Finding aid for the J.Paul Getty Trust Oral History Transcripts, 1999-2010

Nancy Enneking
Descriptive Summary
Title: Getty oral history transcripts
Date (inclusive): 1999-2010
Number: IA10024
Creator/Collector: J. Paul Getty Trust
Physical Description: 1.35 Linear Feet
Repository:
The Getty Research Institute
Institutional Records and Archives
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100
Los Angeles 90049-1688
reference@getty.edu
Abstract: Records comprise the final transcripts and three videos of oral histories conducted with Getty staff, trustees, and associates by Oral Historian Eric Abrahamson between 1999 and 2010.

Language: Collection material is in English

Administrative History
The J. Paul Getty Trust Oral History Project was launched in the fall of 1999 to capture the insights and perspectives of individuals who made critical contributions to the development of the Trust and its programs. These interviews have been conducted to provide a rich resource of perspectives on the history of the Getty as an institution; they are intended to help future generations of Getty leaders understand the organizational dynamics that shaped and will continue to shape the J. Paul Getty Trust. For historians and managers, they also provide the rich detail and color that makes the stories of the past inspire a new generation to carry on the work of the moment.

No oral history project will be an exhaustive or comprehensive resource for the history of the Trust. The project focused on the development of the Trust's strategy and structure and the organizational culture that affected the realization of the Trust's broadest goals. Although it has touched on specific activities of the programs, it has done so in an effort to explore the dynamics of the Trust as a whole. Documentation of the specific Trust Programs, or of projects undertaken by various Trust entities, is not included. Therefore, the project to date has focused on institutional organization and dynamics rather than on the Getty's specific activities, accomplishments, and influence.

Work on the project has been continuous since the late 1990s, with a few periods of heightened activity. Altogether, 60 former trustees, current and former staff members, and outside advisors have been interviewed for the project, comprising 65 interviews. The project had four phases:

Formative Years, 1976-1997 (Interviews in 1999-2001): This first phase focused on Trustees and Trust executives who were involved in shaping the Trust's strategy and structure following the death of J. Paul Getty in 1976. Conceived by the project's sponsor Stephen Rountree (Vice President and Chief Operations Officer), this phase was intended to document the President Harold Williams' years. The interview list was developed in close cooperation with the President's Office and included nearly all of the members of the Board of Trustees whose service concluded in these years along with the top management of the Trust, including chief executive officers, program directors, and some senior staff. Of all the individuals contacted, only one former trustee declined to participate. This phase was completed by 2001 and comprised 25 interviews.

Formative Years Staff Interviews, 1954-1997 (Interviews in 2001-present): As budget and schedules permitted, interviews were conducted with former and current staff members whose tenure with the Getty began prior to 1984. Priority was generally given to the longest serving employees to capture the history of the earliest days of the institution. These interviews have been occasional and were intended to supplement the record established with the first phase. The selection was somewhat opportunistic, because it was decided not to interview people until after they had left the Getty's employment. This phase comprised 16 interviews.

Getty Villa Program Planning, 1984-1997 (Interviews in 2007-2009): Stimulated by the re-opening of the Getty Villa, this phase was designed as a case study in the Getty's management history; it intended to explore the institution-wide process undertaken to define a new program for the renovated Villa. Interviewees were chosen from a research survey of
documents related to Villa program planning during the formative years in the mid-1990s. Seven interviews were conducted and a draft narrative created. Work to finalize these interviews was put on hold until the oral history program was re-evaluated.

Transition Years of the Trust, 1998-2006 (Interviews in 2008-2010): Interviews focused on the restructuring of the Trust's programs in the years following the opening of the Getty Center and under a new president and CEO. Under the project's sponsor, President James Wood, this effort sought to document the President Barry Munitz years using a methodology analogous to the initial oral history project focused on the Williams years. This phase encompassed interviews with 17 different individuals.

Biographical Note
All interviews for the oral history project have been conducted by Dr. Eric John Abrahamson, president and principal historian with Vantage Point Historical Services, Inc.. Abrahamson received his doctorate in history from Johns Hopkins University. In addition to the Getty Trust, Abrahamson has conducted oral histories for the Canadian Center for Architecture, the Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation, the Connecticut Audubon Society, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Pacific Telesis Group. In addition, he is the author or co-author of a number of organizational histories including Anytime, Anywhere: Entrepreneurship and the Creation of a Wireless World with Dr. Louis Galambos (Cambridge University Press, 2002) and Spirited Commitment: The Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation with Dr. Roderick MacLeod (McGill-Queens University Press, 2010). Abrahamson's book Building Home: Howard F. Ahmanson and the Politics of the American Dream was published by the University of California Press in January 2013. He is currently writing and editing a series of books to be published in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation’s centennial.

