



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Marvin Lipofsky

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.

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/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Marvin Lipofsky
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.lipofs03
<b>Date:</b>	2003 July 30-August 5
<b>Creator:</b>	Lipofsky, Marvin, 1938-2016 (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
<b>Extent:</b>	103 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Marvin Lipofsky, 2003 July 30-August 5, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Marvin Lipofsky, 2003 July 30-August 5, 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

Marvin Bentley Lipofsky (1938- ) is a glass artist and educator from Berkeley, California. Paul Karlstrom (1941- ) is an art historian from San Marino, California.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Marvin Lipofsky conducted 2003 July 30-August 5, by Paul Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Berkeley, California.

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## Scope and Contents

Lipofsky speaks of growing up in the retail clothing trade; relating immediately in his early career to artists Peter Voulkos and John Mason; studying industrial design at the University of Illinois and sculpture at the University of Madison, Wisconsin, where Harvey Littleton introduced him to glass blowing; traveling to Europe to learn about glass; his desire to share education experiences with others; setting up education programs at Berkeley and the California College of Arts and Crafts; establishing the Great California Glass Symposium and creating a sense of community of glass art; artists versus artisans and craftsmen; studio glass as an American phenomenon; functional versus non-functional glass art; spirituality in his work; glassblowing associated with the breath of life; the Bay Area art scene; symbolic forms and organic quality of works; influences from working in factories and other countries; his experience working at the Venini Factory in Murano, Italy; his involvement in the California College of Arts and Crafts, Glass Arts Society, and National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts; abstraction as his main subject of works; inspirations of colorful clothing and color in nature; and the "American Glass Now" exhibition at the Toledo Museum of Art, the first major glass exhibit in the United States. Lipofsky also recalls Dante Marioni, Paul Marioni, Beatrice Wood, Christopher Wilmarth, Ken Holston, Dale Chihuly, and others.

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## General

Originally recorded on 6 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 11 digital wav files. Duration is 6 hrs., 31 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
- Glass art -- California
- Glass artists -- California -- Interviews
- Glass blowing and working -- Study and teaching
- Glass blowing and working -- Technique

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America