



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with William Cumming

Archives of American Art  
750 9th Street, NW  
Victor Building, Suite 2200  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with William Cumming
<b>Date:</b>	1965 April 3
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.cummin65
<b>Creator:</b>	Cumming, William Bestor, Dorothy K., 1913- (Interviewer) New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
<b>Extent:</b>	27 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with William Cumming, 1965 April 3, Transcript</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

This interview 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: 35mm microfilm reel 3418 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

### 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.

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## Biographical / Historical

William Cumming is a painter from Seattle, Washington.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of William Cumming conducted by Dorothy Bestor on 1965 April 3 for the Archives of American Art.

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## Scope and Contents

Cumming speaks of getting on the Federal Art Project; meeting Morris Graves; problems with the way the project was administered and supervised; destruction of some of the art work produced by the project; his feelings about federal support for the arts; his existential philosophy on life; and his views on current trends in painting. He recalls Jacob Elshin, Robert Bruce Inverarity, Mark Tobey, Denise Farwell, Guy Anderson.

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## General

Originally recorded on 1 sound tape reel. Reformatted in 2010 as 4 digital wav files. Duration is 4 hr., 29 min.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

- Art and state
- Federal aid to the arts
- Painters -- Washington (State) -- Seattle -- Interviews

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Anderson, Guy, 1906-1998
- Elshin, Jacob Alexander, 1891-1976
- Farwell, Denise
- Federal Art Project (Wash.)
- Graves, Morris, 1910-
- Inverarity, Robert Bruce, 1909-1999
- New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
- Tobey, Mark