Historical Note
The J. Paul Getty Trust is a not-for-profit institution, educational in purpose and character, that focuses on the visual arts in all of their dimensions.

The origins of the J. Paul Getty Trust date to 1953, when J. Paul Getty established the J. Paul Getty Museum as a California charitable trust to house his growing art collections. Originally a small, private institution located in Mr. Getty’s ranch house near Malibu, the museum moved to the newly constructed Getty Villa in grounds adjacent to the ranch house in 1974. When most of Mr. Getty’s personal estate passed to the trust in 1982, the trustees decided that, given the size of the endowment, it should make a contribution to the visual arts and humanities that would reach even beyond the museum. Out of this resolve grew an expanded commitment to the arts in the general areas of scholarship, conservation, and education. Harold M. Williams was the first president and CEO of the trust, serving from 1981 through 1998. Williams supervised the Trust’s development of new programs, with the advice and recommendations of advisors such as Lani Duke and Nancy Englander. The programs included the Center for the History of Arts and Humanities, Art History Information Institute, Conservation Institute, and Center for Education in the Arts, as well as smaller programs, such as the Museum Management Institute and the Program for Art on Film. In 1983 the Trust’s name was changed from the J. Paul Getty Museum to the J. Paul Getty Trust to reflect its broader scope, with the museum becoming an operating program of the Trust. As of 2010 the Trust supports and oversees four programs: the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Foundation, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Research Institute.

Due to expanded operations and limited space at the original J. Paul Getty Museum in Pacific Palisades (near Malibu), the various programs of the J. Paul Getty Trust were located at different sites throughout the Los Angeles basin during the 1980s and mid 1990s. The Trust’s vision was to bring together most of their programs at a single site. A roughly 750-acre property in Brentwood (west Los Angeles) was purchased by the Trust in 1983 and the following year the architectural firm Richard Meier & Partners was chosen to design the Getty Center, to house the Trust, its newly created programs, and an additional space for the Museum. Currently, the J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from both locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa near Malibu, California.

Access Restrictions
Restrictions are noted at the individual/transcript level and were designated by the participants. When known, the date on which an interview will open for research has been noted.

Access to the hard copy transcript is available in the Reading Room of the Getty Research Institute.

The following types of records are permanently closed: records containing personal information, records that compromise security or operations, legal communications, legal work product, and records related to donors. The J. Paul Getty Trust reserves the right to restrict access to any records held by the Institutional Archives.

Preferred Citation
[Cite the item and series (as appropriate)], J. Paul Getty Trust Oral History Transcripts, 1999-2010. Institutional Archives, Getty Research Institute, IA10024.
Acquisition Note

Processing History Note
The inventory was initially created by Nancy Enneking in 2008 and updated on a regular basis thereafter. The inventory was made available to the public in 2016.

Scope and Content of Collection
Records comprise the final transcripts and three videos of oral histories conducted with Getty staff, trustees, and associates by Oral Historian Eric Abrahamson between 1999 and 2010. Though the interviews were conducted for specific projects, the same individuals were interviewed for several projects and the results, in many cases, have been combined into a single transcript for an individual. For this reason, the resulting transcripts have been listed by individual and not project. All interviews that have been finalized are listed below with the date on which it will open for research. Several interviews are still in the process of being finalized.

The interviews focus on the development of the Trust's strategy and structure and the organizational culture that affected the realization of the Trust's broadest goals. Although discussion touches on specific activities of the programs, it has done so in an effort to explore the dynamics of the Trust as a whole. Therefore, the interviews emphasize institutional organization and dynamics rather than the Getty's specific activities, accomplishments, and influence.

Arrangement
Transcripts are listed in alphabetical order by the name of the participant.

Subjects - Corporate Bodies
Getty Conservation Institute
Getty Education Institute for the Arts
J. Paul Getty Trust
 Getty Information Institute
Getty Research Institute
 Getty Foundation
J. Paul Getty Museum

Subjects - Topics
Art museums -- Administration
Museums -- Management
Conservation and cultural heritage
Research institutes
Art museums -- Design and construction
Art museum curators -- Interviews

Genres and Forms of Material
Oral histories (document genres)
Transcripts
Interviews -- United States -- 20th century

Contributors
J. Paul Getty Trust

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Gett y Oral History Interviews conducted by Eric Abrahamson

