



## Artists Documentation Program (ADP) Interview Video Index

**Artist:** Sarah Sze

**Date:** June 30, 2008

**Location:** Sarah Sze Studio, New York (Produced by Whitney Museum of American Art)

**Interviewer:** Carol Mancusi-Ungaro

**Video:** Carlton Bright / **Edit:** Laurie McDonald

**Total Run Time:** 01:21:02

### Abstract:

Artist Sarah Sze discusses her work with Artists Documentation Program Founding Director and Whitney Museum of American Art Associate Director for Conservation and Research, Carol Mancusi-Ungaro. The discussion focuses primarily on the materials and methods that Sze used to create her assemblage work *Migrateurs*, 1997; an installation that Sze created for the 2008 Liverpool Biennial, *Just Now Dangled Still*; and two installation works owned by the Whitney Museum of American Art: *Untitled (Soho Annual)*, 1996, and *Strange Attractor*, 2000. Present during the first portion of the interview is John Silberman, owner of *Migrateurs*. Throughout the interview, Sze reflects on the significance of time, material, and narrative to her works, as well as her wishes for their future conservation.

### Controlled Access Headings (Library of Congress):

#### Corporate Name(s)

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
Artists Documentation Program  
Harvard University. Art Museums  
Menil Collection (Houston, Tex.)  
Whitney Museum of American Art

#### Genre(s)

Interviews  
Oral histories

#### Personal Name(s)

Mancusi-Ungaro, Carol  
Sze, Sarah, 1969-

#### Subject(s)

Art--Conservation and restoration  
Artists' materials  
Art--Technique  
Conceptual art  
Sculpture, American

**Exhibitions/Works:**

Names of exhibitions and works referenced during this interview appear below in gray cells.

**Controlled Vocabulary:**

Except where indicated, all keywords employ Getty vocabularies (AAT/ULAN/TGN). Those marked with (\*) employ Library of Congress Authorities. Those marked with (\*\*) employ local terms.

Time	Contents	Subject Keywords
00:00:02	<b>Opening Credits</b>	
00:00:42	<b>Introduction</b> Carol Mancusi-Ungaro, John Silberman, Sarah Sze	
00:01:19	<b>Concept/Nature of Work and Process of Creation</b> Sze explains the concepts behind <i>Migrateurs</i> , 1997, as well as the circumstances that led to its creation. She discusses her typical practice in creating site-specific installations and reflects on the notion of the life of a work over time.	Gonzalez-Torres, Felix installations (visual works) Paris signs (declaratory or advertising artifacts) site-specific works
00:01:19	<b>(Exhibition Reference)</b> <b>"Migrateurs"</b> <b>Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris / ARC</b> <b>December 4, 1997–January 18, 1998</b>	
00:02:50	<b>(Image)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Just Now Dangled Still</i>, 2008</b> <b>Site-specific Installation for 2008 Liverpool Biennial</b>	
00:04:41	<b>Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues</b> Sze traces the provenance of <i>Migrateurs</i> . She assesses the work's current condition and discusses the materials and techniques that she used to create it.	cotton (textile) deterioration glue yellowing
00:04:48	<b>(Image)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Migrateurs</i>, 1997</b> <b>Collection of John Silberman</b>	
00:05:11	<b>(Image)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Migrateurs</i>, 1997 (detail of plinth)</b> <b>Collection of John Silberman</b>	
00:05:43	<b>(Images)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Migrateurs</i>, 1997 (details of yellowing glue, Tic Tacs, aspirin, soap, gum, and cotton)</b> <b>Collection of John Silberman</b>	

