



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Fong Chow

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Fong Chow
Identifier:	AAA.chow02
Date:	2002 February 6
Creator:	Chow, Fong (Interviewee) Carney, Margaret, 1949- (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	27 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Fong Chow, 2002 February 6, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Fong Chow, 2002 February 6, 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 available on line.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Fong Chow (1923-) is a Chinese American ceramicist, curator, and photographer from New York, N.Y. Margaret Carney (1949-) is the director of the Schein Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art in Alfred, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Fong Chow conducted February 6, 2002, by Margaret Carney, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, at Chow's home, in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

Chow speaks of his family, specifically, his grandfather who was sent to Hartford, Connecticut, in 1874, for schooling, then studied at Columbia University and returned to China, working as general manager of one of the earliest railroads in north China; the schools Chow attended in Hong Kong; working in different media, including painting and photography; attending the Boston Museum School and then Alfred University; his relationship with Charles Harder, the head of the ceramic design department at Alfred; the "wonderful" teachers at Alfred in the early 1950s, including Katharine Nelson in painting, Marion Fosdick in sculpture, Daniel Rhodes and Ted Randall; learning production methods, as well as "studio potters work"; developing forms, new glazes, and decorations at Glidden Pottery; his "famous" pieces for Glidden Pottery, such as "New Equations" and "Charcoal and Rice"; how he became involved with the Metropolitan Museum of Art and his relationship with Alan Priest, curator of Far Eastern art; working at the Met as a curator for more than 20 years; changes at the Met during his tenure there; and his hiatus from making ceramics while working at the Met. He discusses his return to clay in 1983 and his studio near Cooper Union; he describes visiting his best friend from childhood, Pan He, a sculptor in China. He also discusses his health; his wife Chao-Ling and how they met; his current focus on photography. Chow also recalls Glidden Parker, James Romer, Bo Gyllensvard, Sergio Dello Strologo, Theodore Hobby, Paul Bollardo, Norman Arsenault, and others.

General

Originally recorded 3 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 5 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 41 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Technique
- Asian American art
- Asian American artists
- Asian American ceramicists
- Asian American curators
- Asian American photographers
- Ceramics -- Chinese
- Chinese American art
- Chinese American artists
- Decorative arts

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Alfred University -- Students
- Glidden Pottery (Alfred, N.Y.)
- Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.) -- Employees
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
- Parker, Glidden, 1913-1980

Occupations:

Ceramicists -- New York (State) -- New York
Photographers -- New York (State) -- New York