



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Thomas Hart Benton

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Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
Business Number: Phone: 202-633-7950
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Thomas Hart Benton
Date:	1973 July 23-24
Identifier:	AAA.benton73
Creator:	Benton, Thomas Hart, 1889-1975 (Interviewee) Cummings, Paul (Interviewer)
Extent:	68 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

These interviews are 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.

Restrictions

ACCESS RESTRICTED; written permission required.

Biographical / Historical

Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975) was a painter and mural painter.

Scope and Contents

Interview of Thomas Hart Benton conducted 1973 July 23-24, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art. Benton speaks of his childhood in Missouri and Washington, D.C., working as a newspaper cartoonist, and classes at the Chicago Art Institute (1907-1908) and the Academie Julian in Paris (1908). He discusses the New York art world, painting scenes for silent movies, the "Stieglitz Society," the synchromist and regionalist movements, John Weichsel and the People's Art Guild, teaching at the Art Students League and the Kansas City Art Institute, murals and mural techniques, lithographic illustrations, drawings, and World War II propaganda posters. He recalls Thomas Craven, Rex Ingram, Stanton Macdonald-Wright, Jackson Pollock, Alma Reed, Boardman Robinson, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 4 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 46 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Mural painting and decoration -- 20th century
- Muralists -- Interviews
- Regionalism
- Synchronism (Art)

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Craven, Thomas, b. 1889
- Ingram, Rex, 1895-1969
- Macdonald-Wright, Stanton, 1890-1973
- Pollock, Jackson, 1912-1956
- Reed, Alma M.
- Robinson, Boardman, 1876-1952
- Stieglitz, Alfred, 1864-1946
- Weichsel, John, 1870-1946

Occupations:

- Painters -- Interviews