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00:07:04	<b>Conservation Issues</b> Sze offers her opinions on the current condition and future restoration of <i>Migrateurs</i> .	cotton (textile) food natural aging restoration (process) visual inspection
00:08:09	<b>(Exhibition Reference)</b> <b>"Robert Rauschenberg: Combines"</b> <b>Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York</b> <b>December 20, 2005-April 2, 2006</b>	
00:10:12	<b>(Images)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Migrateurs</i>, 1997 (details of yellowing cotton and food items)</b> <b>Collection of John Silberman</b>	
00:10:46	<b>Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze reflects on her work in time, including her choice of mass-produced, often ephemeral, materials.	deterioration natural aging organic shrines (structures) time
00:10:55	<b>(Work Reference)</b> <b>Grand Shrine</b> <b>Ise, Japan</b>	
00:12:05	<b>(Images)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Migrateurs</i>, 1997 (details of various elements)</b> <b>Collection of John Silberman</b>	
00:15:26	<b>Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze and Mancusi-Ungaro reflect on the role of the artist's hand in a work, as well as the relationship between the conservator and the specific creative moment that gives rise to an individual work.	glue reworking time
00:16:04	<b>(Exhibition Reference)</b> <b>"Cities on the move: Contemporary Asian Art of the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century"</b> <b>Curated by Hou Hanru and Hans Ulrich Obrist</b> <b>November 26, 1997-January 18, 1998</b> <b>Wiener Secession, Vienna</b>	
00:17:17	<b>(Images)</b> <b>Sarah Sze</b> <b><i>Migrateurs</i>, 1997 (details of various elements)</b> <b>Collection of John Silberman</b>	
00:19:01	<b>Conservation Issues</b> Sze discusses those elements of <i>Migrateurs</i> that she feels should be replaced with identical material, and which can be replaced with a more permanent, yet visually similar, material. Specifically, she	age artist's intent inherent vice natural aging

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	discusses her use of ephemeral materials like chewing gum and aspirin.	
00:23:32	<b>Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze describes those aspects of <i>Migrateurs</i> that are of utmost importance to the work. Specifically, she discusses her use of glue.	glue signs (declaratory or advertising artifacts)
00:25:24	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Migrateurs, 1997 (details of glue)</i> Collection of John Silberman	
00:26:29	<b>Conservation Issues</b> Sze and Mancusi-Ungaro discuss the relative advantages and problems inherent in conservation-focused interventions, e.g., the application of protective coatings to sculpture.	deterioration preservation (function)
00:29:21	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Migrateurs, 1997 (details of soap and cotton)</i> Collection of John Silberman	
00:29:41	<b>Conservation Issues</b> Sze suggests which elements she would replace, were <i>Migrateurs</i> to be restored immediately.	candy cleaning cotton (textile) restoration (process)
00:30:10	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Migrateurs, 1997 (details of pushpin and wire)</i> Collection of John Silberman	
00:31:14	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Migrateurs, 1997 (details of Tic Tacs)</i> Collection of John Silberman	
00:34:16	<b>Conservation Issues and Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze and Mancusi-Ungaro discuss the importance of good documentation in preserving the qualities of a work, particularly with installations, but also with small, sculptural works.	cleaning documentation (activity) installations (visual works) photographs site-specific works
00:35:33	<b>(Work Reference)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Proportioned to the Groove, 2005</i> Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Chicago	
00:37:47	<b>Technical Specifications and Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze describes the techniques and materials that she used to create <i>Just Now Dangled Still</i> , a site-specific installation for the 2008	artificial installations (visual works) organic

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	Liverpool Biennial. She discusses her tendency to combine real and artificial materials.	site-specific works
00:37:48	<b>(Work Reference and Exhibition Reference)</b> <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008</i> "International 08: Made Up" Liverpool Biennial September 20-November 30, 2008	
00:38:26	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of temporary installation in studio)</i>	
00:39:23	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of oranges)</i>	
00:39:52	<b>(Work Reference)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Everything That Rises Must Converge, 1999</i> Foundation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain, Paris	
00:40:11	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of oranges and plants)</i>	
00:40:33	<b>Concept/Nature of Work and Conservation Issues</b> Sze and Mancusi-Ungaro reflect on the significance of time and living materials in Sze's work, and how that affects the work of the conservator. Sze continues to detail those elements that are of utmost importance to the preservation of her work.	life restoration (process) time
00:41:36	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of oranges on floor)</i>	
00:43:27	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of oranges and plant)</i>	
00:44:34	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of oranges)</i>	
00:44:44	<b>Technical Specifications and Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze continues to describe the materials that she employed in <i>Just Now Dangled Still</i> . She and Mancusi-Ungaro also discuss some of the implications of age on a work and of an artist restoring his or her own work.	age artist's intent Fome-Cor (TM) restoration (process)

