



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Leo Holub

Funding for this interview was provided by the Bente and Gerald E. Buck Collection.
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

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Leo Holub
Date:	1997 July 3
Identifier:	AAA.holub97
Creator:	Holub, Leo, 1916-2010 (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer) Art Schools in California Oral History Project
Extent:	2 Sound cassettes (Sound recording (90 min); analog) 34 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Leo Holub, 1997 July 3, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Leo Holub, 1997 July 3, 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

Leo Holub (1916-2010) was a photographer, lithographer, and teacher from San Francisco, Calif.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Leo Holub conducted 1997 July 3, by Paul Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art, in San Francisco, Calif.

Scope and Contents

Holub discusses his background, being born in Arkansas, moving to New Mexico, and then to Oakland, Calif. (1923); early educational experiences in Oakland, and later at the Art Institute of Chicago; seeing Edward Weston's photographic work at an exhibition in Chicago, and admiring Weston's nude studies of Charis Wilson; his return to the Bay Area; his studio on Montgomery St. (Monkey Block); meeting painter Matthew Barnes, who had assisted Diego Rivera with his murals at the California School of Fine Arts (CSFA),

1931-1932; his experiences as a student at CSFA- its program and instructors which included Maurice Sterne, Gottardo Piazzoni, Lee Randolph, Dick Hackett, Otis Oldfield, William Gaw, Spencer Mackey, and Victor Arnautoff; fellow students including Hassel Smith, Ed Corbett, and Florence Michelson (his future wife); and his beginning awareness of modernism.

Scope and Contents

Holub discusses his involvement with the Golden Gate International Exposition (1939); apprenticeship with industrial designer Joe Sinel and the advent of the product design era; his founding of Design Development Associates, and staying only a year before moving to Grass Valley, Calif. for his son's health; his return to the Bay Area, succeeding Emmy Lou Packard at the San Francisco Planning Office graphic arts dept.; working at the housing agency and redevelopment agency and as chief designer for the Bay Area Rapid Transit report.

Scope and Contents

He recalls his encounter with Ansel Adams at the 1955 Yosemite workshop where Holub produced a pictorial map of Yosemite; Adam's "zone system" of exposing for shadows and developing for highlights; going on to teach at CSFA (1955-1957), where Imogen Cunningham was a guest instructor; Minor White replacing him; his ten years at Stanford University's planning office (1960-1970); his campus views "Stanford Scene" that were used by the university to appeal for more space for the art dept., and his shows at Stanford's art gallery in 1964 and at the Washington, D.C. home of Vice President Walter Mondale in 1980.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Study and teaching -- California
- Photographers -- California -- San Francisco -- Interviews
- Photography
- Photography -- California -- San Francisco Bay Area

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Adams, Ansel, 1902-1984
- Arnautoff, Victor Mikhail, 1896-1979
- Art Schools in California Oral History Project
- Barnes, Matthew Rackham, 1880-1951
- Corbett, Edward, 1919-
- Cunningham, Imogen, 1883-1976
- Gaw, William A., 1891-1973
- Golden Gate International Exposition (1939-1940 : San Francisco, Calif.)
- Hackett, Dick
- Holub, Florence
- Mackey, Spencer, 1880-1958
- Mondale, Walter F., 1928-

Oldfield, Otis, 1890-1969
Packard, Emmy Lou, 1914-1998
Piazzoni, Gottardo, 1872-1945
Randolph, Lee F., b. 1880
Rivera, Diego, 1886-1957
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (Calif.)
Sinel, Joseph Claude, 1889-1975
Smith, Hassel, 1915-2007
Stanford University. Dept. of Art
Sterne, Maurice, 1878-1957
University of California, San Francisco. School of Fine Arts -- Faculty
University of California, San Francisco. School of Fine Arts -- Students
Weston, Edward, 1886-1958
White, Minor
Wilson, Charis, 1914-2009

Functions:

Art Schools -- California