



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Lia Gangitano

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives of American Art |
| Title: | Oral history interview with Lia Gangitano |
| Identifier: | AAA.gangit17 |
| Date: | 2017 February 5-6 |
| Extent: | 4 Items (sound files (5 hrs., 59 min.); digital, wav) 74 Pages (Transcript) |
| Creator: | Gangitano, Lia, 1968- Fialho, Alex, 1989- |
| 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

Lia Gangitano (1968-) is the Director of PARTICIPANT INC., in New York, New York. Alex Fialho (1989-) is a curator and arts writer and works as Programs Director for Visual AIDS in New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Lia Gangitano, conducted 2017 February 5-6, by Alex Fialho, for the Archives of American Art's Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project, at Gangitano's home in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

Gangitano speaks of growing up in a staunchly Roman Catholic family; the religious interests of her family directly influencing her appreciation for art through formative trips to Italy; her parents' choice to raise

her and her sister in suburban Connecticut in an effort to Americanize them; his father's activity in the Democratic party; the high rate of suicide and drug use in her community growing up; becoming aware of HIV through friends who were intravenous drug users; regarding her work study program at ICA Boston as her main education; her involvement in Women's Action Coalition; spending nine weeks painting during a residency at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the realization that she didn't like her own art and instead wanted to support other people's art; the formative experience of co-curating Dress Codes; the path she took from ICA Boston to her own alternative space; Boston School show at ICA Boston; the survey of Mark Morrisroe's work at ICA Boston; her experience at Thread Waxing; navigating the process of starting a business when she founded Participant, Inc.; her desire to establish an artists' space that was non-commercial; the group exhibition Dead Flowers; Greer Lankton's retrospective at Participant; finding that people want a more active role in their art experience through Julie Tolentino's For You show; the unique mission of Participant in the art world; the desire to create and maintain a space for people to remember as well as follow their dreams. Gangitano also recalls Avery Gordon, Gayatri Spivak, Stephen Pfohl, Andrew Tavarelli, Elisabeth Sussman, Mark Morrisroe, Pat Hearn, Catherine Opie, Ron Athey, Frank Wagner, Ramsey McPhillips,.

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
Arts administrators -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project