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00:44:54	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of foamcore)</i>	
00:46:44	<b>Exhibition and Technical Specifications</b> Sze discusses the techniques and materials that she used to create, as well as her wishes for the installation and exhibition of, a work that she completed in graduate school, <i>Untitled (Soho Annual)</i> , 1996, owned by the Whitney Museum of American Art.	galleries (display spaces) installations (visual works) lighting paper (fiber product) viewers (observers)
00:47:02	<b>(Image)</b> <i>Untitled (Soho Annual), 1996</i> Whitney Museum of American Art, New York	
00:51:32	<b>Conservation Issues and Exhibition</b> Sze expresses her wishes for the future exhibition and conservation of <i>Untitled (Soho Annual)</i> . Specifically, she offers suggestions for creating replicas of the small, paper-based objects in the work.	deterioration instructions (document genre) paper (fiber product) replicas storage
00:56:17	<b>Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze describes her intent behind, and her preferences for the installation and exhibition of, <i>Strange Attractor, 2000</i> , another work owned by the Whitney Museum of American Art.	artificial galleries (display spaces) installations (visual works) organic site-specific works
00:56:21	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Strange Attractor, 2000</i> Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Marianne Boesky, Ed Cohen, and Adam Sender, 2001.1	
00:59:57	<b>(Image)</b> Sarah Sze <i>Everything That Rises Must Converge, 1999 (view in exhibition catalogue)</i> Foundation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain, Paris	
01:01:01	<b>Concept/Nature of Work and Conservation Issues</b> Sze discusses the importance of movement, speed, time, and tension in her work. She and Mancusi-Ungaro revisit the question of Sze's preferences regarding the future restoration of <i>Migrateurs</i> .	architecture (object genre) Futurist gesture motion speed time
01:04:14	<b>(Image)</b> Sarah Sze	

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	<b>Migrateurs, 1997 (detail of Tic Tacs)</b> Collection of John Silberman	
01:04:56	<b>(Image)</b> Sarah Sze <b>Migrateurs, 1997 (view of work in the round)</b> Collection of John Silberman	
01:05:08	<b>Concept/Nature of Work</b> Mancusi-Ungaro discusses other artists whose works engage materials similarly to the way in which Sze's do.	artists' materials Hanson, Duane Harrison, Rachel Kienholz, Edward Rhoades, Jason Robleto, Dario Warhol, Andy Wesselmann, Tom
01:07:13	<b>(Work Reference)</b> Edward Kienholz <b>Jane Doe, 1960</b> Collection of Laura Lee Sterns	
01:10:37	<b>Concept/Nature of Work and Exhibition</b> Mancusi-Ungaro asks Sze about several of her quotes. Sze discusses the importance of installation, narrative, and space in her work. She describes what she thinks would be an ideal retrospective of her work.	Bourgeois, Louise Danto, Arthur Coleman, 1924- Eliasson, Olafur Kawamata, Tadashi narrative (artistic device) retrospectives
01:10:49	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <b>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of temporary installation in studio)</b>	
01:11:46	<b>(Exhibition References)</b> "Tadashi Kawamata [Walkway]" Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (MOT)  "Take Your Time: Olafur Eliasson" Museum of Modern Art, New York April 20-June 30, 2008	
01:12:51	<b>(Images)</b> Sarah Sze <b>Just Now Dangled Still, 2008 (details of temporary installation in studio)</b>	
01:13:29	<b>(Exhibition Reference)</b> "Louise Bourgeois" Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York June 27-September 28, 2008 (co-organized by Tate Modern, London and Centre Georges	

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	<b>Pompidou, Paris)</b>	
01:14:17	<b>Concept/Nature of Work and Exhibition</b> Sze continues to describe what she thinks would afford an ideal retrospective of her work.	narrative (artistic device) scale (relative size)
01:18:14	<b>Concept/Nature of Work</b> Sze and Mancusi-Ungaro discuss the relationship between artist and conservator.	artist's intent time
01:19:41	<b>Closing Credits</b>	