years ago put it in our book that a slave cannot be held for more than six years and the seventh year he must be redeemed, It's in our book. There it is for everybody to see. You cannot own a slave for more than six years. You must understand when it was written when slavery was--you had to have slaves. Without slaves they couldn't live. They had no machinery, they had to have labor. And the book also says if the slave doesn't want to be redeemed, you 'rust punish him. Bore a hole

in his ear. He didn't listen to the commandment of God. They're telling us that we are racists? This is outrageous. So again, by some miracle, an Irishman gets up at United Nations and fights our cause. And what's more, I don't like it because even our government didn't like him up there. They threw him out. He didn't go back to Harvard to teach school. Don't give me that nonsense. I don't believe that, a man who's reached such heights, such heights he's been isolated by the entire civilized world. He was wonderful up there, I mean at the United Nations. So they threw him out. Of course, he's diplomatic enough to say he wants to go and teach at Harvard. That's a crock o'shit

I say somehow when Federal Theatre Project died--we go off on a tangent sometimes but I come back--when Congress was against it, along comes a guy by the name of Atkinson out of nowhere and he saves the situation. Now too Moynihan comes up but there's always, somehow somebody comes through to save the situation. I taught school first at Yale University, I taught at City College, I lectured at Yale many times, at Yale I'm still around. I went there so they call me back. Every time I do a show they want me to come up and tell them about it. You know, it's fun, it's good. Why not hand it down to the next generation? And when scenery has to be constructed and I say to myself, "Who's gonna do this thing? I need a mechanic for this job. I need a first-rate mechanic." And somehow soiree one student comes through and does the job like a miracle. How does happen? It happens. There's always somebody who comes through. But it needs patience.

Now I have a lot of writeups. But before we come to the writeups I want to show you some more pictures. Jiggins of Jigginstown again. I did a crazy little thing, a curtain idea for Ernst Toller's No More Peace and I said,

"Dove of Peace proclaims liberty throughout the land and unto all the inhabitants thereof."

JO: That's beautiful. I haven't seen this before.

SL: (Laugh) You may have that but you gotta return it to me. Okay?

JO: Yeah, I would very much--I hadn't seen that.

SL: It's got an idea to it. You know, this is a proclamation. "Dove of Peace proclaims liberty throughout the land and to all this is the inscription on the Liberty Bell which fits into ours. Okay? So you may have that but please, please. Okay?"

JO: Yeah. We can make a--

SL: And no markings, nothing. Okay, put it over there. Good.

Again, I did a job for Orson Welles' production of Julius Caesar. How again can I come through with something special? That's what the theatre is all about. You can't do another Hamlet. They tried it. You can't. You see, in the manufacturing world, you manufacture a chair and you can do another chair like that and it'll sell. But you can't do it in the arts. I made Moses.

I fight Michelangelo in this Moses, why Michaelangelo did it with two horns. And again you must understand when Michelangelo lived. If he lived today, he wouldn't give him two horns, Michelangelo the Great did not give Jesus, he did not give him a halo because he believed in the dignity of man. Not the divinity, dignity of man. In Michelangelo you'll find no halo. In the others, Raphael was a greater painter, gave him. Botticelli gave him halos. And even the great Leonardo gave the figure Jesus, he didn't give him a halo but he gave him a light behind his head in "The Last Supper." But Michaelangelo in "The Last Judgment," no halos. It took the Renaissance to fight that kind of--he won. He was ahead of his time, okay. However, he gave Moses two horns which hurt--

JO: That's because of mistranslation, isn't it?

SL: You got it. I'm glad you got it. Now we're talking. "This is what I want to tell you. The word "khn" in Hebrew means "a horn, a corner, and a beam of light. So I give him--incidentally--I give him two beams of light which are the two tablets, you know. Of course, the two tablets. And I took from Jove more white stone, all he brake, all Semitic characters. Not the modern Hebrew characters as we quoted on air"...

..Well, I did a job for Orson Welles. He called me to design his Caesar. Well, how do I make a splash on Broadway? You know, it's important. You just can't do an interior and make a splash and Welles didn't have any money, you know. We went into the old Mercury Theatre, the old Comedy Theatre, and the place looked quite presentable. And lighting was just getting into effectiveness because prior to that they called an electrician to illuminate, not to light a play. I had just come out of school, took a course in lighting, my professor was a very inspiring kind of a teacher. He said, "Well, do the whole thing with lights. You'll see a way."

JO: But there was--I mean, the back wall was all--

SL: We painted the back wall red. You know about it?

JO: Yes. And I can't remember whether it was raked or whether there were steps.

