

Exhibition records, 1940--1961

Accession Number 94.06.CO.R

Collection Code: WAC RG 2

Inclusive Dates: 1940-1977

Volume: 30 linear ft.

Prepared by: Martha Ruddy, 11/01/98

Provenance

These files are part of the Walker Art Center institutional records. They were created by Walker Art Center staff and stored onsite.

History

From its gala inauguration on January 4, 1940, the exhibition program at the Walker Art Center was designed to educate and expand the public's notion of what "art" is, and what it could mean in their lives. This intent to educate was derived in large measure from the first director of the Walker, Daniel S. Defenbacher. Defenbacher had been an assistant director of the Works Progress Administration Federal Arts Project and one of the architects and promoters of the regional art centers program. When the Minnesota Arts Council requested WPA help to set up an art program in the Walker Gallery, Defenbacher recognized the potential to create, on a large-scale, the kind of community art center he had been fostering in small towns across America. His vision, shaped and motivated by New Deal enthusiasm, was to bring people and art face to face. He wanted to jettison the static, dusty formality of the old style museum and build in its place a new kind of community cultural center in which people could have direct and personal experience with art. The Walker Art Center, as Defenbacher envisioned it on the eve of its opening, would incorporate changing exhibitions that would educationally clarify art for the layman. It would establish workshops led by artists through which the public could learn and participate themselves in the creative process. And it would offer an extension service to serve schools and outlying communities with circulating exhibitions.

From mid-1942 through 1943 the exhibition program was given over almost entirely to Civilian Defense activities, as the WPA had ruled that none of its workers could be used in any project except those serving Civilian Defense, the Army or the Navy. The T.B. Walker Foundation subsidized the salaries of a few key technical people to maintain the nucleus of the art program, but most of the program consisted of exhibits specially requested by Defense agencies, and training exhibitions.

Several other factors combined with the New Deal educational imperative to characterize the early exhibition program, such as the existing T.B. Walker Collection: large, eclectic and, for the most part, mis-attributed; it was used as an educational tool in specially designed exhibitions to explain and examine art in thematic ways. However valuable it was as an educational tool, the collection was re-examined and reappraised in the mid-forties that resulted in the de-accession of much of the collection in auctions held at Gimbel Brothers, New York from 1945 to 1947. The sale of the T.B. Walker collection served to redefine the Walker's collection and programming toward contemporary art.

The close relationship between the Center and Hudson D. Walker, New York art dealer and grandson of T.B. Walker had a strong impact on the early exhibition program. His

warm professional and personal relationship with Defenbacher (who became his brother-in-law in 1941) is detailed by correspondence in the Defenbacher papers and in the Exhibition files. Hudson Walker helped establish Walker Art Center connections with New York City art dealers and initiated several annual “purchase exhibitions” through which the Walker’s permanent collection was regularly augmented. Early purchases for the Center were often made based on Hudson’s advice. Walker was also active as a trustee and president of the American Federation of Arts and the Art Center maintained close ties to the AFA, relying upon their circulating exhibitions particularly in the early years.

Perhaps the over-arching influence on the first decade of the exhibition program was Defenbacher’s determination to include design and utilitarian art—later termed “everyday art”—within the scope of the museum. *Idea House I*, (1941) was the first of two houses built and exhibited on Walker property, and was the first full-scale exhibition house built by a museum in the United States. The construction of *Idea House I*, launched Defenbacher’s design-oriented exhibition program.

Two staff members were key to the Walker’s innovative exhibition program. William M. Friedman, Assistant Director in charge of Exhibitions, was an architect, trained at New York University and Atelier Whitman-Goodman. From 1937 to 1939 he was Chairman of the Faculty at the Laboratory School of Design in New York. Later he was head of Iowa’s Design Department: WPA Art Project. Friedman was responsible for nearly all the major exhibitions of the 1940’s, many of which traveled throughout the United States, and established the Walker’s high reputation for innovative exhibition and catalog design.

Hilde Reiss joined the Walker staff in 1946 as Curator of the Everyday Art Gallery and Editor of *Everyday Art Quarterly*. She studied architecture at the Bauhaus in the early 1930’s. She taught at the New School for Social Research, and at the Laboratory School of Design, and had worked in the offices of Russell Wright, Gilbert Rohde and Norman Bel Geddes. Reiss designed the Everyday Art Gallery in 1946 as a permanent space within the Center devoted to presenting exhibitions of well-designed objects for everyday use.

The success of the Everyday Art Gallery was quickly followed by the construction of *Idea House II* in 1947. The house was built on a hill behind the Art Center and was designed by Friedman and Reiss with an open-flow layout, up-to-the-minute galley kitchen with designer furnishings by Isamu Noguchi and Charles Eames. It was featured in numerous national publications including *LIFE*, *McCall's*, and *Progressive Architecture*.

The emphasis on everyday arts and industrial design which was a hallmark of the Walker’s first decade was redirected toward sculpture during the tenure of the Center’s second director, H. Harvard Arnason. Arnason was the Chairman of the Art Department of the University of Minnesota and a member of the Walker’s board of directors when he was asked to take leadership of the museum after Defenbacher’s departure in 1951. He was an art historian, with a doctorate from Princeton University, and his preference for painting and sculpture over design is marked. Indeed, Arnason’s goal was to create for the Walker a reputation of owning and exhibiting important contemporary works, particularly sculpture.

Arnason's parallel career as head of the University's Art Department influenced the direction the Walker's exhibition program took in the 1950s. Rather than relating art to everyday experiences, exhibitions were presented in art historical periods and genres, such as avant-garde photography or expressionist painting. He also began the Walker's long tradition of providing related programming around an exhibition, such as lectures by art historians and interviews with artists. Unlike Defenbacher, Arnason felt the audience would appreciate programming with a scholarly approach.

Another aspect of Arnason's exhibition program was to encourage local collecting. He established two programs to accomplish this: the Collectors Club and the Sales and Rental Gallery. The Collectors' Club organized small exhibitions and related-events around major exhibitions, such as lectures by dealers. The Sales and Rental Gallery was an innovative program providing artwork by local, regional, and nationally recognized artists to the public.

Because Arnason's time was divided between the University, the Walker and his own art history pursuits, the exhibition staff were largely in control of the day to day operation of, and planning for, exhibits. Arnason traveled frequently leaving staff to make decisions in his absence. Arnason was notified by telegram of important developments requiring his authorization. In his absence, the senior curator was also acting director, and in many ways this person was the institutional voice as well as the one directly in charge of exhibition programming.

Fortunately, the Walker was blessed with a dedicated curatorial staff including Norman Geske, James Elliot, Sidney Simon, Huldah Curl, Meg Torbert and Dorothy Berge, among others. Senior curators Norman Geske and Sidney Simon went on to become directors of other museums, Geske at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln and Simon at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Other staff, such as, Dorothy Berge, were artists too.

The Fifties was a tremendous decade of growth for the Walker, in terms of expanded exhibition programs and in staff. Because of this growth, the curators began to form a departmental identity separate from the Director. Whereas in the forties, the small staff worked directly under the Director and the assistant Director in charge of Exhibitions, in the fifties the Senior Curator assumed the role of supervisor in charge of exhibitions. This set the stage for further growth and expansion in the decades to come. Specifically, when Martin Friedman became Senior Curator in 1958, the curatorial staff solidified into a departmental unit. In 1961, Friedman became Director of the Walker Art Center and under his direction the Walker continued to develop both professionally and programmatically.

