

San Francisco Art Institute Legacy Foundation + Archive
Michael Leonard Oral Histories Collection (SFAI.049)

Container List

Box 1, Folder 1:

Audio cassette and transcript of Flo Allen oral history interview, conducted on June 29, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Florence "Flo" Wysinger Allen, born in Oakland in 1913, was a prominent figure in the Bay Area art scene, celebrated for her multifaceted roles as an artist's model, hostess, personality, and civil activist. In this interview, she briefly discusses her upbringing, parents, and notable achievements, and recounts her firsthand experiences as an art model and confidante to key figures in the Bay Area Figurative Movement, alongside reflections on the evolution of the California School of Fine Arts/San Francisco Art Institute.

Box 1, Folder 2:

Audio cassette and transcript of Joan Brown oral history interview, conducted on October 27, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Joan Brown, born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, attended the California School of Fine Arts from 1956 to 1959 where she was particularly influenced by mentor Elmer Bischoff and achieved notoriety as a Bay Area Figurative artist. Throughout her career, she reinvented her art to reflect the changes she underwent as an artist and individual. The interview highlights Brown's journey, including her influences, experiences at art school, and reflections on the art scene, offering insights into her artistic evolution and the broader art world context of her time.

Box 1, Folder 3:

Audio cassette and transcript of Jay DeFeo oral history interview, conducted on June 29, 1983

Scope and Content Note:

Jay DeFeo, a painter, photographer, and educator, emerged as a significant figure in the San Francisco Bay Area art scene during the 1950s and 1960s. She is well known for her monumental sculptural painting, *The Rose*, which she worked on for eight years in the Fillmore Street apartment she shared with her husband and fellow artist Wally Hedrick. In this interview, Jay DeFeo offers insights into the dynamic Bay Area art scene of the era, discussing the contrasts between East and West Coast art, the impact of social gatherings on collaboration, and reflecting on her experiences with influential figures from her time at the California School of Fine Arts, later known as the San Francisco Art Institute.

Box 1, Folder 4:

Audio cassette and transcript of Wally Hedrick oral history interview, conducted on January 11, 1984.

Scope and Content Note:

Wally Hedrick was an artist and key figure in San Francisco's art community during the Beat era. Co-founder of the Six Gallery and husband to fellow artist Jay DeFeo, he was deeply

involved in the California School of Fine Arts scene, before settling in Bodega Bay until his passing in 2003. In this interview, Hedrick shares insights into his experiences at the California School of Fine Arts (later San Francisco Art Institute), recounting his move from Pasadena to San Francisco, encounters with influential figures, and his role as a teacher, offering perspectives on the San Francisco art scene of the mid-20th century.

Box 1, Folder 5:

Audio cassette and transcript of Jack Jefferson oral history interview, conducted on June 13, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Jack Jefferson (1921-2000) was a prominent painter associated with Bay Area Abstract Expressionism. Following his service in World War II, he utilized the GI Bill to study at the California School of Fine Arts, where he was mentored by Clyfford Still. Jefferson later taught at the school for two decades until his retirement in 1979. In this interview, he reflects on his formative years as an art student in mid-20th century San Francisco, discussing the city's cultural atmosphere and the influence of figures such as CSFA director Douglas MacAgy, while also exploring the evolving artistic currents within the school.

Box 1, Folder 6:

Audio cassette and transcript of Hayward King oral history interview, conducted on July 15, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Hayward Ellis King, an artist, curator and arts administrator who was influential in the mid-20th century San Francisco arts scene, co-founded the renowned Six Gallery and broke barriers as the first African American art museum administrator in the Bay Area during the 1960s. In this interview, King reflects on his time at the California School of Fine Arts, his involvement in the North Beach scene, and the challenges faced by the institution amidst financial struggles.

Box 1, Folder 7:

Audio cassette and transcript of Erle Loran oral history interview, conducted on August 25, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Erle Loran studied art at the Minneapolis School of Art, later receiving a scholarship to study art in Europe. In the late 1930s, he settled in California, joining the faculty of the University of California, Berkeley, where he taught until 1973. In this interview, Loran explores the mid-20th century San Francisco art scene, discussing various artists, events, and movements. He offers insights into the creative processes and influences of notable Bay Area painters, while also examining the transition of artists from abstraction to figurative painting.

Box 1, Folder 8:

Audio cassette and transcript of Fred Martin oral history interview, conducted on June 21, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Fred Martin, former student at both UC Berkeley and the California School of Fine Arts (later the San Francisco Art Institute), held various administrative positions at the San Francisco Art Institute, including school Director from 1965 to 1975. In this interview, Martin discusses the changing climate and leadership of the school between the 1940s and 1960s, as well as the

internal politics surrounding the transition from the California School of Fine Arts to the San Francisco Art Institute.

Box 1, Folder 9:

Audio cassette and transcript of Ernest Mundt oral history interview, conducted on May 18 & June 21, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Ernest Karl Mundt, born in 1905 in Bleicherode, Germany, was an artist, architect, educator, and administrator. He was the director of the California School of Fine Arts from 1950 to 1955, during a time of financial strain at the school. In this interview, Mundt discusses his life and career, including his architectural training in Germany and Turkey, migration to the United States, experiences in New York, and eventual move to the West Coast. He reflects on his teaching experiences, including the internal politics and financial instability during his tenure at the California School of Fine Arts.

Box 1, Folder 10:

Audio cassette and transcript of Ralph Putzker oral history interview, conducted on May 16, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Ralph Putzker (1921 - 2006), an American painter, photographer, and educator, taught at the California School of Fine Arts (later the San Francisco Art Institute) from 1954 to 1960. In this interview, Putzker compares the institution between the late 40s-early 50s and the 1980s, discussing administration attitudes, teachers' work ethics, students, and overall atmosphere. He also provides insights into the American higher-education system, comparing it to the British university system, and shares personal anecdotes about various artists.

Box 1, Folder 11:

Audio cassette and transcript of Nell Sinton oral history interview, conducted on July 12, 1983.

Scope and Content Note:

Nell (Eleanor) Sinton (1910-1997), painter and educator in San Francisco, studied at the California School of Fine Arts (later the San Francisco Art Institute) and went on to teach drawing and painting as a visiting artist at several universities. In this interview, Nell Sinton discusses her emergence as an artist and educator, recounting her formative years as an art student, her struggles with traditional gender roles, and exploring the evolving leadership and atmosphere of the San Francisco Art Institute during the 1940s, '50s, and '60s.