



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Jirayr Zorthian

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.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Jirayr Zorthian
Date:	1997 January 28-July 9
Identifier:	AAA.zorthi97
Creator:	Zorthian, Jirayr (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer)
Extent:	90 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Jirayr Zorthian, 1997 January 28-July 9, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Jirayr Zorthian, 1997 January 28-July 9, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

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 the transcription of this interview provided by Pasadena Art Alliance

Biographical / Historical

Jirayr Zorthian (1911-2004) was a painter from California.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Jirayr Zorthian conducted 1997 January 28-July 9, by Paul J. Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art, at Zorthian's home and studio, in Fair Oaks, California.

Scope and Contents

Zorthian describes his property, Art Ranch, and its meaning to him; his personal and educational background, including studying at Yale; early mural work and his inspiration to move west; settling in Altadena, California in 1945; his description of his property as "The Center for Research and Development of Industrial Discards with Emphasis

on Aesthetics"; bohemianism and his desire to stay free of conventions of work; friendships with artists and socially prominent people.

Scope and Contents

He discusses a profile of him in L.A. Weekly, by Dave Gardetta; his antipathy towards galleries and his "outsider" relationship to the artworld; his recent nude drawings and paintings, the Jennifer Series, and his views the work illustrates social themes and celebration of the body; and his self-concept as an artist and perceptions of him and his work.

General

Originally recorded on 5 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 41 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Painters -- California -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings