



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Pat Steir

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Pat Steir
Date:	2008 March 1-2
Identifier:	AAA.steir08
Creator:	Steir, Pat, 1940- (Interviewee) Richards, Judith Olch (Interviewer)
Extent:	92 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Pat Steir, 2008 March 1-2, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Pat Steir, 2008 March 1-2, 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 is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Restrictions

This interview is open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Pat Steir (1938-) is a painter and printmaker in New York, N.Y. Judith Olch Richards (1947-) is the former executive director for iCI in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Pat Steir conducted 2008 March 1-2, by Judith Olch Richards, for the Archives of American Art, at Steir's home, in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

Steir speaks of her parents' history and various occupations; her Russian Jewish background; her early desire to become a poet or artist; the lack of encouragement from both her parents; memories of earlier interactions with a number of influential figures; rejecting a scholarship offer to go to Smith College for a scholarship to study art at Pratt Institute; studying art at Boston University; illustrating for Harper & Row; her experiences and reflections as a female artist struggling to get recognition equal to that of her male counterparts; teaching at Parsons School of Design; living in Pasadena, California and teaching at CalArts; traveling to Europe, China, Japan, and India; opening a studio in Amsterdam; her involvement with the feminist movement; working as an editor at Semiotext magazine and how that launched her into starting a private company called Printed Matter, designing books; traveling to the Southwest and the influence of the Navajo culture on her work; her relationships with various performing artists; her interns and teaching; how she got involved with printmaking; her preference for oil-based paints rather than acrylic; printmaking as a major art form; how her relationship with dealers changed over time; how her work was seen and promoted in Europe; exhibiting at Paley & Lowe; working with large canvases; her interest in reacquiring her sold works; influences from Japonism, Impressionism, Modernism, and Postmodernism; the influence of Chinese and Japanese art, process, and technique; the significance of her Brueghel paintings; her artistic process and techniques; her interest in the romance of art history; almost giving up painting; working with Cheim & Read; her current exhibition at the Ochi Gallery in Idaho; the future of her work; the struggle for women to gain critical attention in the art world; the fusion of the art world and fashion; and her love and zeal for fashion. Steir also recalls Agnes Martin, Mark Rothko, Dick Solomon, Joan Mitchell, Brigitte Cornand, Louise Bourgeois, Lucy Lippard, Flora Biddle, Willem de Kooning, Marcia Tucker, Joan Snyder, Miriam Schapiro, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 4 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 5 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 47 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Women painters
- Women printmakers

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Heresies Collective, Inc.

Occupations:

- Painters -- New York (State) -- New York
- Printmakers -- New York (State) -- New York