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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Wayne Higby

Funding for this interview was provided by the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America. Funding for the digital preservation of this interview was provided by a grant from the Save America's Treasures Program of the National Park Service.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Wayne Higby
Identifier:	AAA.higby05
Date:	2005 April 12-14
Creator:	Higby, Wayne (Interviewee) McInnes, Mary, 1956- (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	9 Items (Sound recording: 9 sound files (4 hr., 55 min.); digital, wav) 66 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Wayne Higby, 2005 April 12-14, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Wayne Higby, 2005 April 12-14, 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.

Restrictions

Use requires an appointment.

Biographical / Historical

Wayne Higby (1943-) is a ceramicist from Alfred Station, New York. Mary McInnes is a professor from Alfred, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Wayne Higby conducted 2005 April 12-14, by Mary McInnes, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Alfred Station, New York. Higby speaks of growing up in Colorado Springs, Colorado; choosing to go to University of Colorado, Boulder; traveling to Europe, Asia, and Africa; being influenced by Minoan pottery; working for ceramicist Betty Woodman; deciding to become a teacher; getting a graduate degree at the University of Michigan; working at Archie Bray Foundation; teaching at the University of Nebraska and Rhode Island

School of Design; having his first one person art show and exhibiting nationally; teaching at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts; the influence of landscape on his work; how the craft market has changed during his career; working with the Helen Drutt Gallery; writing about craft and the need for critical dialogue in craft publications; being inspired by Asian art; learning ceramics from Jim and Nan McKinnell, and the influence of other teachers on his career; getting hired at Alfred University; the challenges and benefits of teaching at Alfred; his colleagues at Alfred; making functional art and using the vessel form; his teaching philosophy; putting ceramics in a larger art context; his current project; his studio practice; themes in his artwork; choosing to work in porcelain; lecturing and touring in China; being interested in landscape painting; the public response to his work; and recently being awarded several honors. Higby also recalls Manuel Neri, Peter Voulkos, Paul Soldner, Fred Bauer, David Shaner, Francis Merritt, Ted Randall, Bob Turner, Val Cushing, Kenneth Ferguson, Robert Motherwell, and others.

System Details

Originally recorded on 4 sound discs.

General

Originally recorded on 4 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 9 digital wav files. Duration is 4 hr., 55 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Ceramicists -- New York (State) -- Interviews
- Ceramics -- Study and teaching
- Decorative arts
- Educators -- New York (State) -- Interviews
- Pottery, Minoan

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Alfred University -- Faculty
- Archie Bray Foundation
- Bauer, Fred
- Cushing, Val M.
- Ferguson, Ken, 1928-
- Haystack Mountain School of Crafts -- Faculty
- Helen Drutt Gallery
- McKinnell, James
- McKinnell, Nan
- Merritt, Francis Sumner, 1913-2000
- Motherwell, Robert
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
- Neri, Manuel, 1930-

Randall, Theodore, 1914-1985
Rhode Island School of Design -- Faculty
Shaner, David, 1934-
Soldner, Paul
Turner, Robert Chapman, 1913-2005
University of Colorado (Boulder campus) -- Students
University of Michigan -- Students
University of Nebraska -- Faculty
Voukos, Peter, 1924-2002
Woodman, Betty, 1930-2018

Places:

Africa -- description and travel
Asia -- Description and Travel
China -- Description and Travel
Colorado -- description and travel
Europe -- description and travel