

MIT List Visual Arts Center

James Melchert

MEDIUM Sculpture, ceramics

NATIONALITY American

LIFE DATES New Bremen, Ohio 1930 -

Born in 1930 in New Bremen, Ohio, James Melchert studied art in grade school. After graduating in 1952 from Princeton, where he studied art history, Melchert spent four years teaching English in Japan. He returned to the United States in 1956, intending to pursue a degree in Psychology at the University of Chicago, but decided instead to study painting in the school's Master of Fine Arts program. Melchert accepted a teaching position at Carthage College after graduation and took two summer classes with ceramic artist Peter Voulkos in Montana. He followed Voulkos to the University of California at Berkeley, where he embarked on a degree in Decorative Arts, devoting himself exclusively to ceramics.

Melchert taught at the San Francisco Art Institute, 1961-65, and was a professor at the University of California at Berkeley from 1965 to 1992. He was the Director of both the Visual Art Program at the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Academy of Rome. Melchert is an Honorary Fellow of the National Conference of Educators and the American Craft Council; he also holds Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts Degrees from the San Francisco Art Institute and the Maryland Institute College of Art. He was awarded the Centennial Medal of the American Academy in Rome, and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the College of Environmental Design at the University of California in Berkeley. In addition to private collections, Melchert's work is held by MIT; the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

James Melchert lives and works in Oakland, California.

