



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with David Shaner

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with David Shaner
Identifier:	AAA.shaner01
Date:	2001 June 17
Creator:	Shaner, David, 1934- (Interviewee) Williams, Gerald, 1926-2014 (Interviewer) Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Extent:	34 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with David Shaner, 2001 June 17, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with David Shaner, 2001 June 17, 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

For more information on how to access this interview contact Reference Services.

Biographical / Historical

David Shaner (1934-2002) was a ceramist from Bigfork, Montana. Gerry Williams (1926-) is a ceramist and editor of Studio Potter from Goffstown, N.H.

Scope and Contents

An interview of David Shaner conducted 2001 June 17, by Gerald Williams, for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, at Shaner's home in Bigfork, Montana.

Scope and Contents

Shaner speaks of his childhood in Pennsylvania and his parents background as pre-Revolutionary German-Swiss immigrants; his love of gardening; travels to the southwest United States, as well as Mexico and Peru; the appeal of the teapot; the spiritual aspect of making a bowl; how American craft has changed during his lifetime; his work at the Archie Bray Foundation; his education and his own teaching experiences; his "Saturday job" with Robert Turner; periodicals and their impact on the American craft movement; the calming effect of classical music while he worked; the construction of his studio space and equipment; the enthusiasm his family has for pottery and the arts in general; his involvement in the environmental movement and membership to the Sierra Club; his political views; the simplicity of his work; his opinion of writing in the field of pottery; his views on technology, especially within the field of pottery; his first one-man show; his opinion of other artists, especially those who are not "ordinary"; being diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease and its impact upon him; and the last few pieces he did before closing his studio. Shaner also recalls Kenneth Ferguson, Daniel Rhodes, John Wood, Peter Voukos, Val Cushing, Ted Randall, Charles Harder and others.

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 4 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 5 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Ceramicists -- Interviews -- Montana
- Ceramics -- Equipment and supplies
- Ceramics -- Study and teaching
- Ceramics -- Technique
- Ceramics. -- Economic aspects
- Decorative arts

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Archie Bray Foundation
- Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America