

E.P. Taylor Library & Archives

**Description & Finding Aid:
Paterson Ewen Collection
SC148**

Prepared by Hannah Johnston, 2017

Paterson Ewen Collection

Dates of creation:

1943-1995

Extent:

46 audiocassettes
8 cm of textual records and graphic material
1 photograph

Biographical sketch:

Paterson Ewen (1925-2002) was a Canadian painter best known for his abstract landscapes and monumental paintings dealing with themes of nature and cosmology. Born in Montreal, Ewen was associated with the mid-century abstraction movement in Quebec. He moved to London, Ontario in 1968, where he lived and worked until his death in 2002.

Ewen briefly attended McGill University, studying geology, but transferred to the School of Art and Design at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in 1948. It was here that Ewen developed an interest in painting landscapes, inspired by his teachers Arthur Lismer and Goodridge Roberts. While attending the School of Art and Design, Ewen met his first wife, Francoise Sullivan, with whom he had four sons: Vincent, Geoffrey, Jean-Christophe, and Francis. It was through Sullivan that Ewen was exposed to the work of the Surrealist poets and Automatiste abstract painters, such as Jean-Paul Riopelle and Paul-Emile Borduas. Ewen married Sullivan in December 1949, and a few months later left art school, dismissed by Lismer in response to an exhibition of Ewen's paintings at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Ewen held various part-time jobs to support his family during this period, including caretaker and training coordinator at a box factory and supermarket chain. Ewen and Sullivan divorced in 1968, and he moved to London, Ontario. It was in London that Ewen came into contact with local artists such as Greg Curnoe, Jack Chambers, and David Rabinowitch. Their influence impacted Ewen's art, as he moved from representational landscapes to a more abstract style. It was around this time when Ewen developed techniques that would be a hallmark of his later works, such as the use of plywood gouged with an electric router as a painting surface. He also began using more unconventional materials in his art, including wire and other metals. In 1972, Ewen began teaching painting at University of Western Ontario, where he met his second wife, Mary Handford. The two married in 1995.

In 1982, Ewen was chosen to represent Canada at the Venice Biennale, and he received other recognition in the form of several awards, including the Chalmers Award for Visual Arts and the Toronto Arts Award. In 1996, the Art Gallery of Ontario mounted a retrospective exhibition of Ewen's works that travelled to the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art. Ewen's work is in the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, the National Gallery of Canada, the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and other museums.

Scope and content:

Collection consists of research materials assembled by Matthew Teitelbaum and Ron Graham in preparation for the 1996 exhibition *Paterson Ewen: Earthly Weathers/Heavenly Skies*. Materials include audio recordings of interviews with Paterson Ewen and others, photographs and photocopies of photographs, interview transcripts, essays, newspaper articles, exhibition related files, and other miscellaneous research material.

Contains series:

1. Audio Recordings
2. Research Files

Custodial history:

The materials now constituting the Paterson Ewen Collection were transferred to the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2015.

Notes:

Immediate source of acquisition:

AGO Credit Line: Gift of Ron Graham, 2017

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged by the processing archivist following the original order of the creator where possible.

Language:

Material is primarily in English. Some textual material in Series 2: Research Files is in French.

Restrictions on access:

Master recordings in Series 1: Audio Recordings may not be played. Reference copies of these items can be created on demand; please contact the reference desk. All other material is open. Access to Special Collections is by appointment only. Please contact the reference desk for more information.

Terms governing use and reproduction / publication:

Various copyright holders. Copyright belonging to other parties, such as that of photographs, may still rest with the creator of these items. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain permission for the reproduction of any part of the collection.

Accruals:

No further accruals are expected.

Related material:

Other records relating to exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Ontario featuring Paterson Ewen can be found in the Exhibitions files at the AGO Archives.

General note:

Titles of series, files and items are supplied and based on contents, except where otherwise noted.

Provenance access point:

Ewen, Paterson, 1925-2002

Graham, Ron, 1948-

Teitelbaum, Matthew

SERIES 1: AUDIO RECORDINGS

Dates of creation:

1969-1995

Extent:

46 audio cassettes

Scope and content:

Series comprises of interviews with Paterson Ewen and others assembled in support of research for the 1996 exhibition *Paterson Ewen: Earthly Weathers/Heavenly Skies*.

Notes:

Arrangement: The audio cassettes were acquired separately from Ron Graham and Matthew Teitelbaum, but have been described as a single series based on their presumed shared origin and prior usage in preparation for the *Earthly Weathers/Heavenly Skies* exhibition.

Conservation: Some of the audio cassettes are fragile or damaged and should not be played.

General Note: File titles are supplied from the labels on the audio cassettes.

