



# **Finding aid for the J.Paul Getty Trust Oral History Transcripts, 1999-2010 IA10024**

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Description is in English.

## **Institutional Records and Archives**

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URL: [http://www.getty.edu/research/special\\_collections/institutional\\_archives/](http://www.getty.edu/research/special_collections/institutional_archives/)

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## Summary Information

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- Repository:** Institutional Records and Archives
- Creator:** J. Paul Getty Trust
- Title:** Getty oral history transcripts
- ID:** IA10024
- Dates:** 1999-2010
- Extent:** 1.35 Linear Feet
- Request Materials:** Request access to the physical material described in this inventory through its corresponding [library catalog record](#) and click "Request." Click here for [general library access policy](#). See the Administrative Information section of this finding aid for access restrictions specific to the records described below. Please note, the records are stored off site; advanced notice is required for access to these materials.
- Language:** English .
- 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.

### Preferred Citation

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

<http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifaia10024>

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## Administrative History

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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.

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## Biographical Note

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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.

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## Historical Note

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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.

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## Scope and Contents Note

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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.

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## Arrangement

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

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## Administrative Information

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### 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.

### Acquisition Note

The collections contains material from the following accessions: 2000.IA.02; 2001.IA.09; 2002.IA.07; 2002.IA.10; 2008.IA.28; 2009.IA.24; 2010.IA.25; 2011.IA.11; 2014.IA.24; and 2015.IA.18.

### 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.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Subjects - Corporate Bodies

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

### Subjects - Topics

- Art museum curators -- Interviews

- Art museums -- Administration
- Art museums -- Design and construction
- Conservation and cultural heritage
- Museums -- Management
- Research institutes

## Genres and Forms of Materials

- Interviews -- United States -- 20th century
- Oral histories (document genres)
- Transcripts

## Collection Inventory

### Getty Oral History Interviews conducted by Eric Abrahamson

(IA10024) [J. Paul Getty Trust Oral History Transcripts](#)

Title/Description	Containers
<p>John Biggs, June 8-9, 2010</p> <p><i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death but subject to a minimum of 15 years (until January 1, 2027).</p>	
<p>Miguel Angel Corzo, GCI Director, December 17, 2008</p> <p><i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.</p>	<p>Box 2009.IA.24-2</p>
<p>Kenneth Dayton, Trustee, September 25, 2001</p> <p><i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.</p>	<p>Box 2002.IA.07-1</p>
<p>Lani Duke, Advisor to Harold Williams and GEI Director, March 8, 2000</p> <p><i>Access Restrictions:</i> Reviewed by General Counsel and opened 8/8/23.</p>	<p>Box 2002.IA.07-4</p>
<p>Nancy Englander, Trust Senior Executive, March 21, 2000</p> <p><i>Access Restrictions:</i> Reviewed by General Counsel and opened 8/8/23</p>	<p>Box 2010.IA.25-4</p>
<p>Robert Erburu, Trustee, November 11, 2000</p> <p><i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.</p>	<p>Box 2010.IA.25-4</p>
<p>Michael Ester, AHIP (GII) Director, December 8, 1999</p>	



*Access Restrictions:*  
Open.

Box  
2002.IA.07-4

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John Fey, Trustee, October 26, 1999

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until January 1, 2017.

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Eleanor Fink, GII Director, July 2, 2007

*Access Restrictions:*  
Open.

Box  
2010.IA.25-3

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Barbara Fleischman, Trustee, August 12, 2009

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until January 1, 2026.

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Kurt Forster, GRI Director, October 19, 2000

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until death. (Only have verbatim transcript.)

Box  
2001.IA.09-1

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Burton Fredericksen, Paintings Curator, Founder of Provenance Index, June 23-24, 2009

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until death.

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David Gardner, Trustee, September 12, 2005

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until January 1, 2021, except pages 43-54 are sealed until death.

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Stephen Garrett, Museum Director, November 3, 1999

*Access Restrictions:*  
Open.

Box  
2002.IA.07-1

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Gordon Getty, son of J. Paul Getty, Trustee, April 27, 2000

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until death.

