



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Robert Cremean

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Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Collection Overview

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|-------------------------|---|
| Repository: | Archives of American Art |
| Title: | Oral history interview with Robert Cremean |
| Date: | 1996 September 5 |
| Identifier: | AAA.creamea96 |
| Creator: | Cremean, Robert, 1932- (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer) |
| Extent: | 54 Pages (Transcript) |
| Language: | English . |
| Digital Content: | Digital Content: Oral history interview with Robert Cremean, 1996 September 5, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Robert Cremean, 1996 September 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 this interview was provided by the Pasadena Art Alliance.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Robert Cremean (1932-) was a sculptor from Tomales, California.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Robert Cremean conducted 1996 September 5, by Paul J. Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art, in Cremean's studio, Tomales, California.

Scope and Contents

The focus of the interview is Cremean's withdrawal from the commercial art market in early 1980 and his subsequent arrangement with the Fresno Arts Center (now Fresno Art Museum) to serve as the main center for his work. Cremean discusses the Fresno project and a related book undertaken by George Blair, the

main funder of the museum collaboration; the philosophy behind the arrangement and the desire to take the market out of the relationship between artist and audience; Cremean's commitment to small museums and breaking the pattern of large, wealthy institutions defining culture through limited sampling; Cremean's family background, education, and career; study at Cranbrook; Fullbright to Italy; teaching at UCLA (1956-1959); his move to San Francisco Bay Area (1958); move to Tomales (1963); his relationship to galleries/dealers, mostly in Los Angeles; L.A. "culture wars" of the late 1950s and 1960s; Ferus Gallery against all others; and the victimization of Rico Lebrun's romantic humanism; a series of galleries and several important museum shows including 1976 exhibition of "Vatican Corridor" at the M.H. de Young Museum in San Francisco; autobiographical quality of work and the description of recent series as "opera"; the importance of place; and "love affair" with his valley home in Tomales.

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 5 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Marketing

Types of Materials:

Interviews

Sound recordings

Names:

Fresno Arts Center

Occupations:

Sculptors -- California