



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Warren MacKenzie

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Warren MacKenzie
<b>Date:</b>	2002 October 29
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.macken02
<b>Creator:</b>	MacKenzie, Warren, 1924-2018 (Interviewee) Silberman, Robert B. (Robert Bruce), 1950- (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
<b>Extent:</b>	44 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Warren MacKenzie, 2002 October 29, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Warren MacKenzie, 2002 October 29, 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 online.

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

Warren MacKenzie (1924-2018) was a ceramist from Stillwater, Minnesota.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Warren MacKenzie conducted 2002 October 29, by Robert Silberman, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Stillwater, Minnesota.

## Scope and Contents

MacKenzie speaks of his early childhood and eagerness to become a painter; being drafted in 1943; returning from active duty in the Army to find all the painting classes full and registering for a ceramic class; the significance of Bernard Leach's, "A Potter's Book" to his early ceramic education, and fellow classmates; his studies at the Chicago Art Institute; museums in Chicago; his first wife, potter, Alix MacKenzie; traveling to England to receive further training from Leach, first being rejected and then returning a year later to work 2 1/2 years at Leach Pottery at St. Ives; contacts such as Shoji Hamada, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, Terry Frost, Peter Lanyon, and others; his lack of interest in sculptural ceramics; the good remnants of Leach pottery pots in his pottery today; Korean and Japanese influences; the International Potters and Weavers Conference in 1952 and returning to the U.S.; Alix's role in arranging Hamada's tour of the U.S. and exhibition in St. Paul; building their first pottery; exhibitions at the Walker Arts Center; purchasing the best Hamada pot at the St. Paul exhibit; teaching at the University of Minnesota; his experiences at craft schools; his involvement with NCECA [National Council on Education in Ceramic Art] and the Minnesota Craft Council; his travels; the self-service showroom on his property; changes in the field of ceramics; the 1968 fire that destroyed his barn studio; his working process; his experience with a salt kiln; experimenting in each firing; and his monthly work schedule. MacKenzie also recalls Kathleen Blackshear, Lucie Rie, Hans Coper, Soetsu Yanagi, Jerry Liebling, Allen Downs, Walter Quirt, Phil Morton, Curt Heuer, Karen Karnes, David Weinrib, Josef Albers, Kenneth Ferguson, Rudy Autio, Peter Voukos, Tatsuzo Shimaoka, David Lewis, Michael Cardew, and others.

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## General

Originally recorded on 3 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 9 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hrs., 33 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:

- Ceramicists -- Minnesota -- Interviews
- Ceramics
- Decorative arts

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Art Institute of Chicago -- Student
- Hamada, Shōji, 1894-1978
- Leach, Bernard, 1887-1979
- MacKenzie, Alixandra Kolesky, d. 1962
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
- University of Minnesota -- Faculty