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Kathryn Girard, Head of Administration, GII and GRI, June 29, 2009

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until January 1, 2025.

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George Goldner, Senior Staff, November 17, 2008

*Access Restrictions:*  
Sealed until death.

Vartan Gregorian, Trustee, May 3, 2000 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	Box 2002.IA.07-5
Agnes Gund, Trustee, April 22, 2008 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Anne-Mieke Halbrook, GRI Senior Staff, January 26, 2009 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Lee Hendrix, Museum Drawings Curator, May 4 and June 23, 2009 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	Box 2011.IA.11-1
Karl Katz, Executive Director, Program for Art on Film, October 22, 2004 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Joe Kearns, Trust Senior Executive, September 23, 1999 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until January 1, 2017.	
Jon Lovelace, Trustee, November 2, 1999 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	Box 2008.IA.28-1
Herbert Lucas, Trustee <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Both transcripts are open.	
Transcript, January 19, 2000	Box 2008.IA.28-2
Transcript, September 24, 2009	Box 2011.IA.11-1
Deborah Marrow, Foundation Director, Interim GRI Director, Interim Trust President <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Both transcripts are sealed until January 1, 2031.	
Transcript, December 6, 1999	

Transcript, March 12, 2009		
Charles J. (Jack) Meyers, June 19, 2009		
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until January 1, 2028.		
Jack Miles, July 31, 2009	Box	2011.IA.11-2
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.		
Luis Monreal, GCI Director, June 28, 2000		
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until January 1, 2017.		
Barry Munitz, Trust President, September 27, 2000	Box	2002.IA.07-5
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.		
Richard Naranjo, Facilities, Head of Landscaping, May 2006		
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> The video interview is open; an interview transcript dated May 15, 2006 is sealed until death.		
Video interview, May 9 and 22, 2006	Box	2010.IA.25-1
Nicholas Olsberg, Consultant and GRI Senior Staff, April 28, 2005	Box	2008.IA.28-1
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open, with the exception of undesignated portions sealed until January 1, 2021.		
Stuart Peeler, Trustee		
Transcript, October 25, 1999	Box	2002.IA.07-1
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed for the lifetime of Gordon Getty.		
Video interview, 2002	Box	2002.IA.10-1
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.		
Elmar Seibel, May 21 and June 15, 2009		
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.		
Salvatore Settis, Research Institute Director, January 21-22, 2009		

*Access Restrictions:*

Sealed until January 1, 2025.

Rocco Siciliano, Trustee, November 3, 1999	Box 2002.IA.07-6
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Reviewed by General Counsel and opened 8/8/23.	
Jorge Silvetti, Villa Architect, June 15, 2009	
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Marion True, Museum Antiquities Curator, September 17-18, 2009	
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until 2027.	
Gwen Walden, September 23, 2009	
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
John Walsh, Museum Director	
Transcript, March 8, 2000	Box 2002.IA.07-7
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Video interview, November 18, 2002	Box 2002.IA.10-1
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open once his permission has been obtained.	
Timothy Whalen, Building Program, GRI Director, February 22, 2000	
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Timothy Whalen, Conservation Institute Director, May 5 and June 22, 2009	
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Patrick Whaley, Trustee, December 1, 1999	Box 2002.IA.07-2
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	
John Whitehead, Trustee, May 4, 2000	Box 2002.IA.07-3
<i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	

<hr/> Barbara Whitney, Building Program and Museum Senior Staff, <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Curtis Williams, Head of Facilities, January 13, 2005 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	Box 2008.IA.28-2
<hr/> Harold Williams, Trust President	
Transcript, 1999-2000 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	Box 2008.IA.28-1
Video interview, July 25, 2002 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open for viewing only. Further use requires an agreement.	Box 2002.IA.10-1
<hr/> Blenda J. Wilson, Trustee, May 28, 2010 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until 2030.	
<hr/> Gillian Wilson, Museum Decorative Arts Curator, August 7, 2006 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Sealed until death.	
Otto Wittmann, Consultant, Trustee, September 24, 1999 <i>Access Restrictions:</i> Open.	Box 2002.IA.07-3

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