



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Julie Tolentino

Funded by the Keith Haring Foundation.

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.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Julie Tolentino
Date:	2018 April 11-12
Identifier:	AAA.tolent18
Creator:	Tolentino, Julie (Interviewee) Fialho, Alex, 1989- (Interviewer)
Extent:	7 Items (sound files (6 hr., 14 min.) Audio; digital, wav) 79 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Julie Tolentino, 2018 April 11-12, Transcript

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.

Restrictions

The transcript and audio recording are open for research. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Julie Tolentino (1964-) is a visual and performance artist in New York and Joshua Tree, California. Alex Fialho (1989-) is a curator and arts writer who is the Programs Director for Visual AIDS in New York, New York.

Scope and Contents

An interview with Julie Tolentino conducted 2018 April 11 and 12, by Alex Fialho, for the Archives of American Art's Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project, at a friend's apartment in the East Village, New York.

Scope and Contents

Tolentino speaks of her childhood in San Francisco; her family dynamics, including caring for her developmentally disabled sister; Harvey Milk's assassination; early exposure to dance and art-making; early exposure to queer nightlife; briefly pursuing dance training in Los Angeles after high school; soon thereafter moving to New York; volunteering for the National Gay and Lesbian Suicide Hotline; her involvement with ACT UP; experiences of AIDS-related grief; her close friendships during this time; continuing her dance education and performance practice in the late '80s and '90s; founding and operating the Clit Club; changes in the landscape of queerness during the '90s; managing the performance companies of David Roussève and Ron Athey; the beginning of her solo practice with Mestiza-Que Ojos Bonitos Tienes; the installation Marks of My Civilization; the beginning of ART+; her role in Madonna's book Sex; her reflections on the visibility of her body; developing the Lesbian AIDS Project's Safer Sex Handbook; her performance works For You, Sky Remains the Same, and Honey; her video work evidence; and her awareness of the past's construction and meaning in the present. Tolentino also recalls Page Hodel, Doug McDowell, Maxine Wolfe, Ann Northrup, David Robinson, Ray Navarro, Aldo Hernandez, Anthony Ledesma, Lola Flash, Catherine Gund, Zoe Leonard, Robert Garcia, Jocelyn Taylor, Martina Yamin, Cookie Mueller, Diamanda Galas, D.M. Machuca, Pigpen, John Lovett, Alessandro Codagnone, John Killacky, Lia Gangitano, Alistair Fate, Steven Meisel, Cythia Madansky, Kim Christensen, Kate Clinton, Lori Seid, Ori Flomin, Abigail Severance, and others.

System Details

Recorded on Tascam DR-100MKII R00326.

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
- AIDS activists
- Artists (LGBTQ)
- Latino and Latin American artists
- Lesbian artists
- Women artists
- Women performance artists

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- ACT UP New York (Organization)
- Athey, Ron
- Madonna, 1958-
- Visual Arts and the AIDS Epidemic: An Oral History Project

Occupations:

- Choreographers

Performance artists -- New York (State) -- New York