



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Ira Spanierman

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Ira Spanierman
<b>Date:</b>	2007 June 6-12
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.spanie07
<b>Creator:</b>	Spanierman, Ira (Interviewee) McElhinney, James Lancel, 1952- (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	63 Pages (Trancript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Ira Spanierman, 2007 June 6-12, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Ira Spanierman, 2007 June 6-12, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## 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.

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## Biographical / Historical

Ira Spanierman is a gallery owner from New York, New York. James McElhinney (1952- ) is a painter and educator from New York, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Ira Spanierman conducted June 6-12, by James McElhinney, for the Archives of American Art, in the Spanierman Gallery, New York, New York. Spanierman speaks of growing up and living in New York City his whole life; the influence of working in his father's antique store; studying English at Syracuse University; how he got involved in the art business; becoming an auctioneer at Savoy Gallery working with silver and arms and armor; his collecting preferences; the influence of the Internet and technology; changes in the art market among buyers and collectors; the development and growth of art auctions; opening his first gallery and what kind of art he showed; interest in dealing 19th and 20th century American art; the kind of clientele he attracted; the Spanierman Gallery catalogues and publication program; publishing and distributing the catalogue raisonn ; working and collaborating with other institutions like the Cooper-Hewitt; working with a panel of scholars to identify work that was fraud; the various kinds of collectors he has dealt with in the past and what kind of collectors he prefers to work with; opening a contemporary

and modern wing to the gallery and the motivation behind that; relationships with artists; exhibiting members of the Ashcan School, the Ten, and the Hudson River School; trying to find artists that have been overlooked in the past and promoting a re-emergence of these figures and their work; a number of mentors in his life including Abe Adler and Roy Leroy; advice for younger collectors; what he sees in the future for the art market; a shift in privately owned art being turned over to museums; the educational aspect of his gallery; future goals of his gallery; the role of the museum today; what he has contributed to the art world; and how he would like to be remembered and thought of in the future. Spanierman also recalls Peter Wilson, Gene Thaw, Lloyd Goodrich, Abigail Gerds, Peter Poskas, Hans Heinrich, Daniel Terra, Jack Warner, Diane and Bruce Halles, Daniel and Rita Fraad, Barbara Newington, Robert Noortman, Ian Woodner, Barbara Novak, Roy Leroy, Abraham Adler, Norman Hirsch and others.

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## General

Originally recorded on 2 sound discs. Reformatted in 2010 as 2 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 21 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:

- Art -- Collectors and collecting
- Art, American -- 19th century
- Art, American -- 20th century
- Ashcan school of art
- Gallery owners -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews
- Hudson River school of landscape painting

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Adler, A. M. (Abraham M), 1902-1985
- Cooper-Hewitt Museum
- Fraad, Daniel
- Fraad, Rita
- Gerds, Abigail
- Goodrich, Lloyd, 1897-1987
- Halles, Bruce
- Halles, Diane
- Heinrich, Hans
- Hirsch, Norman
- Leroy, Roy
- Newington, Barbara
- Noortman, Rob
- Novak, Barbara
- Poskas, Peter
- Savoy Gallery
- Spanierman Gallery

Syracuse University -- Students  
Terra, Daniel J., 1911-1996  
Thaw, Eugene Victor  
Warner, Jack  
Wilson, Peter  
Woodner, Ian