



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Wallace Putnam

Funding for the digital preservation of this interview was provided by a grant from the Save America's Treasures Program of the National Park Service.

Table of Contents

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

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Wallace Putnam
Date:	1982 Aug. 13-20
Identifier:	AAA.putnam82
Creator:	Putnam, Wallace, 1899-1989 (Interviewee) Berman, Avis (Interviewer) Mark Rothko and His Times Oral History Project
Extent:	36 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Wallace Putnam, 1982 Aug. 13-20, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Wallace Putnam, 1982 Aug. 13-20, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview was conducted as part of the Archives of American Art's Mark Rothko and his Times oral history project, with funding provided by the Mark Rothko Foundation.

Acquisition Information

Others interviewed on the project (by various interviewers) include: Sonia Allen, Sally Avery, Ben-Zion, Bernard Braddon, Ernest Briggs, Rhys Caparn, Elaine de Kooning, Herbert Ferber, Esther Gottlieb, Juliette Hays, Sidney Janis, Buffie Johnson, Jacob Kainen, Louis Kaufman, Jack Kufeld, Katharine Kuh, Stanley Kunitz, Joseph Liss, Dorothy Miller, Betty Parsons, Rebecca Reis, Maurice Roth, Sidney Schectman, Aaron Siskind, Joseph Solman, Hedda Sterne, Jack Tworokov, Esteban Vicente and Ed Weinstein. Each has been cataloged separately.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Wallace Putnam (1899-1989) was a painter, writer, lithographer, and draftsman from Yorktown Heights, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Wallace Putnam conducted 1982 Aug. 13-20, by Avis Berman, for the Archives of American Art's Mark Rothko and His Times oral history project.

Scope and Contents

Putnam recalls his youth and art training in Boston, Mass., his move to Hartford, Conn., and friendship with Milton Avery, whom he met when they both worked filing policies at Traveler's Insurance Co. He talks about his and Avery's early careers in New York and his first acquaintance with Mark Rothko. He remembers Rothko's early concerns as an artist, his interest in music, and visits to his studio and home (including catsitting for the Rothko's for three weeks).

General

Originally recorded on 2 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 4 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 57 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Abstract expressionism
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Avery, Milton, 1885-1965
Mark Rothko and His Times Oral History Project
Rothko, Mark, 1903-1970