



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Allan Rohan Crite

Funding for the digital preservation of this interview was provided by a grant from the Save America's Treasures Program of the National Park Service.

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives of American Art |
| Title: | Oral history interview with Allan Rohan Crite |
| Identifier: | AAA.crite79 |
| Date: | 1979 January 16-1980 October 22 |
| Creator: | Crite, Allan Rohan, 1910-2007 (Interviewee) Thompson, Susan Brown, Robert F. (Interviewer) |
| Extent: | 179 Pages (Transcript) |
| Language: | English . |
| Digital Content: | Digital Content: Oral history interview with Allan Rohan Crite, 1979 January 16-1980 October 22, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Allan Rohan Crite, 1979 January 16-1980 October 22, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt) |

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.

Available Formats

Transcript available online.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Allan Rohan Crite (1910-2007) was a painter and illustrator from Boston, Massachusetts.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Allan Rohan Crite conducted 1979 January 16-1980 October 22, by Robert F. Brown for the Archives of American Art. Also participating in the interview is Crite's assistant, Susan Thompson.

Scope and Contents

Crite describes his family background and his youth in Boston. He gives great detail about his childhood interest in art and the art classes he took as a child, sharing drawings he did then with the interviewer. He remembers his art education at the Museum of Fine Arts School and involvement with the Society of Independent Artists. Crite discusses his ideas about the Episcopal church, his religious beliefs, and his interest in the liturgy and spirituals in his artwork. He recounts his engagement in the Navy, participation in the WPA, and work with the Rambusch Company. Crite describes paintings he did of street life in Black communities of Boston in the 1930s, a series of portraits, and paintings he did to illustrate spirituals and the Episcopal liturgy. He speaks about race relations and explains his motivations for an educational project in progress entitled, "The Cultural Heritage of the United States: a Rediscovery," promoting a multicultural view of American history. The last segment of the interview includes Susan Thompson, a fabric artist and close friend collaborating with Crite on projects mostly of a religious nature, including vestments and altar cloths.

General

Originally recorded on 4 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 7 digital wav files. Duration is 7 hr., 8 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- African American artists
- African American painters
- Art, American
- Christian art and symbolism

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. School
- Rambusch (Firm)
- Rambusch Glass and Decorating Company
- Society of Independent Artists (New York, N.Y.)

Occupations:

- Illustrators -- Massachusetts -- Boston
- Painters -- Massachusetts -- Boston