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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Dore Ashton

This interview is part of the Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project, funded by the A G Foundation.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Dore Ashton
Identifier:	AAA.ashton10
Date:	2010 November 21 - 2011 March 9
Creator:	Ashton, Dore (Interviewee) Sampson, George E., 1951- (Interviewee) Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project
Extent:	67 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Dore Ashton, 2010 November 21 - 2011 March 9, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Dore Ashton, 2010 November 21 - 2011 March 9, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

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 administrators.

Biographical / Historical

Dore Ashton (1928-2017) was an art historian in New York, New York. George W. Sampson (1951-) is an arts administrator in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Dore Ashton conducted 2010 November 21 and 2011 March 9, by George W. Sampson, for the Archives of American Art's Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts project, at Ashton's home, in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

Ashton talks about growing up politically active; protesting the internment of the Japanese Americans during WWII; attending The New School and then Harvard University; briefly working as a gallery receptionist; writing her first reviews for Art Digest; Howard Devree hiring her as a writer for The New York Times; travels and living in Europe; writing feature pieces about individual artists for The New York Times; writing

for Cahiers d'art; her relationships Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Philip Guston, Robert Motherwell, Billy Kluver, Robert Rauschenberg, Octavio Paz, and others; marriage to Adja Yunkers; teaching at Cooper Union; interest in Latin American Art; flirting; being a "dedicated reader of Nietzsche"; visits to the Cedar Tavern; being a peacenik; and other topics. She recalls Jeanne Reynal, Mario Pedrosa, Alger Hiss, Peter Selz, Peter Orlovsky, David Smith, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 2 memory cards. Duration is 2 hr., 57 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Women art critics
- Women art historians
- Women authors
- Women educators

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art -- Faculty
- De Kooning, Willem, 1904-1997
- Devree, Howard, 1891-1966
- Elizabeth Murray Oral History of Women in the Visual Arts Project
- Guston, Philip, 1913-1980
- Harvard University -- Students
- Kline, Franz, 1910-1962
- Klüver, Billy, 1927-2004
- Motherwell, Robert
- New School for Social Research (New York, N.Y.) -- Students
- New York Times Company
- Orlovsky, Peter, 1933-2010
- Paz, Octavio, 1914-
- Rauschenberg, Robert, 1925-2008
- Reynal, Jeanne, 1903-
- Rothko, Mark, 1903-1970
- Selz, Peter Howard, 1919-2019
- Smith, David, 1906-1965
- Yunkers, Adja, 1900-1983

Occupations:

- Art critics -- New York (State) -- New York
- Art historians -- New York (State) -- New York
- Authors -- New York (State) -- New York
- Educators -- New York (State) -- New York