

Michael Cardew, studio potter: papers, 1903-2000

Introduction and summary description

Creator: Michael Cardew

Reference: AAD/2006/2

Extent: 58 files

Context

Michael Cardew (1901-1983) was a pioneer of the studio pottery movement, and is widely credited as having revived the slipware tradition in England. He held a major international reputation and his work has been highly influential throughout the world. Cardew had a long and rich working life, which included lengthy spells in Africa in addition to the time spent running potteries in Gloucestershire and Cornwall, writing extensively and giving lectures and demonstrations at home and abroad. From 1923-1926 Michael Cardew worked at the St. Ives Pottery, leaving to set up his own pottery at Wincombe from 1926-1939. Cardew finally settled at Wenford Bridge Pottery and worked on and off here until his death on 11 February, 1983. His passion for pottery lead him to teach at Achimota College, Ghana from 1942-45, set up a pottery at Vume from 1946-48 and to be Pottery Officer in Abuja, Nigeria from 1950-1965, where he encouraged such potters as Ladi Kwali. In 1965 he was appointed MBE and in 1981 appointed CBE and chosen as selector and writer for the Crafts Council exhibition 'The Makers Eye'. He also received an honorary doctorate from the Royal College of Art in 1982. Michael Cardew's book, 'Pioneer Pottery' was published in 1969, a film of his life, 'Mud and Water Man' was released in 1973 and his autobiography, 'A Pioneer Potter' was published posthumously in 1988.

Scope and content

Personal papers including: Michael Cardew's diaries (1916 - 1983); personal photographs (1903 - 1983); personal correspondence (1933 - 1982); other papers including Mariel Cardew's papers, (1915 - 2000). Business papers including, pottery photographs (undated); potteries (1926 - 1980s); films (1965 - 1977); publications (1951 - 1983); lectures, professional seminars and exhibitions (1933 - 1985); projects and research (ca. 1946 - 1973).

Provenance

Purchased from Seth Cardew, son of Michael Cardew, 2004.

Access

This archive is available for consultation in the V&A Archive and Library Study Room, which is located at Blythe House, 23 Blythe Road, Olympia, London, W14 0QX. The Study Room is open Tuesday to Friday between 10.00 am and 4.30 pm, by appointment only. To request an appointment please email archive@vam.ac.uk or telephone 020 7603 7493. Access to some files may be restricted; these are identified individually with the catalogue.

Detailed catalogue

Personal Papers, 1903-2000

Reference: AAD/2006/2/1

Extent: 20 files

Michael Cardew's Diaries, Personal Photographs, Personal Correspondence and other papers including those of Mariel Cardew.

Diaries of Michael Cardew, 1916-1983

Reference: AAD/2006/2/1/1-5

Extent: 5 files

Diaries of Michael Cardew.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/1/1	Diaries 1 box	1916-1950; 1968
	Contains appointment diaries and some of Michael Cardew's personal diaries (25 volumes). It also contains two notebooks containing Michael Cardew's living expenses and six volumes of other notebooks. Some volumes have pages missing.	
AAD/2006/2/1/2	Diaries 2 boxes	Nov 1950-1962
	Contains appointment diaries and some of Michael Cardew's personal diaries (13 volumes). It also contains photocopy of diary entry from Feb 1961, typed transcript of Jan - May 1960 diary.	
AAD/2006/2/1/3	Diaries 1 box	1963-1969
	Contains Michael Cardew's personal diaries for this period, some entries contain details of appointments.	
AAD/2006/2/1/4	Diaries 1 box	1970-1976
	Contains Michael Cardew's personal diaries for this period, some entries contain details of appointments.	

AAD/2006/2/1/5 Diaries	1 box	1977- 1983
Contains Michael Cardew's personal diaries for this period, some entries contain details of appointments.		

