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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Fritz Dreisbach

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Fritz Dreisbach
Date:	2004 April 21-22
Identifier:	AAA.dreisb04
Creator:	Dreisbach, Fritz (Interviewee) Frantz, Susanne K. (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	121 Pages (Trancript) 21 Items (Sound recording: 21 sound files (8 hr., 41 min.); digital, wav)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Fritz Dreisbach, 2004 April 21-22, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Fritz Dreisbach, 2004 April 21-22, 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.

Biographical / Historical

Fritz Dreisbach (1941-) is a glass artist from Tucson, Arizona. Susanne Frantz is a writer and curator from Paradise Valley, Arizona.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Fritz Dreisbach conducted 2004 April 21-22, by Susanne Frantz, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Tucson, Arizona.

Scope and Contents

Dreisbach speaks of growing up in Ohio, in a family of educators and deciding at an early age to become a teacher; taking high school art; pursuing a BA in art and mathematics at Hiram College; getting his MAT and teaching high school math; attending the University of Iowa to study painting; the impact of taking a summer

class in glassblowing; visiting Dominick Labino at his studio; researching colored glass and glass chemistry; becoming Harvey K. Littleton's teaching assistant at the University of Wisconsin, Madison; building a hot shop and teaching at the Toledo Museum of Art; teaching at Penland School of Crafts; creating the Glass Art Society with Mark Peiser after attending a NCECA conference; moving to Seattle to make glass colors for The Glass Eye; and working for Spectrum Glass Company. Dreisbach also speaks of the importance of community among glass artists; taking part in glass symposia in Frauenau, Germany; traveling around the country to teach workshops, known as his "Road Show"; making representational pop-style pieces as well as historical reference pieces; collaborating on a stained glass window with Gary Noffke; developing techniques for making goblets; working with Dante Marioni on a series of goblets; his commissioned pieces, including the Corning Pokal; engraving glass; his Mongo series; selling works through galleries; the influence of the Italian glass artists; teaching at Pilchuck Glass School; Dominick Labino's career and innovations in glass technology; being invited to give the Samuel R. Scholes lecture at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University; serving twice as Glass Art Society president; inaccuracies in the history of American studio glass; taking part in GAS conferences at Fenton Glass Factory; the importance of the rise of the university-trained glass artist in the 1960s; going to Pilchuck for the first time; meeting international glass artists; attending symposia at Novy Bor, Czech Republic; and his plans for the future. Dreisbach also recalls Tom McGlauchlin, Clayton Bailey, Erwin Eisch, Dale Chihuly, Bill Brown, Marvin Lipofsky, Joel Myers, Billy Bernstein, Dan Dailey, Dudley Giberson, Harvey Leafgreen, Bill Boysen, Henry Halem, Peter Voukos, Ruth Tamura, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 8 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 21 digital wav files. Duration is 8 hr., 41 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Decorative arts
- Glass art
- Painting -- Study and teaching

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Alfred University
- Bailey, Clayton, 1939-2020
- Bernstein, William, 1945-
- Boysen, Bill
- Brown, William J. (William Joseph), 1923-1992
- Chihuly, Dale, 1941-
- Dailey, Dan, 1947-
- Eisch, Erwin, 1927-
- Giberson, Dudley
- Glass Art Society
- Halem, Henry
- Hiram College -- Students

Labino, Dominick
Leafgreen, Harvey
Lipofsky, Marvin, 1938-2016
Littleton, Harvey K.
McGlauchlin, Tom, 1934-2011
Myers, Joel Philip, 1934-
Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Noffke, Gary
Penland School of Crafts -- Faculty
Pilchuck Glass Center (Stanwood, Wash.) -- Faculty
Tamura, Ruth
Toledo Museum of Art
University of Iowa -- Students
University of Wisconsin--Madison -- Students
Voulkos, Peter, 1924-2002

Occupations:

Glass artists -- Arizona -- Tucson
Glass artists -- Italy

Places:

Ohio -- Description and Travel