SL; Raked, yes.

JO; There was a story of Abe Feder and Welles yelling back and forth at each other. Were you caught in between the--

SL; No, no, no. Abe Feder did not do that job. Jean Rosenthal did that job. Abe Feder was fighting with Dr. Faustus. He did Dr. Faustus. Oh, here are some of the photographs of Cherokee Night, an interior. There you see that unit. And it is a beautiful photograph of Cherokee Night. And here again is--

oh, yes, here it is, Cherokee Night, and this is the tent scene. I have a wonderful story about the tent scene. As you see, I make models to be quite effective. I'm careful about the model although I make drawings from which the carpenters build. But I make models and Hallie Flanagan sort of liked the model of the tent. I made a beautiful model of the tent. So she sent a note to the shop. She would like to have the tent model delivered to her office. Well, somehow, through all the red tape of secretaries, the word "model" was deleted. And she had invited some members of Congress to her office. When the members of Congress came into her office, the place was decorated with that tent. They brought in the real tent, (Laugh)

Here was another set of that, when the two units got together, Big Blow. And here's one unit. You have those of Big Blow. Here's another set of the-- and here was the close thing to my sketch with the truck in there.

Oh, yes, beautiful. I designed a curtain which would never, never work because they disbanded Federal Theatre. This was supposed to be--do you understand construction scenery a little bit?

JO; Yeah,

SL; You see this was solid to the left of that, and this was covered with gauze anyway, covered with gauze and this was soft. So this was the only thing solid there to the left and the same thing on this side. I designed it so that there could be a straight line going straight out. Do you get it?

JO: Yes.

SL: So this was solid and the rest was--now, the curtain opens up and then it starts to climb and crosses. You see, this is soft and it gathers up off stage and then later on when it reaches the end, these two become the markings on the side. Beautiful! But it just never happened because the Federal Theatre was

disbanded. Look what happened now. People are out of work because of our President, the big genius in the White House. We could have had another WPA (Works Progress Administration) project, what had been a WPA project. Terrible.

Oh, yes. You see, this line overlapped this line. And this bird kissed that bird, and when the audience saw the curtain first and all this is on gauze and these are ribbons applied onto the gauze, painted ribbons. And the rest is painted. The birds are applied. All you see is a curtain, birds and stuff, color. Then it starts to open up and the opening up, when this line reaches here, you see, it becomes, this small opening becomes a larger opening. Do you follow what I mean?

Jo; Yes.

SL: You always get the triangle. At this point. At first it's over here and then it comes here. When it comes here, you have a smaller opening. When it comes here, you have this opening, and so on. Again, and it folds up. It folds, it's just crossed. This wasn't done. It was the end of Federal Theatre.

JO; What was the show? Was it for a particular show?

SL: Yes. I don't remember the name of the show. And then for this, I'd like you to photograph that. And I got myself into trouble with it. (Laugh)

And just at that time Wrigley's came out with chewing gum: "To open--

JO; Pull tape to open?

SL; "Pull tape to open," something like that. (Laugh) I got myself into real trouble with it. (Laugh) When Hallie saw it, she kissed me for it and said, "Beautiful, Sam. Let's have it. Let's have it." She loved it. It was a great idea, because just then red tape was all over the place. I mean, pull the red tape. Wrigley's

came out with just that and I--

JO: Well, that's terrific.

SL: Oh, yes. Here is that curtain. So this line is a line that goes straight up. This is solid. Same thing over here. You couldn't tell which was solid and which was--but it was just beautiful. But we made it and I drove those guys crazy to make it and it just never happened. I did it with paste paper cuts. Then we did The Revolt of the Beavers and that too--this is the Chief Beaver. It's faded, it's faded in color because I had it out in the sun. The Revolt of the Beavers, the Congress--the cops came in one day and just closed the theatre. You know what The Revolt of the Beavers was? The Revolt of the Beavers was working on a bog and a big, fat, baldsie tells the beaver the little beaver's got nothing to eat. He's on skates and the other guy's barefoot, you know. (Laugh) The cops came in one day and shut the place. (Laugh)

JO: Is this the one that Congress kept talking about this play that the Federal Theatre was Communist?

SL: And Hallie Flanagan said, "This is just too much." (Laugh) She was a great woman. This guy, this Oak Leaf, he's the conspirator. He's the rebel and he was played by Jules Dassin. Do you know that name? Juley Dassin, Jewish boy married to Mercouri, Jules Dassin.

JO: I didn't realize that.

