



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Samuel George Cahan

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Samuel George Cahan
Date:	1967 March 11 and July 12
Identifier:	AAA.cahan67
Creator:	Cahan, Samuel George, 1886-1974 (Interviewee) Cummings, Paul (Interviewer)
Extent:	30 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Samuel George Cahan, 1967 March 11 and July 12, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Samuel George Cahan, 1967 March 11 and July 12, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

These interviews are 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

Samuel George Cahan (1886-1974) was an illustrator in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Samuel George Cahan conducted 1967 March 11 and July 12, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Cahan discusses his childhood poverty and early love of drawing. He recounts being discovered by a newspaper editor at the age of twelve while drawing a picture on the sidewalk in front of a restaurant. He discusses becoming

a staff artist at the New York World at age fifteen and his many years working for that newspaper; his interactions with other artists at the paper, such as George Luks; and his extensive experience covering court cases. He also discusses the illustration work he later did for magazines such as Collier's and his portraits of notable people including Albert Einstein and Woodrow Wilson. He speaks of learning to etch and use oil paint; exhibiting at the National Academy and French & Company Gallery; studying with Robert Henri; his landscape works and paintings of Jewish subjects; and his involvement with the Art Students League. In addition, he mentions the artists John Sloan and Walt Kuhn. His wife also speaks towards the end of the second interview.

General

Originally recorded on 1 sound tape reel. Reformatted in 2010 as 2 digital wav files. Duration is 1 hr., 9 min.

General

This interview was previously dated 1969. Judging from his comments about his age at the time of the interview, it could have been 1967. Listed transcription dates were changed to reflect the new date.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art, American
Illustrators -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings