



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with John Cage

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with John Cage
Identifier:	AAA.cage74
Date:	1974 May 2
Creator:	Callahan, Harry M. (Interviewee) Cummings, Paul (Interviewer)
Extent:	55 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with John Cage, 1974 May 2, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with John Cage, 1974 May 2, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview is 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

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

John Cage (1912-1992) was a composer and printmaker from New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview of John Cage conducted 1974 May 2, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Cage speaks of his education; studying art and architecture in Europe; his paintings; his music teachers including Richard Buhlig, Henry Cowell, and Adolph Weiss; his lectures on modern art and music; his first wife, Xenia; teaching at the Cornish School, the Chicago Institute of Design, and Black Mountain College; taking chess lessons from Marcel Duchamp; Oriental philosophy; and "Silence," "Empty Words,"

and other compositions. He recalls Josef Albers, Bonnie Bird, Merce Cunningham, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Tobey, Alan Watts, and others.

General

Originally recorded on 1 sound tape reel. Reformatted in 2010 as 2 digital wav files. Duration is 1 hr., 39 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Printmakers -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Albers, Josef
Bird, Bonnie
Buhlig, Richard, 1880-1952
Cowell, Henry, 1897-1965
Cunningham, Merce
Duchamp, Marcel, 1887-1968
Johns, Jasper, 1930-
Rauschenberg, Robert, 1925-2008
Tobey, Mark
Watts, Alan, 1915-1973
Weiss, Adolph, 1891-1971

Occupations:

Composers -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews