

The Artist Speaks Series

As part of the Artists Training and Career Project, 150 oral history interviews were conducted in the fields of acting, crafts and painting with 35 artists in each field and 15 related experts. These oral histories informed a questionnaire that was then sent to 6,000 actors, 4,000 craftspeople and 2,000 painters. They focused on the career development of these artists, from early childhood through mature careers and included artists from the unknown to the very well known, from all parts of the country, from amateur to professional, and from a great variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

In addition to their intellectual value, they were seen as a mechanism to inform people considering careers in the arts about the career paths, and the points of greatest validation and greatest resistance in artists' careers.

The tapes and transcripts are archived at Columbia University's Oral History Collection. A dozen oral histories in each area have been published by Greenwood Press, with an extensive introduction on the history of each discipline:

The Actor Speaks: Actors Discuss Their Experiences and Careers (Alan Alda, Mary Alice, Philip Bosco, Al Carmines, Pat Carroll, Miriam Kressyn, Marcia Jean Kurtz, Susan Nussbaum, John Randolph, Jason Robards, Jr., Mercedes Ruehl, B.D. Wong)

The Craftsperson Speaks: Artists in Varied Media Discuss Their Crafts (Carol Aoki, John Cogswell, Wayne Higby, Margerita Leon, Steven Maslach, Alphonse Mattia, Norma Minkowitz, Lillian Pitt, Joyce Scott, Rudolf Staffel)

The Painter Speaks: Artists Discuss Their Experiences and Careers (Chuck Close, Jim Dine, Sam Gilliam, Sally Haley, Al Held, Carl Morris, Joan Nelson, Barbara Noah, Elias Rivera, Dan Smajo-Ramirez, Emmi Whitehorse, Lisa Young)