Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Joe Overstreet

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Joe Overstreet
Date:	2010 Mar 17-18
Identifier:	AAA.overst10
Creator:	Overstreet, Joe, 1933-2019 (Interviewee) Richards, Judith Olch (Interviewer)
Extent:	6 Items (Sound recording, master: 6 memory cards (5 hr., 15 min.); secure digital; 1.25 in.) 120 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Joe Overstreet, 2010 Mar 17-18, Transcript

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

The transcript and recording are open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Interviewee Joe Overstreet (1933-2019) was an abstract artist in New York, N.Y. Interviewer Judith Olch Richards (1947-) is former Executive director of iCI in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Joe Overstreet conducted 2010 March 17-18, by Judith Olch Richards, for the Archives of American Art, at Overstreet's home and studio in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

Overstreet speaks of his family and childhood in Mississippi; introduction to art at a young age and moving to New York City, discovering painting; working at Disney and later Disneyland; studies at the California School of Fine Arts; studio on Grant Ave and the art community of San Francisco; shows with Merton Simpson and Spanierman Gallery LLC; invention of Curvism; interest in social issues and the Civil Rights movement; encounters with Billie Holliday and racial tensions; the evolution of Overstreet's process and style; the history of his paintings destroyed on 9/11; Overstreet also recalls Raymond Howell, Roy O. Disney, Al Williams, Diego Rivera, Bob Kaufman, Sargent Johnson, Merton Simpson, Romare Bearden, Frank Stella, Dominique Menils and others.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

African American artists
African American painters
Civil rights

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Occupations:

Painters -- New York (State) -- New York