



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with John Paul Miller

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with John Paul Miller
Identifier:	AAA.miller04
Date:	2004 August 22-23
Creator:	Miller, John Paul, 1918- (Interviewee) Yager, Jan, 1951- (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	104 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with John Paul Miller, 2004 August 22-23, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with John Paul Miller, 2004 August 22-23, 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.

Available Formats

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

John Paul Miller (1918-) is a jeweler, enamelist, goldsmith, and educator from Brecksville, Ohio; Jan Yager is a jeweler and metalsmith from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Scope and Contents

An interview of John Paul Miller conducted 2004 August 22-23, by Jan Yager, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Brecksville, Ohio.

Scope and Contents

Mr. Miller speaks of spending summers with his grandparents in central Pennsylvania; growing up in Cleveland, Ohio; taking art classes as a child at the Cleveland Museum of Art and in school; participating in theater and set design; attending the Cleveland School of Art and majoring in industrial design; meeting fellow student Fred Miller; working as a film editor; directing a documentary in Alaska; painting murals while in the army; exhibiting early jewelry in the "May Show;" traveling cross-country with silversmith Baron Erik Fleming; researching and experimenting with the granulation process; visiting museums in Europe; teaching at the Cleveland School of Art; being influenced by various books; choosing to work with metal; and pricing and selling his pieces. Mr. Miller also speaks of the enameling process; exhibiting in various local, national, and international shows; sharing a studio with Fred Miller; making gold granules; his work in museum collections; being inspired by Fabergé; making functional, wearable jewelry; the role of nature in his artwork; assembling his pieces; corresponding with German jeweler Elizabeth Treskow; working at Potter and Mellen; traveling throughout Europe; moving to Brecksville, Ohio, and building a home studio; participating in the American Craft Council; making films on metalsmith techniques; subscribing to craft publications; how crafts have changed since he started working; how American and international jewelry compare; his design philosophy; plans for the future; and balancing teaching with studio work. Mr. Miller also recalls Otto Ege, Kenneth Bates, Viktor Schrekengost, Harry Bertoia, Margret Craver, Alma Eikerman, Margaret De Patta, Toshiko Takaezu, Robert von Neumann, Peter Voukos, Alexander Calder, John Marshall, William Harper, Solve Holquist, Anni Albers, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 6 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 11 digital wav files. Duration is 7 hrs., 58 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Decorative arts
- Jewelry making -- Economic aspects
- Jewelry making -- Technique
- Metal-work -- Technique

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Cleveland School of Art -- Faculty
- Cleveland School of Art -- Students
- Miller, Frederick A.
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America