Scope and Content Arrangement

The Exhibition Program Record Group is an ongoing collection of all exhibitions presented at the Walker Art Center beginning in 1940. This portion of the collection represents exhibits from 1940-1960, measuring 30 linear feet and contained in 72 Hollinger boxes. These documents contain all files for each show including correspondence, memoranda, loan forms, shipping paperwork, research notes, installation

instructions, exhibition catalog copy and occasionally, photographs relating to the exhibitions.

The files are labeled with the full name of the exhibition, and are arranged chronologically by the opening date of the exhibition. Small exhibitions, or those circulated by other institutions, may have only one folder. Larger exhibitions by the Walker, perhaps with an accompanying catalog, may have up to twenty-five folders. If an exhibition is represented by multiple folders, those folders will be divided by subject and arranged alphabetically (e.g. *Sculpture of Gerhard Marcks*: Catalog and Publicity; *Sculpture of Gerhard Marcks*: Checklist; *Sculpture of Gerhard Marcks*: Correspondence).

Some subject folders are labeled with an alphabetical designation (e.g. *Everyday Art Outdoors*: Lenders A—K, *Modern Jewelry Under Fifty Dollars*: Designer-Craftsmen: G-0), which indicates that items within these folders are arranged alphabetically. Otherwise, items within all folders are arranged chronologically. Printed matter and small format objects (postcards, printed notices, etc.) are grouped at the back of the folder.

Artist letters have been kept in their original location in the exhibition files. They have been preserved in Mylar sleeves, except for correspondence with regional artists having to do with administrative/shipping issues of the regional exhibitions.

Some exhibitions, such as the biennials, and the sculpture shows, tend to follow similar filing patterns year after year, though there are often complicating factors, such as whether the exhibition was circulated after the initial Walker installation, and by what agency. Series include catalog, correspondence, checklist, circulating exhibition, lenders, publicity, and shipping.

Container list to follow. The list was created in filemaker.pro 3.0 and is searchable by fields: box, folder, title and dates. It is also searchable by exhibition name, and specific location when known, such as Everyday Art Gallery or Minnesota Gallery. Note that exhibition opening and closing dates appear below the folder title in the same field. This is for reference purposes only.

Description

The files for early Walker exhibitions, during the years when staffing was primarily supported by the WPA, are scarce. WPA funds were sharply curtailed in 1942 when WPA workers were authorized to work only on projects serving the Department of Civilian Defense, or the military. Few records of the Walker's war activities survive. Files exist for *From the Halls of Montezuma* (1942), a history of the U. S. Marine Corp [Box 2, Folder 2 - 3]. Benefit exhibitions of art from allied nations, such as, *Benefit Exhibition of Van Gogh Paintings* (1940) [Box 1, Folder 2-3] and *Chinese Paintings* (1942) [Box 2, Folder 1], were also WPA sponsored war effort shows. It seems probable that when the WPA decamped entirely in 1943, they took with them the early exhibition files, including those on the Walker's civilian defense exhibitions.

Luckily, files from *Idea House I* (1941), which was funded by the T. B. Walker Foundation, do remain to document the first exhibition house built by any museum in the United States [Box 001, Folders 10-12]. This exhibition is also important as the

germination of Defenbacher's concept of "everyday art" and of what will become a nationally acclaimed program of exhibitions on design.

By 1944 the exhibition files become more complete. Certain patterns emerge that can be traced through much of the exhibition history of the 1940's and 1950's. For example, the Walker devotes a significant amount of time and energy producing regional shows, particularly the biennials, large theme shows, and one-man shows.

The Walker's early tradition of regional art exhibits began with the *First Annual Sculpture Exhibition* in 1944 [Box 002, Folders 10-11]. There were five regional sculpture exhibitions (1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1951), and five biennial exhibitions of paintings and prints (1947, 1949, 1951, 1956, 1958). The files of these exhibitions contain a rich profile of artists working in the upper mid-west during these two decades. By the volume of correspondence, the files reveal the important effect these exhibitions had on artists—many of them non-professionals—who were eager to enter their works. The files contain forms and correspondence concerning entries, shipping, and catalog production. The juries for these exhibitions were often dealers or artists from the east, and their correspondence can provide interesting glimpses of an outsider's view of the work being produced in and around the Twin Cities in those years. Philip Evergood, juror for the *First Biennial of Paintings and Prints* (1947), writes in his statement: "...Perhaps the highest technical accomplishment was in the prints, but by and large the greatest derivative mannerisms were in evidence here—the plucking of too many hairs from Picasso's abundant tail." [Box 014, Folder 009]

Defenbacher implemented an ambitious schedule of large exhibitions designed for national circulation. *The New Spirit: LeCorbusier—Architect, Painter, Writer* (1944) was a major retrospective spanning more than thirty years, with an installation in Rockefeller Center before a national tour. It was highly praised for including the paintings, drawings and writings of an artist known in America primarily as an architect [Box 003, Folders 8--Box 004, Folder 05]. *American Watercolor and Winslow Homer* (1945), was curated for the Walker by Lloyd Goodrich of the Whitney Museum, who also wrote the monograph [Box 004, Folders 07--Box 005, Folder 27]. For this extensive exhibition, the Walker arranged loans from over 30 institutions and individuals. Two years later, nearly the entire show was reprised as *Watercolor USA* when the Walker was asked by the Smithsonian to circulate an exhibit of American watercolors to Latin America. This required writing a catalog in three languages, and the development of a new kind of plastiseal frame to protect the paintings from the perils of overseas travel and tropical climes [Box 007 Folders 05-33].

Knife Fork Spoon (1951) was another large and elaborate traveling exhibition [Box 27, Folder 27-29, Box 28, Folder 1-4]. It was an historical exhibit about the design of eating utensils, and is interesting as a very early example of corporate sponsorship. Defenbacher convinced Towle Silversmith to underwrite the expenses of the exhibition, part of which highlighted a new Towle flatware design. The accompanying catalog designed by William Friedman (who also designed the exhibit) was in high demand, as Walker catalogs often were. It contained many photographs of the exhibited items, was highly didactic about the good and bad design of eating utensils over the centuries, and included a series of clever cartoon drawings by Alonzo Hauser that became a signature of the exhibition. The exhibition was mounted on aluminum panels with wooden bases, and

required a specially outfitted truck for its national circulation. This was the last large-scale exhibition of Defenbacher's tenure.

Throughout the years the Walker was mounting large, circulating exhibitions, the curators were also creating large permanent installations for the galleries. The Jade Room opened in 1945 [Box 006, Folder 06]. Using items from the T. B. Walker Collection, it displayed the history and cultural significance of jade. This same didactic approach was taken with another permanent exhibit, *Man and Clay* [Box 010, Folders 01-10]. Designed by Friedman and opened in stages beginning in February, 1948, this was an enormous installation that ranged over the entire history of ceramic production around the world—from the earliest Chinese pots and South American figure, through contemporary industrial porcelain and hand-crafted pottery.

