Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Herbert Bayer

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Herbert Bayer
Date:	1981 November 3-1982 March 10
Identifier:	AAA.bayer81nov
Creator:	Bayer, Herbert, 1900-1985 (Interviewee) Cohen, Arthur A. (Arthur Allen), 1928-1986 (Interviewer)
Extent:	105 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Audio: Oral history interview with Herbert Bayer, 1981 November 3-1982 March 10, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

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.

Biographical / Historical

Herbert Bayer (1900-1985) was a painter, sculptor, and architect of Montecito, California.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Herbert Bayer conducted 1981 November 3-1982 March 10, by Arthur Cohen, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Bayer speaks of his family background and early influences in art and painting, his education and experiences at the Bauhaus school, studies under Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, and his friendship with Marcel Breuer. Bayer also tells of fleeing from Nazi Germany and of his travels in Italy. He concludes the interview with a discussion of his theories of color, the relation of surrealism to his work, the influence of architecture upon his work, the beginning of his interest in sculpture, the relationship of landscape to culture, mathematics and its relationship to painting, and the role of metaphysics in his life.

General

Originally recorded on 5 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 9 digital wav files. Duration is 6 hr., 44 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Architects -- Interviews
Architecture, Modern -- 20th century
Color in art
Surrealism

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Bauhaus
Breuer, Marcel, 1902-
Kandinsky, Wassily, 1866-1944
Klee, Paul, 1879-1940

Occupations:

Painters -- Interviews