



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with John Weber

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with John Weber
Identifier:	AAA.weber06
Date:	2006 March 21-April 4
Extent:	62 Pages (Transcript)
Creator:	Weber, John, 1932-2008 McElhinney, James, 1952- Widgeon Point Charitable Foundation
Language:	English

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

John Weber (1932-2008) is an art dealer from Chatham, New York. James McElhinney (1952-) is a painter and educator of New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview of John Weber conducted 2006 March 21 and April 4, by James McElhinney, for the Archives of American Art, at Weber's home, in Chatham, New York.

Scope and Contents

Weber discusses his education at St. Catherine's Military School in Anaheim, California, and Admiral Farragut Academy in St. Petersburg, Florida; attending the Citadel in South Carolina and then joining the Navy; attending Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, after getting out of the Navy; accepting a job at

the Dayton Art Institute on the curatorial staff and working for the director, Thomas C. Colt; moving to New York and attending the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University; working at the Martha Jackson Gallery and his involvement in various influential shows there, including "Environments, Spaces, Situations," and "New Forms, New Media"; moving to Los Angeles in 1962 to work for the Dwan Gallery; getting involved with land artists, including Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, and Walter De Maria; moving back to New York to take on the directorship of the East Coast location of the Dwan Gallery, in SoHo, then the newest gallery neighborhood; opening his own gallery, the John Weber Gallery, on West Broadway in 1972; his involvement with the Fluxus Group and Arte Povera; the international nature of the art world in the 1960s and 70s; his business arrangements with artists, including the monthly stipends he gave them as advances on sales; his relationships with collectors, including Giuseppe Panza di Biumo and Emily and Burton Tremaine; his advocacy of Aboriginal art; the studios of Robert Smithson and Claes Oldenburg; his belief in the importance of originality; his adverse reaction when he first saw a piece by Dan Flavin; his interaction with art critics, including Irving Sandler and Grace Gluck; and his experience with art fairs. He also recalls Kirk Varnedoe, Jim Dine, Michael Goldberg, Jean Tinguely, Martial Raysse, Arman, Yves Klein, Franz Kline, Andre Emmerich, Mary Boone, Sol LeWitt, Andy Warhol, Gilberto Zorio, Richard Long, Hamish Fulton, Anina Nosei, Sven Lukin, Robert Ryman, Alighiero Boetti, Konrad Fischer, Ivan Karp, Paula Cooper, Angela Westwater, Jeff Koons, Joseph Beuys, Hans Haacke, Leo Castelli, Tom Otterness, Joyce Nereaux, Dorothea Rockburne, Eva Hesse, Lucas Samaras, and Joseph Hirshhorn, among others.

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 2 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hrs., 11 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Collectors and collecting
Art -- Economic aspects

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Dwan Gallery (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Dwan Gallery (New York, N.Y.)
Martha Jackson Gallery
Widgeon Point Charitable Foundation

Occupations:

Art dealers -- New York (State)

Functions:

Artists' studios