



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Edward Hopper

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 Edward Hopper
Date:	1959 June 17
Identifier:	AAA.hopper59
Creator:	Hopper, Edward, 1882-1967 Morse, John D., 1906- (Interviewer)
Extent:	1 Sound tape reel (Sound recording; 3 3/4 ips.; 7 in.) 12 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Edward Hopper, 1959 June 17, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Edward Hopper, 1959 June 17, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview is part of the Archives' 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 others.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Edward Hopper, (b. 1882; d. 1967), painter of New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Edward Hopper conducted 17 June 1959, by John D. Morse, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

This interview was conducted in the Board Room of the Whitney Museum. The interview begins with the reading of Mr. Hopper's 1933 "Notes on Painting" in which Hopper states that the aim of painting is to create the most

exact transcription of the most intimate impression of nature. Mr. Hopper then speaks of his change of feelings since the publication of this statement; his realization that the return to nature which he had prophesied has not yet occurred; his move towards realism despite contemporary abstraction (citing Eakins similar position in the 17th century); techniques on canvas and use of zinc; his decision to avoid protective varnishes in the belief that it is the responsibility of the owner to keep the works preserved; his success as a subconscious result of his painting honestly; the belief that "Apartment Houses" crystallized his style from thenceforth. Mr. Hopper then reads a statement that was published in Reality magazine in 1953 in which Hopper posits that art is an outward expression of inner life. In an addendum, John Morse states that a ledger of all of Mr. Hopper's works, catalogue dates, and prices exists. Hopper reads from two statements on art written for other purposes. He also comments on the materials he uses, why he chooses some of the subjects he does, and his predictions about the future of American art.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Painters -- New York (State) -- Interviews
- Painting -- Technique
- Painting, Modern -- 20th century
- Realism

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings