



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Beverly Mayeri

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Beverly Mayeri
Date:	2007 September 15-October 3
Identifier:	AAA.mayeri07
Creator:	Mayeri, Beverly, 1944- (Interviewee) Riedel, Mija, 1958- (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	46 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Beverly Mayeri, 2007 September 15-October 3, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Beverly Mayeri, 2007 September 15-October 3, 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.

Biographical / Historical

Beverly Mayeri (1944-) is a ceramist in Mill Valley, California. Mija Riedel (1958-) is a curator and writer from San Francisco, California.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Beverly Mayeri conducted 2007 September 15 and October 3, by Mija Riedel, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, at Mayeri's studio, in Sausalito, California.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Beverly Mayeri, conducted by Mija Riedel for the Archives of American Art, at the artist's studio in Mill Valley, California, on September 15, 2007 and October 3, 2007. Mayeri speaks of her childhood in New Jersey; the artistic and creative activities of her parents; her mother, who was a watercolorist; her

father, who was an inventor, woodworker, and artist; enjoying setting up and conducting biology experiments in high school; working as an intern marine biologist between senior year of high school and freshman year of college; attending the University of California, Berkeley and receiving her degree in zoology; becoming interested in clay during her senior year at Berkeley; her marriage, daughter, and time spent in New York City where she was unable to focus on ceramics; participating in classes and workshops at the Sausalito Art Center upon her return to California; her early functional, production work; being inspired by Karen Breschi's work, which led to the Mother series; working from her garage; attending graduate school at San Francisco State University; reading Erich Neumann's "The Great Mother" and becoming interested in the psychological world within individuals and expressing that through art; the development of the checkerboard theme in her work; expressing a personal truth that others will recognize in themselves; the prevalence of faces, animals, patterns, and texture in her work; portraiture and anatomy; working with dark clay; exploring environmental themes; the connection between expressing both human and environmental frailty; the cyclical nature of her work in returning to previous themes; conveying stillness versus gesture; her experience with galleries, including Susan Cummins Gallery, Dorothy Weiss Gallery, and Ivory Kimpton Gallery; the freedom of working with acrylic paint as opposed to glaze; and becoming more involved in environmental activism. Mayeri also recalls Peter Marler, Marni Turkel, Diana Bohn, Marilyn Stiles, Steven De Staebler, Robert Arneson, José Argüelles, Wendy Gruber, Mimi Chen-Ting, Gail Van Dyke, Daniel Goldstein, Allan Frumkin, George Adams, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 3 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 4 hrs., 34 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Decorative arts
- Women artists
- Women ceramicists

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Adams, George
- Argüelles, Jose
- Arneson, Robert, 1930-1992
- Bohn, Diana
- Breschi, Karen
- Chen-Ting, Mimi
- De Staebler, Stephen, 1933-2011
- Dorothy Weiss Gallery
- Frumkin, Allan
- Goldstein, David
- Gruber, Wendy
- Marler, Peter
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America

San Francisco State University -- Students
Sausalito Art Center
Styles, Marilyn
Susan Cummins Gallery
Turkel, Marni
University of California, Berkeley -- Students
Van Dyke, Gail

Occupations:

Ceramicists -- California