FINDING AID FOR THE

RALPH GIBSON COLLECTION
AG 37

Center for Creative Photography
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721-0103

For further information about the archives at the Center for Creative Photography, please contact the Archivist: phone 520-621-6273; fax 520-621-9444

DESCRIPTION

Papers, photographic materials, audio-visual materials, and memorabilia, 1959 - , of Ralph Gibson (1939 - ), photographer and publisher. Included are correspondence with photographers, museums, universities, publishers, friends, and others relating to a wide variety of activities; activity files containing biographical information, business receipts, clippings, date books, writings, interviews, lectures, and other printed materials on Gibson and his involvement with Lustrum Press and the Sex and Drugs Band; exhibition files containing announcements and catalogs of one-person and group shows; publication materials for published and unpublished books by Lustrum Press including Tropism (1987), Nude: Theory (1979), Days At Sea (1974), Deja Vu (1973), and Somnambulist (1970); negatives, contact sheets, work prints and transparencies by and of Gibson; audiotapes of guitar improvisations and interviews between Gibson and other photographers; publications containing articles about him; and memorabilia pertaining to Gibson and Lustrum Press. The collection is still active.

52 linear feet

PROVENANCE

Gibson began loaning material to the Center in 1977. The collection became a gift in 1985.

RESTRICTIONS

Access to the following is restricted: recommendations and evaluations by or about Gibson; one medical report about Gibson. Permission to view must be obtained from Gibson. Twenty-five year privacy rule is in effect with regard to correspondence.

LANGUAGES

French, German, Swedish
CHRONOLOGICAL SKETCH

1939          Born in Los Angeles on February 16
1956-60       Studied photography while serving in the U.S. Navy
1960-61       Studied photography at the San Francisco Art Institute
1962          Served as an assistant to Dorothea Lange (San Francisco)
1966          Published The Strip
1967          Began working with Robert Frank on the film Me and My Brother
1968          Published The Hawk
1969          Moved to New York to assist Robert Frank on the filming of Conversations in Vermont. Founded Lustrum Press and published The Somnambulist
1973          Published Deja-Vu; granted an NEA Fellowship
1974          Published Days at Sea
1975          Founding member of Sex and Drugs Band; granted an NEA Fellowship; participated in DAAD Exchange Fellowship (Berlin)
1976          Began to exhibit with Castelli Graphics (New York)
1977          Received Creative Artists Public Service Grant (New York)

LUSTRUM PRESS

1969          Founded in New York
1970          Published The Somnambulist with Robert Overby as designer
1971          Published Tulsa by Larry Clark
1972          Published Loud Song by Larry Seymour and Portugal by Neil Slavin
1973          Published Lines of My Hand by Robert Frank and Sunday by Erica and Elizabeth Lennard
Partnership established between Gibson and John Flatow as business manager and Andre Lewis as designer

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection has arrived in increments since 1977. There was no original order to the collection; it was organized by record types.

Correspondence

Series one: Correspondence, 1965 - . Includes letters, cards, and telegrams received by Gibson from friends, acquaintances, business associates, museums, galleries, foundations, and admirers of his work. The bulk of this series begins in the 1970s. His earlier correspondence is no longer extant. This series indicates the extent of Gibson's involvement with his chosen medium in America and Europe. Included in these letters are business correspondence addressed to Gibson, relating to the operations and publications of Lustrum Press.

Lustrum Press publications and design material

Series four: Lustrum Press publications and design materials, 1970 - . Contains book mechanicals, folded and gathered signatures, duotone reproductions of photographs, press pages, galleys, dummies and maquettes, and a few finished books. Extensive documentation exists for these published and unpublished titles: The Somnabulist, Days at Sea, Deja-Vu, Nude: Theory, and Susan Sleeps and Dreams Her Myths, all by Gibson; Dark Light by Michael Martone; and Sunday by Erica and Elizabeth Lennard. Lustrum Press often published works by younger artists who had not been previously published. There is a small amount of printed materials which could not be linked with any of the extant titles. Not all publications of Lustrum Press are represented here. Many of these earlier editions, such as Larry Clark's Tulsa, are now out of print.

Photographic materials

Series five: Photographic materials, ca.1964 - . Color photographs, photographs by other photographers, portraits of Gibson, contact sheets, press prints, graphic arts, work prints, mounted prints, negatives, and transparencies. This work largely reflects Gibson's projects in the 1960s and 1970s including commercial, artistic, and personal work. There are thirty-six black and white photographs, mostly by little-known photographers; and sixty-four portraits of Gibson.

