



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with George Tsutakawa

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.

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

Table of Contents

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

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with George Tsutakawa
Date:	1983 September 8-19
Identifier:	AAA.tsutak83
Creator:	Tsutakawa, George (Interviewee) Kingsbury, Martha, 1941- (Interviewer)
Extent:	119 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with George Tsutakawa, 1983 September 8-19, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with George Tsutakawa, 1983 September 8-19, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview is part of the Archives' Northwest Oral History Project, begun in 1982 to document the Northwest artistic community through interviews with painters, sculptors, craftsmen, educators, curators, and others, in Oregon, Washington and Montana.

Location of Originals

Transcript also available at the University of Washington, Manuscripts Collection, and at the Oregon Historical Society.

Available Formats

Transcript available on line.

Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

George Tsutakawa (1910-1997) was a Japanese American painter and sculptor based in Seattle, Washington. Born in Seattle in 1910, he moved with his mother to Fukuyama, Japan, at the age of seven. While there, he took an interest in art, and was influenced by traditional Japanese practices. Returning to Seattle at age 16, he continued his education in art at the University of Washington. His interest in sculpture led to numerous commissions for fountains worldwide, a form that combined his experiences in both the Pacific Northwest and Japan. During his career, Tsutakawa designed, built, and installed over 70 fountains.

Scope and Contents

An interview of George Tsutakawa conducted 1983 September 8-19, by Martha Kingsbury, for the Archives of American Art's Northwest Oral History Project, in Seattle, Washington.

Scope and Contents

Tsutakawa speaks of his youth in Japan and Seattle, and the importance of a bicultural family and education on his development; the influence of European art magazines and American movies in Japan; family members who were influential; his early sculpture; Alexander Archipenko; the Asian art community in Seattle; teaching at the University of Washington School of Architecture; Bauhaus philosophy; the Seattle Public Library fountain; his World War II experiences; art and World's Fairs; fountains he has sculpted and his feelings about them; and permanency in art.

General

Originally recorded on 7 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 14 digital wav files. Duration is 6 hr., 43 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Asian American art
- Asian American artists
- Asian American educators
- Asian American painters
- Asian American sculptors
- Fountains -- Washington (State) -- Seattle
- Japanese American art
- Japanese American artists

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Archipenko, Alexander, 1887-1964

Occupations:

- Educators -- Washington (State) -- Seattle
- Sculptors -- Washington (State) -- Seattle