Personal Photographs, 1903-1983

Reference: AAD/2006/2/1/7-8

Extent: 2 files

2 early photograph albums, various loose photographs

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/1/7	Photograph albums 1 box	1906-1920
AAD/2006/2/1/8	Loose photographs 1 box	1903-1983

Personal Correspondence, 1933-1993

Reference: AAD/2006/2/1/9-14 : AAD/2006/2/1/17-20

Extent: 10 files

Letters from and to Michael Cardew, Mariel Cardew, their sons, and friends

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/1/9	Michael and Mariel Cardew Correspondence 1 box	1933-1942
AAD/2006/2/1/10	Michael and Mariel Cardew, Family and Friends Correspondence 1 box	1940-1981
AAD/2006/2/1/18	Correspondence relating to a job at the Bailie School, China 1 folder Also contains notes about the British Council, letter dated 1961 from the New Zealand Potter and a invoice.	1940 ; ca. 1946-1947; 1961
AAD/2006/2/1/12	West Africa Correspondence 1 box	1942-1982
AAD/2006/2/1/17	Correspondence from Michael Cardew, mostly to Mariel Cardew 1 folder	1945-1948
AAD/2006/2/1/11	Michael and Mariel Cardew, Family and Friends Correspondence 1 box	1949-1982
AAD/2006/2/1/13	Nigeria Correspondence 1 box	1950-1965
AAD/2006/2/1/19	Correspondence from Ivan McMeekin 1 folder Includes letter to Seth Cardew from Ivan McMeekin dated 1992 and letter to Seth Cardew from Trish McMeekin 1993.	1955 - 1957; 1992 - 1993

AAD/2006/2/1/20	Correspondence Michael Cardew, many to Mariel Cardew 1 folder Includes some correspondence to Michael Cardew from The Potters Society of Australia.	1968; 1981
AAD/2006/2/1/14	General Correspondence	1974-1983

Other papers, including Mariel Cardew's papers, 1915-2000

Reference: AAD/2006/2/1/6 : AAD/2006/2/1/15-16

Extent: 3 files

Notebooks, family papers, newspaper clippings, research, addendum to will, sale of ceramics

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/1/16	Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, family papers, sale of ceramics, obituaries, addendum to will 1 box	1915-2000
AAD/2006/2/1/15	Notes on Old Cornish, Chinese Calligraphy, Music and Cornwall 1 box	1925-1978
AAD/2006/2/1/6	Mariel Cardew Papers 1 box Contains two diaries, one folder of lecture notes, three notebooks and letter to Mariel Cardew from her brother.	1927-ca. 1950s

Business Papers, 1926-ca. 1980s

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2

Extent: 38 files

Pottery Photographs, Undated

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2/1-6

Extent: 6 files

Photographs from Africa, Winchcombe and Wenford.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/2/1	African Pottery Photographs 1 box	1942-1965
AAD/2006/2/2/2	African Pottery Photographs 1 box	1942-1965
AAD/2006/2/2/3	Photographs of Pottery 1 box	Undated
AAD/2006/2/2/4	Photographs of Pottery 1 box	Undated

AAD/2006/2/2/5	Photographs of Michael Cardew, Pottery, and America 1 box	Undated
AAD/2006/2/2/6	Photographs of Michael Cardew and Pottery 1 box	Undated

Potteries, 1926-1980s

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2/7-13 : AAD/2006/2/2/28

Extent: 9 files

Papers from Winchcombe, Wenford Bridge, Achimota College, Ghana, Vume Pottery and Abuja, Nigeria

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/2/7	Winchcombe Pottery 1 box	1926-1939
AAD/2006/2/2/11	Wenford Bridge Pottery Records 1 box	1939-1977
AAD/2006/2/2/28	Wenford Bridge pottery ledger 1 volume	1941-1977
AAD/2006/2/2/8	Gold Coast Potteries 1 box	1942-1948
AAD/2006/2/2/10	Wenford Bridge Pottery 1 box	1948-1966
AAD/2006/2/2/9	Nigeria Potteries 1 box	1950-1965
AAD/2006/2/2/14	Wenford Bridge Pottery Glaze/Clay Analysis, Summer Schools and Students Letters 1 box	1959-1970
AAD/2006/2/2/12	Wenford Bridge Pottery Records 1 box	ca. 1960s-ca. 1980s
AAD/2006/2/2/13	Wenford Bridge Pottery Records 1 box	1974-1983