Audio-visual materials

Series six: Audio-visual materials, ca.1975 - . Consists of 1/4 in. reel-to-reel magnetic audio tapes, 1/8 in. cassette tapes, one microcassette, and one 16 mm. color motion picture. The reel-to-reel
tapes are mostly recordings of improvisations and practice sessions featuring Gibson on the electric guitar. There is little or no information on the tapes concerning dates, places, or other individuals who are recorded on the tapes. There is one interview with Gibson discussing his work and aesthetics, but the tape is somewhat distorted with wow and flutter. The cassettes contain interviews by Gibson in 1978 with many leading photographers including Aaron Siskind, Duane Michals, Robert Heinecken, Harry Callahan, Judy Dater, Lisette Model, and others. Although not all tapes were audited, the interviews usually express practical and aesthetic viewpoints of the respective artists. The motion picture was not screened for content.

Memorabilia

Series seven: Memorabilia, ca.1970 - . Includes two tee-shirts and several miscellaneous articles such as a credit card, a placecard, stickers, and a button with a printed slogan.

Publications

Series eight: Publications, 1965 - . Includes a monograph and periodicals which contain articles and reproductions by, on, or about Ralph Gibson, his work, reviews of his exhibitions, profiles of Lustrum Press, and other similar matters. Of interest in this series are publications incorporating some of Gibson's commercial work in the late 1960s. Of special interest is a copy of Nexus: A Monthly Review (September 1963) with Gibson's photo essay "Ja, das Meer is blau, so blau," and a copy of The Strip: A Graphic Portrait of Sunset Boulevard (1966), designed by Roger Kennedy and photographed by Gibson. There are also posters and other printed materials about his participation in workshops and lectures filed in oversize AG37:es.

Unprocessed Materials

Miscellaneous papers and publications filed by Accrual date...

BOX LIST

AG37:1 Correspondence, 1965-1977
AG37:2 Correspondence, 1978-1982
AG37:3 Correspondence, 1983-1987
AG37:4 Correspondence, 1988-1993
AG37:5 Correspondence, 1994-1999
AG37:6  Correspondence, 1972-1988
AG37:7  Correspondence, 1989-1990
AG37:8  Correspondence, 1989-1999
AG37:9  Correspondence, 2003
AG37:10 Correspondence, 1991-1993
AG37:11 Correspondence, 1994-1997
AG37:12 [papers]
AG37:13 Correspondence, 2000-2005
AG37:14 Greeting cards
AG37:15 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 1971-1987
AG37:16 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 1977-1992
AG37:17 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 1993-1995
AG37:18 Important Projects and Files, 1990s – 2000s
AG37:19 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 2000
AG37:20 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 2001
AG37:21 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, Undated
AG37:22 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 2002
AG37:23 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 2003-2006
AG37:24 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 2004
AG37:25 Cards, Invitations, Personal Notes, 2005-2006
AG37:26 Photography Career, 1970-2006, Group and Solo Exhibitions, Announcements
AG37:27 Exhibition Announcements, No Personal Notes
AG37:29 Lectures, Workshops, Galleries, Interviews
AG37:30 Photography Career, 1984-1995, Group and Solo Exhibitions, Publications, Clippings, Correspondence
AG37:32 Appointment Calendars
AG37:33 Phone Message Book
AG37:34 Business Cards
AG37:35 Business Cards
AG37:36 Gibson Scrapbooks 2005 Acq.
AG37:37 Lustrum Press publication and design material
AG37:38 Lustrum Press publication and design material
AG37:39 Miscellaneous material from 1960s-1980s
AG37:40 Exhibition: “Tropism” Book Copy, Mss Drafts, Lustrum Press
AG37:41 Book Dummies: “Courant Continu”
AG37:42 Book Projects: “Deus ex Machina,” “L’Histoire de France,” Publication Proofs, Related Correspondence
AG37:43 Business, Financial, Tax related
AG37:44 Audio-visual Materials: videotapes and audiotapes
AG37:45 Audio-visual Materials: reel-to-reel audio tapes, cassette audio tapes
AG37:46 CCP Overby Collection
AG37:47 Color Snapshots of Photos
AG37:48 Record of Prints
AG37:49 Memorabilia
AG37:50 Photographic Materials: Negatives, Black and White, Color
AG37:51 Photographic Materials: Workprints, Architectural Details
AG37:52  Portraits
AG37:53  Misc. Oversize
AG37:54  Photographic Materials
AG37:55  Photographic Materials: Work prints, Mounted Prints
AG37:56  Photographic Materials: Work prints
AG37:57  Photographic Materials
AG37:58  Photographic Materials: Transparencies, Color
AG37:59  New Acq T/F 04219
AG37:60  Papers (T/F 04488/2006)
AG37:61  Posters
AG37:62  Exhibition Announcements (rec 5 Mar 07)
AG37:63  New Acq, Misc.
AG37:64  RG Work Used for Book Design, etc.
AG37:65  Publications: Mock-ups/Proofs
AG37:66  Appointment Calendars, Clippings, Correspondence, 2006-2007,
          Exhibition announcements, catalog (rec 26 Feb 07)
AG37:67  Greeting Cards, Invitations, Memorabilia, Misc (rec 26 Feb 07)
AG37:68  Monographs by others, Monographs by Gibson, Publications Containing images
          Gibson images (rec 26 Feb 07)

