



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Elizabeth Cornell Benton

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Elizabeth Cornell Benton
<b>Date:</b>	1976 April 21
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.benton76
<b>Creator:</b>	Benton, Elizabeth Cornell (Interviewee) Cummings, Paul (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	83 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Elizabeth Cornell Benton, 1976 April 21, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

This interview is 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.

### Restrictions

The transcript and recording are open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

Elizabeth Cornell Benton (1905- ) was the sister of the artist Joseph Cornell.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Elizabeth Cornell Benton conducted 1976 April 21, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art.

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## Scope and Contents

Interview concerns her brother, Joseph Cornell. Benton speaks of Cornell's education; his relationship with his family, especially with his brother, Robert; his interests in astronomy, music, movies, surrealism, and other subjects; his business dealings; his variations on themes in his collages and boxes; his "zany" sense of humor and other aspects of his personality; his use of toxic materials in his art; his health; his places of

employment; his sources of inspiration; his diary and other writings; his attraction to youth; and his assistants. Benton also describes art classes she took from Edward Hopper and her collages.

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## General

Originally recorded on 2 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 3 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 10 min.

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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:

- Assemblage (Art)
- Women artists
- Women painters

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Cornell, Joseph

### Occupations:

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