In January 1946 the Everyday Art Gallery opened with great fanfare [Box 006, Folders 11-15]. This was a permanent display area, designed by Friedman, on the first floor of the Walker Art Center, which would be the site of changing exhibits, curated by Hilde Reiss, devoted to well-designed products for everyday use. The philosophy of the Everyday Art Gallery held that consumers educated to good design could have a positive impact on retailers and, ultimately, upon the designers and manufacturers as well. Local and national retailers and manufacturers provided products for exhibits such as *Sectional Furniture* (1947) [Box 11, Folder 12]; *Everyday Art Outdoors* (1948), [Box 19, Folder 1-2]; *Modern Textiles* (1949), [Box 19, Folder 9-11; Box 20, Folder 1-2], *Modern Jewelry Under Fifty Dollars* (1949), [Box 17, Folder 3-13]; and the annual *Useful Gifts* [Box 10, Folder 11; Box 16, Folder 12; Box 25, Folder 9; Box 38, Folder 3]. Telephones and lists of stores were provided in the gallery, as well as a small library devoted to design. The publicity files for the opening of the Everyday Art Gallery reveal that Defenbacher hired art critic and writer, Elizabeth McCausland, as publicist for the event, which received a great deal of national press coverage.

Idea House II, the second exhibition house designed and built by the Walker, rode the crest of the post-war housing boom [Box 015, Folder 04; Box 016, Folder 09]. William Freidman and Hilde Reiss designed it as a residence for a couple with two children. It was created as a site-specific set of contemporary design concepts, and despite requests from around the country, the Walker never supplied the building plans and would only advise homebuilders to work with a local architect. The exhibit attracted national press attention. *McCall's* ran a large, color spread on the house with photographs by Ezra Stoller in January 1948. After the Walker conducted a well-publicized contest to find a test-case family of four, *LIFE* magazine published an article, "How Livable is a Modern House?" about their week.

Throughout its exhibition history, the Walker has relied on its strong connections with New York art dealers. These connections were established early by Hudson Walker, making selections for *92 Artists* (1943) [Box 2, Folder 4] and *110 American Painters* (1944) [Box 003, Folders 01-04]. These were the first of five "purchase exhibitions" held during the 1940's. They were large exhibitions of twentieth century American artists selected from the stock of New York art dealers. The Art Center made several important purchases from these shows. Edward Hopper's *Office at Night* (1940) from Frank K. M. Rehn Inc. and John Sloan's *South Beach Bathers* (1907-1908) from the Kraushaar Art Galleries were both acquired from *Paintings to Know and Buy* (1948). The intention of

the last purchase show was to introduce Minneapolis audiences to new currents in American art, was the *Fifth Walker Biennial of American Paintings* (1950), and was guest curated by H. Harvard Arnason [Box 027, Folders 07-13].

In 1951, with the appointment of H. Harvard Arnason as second director there was a notable increase in the volume of exhibitions with a strong emphasis on contemporary art. Large scale exhibitions were based on modern or contemporary themes, such as the ambitious three part exhibition series on modernism: *Classic Tradition in Contemporary Art*; (1953); *Reality and Fantasy 1900-1954*; (1954) and *Expressionism 1900-1955*, (1956). These shows included a diverse range of artists from Europe and America from Thomas Hart Benton to Francis Bacon. Large in theme, the files reflect the amount of work put into these shows from research and correspondence to catalog publication and national circulation. The files include artist correspondence with Amedee Ozenfant, [*Classic Tradition in Contemporary Art*: Lenders: N-Z, Box 36, Folder 2], Aaron Bohrod, [*Reality and Fantasy* Lenders: B, Box 39, Folder 13], Louise Bourgeois, [*Reality and Fantasy* Lenders: Egan Gallery Box 40, Folder 6], and Lyonel Feininger, [*Expressionism: 1900-1955* Lenders: D-F]. In many ways the modernism series captures the spirit of the Walker's exhibition program in the 50s because the shows were large in theme and content, and designed to educate.

Another large contemporary show was *Vanguard 55*, (1955), it featured Helen Frankenthaler and Joan Mitchell among others, and was guest curated by Kyle Morris of Stable Gallery, New York [Box 44 Folder 2-4]. This show exemplifies the connection the Walker had developed with New York dealers and galleries since the 1940s. Arnason organized a steady stream of contemporary art exhibits through New York, art dealers including: *Miro* (1952) from Pierre Matisse Gallery, [Box 31, Folder 8]; *Odilon Redon* (1952) from Jacques Seligman & Co, [box 31, Folder 4]; *Marino Marini: Sculpture and Drawing* (1953) from Curt Valentin, [Box 36, Folder 9]; *Four Abstract Expressionists* (1953), from Sam Kootz [Box 33, Folder 14].

Large-scale one-man shows were also presented at the Walker in the Fifties. Among the most notable artist shows were *Sculpture of Gerhard Marcks* (1953), [Box 37, Folder 12-18]; *The Sculpture of Jacques Lipchitz* (1954), [Box 42, Folder 1-3]; *Theodore Roszak* (1956), [Box 47, Folder 7-16, Box 48, Folder 1-3]; *Paintings by Stuart Davis* (1957), [Box 48, Folder 7-15, Box 49, Folder 1-11]; and *Paintings and Drawings by Kurt Seligmann* (1958)[Box 53, Folder 3]. These shows gave the Walker an opportunity to examine many works by a single artist with an eye toward acquiring art for the permanent collection, such as *Melusine III* (1949/1951) by Marcks, *Prometheus Strangling the Vulture II* (1944/1953) by Lipchitz, and *Colonial Cubism* by Stuart Davis (1954). In the case of Kurt Seligmann and Theodore Roszak, their exhibits led to commissioned works including *Cradle Song Variation No. 2* (1957-1959) by Roszak and a series of drawings by Seligmann for the Walker's presentation of Menotti's *The Unicorn* in 1958. The Davis, Roszak and Lipchitz shows also highlight a growing trend of joint presentation with other museums, in particular New York museums including the Whitney Museum (Roszak and Davis) and Museum of Modern Art (Lipchitz). This cooperative presentation enabled the Walker to achieve greater visibility because these shows were larger in scope with full-scale catalogs and longer circulation.

In addition to the large theme shows, the Walker presented local and regional artists in biennials. Numerous one man shows presented artists such as *Harold Tovish* (1953)[Box 37, Folder 10], *The Sculptures of John Rood* (1954)[Box 41, Folder 10], *George Morrison Paintings* (1955)[Box 43, Folder 3], and *Sculpture by Paul Manship* (1958)[Box 54, Folder 9-12]. These files are rich with artist correspondence as most regional artists worked directly with Walker curators, rather than through a gallery. Because of the direct contact with the artists, these files also reveal the vitality of the local and regional art scene during this decade.

In addition there were regional shows based on themes including the series *Art of the Mentally Ill* [Box 43, Folder 12, Box 46, Folder 8, Box 50, Folder 2]. This series lasted three years from 1955-1957 and was held during mental health week. The paintings were by patients in various mental health institutions in Minnesota. The intent of the series was to educate the public on mental illness as well as demonstrate the benefits of art therapy. Although the documentation for these shows are slim the files nevertheless reveal an important trend in treating mental illness.

