



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Charles Henry Alston

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Charles Henry Alston
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.alston68
<b>Date:</b>	1968 October 19
<b>Creator:</b>	Alston, Charles Henry, 1907-1977 (Interviewee) Murray, Albert (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	25 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Charles Henry Alston, 1968 October 19, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Charles Henry Alston, 1968 October 19, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

This interview is part of the Archives of American Art Oral History Program, started in 1958 to document the history of the visual arts in the United States, primarily through interviews with artists, historians, dealers, critics and others. Funding for this interview provided by the New York State Council on the Arts.

### Available Formats

Transcript available on-line.

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

Charles Henry Alston (1907-1977) was a painter and educator from New York, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Charles Henry Alston conducted 1968 October 19, by Al Murray, for the Archives of American Art.

## Scope and Contents

Alston speaks of his family background, early interest in art, and education at Columbia University; the social and cultural scene in Harlem in the late 1920s, and the street life there; coming into contact with some of the most important figures of the Harlem Renaissance; the differing problems faced by black and white artists; teaching; commercial art; figurative and abstract art. He recalls Romare Bearden and Robert Blackburn.

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## General

Originally recorded on 1 sound tape reel. Reformatted in 2010 as 2 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hrs., 7 minutes.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- African American artists
- African American painters

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Bearden, Romare, 1911-1988
- Blackburn, Robert Hamilton, 1920-

### Occupations:

- Educators -- New York (State) -- New York
- Painters -- New York (State) -- New York