



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Larry Jordan

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.

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

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Scope and Contents.....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
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 Larry Jordan
Date:	1995 Dec. 19 - 1996 July 30
Identifier:	AAA.jordan95
Creator:	Jordan, Larry, 1934- (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer)
Extent:	6 Sound cassettes (Sound recording; analog) 100 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Larry Jordan, 1995 Dec. 19 - 1996 July 30, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Larry Jordan, 1995 Dec. 19 - 1996 July 30, 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 the transcription of this interview provided by the Pasadena Art Alliance.

Available Formats

Transcript available online.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Larry Jordan (1934-) is a filmmaker and collagist from Petaluma, Calif.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Larry Jordan conducted 1995 Dec. 19-1996 July 30, by Paul Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art, at the artist's home, in Petaluma, Calif.

Scope and Contents

Jordan discusses his family background in Denver; his attraction to contemporary avant-garde; his brief time at Harvard, and his mental breakdown and return to Denver; his move to San Francisco in 1954 because of the artistic and literary atmosphere there; meeting Kenneth Rexroth, Robert Duncan and other poets and his initial introduction to the creative community in San Francisco; his friendships with Jordan Belsen, Michael McClure, Wally Hedrick and Jay DeFeo; the San Francisco Renaissance, the beat era, and what it means to be "beat;" the distinction in intensity between bohemianism and the resurrection of the self during the beat era, the social impact of the anti-establishment movement; and the difference between artists and political activists.

Scope and Contents

Jordan discusses his influences and important moments in his experimental film career; the surrealist methods for social changes as seen in film; the west coast filmmakers focus on the interior and mystical; the rivalry in the film world; his association with Bruce Conner and their founding a film society together in 1956 and establishing an experimental theater; meeting Joseph Cornell and his invitation to assist him with films, their time spent together, Cornell as a filmmaker, preparing Cornell boxes, and the influence of Cornell on his own art. He discusses his own art; his role as an artist in society; the religious aspect in his art; his place in the avant-garde film world; the major influences in his art; and the concept of death and the celebration of the mind as a major theme in his film and artwork.

Scope and Contents

He recalls Wallace Berman, Stan Brackage, Bruce Conner, Jay DeFeo, Maya Deren, Robert Duncan, Max Ernst, Allen Ginsberg, Wally Hedrick, George Herms, Jess, Patricia Jordan, Michael McClure, Bruce Nauman, and Kenneth Rexroth.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- California -- San Francisco Bay Area
- Beat generation
- Collagists -- California -- Interviews
- Filmmakers -- California -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Berman, Wallace, 1926-1976
- Brackage, Stan
- Conner, Bruce, 1933-2008
- Cornell, Joseph
- DeFeo, Jay, 1929-1989

Deren, Maya
Duncan, Robert Edward, 1919-
Ernst, Max, 1891-1976
Ginsberg, Allen, 1926-1997
Hedrick, Wally, 1928-2003
Herms, George, 1935-
Jess, 1923-
Jordan, Patricia M., 1937-1989
McClure, Michael
Nauman, Bruce, 1941-
Rexroth, Kenneth, 1905-1982