There are a few design shows in the 50s but nothing on the scale of the 40s, and some of these shows were left over projects from the Defenbacher era. One such show was *California Crafts* (1952). This project started in 1948 under the sponsorship of the Walker and the American Craftsmen's Educational Council. The final product was to be an exhibition and book entitled *A Study of Design and Craftmanship in Today's Products*. The extensive research files for this show include case studies on eminent designers such as Charles Eames, Russell Wright and Aero Saarinen [Case Studies: 1B-32B Box 30, Folder 12], as well as companies including Herman Miller and Redwing Pottery [Case Studies: 1A-43A Box 30, Folder 11]. The case studies are an invaluable resource for design historians, however the project was never completed as planned and the much smaller show, *California Crafts*, was the end result.

Among other design shows offered were *Purcell and Elmslie* (1953), *Marcel Breuer's Design for St. John's Abbey* (1955) and *Shopping Centers of Tomorrow* (1954). The *Purcell and Elmslie* exhibition [Box 34, Folder 4-11] was a study of the prairie school architects. It is important to note because of the amount of detailed research that went into producing this show. In particular, William Purcell took a personal interest in making the show conform to his ideas which is reflected in the numerous letters and audio recordings Purcell sends to Arnason, architectural curator, Norman Nagle and researcher, David Gebhard. *Marcel Breuer's Design for St. John Abbey* [Box 43, Folder 15] was a photography show documenting the construction of the abbey for St. John's University, Minnesota. This relatively small show organized and shot by Walker photographer, Eric Sutherland, is significant in that it documents a regional project by an important architect and designer. Another example is *Shopping Centers of Tomorrow* [Box 39, Folder 2] organized by Victor Gruen and Associates, an architectural firm that pioneered the modern shopping mall. There was a tremendous local interest in this show because it coincided with the construction of Southdale Shopping Center in Minneapolis, designed by Victor Gruen, and the first shopping center of its kind in the country.

To round out the exhibition schedule the museum frequently presented traveling shows of other organizers. The files for these shows are often slim, including checklists, circulation forms and correspondence with participating museums, one such show that

exemplifies this trend is *Young British Sculptors* (1955) organized by the British Art Council [Box 43, Folder 7-9]. The advantage of taking shows like *Young British Sculptors*, was that it allowed the Walker to concentrate on preparing its own large-scale exhibitions, while at the same time providing compelling exhibitions.

The decade ended with two large shows, *School of Paris: The Internationals* (1959) and *60 American Painters* (1960). *School of Paris* was intended to be a series: Modern European Masters. The series was never completed but this ambitious show included artists Karel Appel, Hans Hartung, and Zao Wou-Ki. Among the extensive documentation are rich artist files and information about the catalog and lecture series [Box 55, Folder 7-, Box 56, Folder 1-, Box 57, Folder 1-3]. In conjunction with *School of Paris* the Collectors Club presented *Prints of the School of Paris*, a smaller exhibition offering works for sale [Box 55, Folder 17]. *60 American Painters* presented contemporary American artists such as Adolph Gottlieb, Hans Hofmann, and Jack Tworkov. It was similar in conception to its European counterpart, *School of Paris*, in that it was an exhaustive study of artists and rich in documentation [Box 59, Folder 7-9, Box 60, Folder 1-8]. These shows appropriately end the decade, as they exemplify the process and work involved to create an exhibition had become standardized. In the decades that follow, this formula will be followed and moderated to create new exhibitions.

Reference

See: Exhibition Chronology Database to search for specific artists represented in Walker Art Center exhibitions or to find out if a catalog was published for a specific show. See *Walker Art Center: Painting and Sculpture from the Collection*, Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1990 for information about the Walker's collection and a brief history about the Art Center.

Restrictions: None

Separation Note

Artist Letters of Jacques Lipchitz have been removed from *The Sculpture of Jacques Lipchitz* : Correspondence: Lipchitz, Jacques, 1955-1956 see Object Files: Lipchitz, Jacques: Prometheus Strangling the Vulture II.

Ephemera materials such as exhibition announcements for non Walker Art Center shows have been removed see: Artists Files, Walker Art Center Library.

Access: by appointment only

See Exhibition folder list.

Exhibition Records, 1961-1966

Accession Number: 94.06.CO.R

Collection Code: WAC RG 2 S 2

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Prepared by Michelle Fleischhacker, 6/6/03

Provenance

These files are part of the Walker Art Center institutional records. They were created by Walker Art Center staff and stored onsite.

History

The first half of the 1960s marked a transition period in the exhibition program at the Walker Art Center, primarily due to the appointment of Martin Friedman as director in 1961. Previously Senior Curator in 1958, and acting director from 1959 to 1960, Friedman rejected a Ford Fellowship in order to replace H. Harvard Arnason, who left to become Vice President of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Joining Friedman was Jan van der Marck, Senior Curator, Dean Swanson, Associate Curator, and Peter Seitz, Design Curator. Occasionally, the Registrar, either Suzanne Foley or Linda (Merritt) Royalty acted as Assistant Curator for the exhibitions.

During his tenure Friedman continued some of the programs and goals of Arnason, including an emphasis on related programming around an exhibition, owning and exhibiting important contemporary works, and the redirection of the exhibition program from everyday arts and industrial design toward sculpture. There continued to be occasional shows relating to design, as well as one-man shows, regional shows, and exhibitions featuring local artists. However, there was a growing emphasis on contemporary art, particularly sculpture, and the Walker Art Center became not only a leading national contemporary arts center, but one with an impressive international reputation as well.

Friedman, unlike Arnason whose time was divided between various pursuits, took an active role in the direction of the exhibition program. He traveled extensively meeting with artists for whom the Walker would create shows. During the Sixties there was an emphasis on younger emerging artists that lent the exhibition program a fresh, exciting quality.

**Scope and Content
Arrangement**

The Exhibition Record Group is an ongoing collection of all exhibitions presented at the Walker Art Center beginning in 1940. This portion of the collection represents exhibits from 1961-1966, measuring 20.5 linear feet in 40 Hollinger boxes containing all files for each show including correspondence, memoranda, loans, shipping paperwork, research notes, installation instructions, exhibition catalog copy and occasionally, photographs relating to the exhibitions.

The files are labeled with the full name of the exhibition, and are arranged chronologically by the opening date of the exhibition. Small exhibitions, or those curated and circulated by other institutions, may have only one folder. Larger exhibitions by the

Walker, perhaps with an accompanying catalog, may have up to 25 folders. If an exhibition is represented by multiple folders, those folders will be divided by subject and arranged alphabetically (e.g. *The Vision of Rene Magritte: Catalog, The Vision of Rene Magritte: Correspondence*).

Some subject folders are labeled with an alphabetical designation (e.g. *Homage to Georges Braque: Lenders A-Z; Invitation 1963: Participating Artists A-Z*), which indicates that items within these folders are arranged alphabetically. Otherwise, items within all folders are arranged chronologically. Printed matter and small format objects (postcards, printed notices, etc.) are grouped at the back of the folder.

Artist letters have been kept in their original location in the exhibition files and have been preserved in mylar sleeves. Administrative and shipping documents that are signed by artists are not considered artist letters and have not been preserved in mylar. A list of artist letters will be found at the back of the container list.

