



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Walter Nottingham

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/>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
General.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	1
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Walter Nottingham
Date:	2002 July 14-18
Identifier:	AAA.nottin02
Creator:	Nottingham, Walter, 1930-2012 (Interviewee) Owen, Carol, 1936- (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	29 Pages (Transcript) 4 Items (Sound recording: 4 sound files (1 hr., 41 min.); digital, wav)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Walter Nottingham, 2002 July 14-18, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Walter Nottingham, 2002 July 14-18, 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 online.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Walter Nottingham (1930-2012) is a fiber artist from Hilo, Hawaii. Carol Owen is a fiber artist from Pittsboro, North Carolina.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Walter Nottingham conducted 2002 July 14-18, by Carol Owen, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, at the studios of Idyllwild Arts, in Idyllwild, California. Nottingham speaks of his enthusiasm for basketball; being an altar boy

and, as such, surrounded by beautiful fabrics at an early age; attending St. Cloud State University on the GI Bill; his teachers Jim Crane and Pauline Penning; serving as an art consultant for public schools in Jackson, Michigan; the lasting influence of an exhibition of battle flags at the Metropolitan Museum; articulating aging and decay through self-taught weaving; developing a fiber art program at University of Wisconsin, River Falls; attending Cranbrook Academy of Art and working with Glen Kaufman and Meda Johnson. He discusses specific works including his "Yahooties", that combine both his grandmother's and mother's crochet work; his trip to Mexico City on a National Endowment for the Arts grant in 1974; forming the company Off the Wall with his eldest daughter Karron and their decorative design commissions; the influence of his Catholic upbringing, oriental philosophy, and spirituality in his work; and techniques and materials. Nottingham recalls Shelly Ross, Helen Drutt, Francis Merritt, Don Miller, Lois Moran, Jack Lenor Larsen, Marianne Strengell, Mildred Constantine, Gerhardt Knodel, Lee Nordness, Ed Rossbach, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 3 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 4 digital wav files. Duration is 1 hr., 41 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Technique
- Crocheting
- Decorative arts
- Fiber artists -- Hawaii -- Interviews
- Weavers -- Hawaii -- Interviews
- Weaving -- Equipment and supplies
- Weaving -- Study and teaching
- Weaving -- Technique

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Catholic Church
- Constantine, Mildred
- Cranbrook Academy of Art -- Students
- Crane, Jim
- Drutt, Helen Williams
- Johnson, Meda
- Kaufman, Glen
- Knodel, Gerhardt
- Larsen, Jack Lenor
- Merritt, Francis Sumner, 1913-2000
- Miller, Don
- Moran, Lois
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
- Nordness, Lee
- Nottingham, Karron

Penning, Pauline
Ross, Shelley
Rossbach, Ed
St. Cloud State University -- Students
Strengell, Marianne, 1909-1998
United States -- Montgomery G.I. Bill
University of Wisconsin--River Falls -- Faculty

Occupations:

Self-taught artists
Weavers -- Wisconsin -- Interviews

Places:

Mexico City (Mexico) -- description and travel