

## Transcript of Interview with Bettizane “BZ” Smith by Julia Jensen

**Interviewee:** Bettizane “BZ” Smith

**Interviewer:** Julia Jensen

**Date:** 02/20/2021

**Location (Interviewee):** Sonora, CA

**Location (Interviewer):** Columbus, OH

**Transcriber:** Julia Jensen. This transcript has been provided by Otter.AI w/ a 2nd pass for accuracy.

**Abstract:** I recorded a mini oral history with BZ about silver linings and the projects she has been working on during the pandemic.

JJ: Hi, my name is Julia Jensen and I am a graduate student intern with the COVID-19 archive at Arizona State University. The date is February 20. And the time is 1251. Eastern Standard Time, and I am speaking with BZ Smith. I want to ask you a question about your pandemic experience. But before I do, I would like to ask for your consent to record this response for the COVID-19 archive. The COVID-19 archive is a digital archive at ASU that is collecting pandemic experiences. Do I have your consent to record your response and add it to the archive with your name?

BS: I am honored to be a part of this and yes, I consent.

JJ: Thank you. First, can you tell me your name, age, and where you live?

BS: My name is BZ Smith. That’s actually my nickname, just in case some researcher wants to track me down. My real name is actually Bettizane, that’s one word. B-E-T-T-I-Z-A-N-E. I live in Sonora, California, which is close to Yosemite National Park. And I’m 71. Did you ask me my age, Julia?

JJ: Yes.

BS: Yes, 71.

JJ: Alright, thank you, now I’d like to ask you one question about the pandemic. We’ve experienced a lot of changes in 2020, and many have been negative and disruptive. But perhaps it’s not all bad. What’s one thing you’ve experienced during the pandemic?

BS: I have loved the opportunity to be in my home more. I’ve-because I had a very public life pre-pandemic, my opportunities to just putter and browse at home and work on projects here was very limited and chopped up. Now I’ve had prolonged days and weeks and even months where I could commit to an amazing project and it’s been so exciting to finally have that kind of time in a forced way, quite honestly. I’ve appreciated the forced nature of it.

JJ: What project are you working on?

BS: Well, I have a whole bunch of sorting projects I'm doing. You know, I'm 71 which means I'm sort of in the later quadrant of life. And I'm looking at purging and organizing and getting things ready to exit the planet in a way where I don't leave a total catastrophe for my children when I pass away. So you know, I've been working on that. And in the course of that I have remembered how many sewing materials I have and how many art supplies I have that have long since gone neglected. So I've been doing some sewing projects, I've made a quilt for one of my grandkids during this time, I have been working on some a variety of small mixed media paintings that have been very pleasurable for me, and giving me some of them as gifts. And then I've been also working on some professional things such as updating and revising my personal-my professional website, and looking at whole new ways of sort of doing legacy work that's related to my profession.

JJ: Wow, you've been nice and busy!

BS: Oh and I've been trying to remember to play the piano too.

JJ: Oh nice!

BS: Yeah!

JJ: Well I'm glad you got to reconnect with some of those projects and passions.

BS: So the other thing that I'd like to note is this time has given me an opportunity to really focus on self-care and taking better care of my body and losing weight, which I've needed to do, and allowing myself the time and the space to look at my physical and emotional needs in a more realistic way.

JJ: Nice, I'm glad you've had the time to do that. I know a lot of people are working on that right now.

BS: Yeah, yeah. Mhmm.

JJ: Alright, well thank you for your time today!

BS: Sure!

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