Some exhibitions, such as the biennials and the sculpture shows, tend to follow similar filing patterns year after year. There are many subject folder headings that reoccur throughout the documents: catalog, correspondence, checklist, circulating exhibition, lenders, publicity, shipping. As much as possible, the subject headings are those used in the original filing system by the curatorial staff in charge of the exhibition.

Container list to follow. The list was created in Filemaker.pro 4.1 and is searchable by fields: box, folder, title and dates. It is also searchable by exhibition name. Note that exhibition opening and closing dates appear below the folder title in the same field. This is for reference purposes only.

Description

The files for the first half of the 1960s are fairly complete, there are only a few exhibitions lacking standard documentation. (See exhibition chronology.) In addition, the files feature a wealth of artist correspondence, photos (often from previews/openings as well as artist works), and notes, giving one a glimpse into the development of exhibitions. The files also demonstrate the incredible logistics involved in organizing large shows, for which the Walker was now proficient.

Design shows were varied during this time period; perhaps owing to the fact the Walker was shifting its focus away from design to contemporary art, particularly sculpture. However, one trend that is evident is the number of shows relating to theater and the performing arts, perhaps influenced by the Guthrie Theater, the Walker's new neighbor. One exhibition in fact featured Tanya Moiseiwitsch (*Tanya Moiseiwitsch: Design for the Theater*, 1963) [Box 088, Folders 2-5]; the designer of the Guthrie's thrust stage. A unique design-related event of the time, was *150 Years of Fashion* (1962) [Box 080, Folders 1-10], a fashion show that featured contemporary designers of the time, such as James Galanos, Pauline Trigere, and Norman Norell as well as 18th and 19th Century costumes from the Brooklyn Museum. Aside from local professionals, the show featured Martin Friedman's wife Mickey, architect Ralph Rapson's wife, as well as the wives of Walker board members Mrs. Zelle and Mrs. Judkins as models. A feature of the files includes some designer sketches and photos.

The Walker continued its tradition of providing regional, juried exhibitions during this time period, and organized three biennial shows of painting and sculpture in 1962 [Box 080, Folders 11-15; Box 081, Folders 1-8], 1964 [Box 94, Folders 3-9; Box 095, Folders 1-6], and 1966 [Box 108, Folders 8-10; Box 109, Folders 1-13]. The Biennials featured

many local artists, often affiliated with local colleges, such as Peter Busa, Katherine Nash, Jerry Rudquist, Thomas Cowette, Richard Haas, Leo Steppat, and Wayne Potraz. The 1964 Biennial was a controversial one, with jurors James Wines and Theodoros Stamos offending many with their characterization of the local art scene. Theodoros Stamos found the works he judged to be “about 15 years outdated,” while James Wines stated, “in Minneapolis contact with another painter of really top quality is almost impossible.” Syd Fossum and Minneapolis School of Art Director Arnold Herstand defended Midwest Art, Herstand noting, “What Stamos and Wines found wrong here is perhaps our greatest asset. The artists in this city are not bandwagon operators. While Art International announces what’s “in” and New York artists run from loft to loft picking up new trends for the new Museum of Art show, artists in the “provinces” exhibit no special regional style or “school” but quietly produce in a variety of mid-20th century styles.” (Box 94 Folder 9 Jury/Colloquy from Minneapolis Tribune, October 4, 1964, "That New York 'Monopoly' Termed a Myth: Critics of Midwest Art Answered")

Aside from hosting regional biennials, the Walker was honored by being invited to organize the American exhibition at the *Sao Paulo Bienal VII* in 1963 [Box 085, Folders 1-10; Box 086, Folders 1-12; Box 087, Folders 1-2]. In Sao Paulo, Adolph Gottlieb won top prize, the first artist from North or South America to do so since the Bienal’s inception in 1951. This huge show included a separate Prints Council of America Exhibition, as well as an exhibition of the American sculpture at the Howard Wise Gallery in New York. Commenting at the time on his choice of bringing sculptors to the Bienal, director Martin Friedman stated that sculpture, more and more, has asserted itself as a major and highly original contribution to American art. “Sculpture,” he said, “is so vital nowadays...that it challenges painting for the lead on the contemporary art scene.” (Box 86, Folder 8 Press/Publicity, Press Release "US Exhibition for Sao Paulo Bienal, 1963") The Walker further showcased the sculptors from the Bienal by organizing the circulating exhibition *Ten American Sculptors* the following year in 1964 [Box 089, Folders 4-11, Box 090, Folders 1-8]. The show featured sculptors Peter Agostini, Chryssa, Robert Mallary, George Segal, George Sugarman, David Weinrib, and James Wines, all young artists with whom the Walker would establish strong relationships; a trend that would become the norm for Walker exhibitions.

Prior to the 1963 exhibition, Friedman had traveled to Sao Paulo for the 1961 Bienal, and had also been asked to organize the first full-scale exhibition of Brazilian art for circulation in the United States with *New Art of Brazil* in 1962 [Box 075, Folders 6-9; Box 076, Folders 1-11.] Later, the Walker would organize *New Art of Argentina* (1964) [Box 091, Folders 10-12; Box 092, Folders 1-7; Box 093, Folders 1-12], another large, circulating exhibition.

Besides venturing into international exhibitions, the Walker continued to support local artists as well. Aside from the regional biennials, three local 'Invitation' shows were organized in 1963, 1964, and 1965, as well as one-man shows. The 1963 Invitation [Box 087, Folders 4-5] was notable in that a young Siah Armajani failed to respond to the invitation to submit his works, for which he wrote apologetically was due to being in the hospital.

One-man shows of this time featured retrospectives of established artists, contemporary artists, as well as artists, new to the American audience. Jacques Lipchitz continued to be a popular choice, with exhibitions in 1962 and 1964. Among major show featuring a contemporary artist was *Adolph Gottlieb: Recent Paintings* in 1963 [Box 083, Folders 6-10, Box 084, Folders 1-6], an exhibition that preceded his showing at the Sao Paulo Biennial. Handpicked by Friedman from private and public collections and spanning the years 1950-1962, the works consisted primarily of Gottlieb’s “bursts” and “imaginary

landscapes.” In the accompanying catalog, Friedman wrote, “Gottlieb has developed an art rich in historical awareness, with a directness and immediacy of expression that allowed painting to become an entity in itself.” (Adolph Gottlieb, Walker Art Center, 1963)

The highpoint of one-man shows however was undoubtedly *Not Seen and/or Less Seen of/by Marcel Duchamp/Rose Selavy* in 1965 [Box 103, Folders 4-8.] This small exhibition of early works from the collection of Mary Sisler, was memorable because Duchamp came to Minneapolis for the opening. There are many wonderful photographs of Marcel and his wife Teeny, such as the images from an informal lecture where people are gathered around the balcony railing and in the lobby below. You can practically see the audience straining to hear Duchamp speak. In addition to the photographs there are audiotapes and transcripts of his interviews. In one such interview Duchamp made the following remarks regarding Pop art, “Look at it and don’t say whether you like or dislike it...the vitality is not your concern. It will live or die on its own. That’s the way events take place....” and, “The thing is, it’s a product of our time. It shocks our traditional sense. Suddenly a young man comes along with a work that defies what we are used to. We have to accept it.” (Box 103, Folder 7, Publicity, Minneapolis Tribune, October 20, 1965 "About People" by Margaret Morris)

An important one-man exhibition of this time was *Lucio Fontana: The Spatial Concept of Art* (1966) [Box 105, Folders 4-12, box 106, Folders 1-8], the first major showing of the Italian artist in an American museum. The installation was described as a comprehensive presentation of perforated canvases, metal reliefs, collages, bronze and ceramic spheres. It included a gallery-sized spatialist environment; “Ambiente Spaziale” constructed under the supervision of St. Paul Architect, Duane Thorbeck. In addition there were several related events around the Fontana exhibition including a fashion show, a modern dance performance, and a children’s show. Extensive artist correspondence, and photographs from the fashion show, children’s show, and opening (many of which are humorous as the dancers appear to be moving around in plastic bags) are in the files.

