



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Olin Dows

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical	1
Scope and Contents	1
Names and Subjects	

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Olin Dows
Date:	1963 October 31
Identifier:	AAA.dows63
Creator:	Dows, Olin, 1904-1981 (Interviewee) Phillips, Harlan B. (Harlan Buddington), 1920-1979 (Interviewer) New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
Extent:	111 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Audio: Oral history interview with Olin Dows, 1963 October 31, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

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.

Restrictions

For information on how to access this interview contact Reference Services.

Biographical / Historical

Olin Dows (1904-1981) was an art administrator in Washington, D.C.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Olin Dows conducted on 1963 October 31, by Harlan Phillips for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Dows speaks of his youth and education at Harvard and Yale; parental and family influence; his European travels; his philosophy of painting; the influence of Mexican painters; dealers he knew and worked with; joining the Public Works of Art Project; how the PWAP was administered; the effect of politics on the project; artists who were involved in it; mural competitions and problems with them; the media and public image of the project; art criticism; the long-term effects of the project; camaraderie among those involved. He recalls Edward Bruce and Forbes Watson.

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 4 digital wav file. Duration is 4 hr., 16 min.

General

Sound quality is poor.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art and state
- Arts administrators -- Washington (D.C.) -- Interviews
- Federal aid to the arts

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Bruce, Edward, 1879-1943
- Federal Art Project
- New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
- Watson, Forbes, 1880-1960