



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with William J. Brown

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with William J. Brown
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.brown91
<b>Date:</b>	1991 January 19-March 2
<b>Extent:</b>	203 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Creator:</b>	Brown, William J. (William Joseph), 1923-1992 Brown, Jane Brennan, 1931- Kessler, Jane
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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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.

### Available Formats

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

William J. Brown, art administrator and designer. Director of the Penland School of Crafts (formerly Penland School of Handicrafts) from 1962 to 1983.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of William J. Brown and his wife Jane Brown conducted 1991 January 19-1991 March 2, by Jane Kessler, for the Archives of American Art.

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## Scope and Contents

Brown and his wife Jane discuss his childhood in Michigan, his early interest in sculpture and his attitude towards education; military service in WWII; studies at Cranbrook Academy; designing for Steuben Glass; working with Francis Merritt at the Flint Institute of Arts and at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts;

teaching design at the University of Delaware and working summers at Haystack; Robert Gray, director of the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild; first impressions of The Penland School of Crafts and its founder Lucy Morgan; the development of the Penland School and its various programs; craftspeople who taught at Penland; and relations with the Penland board of trustees.

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## General

Originally recorded on 4 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 5 hr., 4 min.

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## General

2 of the cassettes are 60 min. and 2 are 90 min.

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## General

Sound quality of interview is poor.

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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:

- Decorative arts
- Designers -- Interviews
- Handicraft -- Study and teaching -- United States

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Cranbrook Academy of Art
- Flint Institute of Arts
- Gray, Robert Ward, 1916-
- Haystack Mountain School of Crafts
- Merritt, Francis Sumner, 1913-2000
- Morgan, Lucy, 1889-1981
- Penland School of Handicrafts
- University of Delaware

### Occupations:

- Arts administrators -- North Carolina -- Interviews

Functions:

Art Schools -- United States