By far the most ambitious exhibition of this time period was the group show *London: The New Scene*, 1965. The logistics alone for the exhibition, which circulated through the U.S. and Canada, are contained in 4 boxes [Box 096, Folders 1-17, Box 097, Folders 1-11; Box 098, Folders 1-5, box 099, Folders 1-9.] The show introduced to the American public fresh new art by a young generation of British artists including David Hockney, Bridget Riley, Joe Tilson, and William Tucker. Features of the exhibition files include questionnaires, transcripts of artist interviews, and many memorable photographs.

The last major exhibition of this time period was fittingly a group sculpture exhibition: *Eight Sculptors: The Ambiguous Image* (1966) [Box 109, Folders 14-18, Box 110, Folders 1-12, Box 111, Folders 1-8]. The show featured Christo, Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Claes Oldenburg, Lucas Samaras, George Segal, Ernest Trova, and H.C. Westermann. The files include correspondence with many of the artists, as well as photos. A highpoint of the exhibition was Christo’s collaboration with students at the Minneapolis School of Art to construct 14130 feet Empaquetage (14,130 Cubic Feet Package) over five days in October, for which there are many photos on file.

Reference

For more information on Martin Friedman see Record Group 1: Series 3, Martin Friedman,

1961-1991. See the Exhibition Chronology for a complete list of Walker exhibitions.

Restrictions: None

Separation Note

Ephemeral materials such as exhibition announcements for non-Walker Art Center shows have been removed, see: Artists Files, Walker Art Center Library.

Access: by appointment only.

See Exhibition folder list.

Exhibition Records, 1967 – 1970, Series 3

Accession Number: 94.06.CO.R

Collection Code: WAC RG 2

Inclusive Dates: 1955-2005

Volume: 8 linear ft. (Box 1 to 20, *Banners and Tapestries to 9 Artists/9 Spaces*)

Prepared by Pamela Caserta, 4/1/07

Provenance

These files are part of the Walker Art Center institutional records. They were created by Walker Art Center staff and were stored onsite.

History

Under the continued direction of Martin Friedman, Walker Art Center underwent a major expansion project between 1969 and 1970. While the 1927 building was demolished to make way for the Barnes building the museum experienced its first period of Walker without walls. During the construction the administrative offices were located at 807 Hennepin Avenue, next to the State Theater, on the same plot of land where T.B. Walker had first opened his home as a public gallery in 1879. For a general overview of all programming during the expansion project see Background Supplement C, *The Museum in Exile*; WACA Press Releases 1967 – 1972, Folder 1971, last item in folder.

In early 1967 the exhibition programming continued without much deviation from the themes present in years past. As the expansion project became more imminent the programming steadily grew more ambitious, with large touring exhibitions, such as *Art of the Congo*, which increased Walker's visibility and recognition as a world-class institution. In cooperation with Dayton's, Walker Art Center was able to organize and host several exhibits at the auditorium of the department store in downtown Minneapolis during the interval of displacement.

Martin Friedman and Curators, Jan van der Marck, Dean Swanson and Richard Koshalek relied heavily on traveling and outdoor exhibitions just prior to and during the expansion. In keeping with Martin Friedman's interest in sculpture, approximately one third of the exhibitions during this time were based around sculpture. In connection to sculpture, there was a surge of curiosity for kinetic art, which received much attention through several Walker exhibitions between 1967 and 1970. During this period, all varieties of exhibits were displayed, from the monumental and anthropological based *Art of the Congo*, to one-man exhibitions such as *Paintings by Aribert Munzner* (no records) and the unusual *Dayton's Flower Show*. The diverse array of exhibition programming developed just the attention the growing institution would need for its new phase to come with the opening of the new building. Throughout the duration of construction Friedman ambitiously continued to grow the permanent collection by seeking out young and

promising artists whose work would contribute to the international attention that Walker Art Center was receiving. The museum currently retains sixty-two works that were acquired during *exile*.

Scope and Content Arrangement

The Exhibition Program Record Group is an ongoing collection of all existing Walker Art Center exhibition files dating back to 1940. Series III (1967 – 1970) Exhibition Files contain records for 36 of the 54 exhibitions hosted or organized by Walker Art Center from 1967 – 1970. The 18 exhibits for which there are no files have been noted as such in the Exhibition Chronology Database. Fortunately, the most pivotal exhibitions have rather extensive records. The Series III segment measures 8 linear feet and is contained in 20 Hollinger boxes.

The files are labeled with the full name of the exhibition, and are arranged chronologically by the opening date of the exhibition. Each folder is marked with a year span in the top center that indicates the dates of the information in the file.

Small exhibitions, or those circulated by other institutions, may have only one folder. Within the folder information is situated in the following order: correspondence, memoranda, checklist, gallery plan, publicity, shipping, and photography. Printed matter and small format objects (brochures, printed notices, etc.) are grouped at the back of the folder.

Larger exhibitions by the Walker, perhaps with an accompanying catalogue, may have up to thirty-four folders. Exhibitions represented by multiple folders are divided by subject and arranged alphabetically (e.g. *Figures/Environments*: Circulation; *Figures/Environments*: Circulation: Correspondence; *Figures/Environments*: Correspondence: General Inquiries). The general order of folders within a large exhibition is as follows: artists, budget, catalogue, circulation, correspondence, dispersal, lenders, loan forms, photographs, publicity, research, and shipping. There are other unique categories, which are assigned in order to keep related files in order of succession, (e.g. *Art of the Congo*: Object: Damage; *Art of the Congo*: Object: Missing.)

The content within folders is generally in chronological order, with the following exception. Some subject folders are labeled with an alphabetical designation (e.g. *Light/Motion/Space*: Artist Correspondence A - O, *Light/Motion/Space*: Artist Correspondence P – Z), which indicates that items within these folders are arranged alphabetically.

One other exception for alphabetizing within a file is for files containing loan forms and lender correspondence in which all of the dates are very close. Paperwork for each lender has been sorted and secured with Plastiklips. Within each bundle pertaining to a particular lender all items are in chronological order behind the loan forms, which are easy to read and identify the lender and their artworks clearly.

Letters from artists have been kept in their original location in the exhibition files and have been preserved in Mylar sleeves. Likewise, all photographs and other photographic materials are in photo-sleeves or slide sheets.