SL: Yes, Juley Dassin played Oak Leaf. Here's the poor slob, the poor beaver that got nothing. (Laugh) This sketch I like. You see, there was one real boy and one real girl. They fall asleep and they dream, that's the point. And I like the sketch although the costume didn't look like much, but the sketch was. You like the sketches?

JO; Is this faded too? Was this a darker color or is this—

SL: I used that color, of course. But the costumes look very ordinary but I like the sketch.

JO: This is a nice sketch.

SL: Here's a Soldier Beaver employed by the Big Boss Beaver.

JO; I've seen that. That must have been in the Federal Theatre Magazine.

SL: That's right. And here is Windy. Windy comes down. Well, Windy came from that thing you play at parties. You know, you blow and a thing unravels, Windy.

I don't remember what I used it for. This goes back 35 years. I used this also. I don't remember what I used it for, but it was Federal Theatre Project, some officer's house. I don't remember. But I saved the sketch. I save a lot of junk, as you see,

JO; Oh, I don't think it's junk. (Laugh)

SL; Now, I have many blueprints. Do blueprints mean anything to you?

JO: I'm afraid not.

SL: **NO.**

JO: I understand sketches, just to see how the units are—

SL; There are a lot of blueprints from shows and it's a hell of a job for me to unravel them, I didn't unravel them. I thought you might not be interested in them. But those four sheets I have on Big Blow you would be interested in.

And if you want this, I will take out some papers, some sheets. It's only in this one. I did a show for Maurice Schwartz, Three Cities. Something extraordinary. Oh, that's Big Blow, a wonderful write-up in Yiddish, but

that means nothing. Would you like to copy that? Does it mean anything to you?

JO; What I will do, if I may, is simply take the reference and I can get copies of it.

SL: Oh, beautiful.

JO: So let me do that.

SL: Big Blow, Daily Mirror, October 3, 1938, Robert Coleman.

Now, this is New York Times and Atkinson's name is not on here. J.G., that's Jay Gould. New York Times, October 3, 1938. You see, it says here:

"Technically, Big Blow is an accomplished and professional production. Leve has put his imagination to work on vivid and authentic settings which materially enhance the proceedings. And Feder again demonstrates mastership in lighting." Feder did the lighting on that show.

Now, The Wild Duck. That's not Federal Theatre.

Big Blow. Bronx Home News. You don't want that, huh? Bronx Home News is not an important paper. They should hear me say that!

JO: Did you also do the--I was just going to ask if you also did that--I haven't seen any pictures of Shoemaker's Holiday.

SL; Yeah. I have pictures here. Hold it for a little while. I want to show you something. Do you know John Houseman? You know that name?

JO; Yes,

SL; Did you see his book?

JO: Yes.

SL; "When Orson returned from his ten-day retreat in New Hampshire.. we had four weeks to adapt... at Jean Rosenthal's suggestion we engaged a... scenic designer ... a ... pollywog ... with a crew cut ... strong accent ... Samuel Leve--known also as 'the Rabbi' because he taught 'schul' each Sabbath at a Talmud Tora uptown."
(Laugh)

JO: I'd heard about the Rabbi but I'd forgotten that part.. (laugh)

SL; Page 296. (Laugh).

JO: Okay.

SL; I tell you I had a problem. I come from a religious Jewish family. I also attended the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, not because I wanted to be a rabbi, but a student. My parents were students. When my father came to America, he managed to get through high school with a family to support. He managed to get through high school at night. My mother and I walked down the aisle together at graduation from public school. We both

A lot of these guys now on papers, what have they learned? Humble people, but my mother said, "I'm not going to let my children speak and I don't understand it." That's the way she used to--"I want to understand my children."

They spoke beautiful English with a heavy Jewish accent, but who gives a shit? They spoke articulately in English and we were very proud of them. My father had his high school diploma and my mother had a public school diploma. Consequently, six kids in the house, we never put up a diploma because we didn't want to take away from our parents.

I was at a party only last night and they talked about, "My father, whom I hated and loved."

I said, "How it is I never hated my father and mother? Why is it I loved my parents? " I'm serious and what's more, according to tradition, when parents die, the son says kaddish. You know what that is? I told him, "I said kaddish for my mother."

He said, "Well, you must have been in love with your mother."

"Oh, that bullshit! What do you mean, in love with my mother? I want to take my mother to bed because I love my mother?" They don't understand what love means. I love America. Does it mean I want to fuck America? It's ridiculous. It has many different manifestations. Love between man and woman

is one thing and love between mother and son or son and daughter or man and country is a different thing entirely. I love my work. What does that mean? That I have a sexual aberration to my work? They don't understand it.

