



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Hunter Reynolds

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Hunter Reynolds
Date:	2016 August 10-September 7
Identifier:	AAA.reynol16
Creator:	Reynolds, Hunter, 1959- (Interviewee) Kerr, Theodore (Interviewer)
Extent:	10 Items (sound files (6 hrs., 1 min.); digital, wav) 87 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Hunter Reynolds, 2016 August 10-September 7, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Hunter Reynolds, 2016 August 10-September 7, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

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 Hunter Reynolds (1959-2022) was a performance artist and activist in New York, New York. Interviewer Theodore Kerr (1979-) is a writer and organizer in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Hunter Reynolds, conducted 2016 August 10-September 7, by Theodore Kerr, for the Archives of American Art's Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project, at Fales Library in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

Reynolds speaks of his childhood in Minnesota, Florida, and California; early sexual experiences; attending Otis College of Art and Design; moving to New York in 1984 and becoming part of the East Village scene; the beginning of the AIDS crisis and safe sex discourse; his involvement in ACT UP; being diagnosed with HIV and starting ART+ Positive in Los Angeles in 1989; his body of artwork, performances, exhibitions, and activist actions; resonances between AIDS activism of the 1980s and '90s and contemporary activism around the Black Lives Matter movement; the politics of identifying as an HIV-positive artist; experimenting with drag and developing his alter ego Patina du Prey; performances with "Memorial Dress," "The Banquet," "Dervish Dress;" "Mummification" performance; living and working in Germany in the 1990s; and his personal struggle with long-term HIV survivorship; his "disaster" series and "Survial AIDS" series; and making his life, past and present, his personal masterpiece. Reynolds also recalls Kathy Burkhart, Susan Silas, Fred Tomaselli, Scott Hill, Leslie Dahlgren, Paula Cooper, Ray Navarro, Mark Kostabi, Bill Dobbs, Dread Scott, Kim Levin, Simon Watson, Maxine Henryson, Herr Vishka, Tony Feher, Jim Hodges, Dylan Naylor, Kathleen White, Krista Naylor, 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
- Performance art
- Performance artists -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project

Occupations:

- Political activists -- New York (State) -- New York