



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Harry Bertoia

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
General.....	1
Scope and Contents.....	1
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	2

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Harry Bertoia
Identifier:	AAA.berto72
Date:	1972 June 20
Extent:	33 Pages (Transcript)
Creator:	Bertoia, Harry Cummings, Paul
Language:	English

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.

Biographical / Historical

Harry Bertoia (1915-1978) was a sculptor and furniture designer.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Harry Bertoia conducted 1972 June 20, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art. Bertoia speaks of his childhood in San Lorenzo, Italy; his family; his art education at Cass Technical School, the Society of Arts and Crafts in Detroit, and Cranbrook Academy; his early metal work and woodcuts; defense work with Charles Eames in Venice, California; development of Eames' prize-winning plywood chair; his chair designs for Knoll International; exhibitions of his sculpture; his experiments with sound and with "sonambient" sculpture; and techniques and materials. Bertoia also discusses his commissioned works for Manufacturer's Trust, General Motors, and Dulles Airport. He recalls John Carroll, Carl Milles, Eero Saarinen, Sarkis Sarkisian, and others.

General

Originally recorded 2 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 3 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 1 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Design
- Designers -- Interviews
- Sculptors -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Carroll, John, 1892-1959
- Eames, Charles
- Milles, Carl, 1875-1955
- Saarinen, Eero, 1910-1961
- Sarkis, 1909-1977