



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Fletcher Benton

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Fletcher Benton
Identifier:	AAA.benton89
Date:	1989 May 2-4
Creator:	Benton, Fletcher, 1931- (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer)
Extent:	150 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Fletcher Benton, 1989 May 2-4, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Fletcher Benton, 1989 May 2-4, 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.

Available Formats

Transcript available on line.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Fletcher Benton (1931-2019) was a painter and sculptor from San Francisco, California.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Fletcher Benton conducted 1989 May 2-4, by Paul J. Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art, at the artist's studio, in San Francisco, California.

Scope and Contents

Benton speaks of his education in the Midwest and the decision to pursue an art career in California, and the problems of regionalism and provincialism in art. He describes the art scene in San Francisco in the 1950s, and talks about the effect of the San Francisco environment on him. He also speaks of art dealers and their methods, art criticism and museum politics. He discusses his methods and materials, his early ventures into sculpture, his involvement with kinetic sculpture, his work in watercolor. He recalls his acquaintance with John McLaughlin and discusses the influence of Joan Brown's work on his own.

General

Originally recorded on 7 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 14 digital wav files. Duration is 7 hr., 9 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Kinetic sculpture, American. -- California -- San Francisco
Painters -- California -- San Francisco -- Interviews
Sculptors -- California -- San Francisco -- Interviews
Sculpture, Modern -- 20th century -- United States

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Brown, Joan, 1938-1990
McLaughlin, John, 1898-1976