Finding aid for the
Laura Volkerding Miscellaneous Acquisitions collection,
circa 1970s - 1989

AG 256

Finding aid created by Alexis Peregoy, 2018
Laura Volkerding Miscellaneous Acquisitions, circa 1970s - 1989

AG 256

Creator
Center for Creative Photography

Abstract
Materials in this collection are related to educator and photographer Laura Volkerding.

Quantity/ Extent
.5 linear feet

Language of Materials
English

Biographical/ Historical Note
Educator and photographer Laura Volkerding (1939-1996) began her artistic career making prints and drawings, and discovered her passion for photography in 1972, at age thirty-three. Volkerding studied fine arts at the University of Louisville and the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology where she received a Master’s degree in graphic design. She taught at University of Chicago from 1970 to 1980, and then served as a senior lecturer in photography at Stanford University until her death in 1996.

Citing photographs by Walker Evans and Art Sinsabaugh, as well as Chicago’s modernist architecture as visual influences, Volkerding’s early photographic work depicts quirky vernacular architecture, campgrounds and suggestive landscapes. In the late 1970s, Laura Volkerding, Nicholas Nixon, Stephen Shore, Frank Gohlke, and Lewis Baltz were among twenty-four photographers chosen to participate in an intensive project entitled Court House that documented historic court house architecture across America. Published in 1979, the monograph Court House: A Photographic Document exhibits a diverse and inclusive examination of America’s architectural heritage. In 1980, Volkerding moved to California and embarked on a project documenting the development of the San Francisco and San Pablo Bay waterfronts creating panoramic images by joining continuous frames of 5 x 7 inch negatives into a more expansive view.

Volkerding experimented with multiple photographic formats before settling, in 1984, on the rich clarity of prints produced with a Deardorff 8 x 10 inch view camera. This same year, Volkerding discovered the subject that would drive her work for over a decade: Les Compagnons du Devoir, a French sculpture apprentice community founded in medieval times. Their history of sculptural practice and reverence for craftsmanship resonated for Volkerding. She was attracted to the figurative and architectural forms
that populated their work space. Volkerding photographed classrooms and apprentice projects, foundries and workshops, and cathedral restoration projects. The images suggest the presence of the craftsmen, but are devoid of the actual artisans, thus alluding to the longer craft tradition rather than the contemporary individuals. In addition to making many photographs of Les Compagnons in France, Volkerding photographed other sculpture workshops in Quebec, Tunisia, Spain, Greece, Italy, and the United States. This body of work was exhibited at Stanford in 1986; in 1988 she was awarded her second Guggenheim fellowship. The Center for Creative Photography published a related monograph, Solomon's Temple: the European Building-Crafts Legacy, shortly before Volkerding’s death.

Scope and Content Note
Subgroup one includes two black-and-white portraits of Laura Volkerding taken by Tom McCormick. Subgroup two includes one black-and-white portrait of Robert Gottlieb by Laura Volkerding, as well as correspondence and a snapshot of Volkerding.

Names and Subject Terms
Volkerding, Laura [http://vocab.getty.edu/ulan/500037074]

Restrictions
Conditions Governing Access
Access to this collection requires an appointment with the Volkerding Study Center.

Conditions Governing Use
It is the responsibility of the user to obtain permission from the copyright owner (which could be the institution, the creator of the record, the author or his/her transferees, heirs, legates or literary executors) prior to any copyright-protected uses of the collection.

The user agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Arizona Board of Regents, the University of Arizona, Center of Creative Photography, including its officers, employees, and agents, from and against all claims made relating to copyright or other intellectual property infringement.

Provenance
Subgroup One, gift of Thomas McCormick, 2016.


Related Materials
AG 162 – Laura Volkerding collection
Preferred Citation
Laura Volkerding Miscellaneous Acquisitions collection. AG 256. Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.

Processing Information

Container List

Subgroup 1, 1973
Note: Gift of Thomas McCormick, 2016. Extent: 1 folder.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Two, 8x10 inch, black-and-white portraits of Laura Volkerding: Tom McCormick, <em>Laura Volkerding – Chicago</em>, 1973</td>
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Subgroup 2, circa 1970s, 1988-1989

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>One, 12x18 cm, black-and-white portrait of Robert Gottlieb by Laura Volkerding, Chicago, 1970s</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two letters from Laura Volkerding to Robert Gottlieb, 1988</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One postcard from Laura Volkerding to Robert Gottlieb, 1989</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One, Polaroid photograph of Laura Volkerding by Robert Gottlieb, San Francisco, July 1988</td>
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