



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with John Stephan

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with John Stephan
<b>Date:</b>	1986 May 20-1987 May 7
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.stepha86
<b>Creator:</b>	Stephan, John Walter, 1906-1995 (Interviewee) Brown, Robert F. (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	10 Items (Sound recording: 10 sound files (6 hr., 54 min.); digital, wav) 100 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with John Stephan, 1986 May 20-1987 May 7, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with John Stephan, 1986 May 20-1987 May 7, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

These interviews are 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.

### Available Formats

Transcript is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

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## Biographical / Historical

John Walter Stephan (1906-1995) was a painter.

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## Scope and Contents

Interview of John Walter Stephan, conducted by Robert F. Brown for the Archives of American Art, at Newport, Rhode Island, on May 20, 1986 and May 7, 1987.

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## Scope and Contents

Stephan speaks of Chicago childhood and adolescence; life during the Depression; the Art Institute of Chicago; the 1930s Chicago leftist movement; the WPA and PWAP; The Tiger's Eye art magazine; Rome artistic and literary society; the New York School of artists; Betty Parsons Gallery; the Surrealists; teaching at

Fairleigh Dickenson University; Hunter College; and his critiques of Pop and contemporary artists. Stephan also recalls Ruth Walgreen, Dart Stephan, Rainey Bennett, Clyfford Still, Juan de Diego, Caleb Harrison, Aaron Bohrod, Dudley Crafts Watson, Jack Jones, George Constant, Connie Moran, CJ Bulliet, Rudolph Weisenborn, Inez Cunningham, Eva Watson-Schütze, Jesus Torres, Edgar Miller, Katherine Kuh, Increase Robinson, Peterpaul Ott, Mitchell Siporin, Raymond Breinin, Holger Cahill, John Fabian, Eddie Millman, Winn Nathanson, Fairfield Porter, Norman MacLeish, Ossip Zadkine, Betty Parsons, Alfonso Ossorio, Max Ernst, Julien Levy, Peggy Guggenheim, Bill de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Barney Newman, Nicolas Calas, Bob Motherwell, Monroe Wheeler, Myra Shapiro, Clement Greenberg, Harold Rosenberg, Alfred Knopf, Robert Flaherty, Jaime Sebartés, Frederick Kiesler, Robert Matta, Mario Praz, Bill Denby, Ben Johnson, Milton Gendel, Walter Auerbach, Jerry Wilhelm, Eugene Goossens, and others.

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## General

Originally recorded on 6 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 10 digital wav files. Duration is 6 hr., 54 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, Modern -- 20th century
- Great Depression
- New York school of art
- Pop art
- Surrealism

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- Art Institute of Chicago
- Bennett, Rainey
- Betty Parsons Gallery
- Bohrod, Aaron
- Breinin, Raymond, 1910-
- Bulliet, C. J. (Clarence Joseph), 1883-1952
- Cahill, Holger, 1887-1960
- Calas, Nicolas
- Constant, George
- Coryllis, Peter
- Cunningham, Inez
- De Kooning, Willem, 1904-1997
- Denby, Bill
- Ernst, Max, 1891-1976
- Fabian, John
- Fairleigh Dickinson University -- Faculty
- Flaherty, Robert Joseph, 1884-1951
- Gendel, Milton

Goossen, E. C.  
Greenberg, Clement, 1909-1994  
Guggenheim, Peggy, 1898-  
Harrison, Caleb  
Hunter College  
Johnson, Ben  
Jones, Jack  
Kiesler, Frederick  
Kline, Franz, 1910-1962  
Knopf, Alfred  
Kuh, Katharine  
Levy, Julien  
MacLeish, Norman, 1898-1949  
Matta, 1912-2002  
Miller, Edgar, 1899-1993  
Millman, Edward, 1907-1964  
Moran, Connie, 1898-  
Motherwell, Robert  
Nathanson, Winn  
Newman, Barnett, 1905-1970  
Ossorio, Alfonso, 1916-1990  
Ott, Peterpaul, 1895-1992  
Parsons, Betty  
Porter, Fairfield  
Praz, Mario, 1896-1982  
Public Works of Art Project  
Robinson, Increase, 1890-1981  
Rosenberg, Harold, 1906-1978  
Rothko, Mark, 1903-1970  
Sebartes, Jaime  
Shapiro, Myra  
Siporin, Mitchell, 1910-1976  
Stephan, Dart  
Still, Clyfford, 1904-1980  
Torres, Jesús  
United States. Work Projects Administration  
Walgreen, Ruth  
Watson, Dudley Crafts, 1885-  
Watson-Schütze, Eva, 1867-1935  
Weisenborn, Rudolph, b. 1881  
Wheeler, Monroe, 1899-  
Wilhelm, Jerry  
Zadkine, Ossip  
de Diego, Juan

Occupations:

Painters -- Interviews