File list:

FILE TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX-FOLDER #
Ewan [sic.]	[19--]	[19--]	6 audio cassettes (ca. 540 min.)	BOX 1
Ewen II	[19--]	[19--]	6 audio cassettes (ca. 540 min.)	BOX 1
Ewen III	[19--]	[19--]	5 audio cassettes (ca. 540 min.)	BOX 1
PE IV	[19--]	[19--]	2 audio cassettes (ca. 180 min.)	BOX 1
Ewen V	[19--]	[19--]	2 audio cassettes (ca. 180 min.)	BOX 1
Doreen Curry	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
Duncan de Kergommeaux	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 60 min.) Approx. 30 minutes; plus part of Ashok Malla interview; approx. 30 minutes. Approx 30 minutes of the Duncan de Kergommeaux interview are on the Tom Benner Cassette.	BOX 1
[Ashok] Malla	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.) Approx. 30 minutes of the Ashok Malla interview are on the Duncan de Kergommeaux cassette.	BOX 1
John Fox	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
Francoise Sullivan	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
Tom Benner	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.) Approx. 60 minutes; plus part of Duncan de Kergommeaux interview; approx. 30 minutes.	BOX 1
Doris McNab	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1

FILE TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX-FOLDER #
Brian Macdonald (150)	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Dave Gordon	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
Marjorie [Margesson]	[19--]	[19--]	2 audio cassettes (ca. 135 min.)	BOX 1
Lynn Donoghue (PE)	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
[Louis] Dudek	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Eldon Grier	[19--]	[19--]	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
G. Curnoe Talking about P. Ewen 13 June 88	1988	1988	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Bob McKaskell/ Ewen			1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Doris Shadbult + Paterson Ewen V.A.G. '77	1977	1977	2 audio cassettes (ca. 135 min.) Note: Tape for audio cassette #1 is off reel. The cassette cannot be played.	BOX 1
Paterson Ewen 26 Dec 1990	1990	1990	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
P. Ewen NSCAD 1976	1976	1976	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.)	BOX 1
Paterson Ewen 26 Dec 1990	1990	1990	1 audio cassette (ca. 90 min.) Possible duplicate.	BOX 1
11/18/91 Curatorial Roundtable with Jimmie Durham & Amalia Mesa Bains	1991	1991	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Jan. 6, 1970 20/20 gallery London, Ont.	1970	1970	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1

FILE TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX-FOLDER #
Paterson Ewen Tues. March 8 1969 3 P.M. [Interviewed by Greg Curnoe]	1969	1969	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Conversation w/ Dave Gordon 08/01/95	1995	1995	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1
Interview with Matthew Teitelbaum CBC Radio Later the Same Day June 14/95	1995	1995	1 audio cassette (ca. 45 min.)	BOX 1

SERIES 2: RESEARCH FILES

Dates of creation:

1943-1996, predominant 1995-1996

Extent:

8 cm of textual records and graphic material
1 photograph

Scope and content:

Series comprises of research material compiled by Ron Graham in preparation for the biographical essay "Twenty-Four Sketches for a Portrait of Paterson Ewen." The essay was published in the catalogue for the Art Gallery of Ontario exhibition *Paterson Ewen: Earthly Weather/Heavenly Skies*, ed. by Matthew Teitelbaum and co-published by the AGO and Douglas & McIntyre in 1996. Series consists of photographs and photocopies of photographs, interview transcripts, essays, newspaper articles, exhibition related files, and other miscellaneous research material.

Notes:

Related Material: The published catalogue for *Paterson Ewen: Earthly Weather/Heavenly Skies* (1996) is available in the library collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario's E.P. Taylor Library and Archives (759.971 Ew3 T63.2 1996 c.1).

Physical Description: "Graphic material" includes ca. 70 photocopies of photographs. Some are duplicates.

File list:

FILE TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX-FOLDER #
PE Photos	Photocopied [ca. 1995] (originally created 1915-1992)	[ca.1995]	1 cm of graphic material. File contains photocopies of photographs assembled for "Twenty-Four Sketches for a Portrait of Paterson Ewen" by Ron Graham. Note: Title supplied from the label on the original folder.	2-1
Miscellaneous Research Material	[1943?]	1996	3 cm of textual records and graphic material. 1 photograph. File contains research material and correspondence assembled by Ron Graham in preparation for his essay "Twenty-Four Sketches for a Portrait of Paterson Ewen." It includes a transcript of Doris Shadbolt interviewing Paterson Ewen (February 1977); newspaper article pertaining to Ewen and associated artists; reproductions of awards received by Ewen; photocopies of timetables and lists of students from the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts School of Art and Design (1948-1950); handwritten notes; an essay on Ewen by Mary Hartford (December 4, 1979); an essay on Francoise Sullivan; exhibition proposal/publication justification; Paterson Ewen exhibition contents list; correspondence received by Ron Graham; draft of "Twenty-Four Sketches for a Portrait of Paterson Ewen" by Ron Graham. File also contains 1 photograph [1943?] and copies of photographs [photocopied ca. 1995].	2-2

FILE TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX-FOLDER #
Interview Transcript	[ca. 1995]	[ca. 1995]	4 cm of textual records. File contains a transcript of Matthew Teitelbaum interviewing Paterson Ewen. Note: Transcript cannot be identified as corresponding to any of the audio cassettes in series 1.	2-3