



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Dennis Adrian

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Dennis Adrian
Date:	2015 October 8-9
Identifier:	AAA.adrian15
Creator:	Adrian, Dennis, 1937- (Interviewee) Silverman, Lanny (Interviewer)
Extent:	4 Items (Sound recording: 4 sound files (4 hr., 18 min.); digital, wav) 173 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Dennis Adrian, 2015 October 8-9, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Dennis Adrian, 2015 October 8-9, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview is part of the Archives of American Art Oral History Program, started in 1958 to document the history of the visual arts in the United States, primarily through interviews with artists, historians, dealers, critics and administrators.

Available Formats

Transcript is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Biographical / Historical

Dennis Adrian (1937-) is an art critic, educator, and curator in Chicago, Illinois. Lanny Silverman (1947-) is a curator at the Chicago Cultural Center in Chicago, Illinois.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Dennis Adrian conducted 2015 October 8-9, by Lanny Silverman, for the Archives of American Art's Chicago Art and Artists: Oral History Project, at Adrian's home in Seaside, Oregon.

Scope and Contents

Adrian speaks of growing up in Astoria; traveling to Chicago and New York; Cannon Beach; aging and getting older; his origins; curators and curating; visual sensibilities; the Portland Public Library; opera; his parents,

grandparents, and family; Finnish sensibility and humor; Portland Art Museum and classes for children; curator as voyeur; credit and accomplishments; hands on experiences; Artforum; art history; attending University of Chicago; homosexuality and coming out; looted European masterworks; Botticelli; exposure to real art; connoisseurship; collectors and collecting; a Robert Louis Stevenson letter; violin making; growing into yourself; Chicago; war; New York University; Frumkin Gallery; New York; the art world; Madison Art Center; Akron Art Museum; friendship and role models; Art Institute of Chicago; meeting Mies van der Rohe; meeting idols; education; Oscar Wilde and Dorothy Parker; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Monster Roster; traveling; Chicago art politics; writing and critics; Eurocentric curators; Chicago as an undervalued city; Dog Day Afternoon; discovering art; New York sightings; and experiences running into artists. Adrian also recalls Roger Brown, Ruth Horwich, Gilda Buchbinder, Don Baum, Sherman Lee, Victor Carlson, Peter Voulkos, Lawrence Alloway, Rhona Hoffman, Allan Frumkin, June Leaf, Leon Golub, Jeremy Anderson, Robert Barnes, Tom Garver, Bruce Conner, Natasha Nicholson, H. C. Westermann, Franz Schulze, Bertha Harris Wiles, Muriel Newman, Aaron James Spire, Lillian Florsheim, John Maxon, Greg Knight, P.B. Maryan, Philip Pearlstein, Sylvia Sleigh, Nancy Spero, Irving Petlin, John Coplans, Alan Artner, Alice Shaddle, Phyllis Kind, Andy Warhol, Joseph Cornell, Tilda Swinton, Leo Castelli, Philip Guston, Dubuffet, Pussy Pepke, Bumpy Rogers, Barbara Rossi, Christina Ramberg, Philip Hanson, Miyoko Ito, Mark Jackson, Rolf Achilles, and Vito Acconci.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Art -- Collectors and collecting
- Art -- History
- Art -- Study and teaching
- Art thefts -- Europe
- Art, American -- Illinois -- Chicago
- Curators -- Illinois -- Chicago -- Interviews
- Educators -- Illinois -- Chicago -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Acconci, Vito, 1940-
- Achilles, Rolf
- Akron Art Museum
- Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990
- Anderson, Jeremy, 1921-1982
- Art Institute of Chicago
- Artner, Alan G.
- Barnes, Robert, 1934-
- Baum, Don, 1922-
- Botticelli, Sandro, 1444 or 1445-1510
- Brown, Roger, 1941-1997
- Carlson, Victor I.
- Castelli, Leo
- Chicago Art and Artists: Oral History Project
- Chicago's Art-Related Archival Materials: A Terra Foundation Resource
- Conner, Bruce, 1933-2008

Coplans, John
Cornell, Joseph
Dubuffet
Florsheim, Lillian H.
Frumkin, Allan
Garver, Thomas H.
Golub, Leon, 1922-2004
Guston, Philip, 1913-1980
Hanson, Philip, 1943-
Hoffman, Rhona, 1934-
Ito, Miyoko, 1918-1983
Kind, Phyllis, 1933-2018
Leaf, June, 1929-
Lee, Sherman E.
Madison Art Center
Maxon, John, 1916-
Mies van der Rohe, Ludwig, 1886-1969
Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, Ill.)
New York University
Newman, Muriel Kallis Steinberg
Nicholson, Natasha, 1945-
Parker, Dorothy, 1893-1967
Pearlstein, Philip, 1924-
Petlin, Irving, 1934-2018
Portland Art Museum (Or.)
Ramberg, Christina
Rossi, Barbara, 1940-
Schulze, Franz, 1927-2019
Sleigh, Sylvia
Spero, Nancy, 1926-2009
Swinton, Tilda
University of Chicago -- Students
Voukos, Peter, 1924-2002
Warhol, Andy, 1928-1987
Westermann, H. C. (Horace Clifford), 1922-
Wilde, Oscar, 1854-1900
Wiles, Bertha Harris, 1896-

Occupations:

Art critics -- Illinois -- Chicago -- Interviews