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Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Stanton L. Catlin

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Stanton L. Catlin
Date:	1989 July 1-September 14
Identifier:	AAA.catlin89
Creator:	Catlin, Stanton L. (Stanton Loomis) (Interviewee) O'Connor, Francis V. (Interviewer)
Extent:	277 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Stanton L. Catlin, 1989 July 1-September 14, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Stanton L. Catlin, 1989 July 1-September 14, 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 administrators.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Stanton L. Catlin (1915-1997) was a curator, gallery director, educator, art historian, and expert on Latin American Art.

Catlin studied art history at Oberlin College and graduated in 1937. After graduation, he studied painting and art history at the Academy of Arts in Prague, Czech Republic for two years. Catlin received a Fogg Museum Fellowship in Modern Art at Harvard University to survey collections of art in Europe. However, the project was canceled because of World War II.

During the war, Catlin served as a Cultural Relations Representative for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs where he assisted with exhibition arrangements throughout Latin America. In 1942, he also began teaching the history of art in the United States at the University of Chile. After the war, Catlin served in the Field Operations Division of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, working in the Displaced Persons Operation from 1945-1946.

From 1947 to 1950, Catlin served as the executive director of the American Institute of Graphic Arts. He received his graduate degree in art history from New York University in 1952, and shortly thereafter became editor and curator of American art at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. From 1958 to 1967, Catlin was the assistant director of the Yale University Art Gallery. While there, he curated the landmark exhibition Art of

Latin America Since Independence in 1966, the first exhibition to include only Latin American art and the accompanying catalog remains a standard reference source. That same year, Catlin won a Grammy Award for best album notes for an essay on Mexican mural painting.

In 1967, Catlin left Yale to take a position as director of the Art Gallery at the Center for Inter-American Relations before joining the faculty of Syracuse University in 1971 and becoming director of the university's Art Gallery. He remained at Syracuse for the rest of his career.

Catlin was a consultant on the major retrospective exhibition of the work of Diego Rivera at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1986. He also worked on a project to document Mexican murals in the United States. Catlin died in Fayetteville, New York in 1997.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Stanton Catlin conducted 1989 July 1-September 14, by Francis V. O'Connor, for the Archives of American Art.

General

Originally recorded on 9 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 18 digital wav files. Duration is 13 hr., 38 min.

General

Transcripts have been heavily edited by the interviewee; researchers may wish to consult the sound recordings along with the transcript.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Educators -- Interviews
- Latino and Latin American artists
- Museum directors -- Interviews
- Museums -- Study and teaching

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Occupations:

- Art historians -- Interviews

Functions:

- Art museums