Films, 1965-1977

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2/15-15

Extent: 1 file

Film notes, reviews, rights and letters

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/2/15	Films - 'Ladi Kwali', 'Mud and Water Man', 'Abuja' and 'Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance' 1 box	1965-1977

Publications, 1951-ca. 1980s

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2/16-21 : AAD/2006/2/2/29-31

Extent: 9 files

Pioneer Pottery (1969), *A Pioneer Potter* autobiography (1988) and other publications

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/2/21	Miscellaneous Written Works 4 folders Contains Hausa Notebook, Pottery Quarterly Vol 12, No. 46, Michael Cardew: On Life in Africa and Life as a Craftsman-potter, A Conversation with MAC at Wenford Bridge, Preface for Leggett Book, and Garth Clark's Michael Cardew	1951- 1981
AAD/2006/2/2/16	<i>Pioneer Pottery</i> - Notes for Volumes I and II 1 box	1962
AAD/2006/2/2/17	<i>Pioneer Pottery</i> - Notes for Volumes III-VI 1 box	1962
AAD/2006/2/2/18	<i>Pioneer Pottery</i> - illustrations, contract, rights, fan mail, reviews and publishers 1 box	1969
AAD/2006/2/2/29	Partial manuscript for <i>A Potter's Progress</i> 1 folder This section of the manuscript relates to cousin Reggie.	ca. 1970s - 1983
AAD/2006/2/2/30	Draft annotated typescript for <i>A Potter's Progress</i> 2 folders This was the working title for A Pioneer Potter.	ca. 1970s - 1983
AAD/2006/2/2/31	Typescript for <i>A Potter's Progress</i> 1 folder This was the working title for A Pioneer Potter.	ca. 1970s - 1983
AAD/2006/2/2/19	<i>A Potter's Life</i> - Notes for Volumes I-IV 1 box	ca. 1980s
AAD/2006/2/2/20	Manuscript of <i>A Potter's Life</i> and letters about the autobiography, 1 box	ca. 1980s

Lectures, Professional Seminars and Exhibitions, 1933-1985

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2/22-27 : AAD/2006/2/2/32-34

Extent: 9 files

Lecture notes, exhibition guides, travels in the USA, and professional honours

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/2/23	Lecture notes, Exhibition letters and an MA Thesis entitled <i>The Pottery of Michael Cardew</i>	1933-1985
AAD/2006/2/2/26	Lecture Notes and The Report of the International Conference of Craftsmen in Pottery and Textiles, 1952	1938-1959

AAD/2006/2/2/22	Various Exhibition Guides and Periodicals and a 1951 Festival of Britain certificate	1947-1979
	1 folder	
AAD/2006/2/2/24	Lectures and Notes	1967-1981
	1 box	
AAD/2006/2/2/27	Lectures and Travels in the USA	1967-1983
	1 box	
AAD/2006/2/2/32	Lectures and Notes	1968-1971
	1 folder	
AAD/2006/2/2/33	Lectures and Notes	1968
	1 folder	
	These lectures and notes were compiled by Michael Cardew whilst he was in Australia.	
AAD/2006/2/2/34	Lectures and Notes	ca. 1968
	1 box	
AAD/2006/2/2/25	Exhibitions, Professional Seminars , RCA Honourary Doctorate	1975-1983
	1 box	

Projects and research, ca. 1946-1973

Reference: AAD/2006/2/2/35-38

Extent: 4 files

Contains material documenting projects and research Michael Cardew worked on relating to pottery.

Reference	Description	Dates
AAD/2006/2/2/35	Notes and papers relating to pottery in West Africa 1 folder	ca. 1946-1947
AAD/2006/2/2/36	Papers and notes relating to the North Euboa Pottery project, Greece 1 folder	1967-1977
	Includes letters from Marianne de Trey and photocopy of letter to R P Golliet from Charles on Art versus Craft.	
AAD/2006/2/2/37	Papers relating to pottery at Bagot, Australia and to Australian potters and craftsmen 1 folder	1968-1971
AAD/2006/2/2/38	Papers and correspondence relating to Ladi Kwali and the African Craftsmen in America project 1 folder	1971-1973