



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Fairfield Porter

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Fairfield Porter
Date:	1968 June 6
Identifier:	AAA.porter68
Creator:	Porter, Fairfield (Interviewee) Cummings, Paul (Interviewer)
Extent:	65 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Fairfield Porter, 1968 June 6, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Fairfield Porter, 1968 June 6, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

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 others.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Fairfield Porter (1907-1975) was a painter and critic from Southampton, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Fairfield Porter conducted 1968 June 6, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents

Porter speaks of his family background and Harvard education; the Art Students League; his involvement with Marxism and his work as an art critic for "Art News" and "The Nation". He discusses his portrait commissions, his choice of subject matter, theories of realism versus abstraction and drawing versus color, and the role of the

unconscious and the accidental in his art. He recalls Thomas Hart Benton, Jacques Maroger, Elaine and Willem de Kooning, Walter Auerbach, Thomas B. Hess, Clement Greenberg, and Alex Katz.

General

Originally recorded on 1 sound tape reel. Reformatted in 2010 as 3 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 24 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art criticism -- United States
- Painters -- New York (State) -- Interviews
- Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- New York (State)

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Benton, Thomas Hart, 1889-1975
- Coryllis, Peter
- De Kooning, Elaine
- De Kooning, Willem, 1904-1997
- Greenberg, Clement, 1909-1994
- Hess, Thomas B.
- Katz, Alex, 1927-
- Maroger, Jacques, 1884-1962

Occupations:

- Art critics -- New York (State) -- Interviews