



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with George Biddle

Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with George Biddle
Date:	1963
Identifier:	AAA.biddle63
Creator:	Biddle, George, 1885-1973 (Interviewee) Phillips, Harlan B. (Harlan Buddington), 1920- (Interviewer) New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
Extent:	239 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Audio: Oral history interview with George Biddle, 1963, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt) Digital Content: Oral history interview with George Biddle, 1963, Transcript

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Conducted as part of the Archives of American Art's New Deal and the Arts project, which includes over 400 interviews of artists, administrators, historians, and others involved with the federal government's art programs and the activities of the Farm Security Administration in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Available Formats

Transcript is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Restrictions

This interview is open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

George Biddle (1885-1973) was a painter and sculptor, in Croton-on-Hudson, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview of George Biddle conducted in 1963, by Harlan Phillips, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Biddle speaks of his background in Philadelphia; his Harvard education in preparation for a law career; literary acquaintances; travel; the beginning of his art career; his preoccupation with portraiture; his tragic and pleasant works; the importance of mood; his drawing techniques; drawing from nature; color experimentation; Stieglitz's circle; the susceptibility of artists to change during the 1930s; his involvement with the Public Works of Art Project; government censorship of his murals; his involvement with artists overseas during World War II; and his aesthetic philosophy. He recalls Max Weber, Maurice Sterne, George Grosz, William Zorach, Kenneth Hayes Miller, Peggy Bacon, Marsden Hartley, Charles Demuth, Edith Halpert, Boardman Robinson, Reginald Marsh, Thomas Hart Benton, Henry Billings, Ned Bruce, Holger Cahill, Philip Evergood, Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, David Siqueiros, and Rufino Tamayo.

General

Originally recorded 3 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 9 digital wav files. Duration is 13 hr., 56 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Censorship
- Federal aid to the arts
- Painters -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews
- Sculptors -- New York (State) -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Bacon, Peggy, 1895-1987
- Benton, Thomas Hart, 1889-1975
- Billings, Henry, 1901-
- Bouché, Louis, 1896-1969
- Bruce, Edward, 1879-1943
- Cahill, Holger, 1887-1960
- Cassatt, Mary, 1844-1926
- Curry, John Steuart, 1897-1946
- Demuth, Charles, 1883-1935
- Evergood, Philip, 1901-1973
- Grosz, George, 1893-1959
- Halpert, Edith Gregor, 1900-1970
- Hartley, Marsden, 1877-1943
- Kroll, Leon, 1884-1974
- Marsh, Reginald, 1898-1954
- Miller, Kenneth Hayes, 1876-1952
- New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
- Orozco, José Clemente, 1883-1949

Pascin, Jules, 1885-1930
Poor, Henry Varnum, 1887-1970
Public Works of Art Project
Rivera, Diego, 1886-1957
Robinson, Boardman, 1876-1952
Siqueiros, David Alfaro
Sterne, Maurice, 1878-1957
Stieglitz, Alfred, 1864-1946
Tamayo, Rufino, 1899-
Weber, Max, 1881-1961
Zorach, William, 1887-1966
Zorach, William, 1887-1966