



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with A. Alfred Taubman

Funding for this interview was provided by Barbara Fleischman.

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# Table of Contents

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

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with A. Alfred Taubman
<b>Date:</b>	2013 June 6 - July 13
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.taubma13
<b>Creator:</b>	Taubman, A. Alfred (Interviewee) Berman, Avis (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	2 Items (Sound recording: 2 sound files (2 hr., 28 min.); digital, wav) 53 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	Undetermined .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with A. Alfred Taubman, 2013 June 6 - July 13, Transcript</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.

### Related Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds the papers of A. Alfred Taubman.

### Available Formats

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

### Restrictions

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

### Restrictions

Sound recording: ACCESS RESTRICTED; written premission required.

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## Biographical / Historical

Interviewee A. Alfred Taubman (1924-2015) was an art collector, entrepreneur, and philanthropist in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Interviewer Avis Berman (1949- ) is an art historian and author in New York, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

An oral history interview with A. Alfred Taubman 2013 June 6-July 13, conducted by Avis Berman, for the Archives of American Art and the Center for the History of Collecting in America at the Frick Art Reference Library of The Frick Collection.

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## Scope and Contents

Taubman speaks of growing up in Pontiac; Michigan, his love of drawing; attending the University of Michigan; his early interest in architecture; collecting stamps; his father's involvement with farming; importance of learning drawing; his experiences with dyslexia; moving to Detroit and having kids; collecting artwork; meeting artists and dealers; his involvement with the Detroit Institute of Arts; financial troubles in Detroit; Detroit history; Josef Hoffmann furniture; his time in jail; Sotheby's financial trouble and selling works of art; his children and grandchildren; his houses; displaying artwork; his interest in sculpture; the competition of collecting; sculptures in shopping malls; his friendship with Roy and Dorothy Lichtenstein; collecting artwork and working with William R. Acquavella; his time owning Sotheby's and its impact on collecting; missing out on purchasing a blue period Picasso; collecting in depth and types of work he doesn't often collect; Russian artwork; Ms. Taubman's collecting interests; his time on the board of the Whitney Museum of American Art; working with I.M. Pei; commissioning Richard Meier to build a house; and changes that he brought to Sotheby's. Taubman also recalls Carlos Lopez, Reva Kolodney, Barbara Fleischman, Bill Poplack, Richard Bellamy, Leo Castelli, Green Gallery, Henry Geldzahler, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark di Suvero, James Rosenquist, OK Harris Gallery, Antoine Poncét, Domenico di Pace Beccafumi, Detroit Institute of Arts, Coleman Young, Richard Gerstl, Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Michael Graves, Jean Arp, John Chamberlain, College for Creative Studies, Sam Sachs, Arman, Crutchfield, Paul von Ringelheim, Roy Lichtenstein, Seymour Evans, Richard Feigen, Illeana Sonnabend, Larry Gagosian, Pablo Picasso, Niarchos, Balthus, Edward Hopper, Marsha Miro, Tom Armstrong, I.M. Pei, Vincent Ponte, and Richard Meier.

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## System Details

Recorded on an Olympus WS-300M.

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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 -- Michigan

Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Sound recordings

Names:

Acquavella, William R.  
Art Collectors: A Project in Partnership with the Center for the History of Collecting in America  
at The Frick Collection  
Hoffmann, Josef Franz Maria, 1870-1956

Lichtenstein, Roy, 1923-1997  
Meier, Richard, 1934-  
Pei, I. M., 1917-