



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Russell and Jean Lee

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Russell and Jean Lee
Date:	1964 June 2
Identifier:	AAA.lee64
Creator:	Lee, Russell, 1903-1986 (Interviewee) Doud, Richard Keith (Interviewer) Lee, Jean (Interviewee)
Extent:	36 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Russell and Jean Lee, 1964 June 2, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Russell and Jean Lee, 1964 June 2, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview conducted as part of the Archives of American Art's New Deal and the Arts project, which includes over 400 interviews of artists, administrators, historians, and others involved with the federal government's art programs and the activities of the Farm Security Administration in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Available Formats

Transcript: 35mm microfilm reel 3697 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

Biographical / Historical

Russell Lee (1903-1986) was a photographer with the Farm Security Administration. Jean Russell was an administrator under Paul Vanderbilt with the Farm Security Administration of Austin, Tex.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Russell and Jean Lee conducted 1964 June 2, by Richard Doud, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Russell speaks of his background and education; his early interest in photography; meeting Roy Stryker and Ben Shahn; early assignments with FSA covering floods and droughts in the Midwest; overcoming technical problems while traveling around; cameras he experimented with; working in small towns and rural areas; working under Roy Stryker. He recalls John Vachon, Arthur Rothstein, and Walker Evans. Jean speaks of her first association with the FSA and working under Paul Vanderbilt. Both give personal opinions of the value of the work produced by the FSA, and speak of feelings toward the rural people who were the focus of the FSA project.

General

Originally recorded on 1 sound tape reel. Reformatted in 2010 as 2 digital wav files. Duration is 1 hr., 44 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Documentary photography
- Photographers -- Texas -- Austin -- Interviews
- Photography, Artistic

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Evans, Walker, 1903-1975
- New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
- Rothstein, Arthur, 1915-1985
- United States. Farm Security Administration. Historical Section. Photographs
- Vachon, John, 1914-1975
- Vanderbilt, Paul

Occupations:

- Arts administrators -- Texas -- Austin -- Interviews