



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with Raquel Rabinovich

Archives of American Art  
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## Collection Overview

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| <b>Repository:</b> | Archives of American Art  |
| <b>Title:</b>      | Oral history interview with Raquel Rabinovich   |
| <b>Identifier:</b> | AAA.rabino12  |
| <b>Date:</b>       | 2012 September 25 and October 9   |
| <b>Extent:</b>     | 4 Items (Sound recording: 4 sound files (3 hr., 6 min.); digital, wav)<br>64 Pages (Transcript) |
| <b>Creator:</b>    | Rabinovich, Raquel, 1929-<br>McElhinney, James Lancel, 1952-                                    |
| <b>Language:</b>   | English .   |

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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

Raquel Rabinovich (1929- ) is a painter and sculptor in Rhinebeck, New York. James McElhinney (1952- ) is a painter and educator from New York, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Raquel Rabinovich conducted 2012 September 25 and October 9, by James McElhinney, for the Archives of American Art, at Rabinovich's home, in Rhinebeck, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

Rabinovich speaks of growing up in Argentina; becoming aware of art; reproductions and books; European art; her Jewish heritage; her parents moving to Argentina before World War I; Jewish persecution; her parents' background; living in Cordoba; speaking Spanish and Yiddish growing up; quiet reflections; church; art exposure; traveling and moving to Paris; the influence of Ernesto Farina; Peron's dictatorship and rebellion; attending medical school and the call of art; political activities and spending time in jail; meeting Jose and moving to Scotland; Paris and exposure to artwork; teachings of Andre Lhote; her early works; abstraction; painting; the Mona Lisa; darkness and light; "The Dark is Light Enough"; exposure to literature and poetry; living in Copenhagen; meeting Jorge Luis Borges; the Book of Sand; her siblings; her children and her relationship to them; staying up to date with current events; libraries and a lack of books growing up; meditation; texture and the monochromatic works; interest in Jasper Johns' work; meeting Jasper Johns; living in New York; trip to Machu Picchu and spending the night outdoors; "Cloister, Crossing, Passageway 1.32"; glassworks and transparency; exhibiting artwork; her divorce; Rodolfo Mondolfo; environment and exposure; quiet contemplation; spending time with artwork; commissioned work near High Falls; "River Library"; libraries as places of knowledge; minimalism; the 1980s; her daughter's wedding and her relationship with Jose; stones; traveling to Nepal, Thailand, India, and Egypt; temples; Buddhism; "Chhodrtens"; garbhagrihas; NEA fellowship and residency in Paris; "Thrones for the Gods"; INTAR Gallery; "Gateless Gates"; artifacts; Pabhavikas sculpture; Charles Stein; Linda Weintraub; George Quasha; Station Hill Press; "Enfolded Darkness" and "Light Unworn". Rabinovich also recalls Baron Hughes, Beethoven, Lenin, Diego Velazquez, Andre Lhote, Mondrian, Picasso, Braque, David Levi Straus, Robert Kelly, Cezanne, Philip Pavia, Agnes Martin, Dorothea Rockburne, Barry Schwabsky, Bill Zimmer, Agnes Denes, Louisa Valenzuela, Julia Herzberg, and Marco Maggi.

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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:

- Buddhism
- Minimal art
- Painters -- New York (State) -- Interviews
- Sculptors -- New York (State) -- Interviews
- Women artists -- New York (State) -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827
- Borges, Jorge Luis, 1899-1986
- Braque, Georges, 1882-1963
- Cézanne, Paul, 1839-1906
- Del Giocondo, Lisa, 1479-
- Denes, Agnes
- Farina, Ernesto, 1912-
- Herzberg, Julia P.
- Hispanic American Arts Center (New York, N.Y.)

Johns, Jasper, 1930-  
Kelly, Robert, 1956-  
Lenin, Vladimir Il'ich, 1870-1924  
Lhote, André, 1885-1962  
Maggi, Marco, 1957-  
Martin, Agnes, 1912-2004  
Mondolfo, Rodolfo, 1877-1976  
Mondrian, Piet, 1872-1944  
Pavia, Philip, 1915-2005  
Perón, Juan Domingo, 1895-1974  
Picasso, Pablo, 1881-1973  
Quasha, George  
Rockburne, Dorothea  
Schwabsky, Barry  
Station Hill Press  
Stein, Charles, 1944-  
Strauss, David Levi  
Velázquez, Diego, 1599-1660  
Weintraub, Linda  
Zimmer, William, 1946-2007

Occupations:

Political activists

Functions:

Libraries

Geographic Names:

Argentina -- Description and Travel  
Denmark -- Copenhagen -- Description and Travel  
Egypt -- description and travel  
France -- Paris -- Description and Travel  
India -- description and travel  
Machu Picchu Site (Peru)  
Nepal -- Description and Travel  
New York (N.Y.) -- Description and Travel  
Thailand -- description and travel