



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with James Krenov

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

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with James Krenov
<b>Date:</b>	2004 August 12-13
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.krenov04
<b>Creator:</b>	Krenov, James (Interviewee) Fitzgerald, Oscar P. (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
<b>Extent:</b>	38 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with James Krenov, 2004 August 12-13, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with James Krenov, 2004 August 12-13, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## 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 available on line

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

James Krenov (1920-2009) was a woodworker of Fort Bragg, California. Oscar Fitzgerald is a writer and historian from Alexandria, Virginia.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of James Krenov conducted 2004 August 12-13, by Oscar Fitzgerald, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Fort Bragg, California.

## Scope and Contents

Krenov speaks of immigrating to the United States; making things as a child; learning woodworking from Carl Malmsten; teaching workshops in England, Japan, and New Zealand; working as a cabinetmaker in Sweden; teaching at Rochester Institute of Technology; writing books on woodworking, including, "A Cabinetmaker's Notebook"; helping to found the Program in Artisanry at Boston University; teaching at the College of the Redwoods; using veneers; his teaching method; choosing the appropriate wood; the process of designing his pieces; choosing tools, and his opinion on computerized machinery; his favorite pieces; receiving awards; working for pleasure and working on commission; making joinery; pricing his work; choosing not to work with galleries; and his predictions for the future of woodworking. Krenov also recalls Soetsu Yanagi, Craig McArt, Wendell Castle, John Makepeace, Lois Moran, Yong Chen, and others.

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## General

Originally recorded on 3 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 14 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hrs., 42 min.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

- Decorative arts
- Woodwork
- Woodworkers -- California -- Interviews.

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
- Rochester Institute of Technology -- Faculty
- Woodstock School of Painting

### Occupations:

- Cabinetmakers -- California -- Interviews