



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with Catherine Murphy

Funding for this interview was provided by the Lichtenberg Family Foundation.

Archives of American Art  
750 9th Street, NW  
Victor Building, Suite 2200  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

## Table of Contents

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Collection Overview .....        | 1 |
| Administrative Information ..... | 1 |
| Scope and Contents.....          | 1 |
| Scope and Contents.....          | 2 |
| Biographical / Historical.....   | 1 |
| Names and Subjects .....         | 2 |

## Collection Overview

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Repository:</b> | Archives of American Art   |
| <b>Title:</b>      | Oral history interview with Catherine Murphy                                   |
| <b>Identifier:</b> | AAA.murphy17   |
| <b>Date:</b>       | 2017 March 21 and 23   |
| <b>Extent:</b>     | 5 Items (sound files (4 hr., 27 min.); digital, wav)<br>130 Pages (Transcript) |
| <b>Creator:</b>    | Murphy, Catherine, 1946-<br>McElhinney, James Lancel, 1952-                    |
| <b>Language:</b>   | English .  |

---

## 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

Audio: ACCESS RESTRICTED; written permission required.

---

## Biographical / Historical

Interviewee Catherine Murphy (1946- ) is a painter in Poughkeepsie, New York. Interviewer James McElhinney (1952- ) is a painter and educator of New York, New York.

---

## Scope and Contents

An interview of Catherine Murphy, conducted 2017 March 21 and 23, by James McElhinney, for the Archives of American Art at Murphy's home in Poughkeepsie, New York.

## Scope and Contents

Murphy discusses growing up in Lexington, Massachusetts; her experience attending Pratt; her first exhibitions with the First Street Gallery; her review by Scott Burton in *Art in America*, joining Donald Droll gallery; her relationship with dealer Xavier Fourcade; her working process, sketching to canvas and her palette; her husband Harry Roseman and their relationship to Joseph Cornell; her reflections on the art world(s), her recollections of the Educational Alliance and representations painters and arguments about form, her experiences joining a cooperative gallery; showing in the Whitney Annual; she recalls Lexington, Massachusetts and early paintings of her backyard; she discusses joining the American Academy of Arts and Letters; she discusses class and mannerisms of representational painters; she describes her relationship to the art market; she discusses her approach to teaching at Yale and her ongoing relationship to teaching, she describes the use of form and geometry in her work. Murphy also recalls Xavier Fourcade, Yvonne Ranier, Rudy Burkhardt, Lois Dodd, Marcia Tucker, Sylvia Plimack Mangold, Michael Mazur, Rackstraw Downes, Philip Pearlstein, Fairfield Porter, John Walker, Jack Tworkov, Winifred Lutz, Gretna Campbell, Al Held, among others.

---

## 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) -- New York -- Interviews  
Women artists -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Sound recordings