A list of exhibition records with respective locations follows. The list, from database Ex Folder Inventory Ongoing, was created in filemaker.pro 5.0 and is searchable by fields: series, box, folder, title and dates. Exhibition opening and closing dates appear below the folder title in the same field and are for reference purposes only.

Description

From 1967 to 1970 the Walker utilized ties with galleries and museums to collaborate in creating larger, cutting-edge exhibitions that generated greater notoriety. Although much of the programming was in tune with the exhibitions of the previous years, throughout Series III the records are spotted with exhibitions that were quite unusual for the Walker Art Center. In 1967 exhibition programming manifested a sudden transformation as the scope of exhibitions expanded in depth and content. Contributing factors to this renaissance are no doubt related not only to the Walker expansion, but also to the global political climate, technological gains, and a greater variety of mediums available to artists.

Series III begins with the first exhibition to open in 1967, *Banners and Tapestries* [Box 001, Folder 01], which was exhibited in Gallery 3 of the 1927 building. Walker purchased two works from this exhibition, Andy Warhol's *Campbell Soup Can* and Richard Lindner's *Untitled #1*. The exhibition presented a modern approach to an otherwise seemingly outdated medium and coincidentally opened shortly after the Minneapolis Institute of Arts hosted an exhibit of French tapestries.

In continuation of a period of exhibition programming devoted to theater, *Design for Opera* (1967) [Box 001, Folder 02] consisted of designs for two contemporary productions performed by the Center Opera Company of Walker Art Center. *Russian Stage and Costume Design* (1968) [Box 010, Folder 10] was circulated by the Metropolitan Museum of Art with the assistance of the International Exhibitions Foundation.

Witness to Our Time: Photographs by Alfred Eisenstaedt (1967) [Box 001, Folder 03] was presented in collaboration with Life magazine. The Walker press release reinforces the importance of reflecting on history in 1967 by quoting the founder of Life, Henry Luce; "Eisie shows that the camera could do more than take a striking picture...it could do more than record and instant moment...it could deal with and entire subject—whether the subject was a man, a maker of history or whether it was a social phenomenon." In addition to a contact sheet of photographs of Eisenstaedt at the opening, the exhibition file also contains an 8x10 photograph by Eisenstaedt himself, which records the overwhelming attendance of the opening. People all around the grand staircase look back at Eisenstaedt and even take pictures of him taking a picture of all of them.

Although the Walker was experimenting with new programming themes in the late sixties the regional exhibitions remained intact, with much defense from Martin Friedman. *Invitation 1967* [Box 001, Folder 04] highlighted Siah Armajani, Jay Yager and H. Boyd Christenson. The *1968 Biennial of Painting and Sculpture* [Box 010, Folder 12 and Box 011, Folder 01 – 15] included a variety of minimalist and kinetic artworks by regional artists that demonstrated that geographic style was quickly becoming obsolete. Yet, Friedman valued regional exhibitions for a number of reasons; perhaps their contribution to generating local interest in art was the most significant factor for the Walker. Paradoxically, The Collectors Club and the Sales and Rental Gallery, established by H.H. Arnason to stimulate local interest in art, would no longer operate after the close of the 1927 building; however, the Collectors Club Gallery Exhibition was an essential aspect of the 1968 biennial.

Large one-man shows were also a constant. *Nicholas Krushenick, Collages and Prints* (1967) [Box 008, Folder 04 – 14 and Box 009, Folder 01 – 08] was an especially involved one-man exhibition that required coordinating loans from all over the country. Unfortunately, the exhibition was designed with the intention of circulation, but to no avail. *Recent Sculpture by George Rickey* (1967) [Box 003, Folder 05 – 10] was a substantial one-man exhibition organized by the Walker Art Center in cooperation with Staempfli Gallery, NY. Like many other exhibitions of the period, there was a strong emphasis on the kinetic values of the sculptures. The Walker also hosted a number of important one-man exhibitions in 1967. *Alexander Archipenko* [Box 003, Folder 02], *The Expression of Gio Ponti* [Box 003, Folder 03] and *Roy Lichtenstein* [Box 003, Folder 04] were all circulated by the University of California. Walker Art Center's relationship with the University of California was solid during this time. In 1969 the Walker worked with UC Berkeley to produce *Richard Lindner* [Box 016, Box 017, Folder 01 – 02].

Light/Motion/Space (1967) [Box 001, Folder 05 – 09 and Box 002, Folder 01 – 14] was incredibly successful and attracted the highest attendance ever for a single exhibition at the Walker. The Walker Art Center worked with the Milwaukee Art Center to create the major exhibition that sprung from an exhibit organized by the Howard Wise Gallery, NY, just a few months prior. The show included 35 of the same works shown at Howard Wise plus artworks by eight additional artists. Northern States Power purchased five works for the Walker to be displayed in the new Art and Technology Gallery of the 1927 building. The favorable publicity can be located in WACA Press General 1966-1968 [Box 5 of 6, Folder 62,1]. Later, *Light and Design* (1967) [Box 003, Folder 11], and *6 Artists/6 Exhibitions* (1968) [Box 010, Folder 01 – 11] both centered on kinetic art while public fascination with the subject remained elevated.

Large Scale Sculpture by Tony Smith/Two Environments by Les Levine (1967) [Box 004, Folder 01 – 08] was presented ambiguously as two exhibits in one. The files and press are connected, however the shows were in many ways separate and related only through their antithesis to one another. The title of the exhibit(s) is also a bit uncertain. The separate exhibition brochures are titled *Tony Smith Sculptures* and *Les Levine Environments*. Press releases further the confusion by referring to the exhibit as *Large-scale Sculptures*, *Room-size Environments*. "*Large Scale Sculpture by Tony Smith/Two Environments by*

Les Levine” has been determined to be the most accurate way to identify this exhibit based on information in the file and the September 1967 Calendar.

In 1967 Martin Friedman’s time was largely devoted to *Art of the Congo* (1967) [Box 004, Folder 10 – 11, Box 005 – 007, Box 008, Folder 01 – 03] for which he developed a particularly informative catalogue and lectured at the University of Minnesota as part of various related programming. *Art of the Congo* was an especially ambitious undertaking that invited international attention for a seemingly unlikely exhibition for the Walker Art Center. In fact, at the time, *Art of the Congo* was quite fitting for the Walker in many respects. Martin Friedman had a long time interest in African Art that resulted in some exceptional fellowships in the US and in Brussels. His knowledge of modern art coupled with his interest in African Art exposed him to similarities between the two. In the exhibition catalogue for *Art of the Congo* Friedman emphasizes that modern artists such as Pablo Picasso, Julio Gonzalez, Antoine Pavsner, et al. had reproduced artworks with similar qualities. The catalogue carefully outlines the tribes whose works are represented in the exhibit and describes the distinct styles of each tribe respectively. Friedman also takes care to have his colleague, Clark Stillman, address the history of Congolese art in Europe and America. The exhibition traveled extensively through the US and made its final appearance at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts before the collection returned to The Musée Royale de L’Afrique Centrale in Tervuren, Belgium.

