Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Susanne Ghez

This interview is part of the Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project, funded by the A G Foundation.

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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 Susanne Ghez
Date:	2011 Jan. 25-26
Identifier:	AAA.ghez11
Creator:	Ghez, Susanne (Interviewee) Richards, Judith Olch (Interviewer) Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project
Extent:	4 Items (Sound recording, master: 4 memory cards (4 hr., 53 min.); secure digital; 1.25 in.) 84 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Susanne Ghez, 2011 Jan. 25-26, Transcript

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.

Biographical / Historical

Susanne Ghez (1937-) is a museum director at the Renaissance Society in Chicago, Ill. Judith Olch Richards (1947-) is former executive director of iCI in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Susanne Ghez conducted 2011 Jan. 25 and 26, by Judith Olch Richards, for the Archives of American Art's Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts project, at the Renaissance Society, in Chicago, Ill.

Scope and Contents

Ghez discusses her work for the Renaissance Society in Chicago; the Renaissance Society's involvement with European artists; taking risks; the importance of "programming first"; attention to Chicago area artists; a mix of local, national, and international programming; complementary programming with the Smart Museum of Art; audiences; the relationship between the Renaissance Center and the University of Chicago; installation issues; improved outreach to students; working on "Documenta 11," including the experience of co-curating with Okwui Enwezor and travelling to visit artists; exhibitions coming out of the "Documenta experience"; changes in curatorial practices; recommendations for aspiring curators; her retirement and succession plans; projects as an independent curator; art collectors in Chicago; serving on advisory committees; organizing thematic exhibitions; the importance of "belief" and "trust," and other topics. She recalls Anne Rorimer, Richard Flood, Buzz Spector, Katharine Lee Reid, James Coleman, Benjamin Buchloh, Ed Paschke, and others.

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
Women arts administrators

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art
Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project
Enwezor, Okwui
Flood, Richard G., 1949-
Paschke, Ed
Reid, Katharine Lee
Rorimer, Anne
Spector, Buzz
University of Chicago. Renaissance Society

Occupations:

Arts administrators -- Illinois -- Chicago
Curators -- Illinois -- Chicago
Museum directors -- Illinois -- Chicago