



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Rebecca Reis

Funding for the transcription of this interview provided by the Smithsonian Institution's Women's Committee. 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.

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Rebecca Reis
<b>Date:</b>	1980
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.reis80
<b>Creator:</b>	Reis, Rebecca G., 1896-1988 (Interviewee) McNaught, William (Interviewer) Mark Rothko and His Times Oral History Project
<b>Extent:</b>	123 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Rebecca Reis, 1980, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Rebecca Reis, 1980, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## 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, Wallace Putnam, Maurice Roth, Sidney Schectman, Aaron Siskind, Joseph Solman, Hedda Sterne, Jack Tworkov, Esteban Vicente and Ed Weinstein. Each has been cataloged separately.

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

Rebecca Reis (1896-1988) was a collector, from New York, New York. She was married to Bernard Reis, one of the executors of Mark Rothko's will.

## Scope and Contents

An interview of Rebecca Reis conducted in 1980, by William McNaught, for the Archives of American Art's Mark Rothko and His Times oral history project.

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## Scope and Contents

Reis speaks of her life in New York City. At their home in the city they entertained artists, art dealers, and other art lovers and had a great desire to provide a haven for people who loved art. Reis recalls many stories of the people they met and supported including Jacques Lipchitz, George Grosz, Jackson Pollock, Peggy Guggenheim, Max Ernst, Marc Chagall, Larry Rivers, Philip Guston, Robert Motherwell, Helen Frankenthaler, William Baziot, Franz Kline, Adolph Gottlieb, and Mark Rothko, the legal case involving Rothko's estate, and Rothko's relationship with Rita Reinhardt. They were particular friends of Peggy Guggenheim. Bernard Reis gave financial advice to many people in the art world. The latter portion of the interviews concentrates on their great friend, Mark Rothko, his suicide, and subsequent court case brought by the family.

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## General

Originally recorded on 4 sound reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 7 digital wav files. Duration is 7 hr., 20 min.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

Abstract expressionism  
Art -- Collectors and collecting -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

### Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Sound recordings

### Names:

Baziot, William, 1912-1963  
Chagall, Marc, 1887-1985  
Ernst, Max, 1891-1976  
Frankenthaler, Helen, 1928-2011  
Gottlieb, Adolph, 1903-1974  
Grosz, George, 1893-1959  
Guggenheim, Peggy, 1898-1979  
Guston, Philip, 1913-1980  
Kline, Franz, 1910-1962  
Lipchitz, Jacques, 1891-1973  
Mark Rothko and His Times Oral History Project  
Motherwell, Robert  
Pollock, Jackson, 1912-1956

Reinhardt, Rita  
Reis, Bernard J.  
Rivers, Larry, 1925-2002  
Rothko, Mark, 1903-1970