



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Eleanor M. Garvey

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Eleanor M. Garvey
Identifier:	AAA.garvey97
Date:	1997 February 28-June 13
Creator:	Garvey, Eleanor M. (Interviewee) Brown, Robert F. (Interviewer)
Extent:	76 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Eleanor M. Garvey, 1997 February 28-June 13, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Eleanor M. Garvey, 1997 February 28-June 13, 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.

Biographical / Historical

Eleanor M. Garvey (1918-) is a curator and writer from Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Eleanor M. Garvey conducted 1997 February 28-June 13, by Robert F. Brown, for the Archives of American Art in Garvey's office, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Scope and Contents

Garvey discusses her childhood in Worcester, Massachusetts; majoring in art history at Wellesley College under Serape der Nersessian, Alexander Campbell, Agnes Abbott, and Kenneth Conant; study of education at Clark University, with drawing classes at the art school of the Worcester Art Museum; and the extremely useful experience working at the Museum under Charles Sawyer and Louisa Dresser.

Scope and Contents

Working as an art librarian and museum curator at Wellesley College (1947-1952), and art history professors John McAndrew, Sidney Freedberg, James O'Gorman; moving on to the Newark Museum (1952-1953) and its collections and administration under Katherine Coffey.

Scope and Contents

Joining the Dept. of Printing and Graphic Arts of the Houghton Library in 1953 beginning as secretary to curator Philip Hofer; Hofer's work on illustrated books; the development of the Houghton Library from the so-called "Treasure Room" of the main Harvard Library under the direction of George Parker Winship; Garvey's close relationship with William Bentinck-Smith, a Houghton patron and an authority on type design; the status of women professionals at Harvard.

Scope and Contents

Continued discussion of Houghton patron William Bentinck-Smith; publications and exhibitions while at Houghton, including: "The Artist and the Book, 1860-1960" (1961), "The Turn of a Century, 1885-1970" (1970), "Henry Hobson Richardson and His Office: Selected Drawings" (1974), and "Artists of the Book in Boston, 1890-1910" (1988), as well as her current project producing a catalog of 18th century Venetian illustrated books and her involvement in seminars on artists' books.

General

Originally recorded on 3 sound cassettes as X digital wav files. Duration is 3 hrs., 30 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Artists' books
- Book design
- Illustrated books -- 19th century
- Illustrated books -- 20th century
- Women museum curators

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Abbot, Agnes Anne, 1897-1992
- Bentinck-Smith, William, 1914-
- Campbell, Alexander
- Campbell, Louisa Dresser, 1907-1989

Clark University (Worcester, Mass.)
Coffey, Katherine, d. 1972
Conant, Kenneth J.
Der Nersessian, Sirarpie, 1896-1989
Freedberg, S. J. (Sydney Joseph), 1914-1997
Hofer, Philip, 1898-1984
Houghton Library
McAndrew, John
Newark Museum
O'Gorman, James F.
Richardson, H. H. (Henry Hobson), 1838-1886
Sawyer, Charles Henry, 1906-2005
Wellesley College
Winship, George Parker, 1871-1952
Worcester Art Museum

Occupations:

Museum curators -- Massachusetts