John Biggs, June 8-9, 2010

Access Information
Sealed until death but subject to a minimum of 15 years (until January 1, 2027).
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<tr>
<th>Box Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Access Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>box 2009.IA.24-2</td>
<td>Miguel Angel Corzo, GCI Director</td>
<td>December 17, 2008</td>
<td>Access Information Open.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nancy Englander, Trust Senior Executive</td>
<td>March 21, 2000</td>
<td>Access Information Sealed until death.</td>
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<td>box 2002.IA.07-4</td>
<td>Michael Ester, AHIP (GII) Director</td>
<td>December 8, 1999</td>
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<td>box 2010.IA.25-3</td>
<td>Eleanor Fink, GII Director</td>
<td>July 2, 2007</td>
<td>Access Information Open.</td>
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<td>Barbara Fleischman, Trustee</td>
<td>August 12, 2009</td>
<td>Access Information Sealed until January 1, 2026.</td>
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<td>box 2001.IA.09-1</td>
<td>Kurt Forster, GRI Director</td>
<td>October 19, 2000</td>
<td>Access Information Sealed until death. (Only have verbatim transcript.)</td>
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<td>Burton Fredericksen, Paintings Curator, Founder of Provenance Index</td>
<td>June 23-24, 2009</td>
<td>Access Information Sealed until death.</td>
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<td>David Gardner, Trustee</td>
<td>September 12, 2005</td>
<td>Access Information Sealed until January 1, 2021, except pages 43-54 are sealed until death.</td>
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Gordon Getty, son of J. Paul Getty, Trustee, April 27, 2000
  Access Information
  Sealed until death.

Kathryn Girard, Head of Administration, GII and GRI, June 29, 2009
  Access Information
  Sealed until January 1, 2025.

George Goldner, Senior Staff, November 17, 2008
  Access Information
  Sealed until death.

Vartan Gregorian, Trustee, May 3, 2000
  Access Information
  Open.

Agnes Gund, Trustee, April 22, 2008
  Access Information
  Sealed until death.

Anne-Mieke Halbrook, GRI Senior Staff, January 26, 2009
  Access Information
  Sealed until death.

Lee Hendrix, Museum Drawings Curator, May 4 and June 23, 2009
  Access Information
  Open.

Karl Katz, Executive Director, Program for Art on Film, October 22, 2004
  Access Information
  Sealed until death.

Joe Kearns, Trust Senior Executive, September 23, 1999
  Access Information
  Sealed until January 1, 2017.

Jon Lovelace, Trustee, November 2, 1999
  Access Information
  Open.

Herbert Lucas, Trustee
  Access Information
  Both transcripts are open.

Transcript, January 19, 2000
Transcript, September 24, 2009
Transcript, December 6, 1999
Transcript, March 12, 2009
Charles J. (Jack) Meyers, June 19, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until January 1, 2028.

box 2011.IA.11-2
Jack Miles, July 31, 2009
Access Information
Open.

Luis Monreal, GCI Director, June 28, 2000
Access Information
Sealed until January 1, 2017.

box 2002.IA.07-5
Barry Munitz, Trust President, September 27, 2000
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Richard Naranjo, Facilities, Head of Landscaping, May 2006
Access Information
The video interview is open; an interview transcript dated May 15, 2006 is sealed until death.

box 2010.IA.25-1
Video interview, May 9 and 22, 2006
box 2008.IA.28-1
Nicholas Olsberg, Consultant and GRI Senior Staff, April 28, 2005
Access Information
Open, with the exception of undesignated portions sealed until January 1, 2021.

Stuart Peeler, Trustee
Transcript, October 25, 1999
Access Information
Sealed for the lifetime of Gordon Getty.

box 2002.IA.07-1
Video interview, 2002
Access Information
Open.

Elmar Seibel, May 21 and June 15, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Salvatore Settis, Research Institute Director, January 21-22, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until January 1, 2025.

Rocco Siciliano, Trustee, November 3, 1999
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Jorge Silvetti, Villa Architect, June 15, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until death.
Marion True, Museum Antiquities Curator, September 17-18, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until 2027.

Gwen Walden, September 23, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until death.

John Walsh, Museum Director
Transcript, March 8, 2000
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Timothy Whalen, Building Program, GRI Director, February 22, 2000
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Timothy Whalen, Conservation Institute Director, May 5 and June 22, 2009
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Patrick Whaley, Trustee, December 1, 1999
Access Information
Open.

John Whitehead, Trustee, May 4, 2000
Access Information
Open.

Barbara Whitney, Building Program and Museum Senior Staff,
Access Information
Sealed until death.

Curtis Williams, Head of Facilities, January 13, 2005
Access Information
Open.

Harold Williams, Trust President
Transcript, 1999-2000
Access Information
Open.

Video interview, July 25, 2002
Access Information
Open for viewing only. Further use requires an agreement.

Blenda J. Wilson, Trustee, May 28, 2010
Access Information
Sealed until 2030.
Gillian Wilson, Museum Decorative Arts Curator, August 7, 2006
Access Information
Sealed until death.

box 2002.IA.07-3  Otto Wittmann, Consultant, Trustee, September 24, 1999
Access Information
Open.