



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Dana Chandler

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Dana Chandler
Identifier:	AAA.chandl93
Date:	1993 March 11-May 5
Creator:	Chandler, Dana, 1941- (Interviewee) Brown, Robert F. (Interviewer)
Extent:	89 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Audio: Oral history interview with Dana Chandler, 1993 March 11-May 5, 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. Funding for the transcription of this interview provided by the Newland Foundation.

Biographical / Historical

Dana Chandler (1941-) is an African American painter, printmaker, and educator from Boston, Massachussets.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Dana Chandler conducted 1993 March 11-May 5, by Robert F. Brown, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Chandler remembers his childhood in the Black community of Roxbury, Massachussets, with numerous siblings, pugnacious, hard-drinking longshoreman father, and mother who was the linchpin of the family; precocity as a reader and child artist; attendance at Saturday morning children's art classes at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and at Boston Educational High School where needed discipline was instilled in him by its all-white faculty; and as an assistant at school after graduation (1959-61).

Scope and Contents

Chandler talks about his awareness of budding civil rights movement; his attendance (1962-67) at Massachusetts College of Art while supporting his new, young family and working for the Jamaica Plain Area Planning Action Council which was funded by the federal Model Cities program; his first exhibitions (1967), in a liberal local church and a black businessmen's club; the exhibition (1969) "Twelve Black Artists from Boston," at the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University; and his involvement, along with Harold Tovish and Michael Mazur, in the group, Artists Against the War.

Scope and Contents

He recalls his initiation of the exhibition, "Afro-American Artists/New York and Boston," at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1970, for which he was given no credit; his position as an unpaid cultural commentator for a Black newspaper and radio station; his politically-charged paintings and prints from the late 1960s onward; his meetings with senior Black artists, such as Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett Mora, and Benny Andrews; and his steady espousal of confrontation.

Scope and Contents

Chandler discusses teaching at Simmons College, Boston, 1971 to present; his creation in 1974 of the African-American Master Artists-in-Residence Program (AMARP), Northeastern University, Boston, and his direction of it until 1993, when he was relieved of the position by the University.

Scope and Contents

Chandler discusses his exhibition at Northeastern University in 1976, "If the Shoe Fits, Hear It!" under the name Akin Duro, and its evidence of the respect in which he was held; the loss of much of his work in a studio fire; and his current large-scale graphic work.

General

Originally recorded on 4 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 4 hr., 51 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- African American artists
- African American painters

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

African-American Master Artists in Residence Program
Andrews, Benny, 1930-2006
Bearden, Romare, 1911-1988
Catlett, Elizabeth, 1915-2012
Massachusetts College of Art -- Students
Mazur, Michael, 1935-2009
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Northeastern University (Boston, Mass.) -- Faculty
Simmons College. Art and Music Dept. -- Faculty
Tovish, Harold, 1921-2008

Occupations:

Educators -- Massachusetts -- Boston
Painters -- Massachusetts -- Boston
Printmakers -- Massachusetts -- Boston