



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Oral History Interviews of Artists Conducted by Susan C. Larsen, 1973-1978, in the Archives of American Art

Ricky Gomez

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund, administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee.

2019/10/04

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical	2
Scope and Contents	2
Arrangement	2
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	
Series 1: Interviews, 1973-1978	4

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interviews of artists conducted by Susan C. Larsen
Date:	1973-1978
Identifier:	AAA.larssusa
Creator:	Larsen, Susan C.
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The oral history interviews conducted by Susan C. Larsen measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1973 to 1978. The majority of the interviews were conducted by Susan Larsen in preparation for her dissertation, "The American Abstract Artists Group: A History and Evaluation of Its Impact Upon American Art, 1936-1974" at Northwestern University in 1975. Interviews on this topic include Rosalind Bengelsdorf Browne, Ilya Bolotowsky, George McNeil, Ruth Vollmer, Balcomb Greene, and Vaclav Vytlacil. Also included are an interview with Charles Carpenter, executor of the Charles Greene Shaw estate; an interview conducted by Sandra Kraskin, at the request of Larsen, with Willem and Elaine de Kooning regarding the Albert Eugene Gallatin Collection and its impact upon artists in the 1930s and 1940s; and an interview with Richard Diebenkorn. These interviews were not used in Larsen's dissertation.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The oral history interviews relating to the American Abstract Artists Group were donated to the Archives of American Art by Susan Larsen in 2001. The interview of Richard Diebenkorn was donated by Larsen in 1981.

Available Formats

All of the sound recordings in the collection were digitized for research access between 2009 and 2014 and are available at Archives of American Art offices.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Ricky Gomez in 2019. The interview of Richard Diebenkorn was added to this collection in 2020 and the title of the collection was changed. The collection was previously titled "Oral History interviews relating to the American Abstract Artists group."

Preferred Citation

Oral history interviews of artists conducted by Susan C. Larsen, 1973-1978. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center. Researchers interested in accessing audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

Susan C. Larsen (1946-) is an art historian in Portland, Maine. She completed her studies at Northwestern University in 1975. She was a professor of art at the University of California between 1975 and 1996. She has also been a curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and at the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, Maine.

Scope and Contents

The oral history interviews conducted by Susan C. Larsen measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1973 to 1978. The majority of the interviews were conducted by Susan Larsen in preparation for her dissertation, "The American Abstract Artists Group: A History and Evaluation of Its Impact Upon American Art, 1936-1974" at Northwestern University in 1975. Interviews on this topic include Rosalind Bengelsdorf Browne, Ilya Bolotowsky, George McNeil, Ruth Vollmer, Balcomb Greene, and Vaclav Vytlačil. Also included are an interview with Charles Carpenter, executor of the Charles Greene Shaw estate; an interview conducted by Sandra Kraskin, at the request of Larsen, with Willem and Elaine de Kooning regarding the Albert Eugene Gallatin Collection and its impact upon artists in the 1930s and 1940s; and an interview with Richard Diebenkorn. These interviews were not used in Larsen's dissertation.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Women art historians
- Women educators

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

American Abstract Artists

Occupations:

Art historians -- Maine -- Portland

Container Listing

Series 1: Interviews, 1973-1978

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1-2)

Scope and Contents: The majority of the interviews were conducted by Susan Larsen in preparation for her dissertation, "The American Abstract Artists Group: A History and Evaluation of Its Impact Upon American Art, 1936-1974" at Northwestern University in 1975. Interviews on this topic include Rosalind Bengelsdorf Browne, Ilya Bolotowsky, George McNeil, Ruth Vollmer, Balcomb Greene, and Vaclav Vytlacil. Also included are an interview with Charles Carpenter, executor of the Charles Greene Shaw estate; an interview conducted by Sandra Kraskin, at the request of Larsen, with Willem and Elaine de Kooning regarding the Albert Eugene Gallatin Collection and its impact upon artists in the 1930s and 1940s; and an interview with Richard Diebenkorn. These interviews were not used in Larsen's dissertation. The sound quality of the Diebenkorn interview is extremely poor.

Box 1, Folder 1, Item 1-2 Rosalind Bengelsdorf Browne, 1973 January 7
2 Sound cassettes

Box 1, Folder 1, Item 3-4 Ilya Bolotowsky, 1973 January 29
2 Sound cassettes

Box 1, Folder 1, Item 5-6 Ruth Vollmer, 1973 January 30
2 Sound cassettes
[Digital Content: Interview with Ruth Vollmer](#)
Notes: Includes transcript.

Box 1, Folder 2, Item 1-2 Vaclav Vytlacil, 1974 January 10
2 Sound cassettes

Box 1, Folder 2, Item 3 George McNeil, 1974 January 12
1 Sound cassette

Box 1, Folder 2, Item 4 Charles Carpenter, 1976 September 8
1 Sound tape reel

Box 1, Folder 2, Item 5 Willem and Elaine de Kooning, circa 1978
1 Sound cassette

Box 1, Folder 2, Item 6-7 Balcomb Greene, undated
2 Sound cassettes

Box 2 Richard Diebenkorn, 1977, May 24-June 2
5 Sound cassettes
[Digital Content: Interview with Robert Diebenkorn](#)

Notes: Includes transcript.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)