



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with Billy Al Bengston

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Billy Al Bengston
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.bengst80
<b>Date:</b>	1980 September 9
<b>Extent:</b>	38 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Creator:</b>	Bengston, Billy Al Larsen, Susan C.
<b>Language:</b>	English

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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 others.

### Available Formats

Transcript: 35mm microfilm reel 3196 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

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## Biographical / Historical

Billy Al Bengston (1934- ) is a painter from Venice, California.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Billy Al Bengston conducted 1980 September 9, by Susan Larsen, for the Archives of American Art.

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## Scope and Contents

Bengston speaks of his youth and education, the development of his interest in art, his short career in ceramics, his affiliation with the Ferus Gallery, the arts community in Los Angeles in the early 1950s, and his motives and methods of painting. He recalls Kenneth Price and Edward Ruscha.

## General

Originally recorded on 2 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 3 digital wav files. Duration is 1 hr., 20 min.

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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:

Painters -- California -- Interviews  
Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- California  
Pottery -- 20th century -- California

### Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Sound recordings

### Names:

Ferus Gallery (Los Angeles, Calif.)  
Price, Kenneth, 1935-2012  
Ruscha, Edward

### Occupations:

Ceramicists -- California -- Los Angeles