



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Margaret
Scolari Barr relating to Alfred H. Barr

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Margaret Scolari Barr relating to Alfred H. Barr
Identifier:	AAA.barr74
Date:	1974 February 22-May 13
Extent:	69 Pages (Transcript)
Creator:	Barr, Margaret Scolari, 1901-1987 Cummings, Paul
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

These interviews are part of the Archives' 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.

Available Formats

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Biographical / Historical

Margaret Scolari Barr (1901-1987) was married to Alfred Barr, the director of the Museum of Modern Art and lived in New York. Mrs. Barr taught at Vassar (Italian) and the Spence School (art history), wrote several books, and translated others. She worked closely with her husband, on numerous of his projects.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Margaret Scolari Barr conducted 1974 February 22-1974 May 13, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

The interview primarily concerns her husband, Alfred Hamilton Barr, Jr., the director of the Museum of Modern Art, but also touches upon her childhood in Italy, her educational background, and teaching

at Vassar. She discusses her husband's career with the Museum of Modern Art, including his travel and entertaining for the museum, borrowing works of art, installing exhibitions, his work methods and published writings, the Rescue Committee for European Artists in World War II, and the 1958 fire at the Museum of Modern Art. She describes Alfred Barr's firing from the Museum of Modern Art in 1943. She recalls Steven Clark, Rene D'Harnoncourt, Henry Russell Hitchcock, Philip Cortelyou Johnson, Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 3 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 46 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art museum directors -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews
Art, Modern -- 20th century -- New York (State) -- New York
Museum directors -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Barr, Alfred H., Jr., 1902-1981
Clark, Stephen C. (Stephen Carlton), b. 1882
D'Harnoncourt, Rene, 1901-1968
Hitchcock, Henry-Russell, 1903-1987
Johnson, Philip, 1906-2005
Museum of Modern Art (New York, N.Y.)
Rockefeller, Nelson A. (Nelson Aldrich), 1908-1979