So Wild Duck. (Reads) "A triumph for Americana, a new play, The Wild Duck..

What is this? Oh, this is Shoemaker's Holiday. Well, I'll tell you, Mr.

Welles did me an injustice. He left my name off on opening night, you know.

The critics come opening night, but that's all right, that's all right. But

this is not Federal Theatre so it's not of your concern at this moment.

Big boy. He went down the drain, you know why? Because he began to believe his own WPA (Works Progress Administration) work. Okay, that's just publicity.

Now what is this, the play--The Revolt of the Beavers. Oh! (Reads) "The first lesson in naval warfare is staged against some whimsical settings and imaginative costumes designed by..." Now, you want to take that down?

JO: Yeah.

SL: The Revolt of the Beavers. New York Times, May 21, 1937, Atkinson. Now, Daily Mirror, May 21, 1937, Coleman. You want to take the Daily Worker? It's good. Take it, take it, take it. (Laugh) May 24, 1937, Mary Morrow. That's the Daily Worker. Right. You don't want to take the Jewish newspapers? Although this is a Communist Jewish newspaper. The Revolt of the Beavers. New York American, May 21, 1937. The Revolt of the Beavers, World Telegram, May 21, 1937. New York Post--oh, no, I'm sorry. The Revolt of the Beavers. Now comes Tobias and the Angel, April 29, 1937, John Mason Brown, Post. Now, New York Times, April 29, 1937, Atkinson. Look what Atkinson said about Tobias and the Angel. (Reads) With a postage stamp and a setting

conflict ... this excellent play makes magicians out of people who try to...

Leve settings are not only glowingly beautiful in the lines of detail but the warmth garden scene for the second act in particular is extraordinarily placed." Isn't that something? What writeups! I tell you it's just incredible and I did not acknowledge this. Now, you got Atkinson?

JO: Yes.

SL: Again now, John Anderson, Evening Journal. I want to read that to you also.

John Anderson, Evening Journal, same date as the Times, April 29th. Now, I want to read you:

JO: You got John Anderson?

SL: "Tobias and the Angel, an apocryphal ..." I don't know what paper that is.

JO: Douglas Gilbert. I don't know. . .

SL: Douglas Gilbert. That's the Telegram. Okay? Now, Daily News, Tobias and the Angel, April 29th. They're all--it's the same date. They've come out the next morning. Daily Worker. You want that also? Forget it, this is not a--forget it. I kept it here--now, Richard Watts of the Herald-Trib., same date. Tobias and the Angel, I don't know what paper that is. Daily Mirror, April 30, again same thing. Daily Mirror. And you could get

those papers?

JO: That's right.

SL: Now, New York American also. Again ...the best part of it all is the production itself, remarkably ingenious within the limits of the pygmy Provincetown. They just went wild, they went wild.

JO; It is a tremendous set.

SL: Now, Morning Telegraph, July 23. "The play has been staged beautifully

Sam Leve's unit setting is an artistic gem of ingeniousness." (Laugh)

You know, you feel silly even quoting it. Now Richard Watts in the

Herald-Trib., same date. It's all the same date. No, July 21. Now I'm confusing you.

JO: No, that must be Cherokee Night. Yeah, that's right. And the other is--

SL: July 25, that's Cherokee Night. I don't know who wrote that. Lee--Lester

Rodney. Oh, I'm sorry. Forget the Daily Worker. So now Richard Watts, Cherokee Night, you have that?

JO: Yes.

SL: July 21. July 23, Morning Telegraph.

JO; I've got that.

SL: Oh, this is a publicity thing. I have one more little something over there.

I went through to prepare this for you. What's this? Jiggins of Jigginstown

I don't think you -- Jiggins of Jigginstown designed by student. Forget it.

That's enough for now.

JO: Those are terrific reviews.

SL: Does this help a little?

JO: Yes.

SL: I think that's it now.

JO: Let me see if I can get a photo of this.

SL: Of what?

JO: Of this drop where you cut it right in half. I'd very much like to see if I can take a picture of that.

SL: How can you do that?

JO: I have a camera.

SL: Oh, you brought a camera with you?

JO; Yeah.

SL: Then do you have a time exposure business or something?

JO; I've got a flash but it's in my coat.

SL: Well, I think a flash would do—oh, no, a flash is not gonna do good --

JO: Let's see if just against the light here.

SL: That's no good against the light, it's reflective. Now wait. I'm gonna take off this binder anyway. The binder is falling apart so I'll take it off. Let's go in the other room. I think in the other room you can do a better job. I think up against this wall you can do a better job. (Both go in next room. Conversation inaudible).

(End of interview)