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Archives of American Art

Interview with Ed Ruscha, circa 1981

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WEBVTT

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: you still get it with the oldies

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Yeah well see the, I think the original impression on me was that was, was one of being I was confronted with something that was profound.

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You know, I'm not speaking about the actual artwork. I didn't see the actual artwork until for about 10 years later.

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It's the. I saw a tiny postage stamp size reproduction

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Jesus

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: in a magazine and I knew from right then that there was something going on there.

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: And that drew you

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: And so, for that reason magazine reproductions and paintings and paintings, and I think an artist can be influenced by just flipping through art magazines. You know.

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Totally

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: And you can get, you can drive true protein power from imagery by seeing a reproduction of the size of a postage stamp as opposed to confronting the so-called real thing.

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: I don't think it is that important to, to confront the real thing.

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: You know. It's interesting you know it's the reverse of what most people contend, you know.

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Well, imagery is just so up for grabs in modern communication that ah.

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Well, the thing is that it just moves so fast now and you are seeing that in relationship without image painting or new expressionist painting it just going by, we don't even have generations now, its just going back weeks.

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Hmm.

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: And

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: But it's all subject to the same sort of style cycle, and most

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Oh yeah

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: people are really out of style.

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Well it's all cyclical, it's truly cyclical. And, ah.

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Oh yeah. Excuse me. What's bothering me about it now is that it is all contextual.

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: That's kind of the mature attitude to take about it.

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You know, it's that all these things do go in and out and you know the world's greatest artist have been forgotten through the centuries, ah, da Vinci included.

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Do you see yourself painting more again now?

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Yes

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: There seems to be a sense of returning back to it

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Yeah, yeah, no no I am actually painting, painting on canvas.

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Actively painting? Actually painting.

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Yeah. Hmm hmm.

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: Right

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: With traditional oil paints

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<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: What a? Why?

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<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: Ah, well I

<i>Jan Butterfield</i>: All of a sudden.

<i>Ed Ruscha</i>: guess lushness of contact or something.



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