SELECTED INDEX TO CORRESPONDENCE

(Note: This index is selective, incomplete, and does not include unprocessed materials.)

Adams, Ansel, 1978
Adams, Robert, 1978,80
Alinder, James, 1973,78
Apeiron Workshops (Millerton, N.Y.), 1975-78
Baltz, Lewis, ca.1973,75-77
Barrow, Thomas, see George Eastman House, 1971,73
Beaton, Cecil, 1978
Brandt, Bill, 1976
Brown, Dean, 1971
Bullock, Edna, 1976,79
Bullock, Wynn, 1975
Bunnell, Peter, 197?

Camera, 1974-76
Canon Photo Galerie (Geneva), 1979
Capa, Cornell, 197?,72
Castelli Graphics (New York), 1977-78
Center for Creative Photography (Tucson, Ariz.), 1978-80
Center for Photographic Studies (Louisville, Ky.), 1977
Clergue, Lucien, 1975,78-79
Coke, Van Deren, see University of New Mexico, 1973-74,78
Coleman, A.D., 1977,79-80
Connor, Linda, 196?,7?,73-74
Cordier, Pierre, 1978

Dater, Judy, 1978
Desmarais, Charles, 1977-78

Enyeart, James L., see Center for Creative Photography, 1980
Erwitt, Elliott, 1979

Fogg Art Museum (Cambridge, Mass.), 1977
Fontana, Franco, 1978
Frank, Robert, 1969,71-73
Friends of Photography (Carmel, Calif.), 1972,74-75,79

Gassan, Arnold, 1976
Gautrand, Jean-Claude, 1978
George Eastman House (Rochester, N.Y.), 1971,73,77-78
Goldsmith, Arthur, see Popular Photography, 1973,79

Hahn, Betty, 1973,75,79
Hosoe, Eikoh, 1971,73-75,79-80

International Center of Photography (New York), 1978-79

Jay, Bill, 1979
John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (New York), 1972-73,
75,78-79
Jones, Harold, ca.1980
Josephson, Kenneth, 1978
Klein, William, 1979-80
Krause, George, 1980
Krims, Les, 1971,75

Larson, William, 1975
Lartigue, Jacques Henri, 197?,73,75
Lewis, Cynthia Gano, see Center for Creative Photography, 1979-80
Lyons, Nathan, see Visual Studies Workshop, 1971

McFarland, Lawrence, 197?
Mendoza, Antonio, 1980
Mertin, Roger, 1979
Museum of Fine Arts (Houston, Tex.), 1976-78
Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), 1978

Namuth, Hans, 1978-79
National Endowment for the Arts (Washington, D.C.), 1976-78
Neimanas, Joyce, 1978
Newton, June, 1978-80
Nixon, Nicholas, 1978
Noggle, Anne, 1973

Parker, Fred, see Friends of Photography, 1972,75,79
Popular Photography, 1973,79
Porter, Allan, see Camera, 1974-76
Porter, Eliot, 1980
Pratt, Davis, see Fogg Art Museum, 1977
Prince, Doug, 1978

Richards, Eugene, 1977

St. Martin, Barbara, 1972
Sinsabaugh, Art, 1980
Slavin, Neal, 1971,79
Swedlund, Charles, 1979

Tucker, Anne, see Museum of Fine Arts (Houston, Tex.), 1976-78

University of New Mexico (Albuquerque), 1973-74,78

Vestal, David, 1971,73,78
Visual Studies Workshop, 1971
Vogt, Christian, 1975

Witkin Gallery (New York), 1979