



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Doug Wheeler

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Doug Wheeler
Identifier:	AAA.wheele17
Date:	2017 April 4
Creator:	Wheeler, Doug, 1939- (Interviewee) Drohojowska-Philp, Hunter (Interviewer)
Extent:	1 Item (Sound recording: (5 hrs., 40 min.) digital, wav) 146 Pages (Transcript)
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

Online access to this interview transcript is restricted. Access to the audio is restricted. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Doug Wheeler (1939-) is an artist working with light, space, and sound in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Interviewer Hunter Drohojowska-Philp is an art critic and writer in Beverly Hills, California.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Doug Wheeler conducted 2017 April 4, by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp, for the Archives of American Art, at Drohojowska-Philp's home, in Los Angeles, California.

Scope and Contents

Doug Wheeler discusses his 2017 exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, PSAD Synthetic Desert III; his relationship with the art dealer Doug Christmas and the art collector Giuseppe Panza di Biumo; his residency in Boissano, Italy, and time there with his wife, Bridget Johnson; the impact of his experiences while flying in small airplanes and spending time in isolated desert environments on his sense of aesthetics and his art; his time at the Chouinard Art Institute as a student of Emerson Woelffer; his original interest in studying commercial art; his interactions with Robert Irwin and James Turrell. Wheeler

also describes growing up in Globe, Arizona, Phoenix, and Los Angeles, and the early divorce of his parents; his father's career as a doctor in Arizona who flew airplanes to his patients, and his early exposure to flying; his time as a youngster working on ranches and spending time with other families; his experiences as a troublemaker in a social club at University High School in Los Angeles in the 1950s; working as a mechanical draftsman at Douglas Aircraft; his show with Larry Bell and Robert Irwin at the Tate Gallery, London, in 1970; his 2012-2016 installations at the David Zwirner gallery; his time away from the art world and work as a Hollywood screenwriter; his relocation to northern New Mexico, and the critical response to the Guggenheim PSAD Synthetic Desert III show. Wheeler also recalls Bill Moore, Larry Bell, Nancy Harrington, Billy Al Bengston, John Altoon, Ed Ruscha, Ed Reep, Edwin Shneidman, Edy de Wilde as well as Coosje van Bruggen, Robert Graham, Leo Castelli, Irving Blum, Riko Mizuno, Christophe de Menil, Julia Brown, Hugh Davies, Dan Flavin among others.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Artists -- New Mexico -- Santa Fe -- Interviews
Installations (Art)

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings