



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Stephen Hahn

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Stephen Hahn
Identifier:	AAA.hahn08
Date:	2008 Mar. 14
Creator:	Hahn, Stephen, 1921-2011 (Interviewee) Morgan, Susan Ford (Interviewer) Art Dealers Association of America
Extent:	2 Items (Sound recording, master: 2 sound discs (1 hr., 50 min.); digital; 2 5/8 in.) 22 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Stephen Hahn, 2008 Mar. 14, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Stephen Hahn, 2008 Mar. 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.

Available Formats

Transcript is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Restrictions

The transcript and recording are open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Stephen Hahn (1921-2011) was an art dealer in Santa Barbara, Calif. Hahn served as president of the Art Dealers Association of America.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Stephen Hahn conducted 2008 Mar. 14, by Susan Ford Morgan, for the Archives of American Art, at Hahn's home, in Montecito, Calif.

Scope and Contents

Hahn speaks of his early life in Hungary; moving to Paris when he was 12 years old, where his father was an Old Masters art dealer; working as a "runner" for art galleries in Paris; attending the École du Louvre in Paris; marrying an American woman, and moving to New York City in 1952; working as a craft dealer; living on Staten Island and taking the ferry to Manhattan every day; working as a private dealer for galleries in New York; working as an art advisor to Norton Simon; his own gallery shows in the early 1960s, including exhibitions of work by Gustave Courbet, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, and Claude Monet; a recent Courbet show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, and a Courbet exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in the late 1980s; working with Eugene Thaw; working with Dr. Arthur Sackler; Hahn's private collection; opening his gallery in 1960 on Fifty-Eighth Street and Madison Avenue; moving to his second gallery space three years later on Seventy-Fifth Street and Madison Avenue; working as a partner at Niveau Gallery for six months before opening his gallery in the new space; other galleries in the area at the time, including Acquavella Gallery; his first exhibition in the new space, showing two-dimensional work by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Edgar Degas, Pablo Picasso, and Henri Matisse; an exhibition of Karel Appel's work in his gallery in the early 1960s; involvement in the Art Dealers Association of America, beginning in the 1960s; serving as president of the organization in the early 1980s; his work appraising art; his observation that little changed for him in U.S. gallery scene over the years; Art Dealers Association shows at the Park Avenue Armory in New York, City; donating his collection to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC; working as a private dealer; a brief mention of a lawsuit involving a Picasso sold to Marilyn Alsdorf; the redesign of the Norton Simon museum by architect Frank Gehry; the Janice and Henry Lazaroff collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and general trends and quality in art collecting. He also recalls Michael Fitzgerald, Michael Finley, Paul Herring, Eugene Thaw, Jean Dubuffet, the CoBrA group, George Plimpton, John Rewald, Clement Greenberg, Pierre Matisse, Larry Gagosian, John Richardson, Michael Hurson, Pablo Picasso, Nicolas de Staël, Alexina "Teeny" Duchamp.

System Details

Originally recorded on 2 sound discs.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Art Dealers Association of America

Occupations:

- Art dealers -- California