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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Jesús Moroles

This interview is part of the series "Recuerdos Orales: Interviews of the Latino Art Community in Texas," supported by Federal funds for Latino programming, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Jesús Moroles
Date:	2004 July 19-20
Identifier:	AAA.morole04
Creator:	Moroles, Jesús Bautista, 1950-2015 (Interviewee) Cordova, Cary (Interviewer) Recuerdos Orales: Interviews of the Latino Art Community in Texas
Extent:	102 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Jesús Moroles, 2004 July 19-20, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Jesús Moroles, 2004 July 19-20, 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.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Jesús Moroles (1950-) is a sculptor in Rockport, Tex. Cary Cordova (1970-) is an art historian in Austin, Tex.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Jesús Moroles conducted 2004 July 19-20, by Cary Cordova, for the Archives of American Art, in Rockport, Tex.

Scope and Contents

Moroles speaks of his parents' poor background and young courtship; his parents' strong work ethic, and his inheritance of this work ethic; earning money through art commissions at a young age; being a young entrepreneur; joining the Air Force and avoiding combat in Southeast Asia by working with electronics; doing photography while stationed in Thailand; choosing stone as medium; numerous injuries he has received during stonecutting; working in Pietra Santa, Italy; meeting and working under Luis Jimenez; working in segregated Waxahachie, Tex.; differences between his figurative and abstract works; why he curates all his shows; and the reasons behind his unconventional stone-sawing methods. Moroles also discusses how he names his works and series; moving his studio to Rockport; his fears of being typecast as a specific type of artist (i.e., "fountain" or "Chicano"); incredulity and disdain towards art journalism and scholarship; his commission for the CBS building; his good relationships with his dealers; his new book of artwork; his desire to slow down his production; his unconventional Baptist/Latino upbringing and his present lack of religion; the Houston Police Memorial; the pyramid motif in his work; his visits to China; moving to Rockport; the tactile nature of his works; his belief in the musicality of granite; his megalomaniacal disposition towards his works; the drowning victims in the Forth Worth Water Gardens; his desire to create sacred places, and the meaning of that phrase; the process of "granite weaving"; his new metal pieces; the lack of political meanings in his art; his "Moonscapes"; and his affections for his daughter. Moroles also recalls Eckhard Pfeiffer, Isamu Noguchi, Ulrich Ruckriem, Eero Saarinen, David Shrader, Frank Ribelin, Ricardo Legoretta, Judy Baca, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 6 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 10 digital wav files. Duration is 6 hrs., 13 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Economic aspects
- Hispanic American artists
- Sculptors -- Texas -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Baca, Judith Francisca
- Jimenez, Luis, 1940-2006
- Legorreta Vilchis, Ricardo
- Noguchi, Isamu, 1904-1988
- Pfeiffer, Eckhardt.
- Recuerdos Orales: Interviews of the Latino Art Community in Texas
- Ribelin, Frank
- Rückriem, Ulrich.
- Saarinen, Eero, 1910-1961
- Shrader, David

Functions:

Art commissions