



# Smithsonian

## *Archives of American Art*

### Oral history interview with Jesse Amado

This interview is part of the series "Recuerdos Orales: Interviews of the Latino Art Community in Texas," supported by Federal funds for Latino programming, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives.

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Jesse Amado
<b>Date:</b>	2004 May 31-June 7
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.amado04
<b>Creator:</b>	Amado, Jesse, 1951- (Interviewee) Cordova, Cary (Interviewer) Recuerdos Orales: Interviews of the Latino Art Community in Texas
<b>Extent:</b>	79 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Jesse Amado, 2004 May 31-June 7, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Jesse Amado, 2004 May 31-June 7, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## 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.

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

Jesse Amadao (1951-) is an artist in San Antonio, Texas. Cary Cordoza (1970-) is an art historian.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Jesse Amado conducted 2004 May 31 and June 7, by Cary Cordova, for the Archives of American Art, at the artist's studio, in San Antonio, Texas.

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## Scope and Contents

Includes artist's family background, personalities, and relationship of artist's mother and father; parents' occupations and the effect on the family; brother Gilbert; early influences and experiences in drawing; role of religion during childhood; experiences in school including parochial school and losing interest in 12th grade; experiences working with architect O'Neil Ford in high school; decision to go into the Navy; experiences and travels in the Navy; first impressions of New York City; interest in literature and reading on works and life, including T.S. Eliot, "Tom Sawyer," "The Odyssey;" first experiences with foreign film, especially L'Avventura; bilingualism including learning to speak English and it's possible influences on art; work after the Navy on a tanker; travels in Europe; New York City and experiences working and living there; decision to return to San Antonio; starting at San Antonio College and experience of returning to school; first paintings; attempt at teaching; joining the fire department and influences of that job on his art; MFA study at University of Texas, San Antonio; influences of professors including Steve Reynolds, Mel Casas, and Dave Hickey; major influential discussion with Dave Hickey and art that resulted; BFA show exhibition; beginnings of ideas of fragility and mutability in early pieces; relationship to Minimalism or Conceptual Art in works; the growing art scene in San Antonio and it's galleries, including FineSilver, Blue Star and Art Pace; relationships with other San Antonio artists including Franco Mondini, Chuck Ramirez, Rebecca Holland; discussion of Bemis Foundation show; artist's feelings on being a Latino or Chicano artist; possible Latino influences on his art; discussion of Latino culture and iconography; change from stronger tendencies in painting towards sculpture and installation pieces; discussion of works in the "Taking Liberties" exhibition [1992]; the artist's creation process; discussion of Antonioni's L'Avventura and its use in artist's work; use of text as a visual form; importance of backstory and context to artist's work; use of music and lyrics in work, including James Brown and the Beatles; interest in taglines and its use in art; interest in fashion especially fashion magazines and its use in art; introduction and use of DYMO tape in art; relationship and interactions with galleries and museums, especially the Whitney, Blue Star, FineSilver; Barbara Davis; use of digital photography in work; discussion of the economics of the gallery; the future of artist's work and the importance of the process for the artist in the future; role of Catholicism in artist's work; the exhibition "Renascence" at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston; influence of marriage and divorce on works.

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## General

Originally recorded on 7 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 9 digital wav files. Duration is 4 hrs., 45 minutes.

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## General

Interview recorded on mini discs and compact discs.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Technique
- Latino and Latin American artists
- Religion in art

Types of Materials:

- Interviews

Sound recordings

Names:

ArtPace (Foundation : San Antonio, Tex.)  
Casas, Mel, 1929-2014  
Contemporary Art for San Antonio (Organization)  
Davis, Barbara  
Finesilver Gallery  
Ford, O'Neil, 1905-  
Hickey, Dave, 1940-  
Holland, Rebecca, 1962-  
Mondini-Ruiz, Franco, 1961-  
Ramirez, Chuck  
Recuerdos Orales: Interviews of the Latino Art Community in Texas  
Reynolds, Steve

Occupations:

Painters -- Texas -- San Antonio  
Sculptors -- Texas -- San Antonio