



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Hester Diamond

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Scope and Contents.....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Hester Diamond
Identifier:	AAA.diamon17
Date:	2017 October 4-5
Creator:	Diamond, Hester (Interviewee) Richards, Judith Olch (Interviewer)
Extent:	87 Pages (Transcript) 2 Items (sound files (3 hr., 14 min.) Audio; digital, wav)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Hester Diamond, 2017 October 4-5, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Hester Diamond, 2017 October 4-5, 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.

Available Formats

Transcript is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Restrictions

This transcript is open for research. Access to the entire recording is restricted. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Hester Diamond (1928-2020) was an art collector in New York, New York. Judith Olch Richards (1947-) is former executive director of iCI in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Hester Diamond conducted 2017 October 4-5, by Judith Olch Richards, for the Archives of American Art and the Center for the History of Collecting in America at the Frick Art Reference Library of The Frick Collection, at Diamond's home in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

Ms. Diamond discusses the lives of her parents and grandparents in New Jersey as European immigrants; her life as a student during World War II attending Hunter College in Manhattan, and her exploration of the city's art museums, especially the Museum of Modern Art; her early interest in modern art and her friendship and subsequent marriage with Harold Diamond; her work as a social worker and Mr. Diamond's work as a school teacher, and their growing interest in the New York museum and gallery scene; their time working part-time for Martha Jackson at her gallery; their organization of a traveling exhibition in the United States for the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth; their first trip together to Europe in 1955 and their subsequent introduction to the business of art dealing; Mr. Diamond's illness and death and Ms. Diamond's transition out of the art dealing business. Ms. Diamond also describes her first work as an interior designer for J. Seward Johnson; her subsequent decision to leave the decorating business; her second husband Ralph Kaminsky and his daughter Rachel Kaminsky; the shift of her art collecting focus towards Renaissance paintings; her help founding the Medici Archive Project; her relationships with fellow collectors and curators; her new interest in Spanish sculpture; and her third husband, Dr. David Wilson. Ms. Diamond also recalls Ben Nicholson; Nan Roberts; E. L. Hodgkins; G. David Thompson; Joseph Hirshhorn; Alastair Stair; Eugene Thaw; Shepard and Birgitta Schreiber; as well as Dr. Jacques Koerfer; Thomas Ammann; Edward Goldberg; Robert Strassler; Maryan Ainsworth; Jon Landau; and Rose Fried, among others.

System Details

Recorded on Tascam DR-100MKII R000327.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Collectors and collecting -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Art Collectors: A Project in Partnership with the Center for the History of Collecting in America at The Frick Collection