



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Ross Bleckner

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Ross Bleckner
Identifier:	AAA.bleckn16
Date:	2016 July 6-8
Extent:	2 Items (sound files (6 hrs., 23 min.); digital, wav) 151 Pages (Transcript)
Creator:	Bleckner, Ross Yablonsky, Linda, 1948-
Language:	English .

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

Interviewee Ross Bleckner (1949-) is a painter in New York, New York. Interviewer Linda Yablonsky (1948-) is a writer in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Ross Bleckner conducted 2016 July 6 and 8, by Linda Yablonsky, for the Archives of American Art's Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project, at Bleckner's studio in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

Bleckner speaks of his early childhood on Long Island, New York; psychoanalysis treatment as a child; early sexual experiences; his journaling practice; attending college at NYU; exposure to New York City's

gallery scene in the late 1960s; spending the summer of 1970 in San Francisco; enrolling in CalArts' first graduating class; moving back to New York in 1975; his approach to painting; his body of gallery exhibitions; the beginning of the the AIDS epidemic; the New York nightclub scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s; the artists, art collectors, art dealers, and celebrities he socialized with in the 1980s; his career as an art professor; the effect of the AIDS epidemic on his paintings; his work as an AIDS activist; critical responses to his AIDS-related paintings; changes in the art world and market since the 1990s; and his greatest personal influences. Bleckner also recalls Sol Lewitt, Chuck Close, Howard Conant, Irving Sandler, Lizzie Borden, Paula Cooper, Julian Schnabel, Barbara Kruger, Betty Cunningham, David Salle, Eric Fischl, David Diao, Thomas Ammann, Andy Warhol, Alexis Rockman, Bianca Jagger, Gary Indiana, Michael Kimmelman, and others.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

AIDS (Disease) and the arts
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project