



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Dorothea Tanning

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Dorothea Tanning
Date:	1990 July 11-November 5
Identifier:	AAA.tannin90
Creator:	Tanning, Dorothea, 1910-2012 (Interviewee) Shikler, Barbara (Interviewer)
Extent:	187 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Audio: Oral history interview with Dorothea Tanning, 1990 July 11-November 5, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt) Digital Content: Oral history interview with Dorothea Tanning, 1990 July 11-November 5, Transcript

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. Funding for this interview was provided by The John Sloan Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Available Formats

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

Restrictions

This interview is open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Dorothea Tanning (1910-2012) was a painter, designer, and writer from Galesburg, Illinois. She lived and worked in New York City. Her early work was in the surrealist style. She was married to fellow artist Max Ernst (1891-1976).

Scope and Contents

An interview of Dorothea Tanning conducted 1990 July 11-November 5, by Barbara Shikler, for the Archives of American Art. Tanning discusses life in Illinois, New York, Arizona, and France. She recalls artists Max Ernst, to whom she was married; Andre Breton, Julien Levy, George Balanchine, Yves Tanguy, and Kay Sage. She discusses

her past jobs in commercial art and department store art; working on ballet sets and with costumes; her writing, including her book, "Birthday," in addition to her painting. She discusses her process, materials, and exhibitions. She also recalls her work in sculpture and collage. She also recalls her experiences the era of McCarthyism.

General

Originally recorded on 5 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 5 hr., 16 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- United States
Surrealism -- New York (State) -- New York
Women artists
Women painters

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Ernst, Max, 1891-1976

Occupations:

Painters -- New York (State) -- New York