



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with Ed Bereal

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
Scope and Contents.....	1
Scope and Contents.....	1
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 Ed Bereal
<b>Date:</b>	2016 February 13
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.bereal16
<b>Creator:</b>	Bereal, Edmund, 1937- (Interviewee) Drohojowska-Philp, Hunter (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	7 Items (sound files (2 hrs., 45 min.); digital, wav) 63 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Ed Bereal, 2016 February 13, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Ed Bereal, 2016 February 13, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

---

## 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.

### Available Formats

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

---

## Biographical / Historical

Ed Bereal (1937- ) is an assemblage artist who worked in Los Angeles, California. Hunter Drohojowska-Philp is an art critic and writer from Beverly Hills, California.

---

## Scope and Contents

An interview of Ed Bereal, conducted 2016 February 13, by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp, for the Archives of American Art at the home of artist Warren Blakely, in Los Angeles, California.

---

## Scope and Contents

Bereal discusses growing up in Riverside, California during World War Two; his parents, grandparents, and aunts and uncles and their musical activities in and around San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles; the

racial make-up of Riverside during the '40s along with the effects of being near March Air Force Base; his time in school and early interest in art and illustration; his applications to art schools and eventual acceptance to Chouinard; the influence of Robert Irwin and Richards Ruben at Chouinard as well as the exposure to national and international artists brought there by Virginia Dwan; the Huysman Gallery group show War Babies in 1961 and the subsequent controversy; his work as an artist under a stipend from Ms. Dwan; his time teaching at UC Riverside and UC Irvine; and his relationships with his wives, girlfriends, and his daughters. Bereal also describes the impact of the Watts Riots in 1965 on his art and his family; his growing political awareness as a black man living in America at the time; his decision to leave the traditional art world and focus on political theater with his guerilla theater troupe Bodacious Buggerrilla; his time at the Watts Writers Workshop with Budd Schulberg; his focus on creating sets and environments for his theater troupe; the FBI questioning of his troupe and the subsequent decision to close it down and start the television studio Bodacious TV Works; his relocation with his wife Barbara Sternberger in the '90s to Bellingham, Washington to teach and work; his interest in holographic art and creating illusion in art; his perspective on the history of black artists in the Los Angeles area in the 1950s and '60s; his show from the same year as the interview at the Harmony Murphy Gallery and the incorporation of graffiti in that show. Bereal recalls Emerson Woelffer, Jerry McMillan, Ron Miyashiro, Laura Sterns, Gerald Buck, and Meade Lux Lewis along with Ed Kienholz, Joe Goode, Mary Pautsch, Barbara Temken, Barbara Lewis, Mike Frimkess, Dr. Cary Kaufman, Buster Jones, and Buddy Jones, among others.

---

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

African American artists

Types of Materials:

Interviews

Sound recordings

Occupations:

Assemblage artists -- California -- Los Angeles