Some other unique exhibits at the time were *The Architecture of Mies Van Der Rohe* (1968) [Box 013, Folder 01], *Mass Transit: Problems and Promise* (1968) [Box 009, Folder 10], and *Dayton’s Flower Show* (1969) [Box 013, Folder 02], which included sculptures from the permanent collection and was done in collaboration with Bachman’s Nursery. Stan VanDerBeek’s *Telephone Mural* (1970) [Box 017, Folder 04 – 05] was another standout installation that was held in the lobby of the First National Bank of Minneapolis.

From 1969 through 1970, the Walker tended toward larger group shows highlighting sculptors. *14 Sculptors: The Industrial Edge* (1969) [Box 013, Folder 05 – 06, Box 014, Box 015] was an important exhibition that was held in the Dayton’s Auditorium. The show included works by Donald Judd, Ellsworth Kelly, Robert Morris and other significant artists of the 20th century. *Figures/Environments* (1970) [Box 017, Folder 06 – 11, Box 18, Box 19], also shown at Dayton’s, was similarly high profile if not more so with the inclusion of works by Paul Thek, Red Grooms and George Segal. The exhibit circulated to the Cincinnati Art Museum and the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts. The last exhibition before the unveiling of the new building, *9 Artists/9 Spaces* (1970) [Box 020, Folder 01 - 12], was a bit more adventuresome. The exhibit included one work from each of nine regional artists. The sculptures were installed all over the metro area from Hamline University to Prior Lake, and the task of coordinating the exhibition proved to be difficult. The curators had originally planned to include a piece by Alan Shepp, for a total of 10 artists, however, his work was not included because insurance companies would not insure an artwork that included lasers. William Wegman’s *What Goes Up Must Come Down*, which simply depicted the Foshay Tower on its side, was taken down early because people found it to be an offensive terrorist threat. Finally, Fred Escher’s

installation, at Selby Avenue and Victoria Avenue in St. Paul, was disassembled early because the predominantly African American community felt that it had no relevance to issues that affected them, nor did it represent them. Despite these complications the exhibit appears to have been very intriguing.

There is one last installation that demands mention. The Barry Le Va Installation (1969) [Box 013, Folder 04] is perhaps the most elusive installation in the history of the Walker Art Center. Le Va was given permission to create an installation in the 1927 building after it had been vacated and the heat had been turned off just prior to demolition. In May 2005, Martin Friedman wrote *Barry Le Va's Secret Sculpture* for Art In America. His article and a few black and white photographs are all that we have for reference, but that is quite substantial in itself; and is just enough to peak curiosity.

Reference

Artist Correspondence Database (artist correspondence.fp5): Can be used to locate correspondence with artists within WACA files.

Exhibition Chronology Database (WAC Ex Chron.FP5): Can be used to find out which artists were included in an exhibition, where an exhibition was held, who it was organized by or whether or not there was a catalogue or brochure for an exhibition. In WAC Ex Chron, exhibitions that open and close on the first of a month indicate that the exact dates of the exhibit are not known.

Walker Art Center Collections: Bits & Pieces Put Together to Present a Semblance of a Whole, Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2005.

Walker Art Center: Painting and Sculpture from the Collection, Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1990.

Restrictions: None

Separation Note

Some items have been moved to the Series I – IV Oversize Box. These items are clearly identified in the Artist Correspondence Database (artist correspondence.fp5) by searching for 'OS' in the Box field in the upper right corner of the application. It is also possible to search for 'OVERSIZE' in the Description field.

Drawing by Jud Nelson may be moved to Print Study.

Carbon copy image by Stan VanDerBeek may be moved to Print Study.

Oversize blue print of work by Robert Grosvenor may be moved to Print Study or extra large oversize drawer in Archives Storage Room.

Ephemera materials such as exhibition announcements for non Walker Art Center shows have been removed. See: Artists Files and or catalogues from other institutions, Walker Art Center Library.

Access: by appointment only

See Exhibition folder list

Exhibition Records, 1971 - 1980, Series 4

Accession Number: 94.06.CO.R

Collection Code: WAC RG 2

Inclusive Dates: 1969 - 1981

Volume: 69 linear ft.

Prepared by Jill Vuchetich, 9/25/2018

Provenance

These files are part of the Walker Art Center institutional records. They were created by Walker Art Center staff and stored onsite.

History

On May 15, 1971, the Walker Art Center re-opened after being closed for two years while a new museum building was under construction. Designed by architect, Edward Larrabee Barnes, the new Walker included 7 large gallery spaces arranged in a spiraling vertical tower off the central staircase. The gallery design accommodated large scale contemporary artworks such as those featured in the opening exhibition, *Works for New Spaces*. As the title indicates, the exhibition showcased the versatility of the galleries without drawing attention to the architecture. Artists in *Works for New Spaces* included Siah Armajani, Larry Bell, Lynda Benglis, Joe Breidel, Laddie John Dill, Dan Flavin, Sam Gilliam, Robert Irwin, Donald Judd, Rockne Krebs, Cork Marcheschi, Robert Morris, Ed Moses, Pula, Robert Rauschenberg, Dorothea Rockburne, James Seawright, Richard Serra, Mark di Suvero, Stewart Turnquist, Richard Van Buren, and David Von Schlegell. The 1971 opening set the tone for the exhibition program in the 1970s. The large gallery spaces made it possible to exhibit artists' works in a more open and flexible way which was important during a decade when artists created large installation pieces that were difficult to assemble in smaller spaces.

As the decade ended, large installation works transformed into large traveling exhibitions built on a theme such as the 1980 show *Picasso: Works from the Musee' Picasso, Paris*. Thus, ushering in the decade of the blockbuster.

Scope and Content**Arrangement**

The Exhibition Program Record Group is an ongoing collection of all existing Walker Art Center exhibition files dating back to 1940. The files are labeled with the full name of the exhibition and are arranged chronologically by the opening date of the exhibition. Each folder is marked with a year span in the top center that indicates the dates of the information in the file.

Small exhibitions, or those circulated by other institutions, may have only one folder. Within the folder information is situated in the following order: correspondence, memoranda, checklist, gallery plan, publicity, shipping, and photography. Printed matter and small format objects (brochures, printed notices, etc.) are grouped at the back of the folder.

Larger exhibitions by the Walker, perhaps with an accompanying catalogue, may have up to thirty-four folders. Exhibitions represented by multiple folders are divided by subject and

arranged alphabetically. The general order of folders within a large exhibition is as follows: artists, budget, catalogue, circulation, correspondence, dispersal, lenders, loan forms, photographs, publicity, research, and shipping.

The content within folders is generally in chronological order, with the following exception: some subject folders are labeled with an alphabetical designation (e.g. Artist Correspondence P - Z), which indicates that items within these folders are arranged alphabetically.

Description

There were four types of exhibitions organized by the Walker Art Center in the 1970s: large-scale group shows, large-scale solo shows, small-scale emerging artist shows, and permanent collection shows.

Large-scale exhibitions included exhibition catalogues and often toured to multiple venues. Important exhibitions included: *American Indian Art: Form and Tradition*, 1972; *Naives and Visionaries*, 1974; and *Nelson/Eames/Girard/Propst: The Design Process at Herman Miller*.

Solo exhibitions varied from exhibitions of young artists, oftentimes presented in their first major museum show; to established contemporary artists, and artists who influenced contemporary arts. Solo shows include: *Miro Sculptures*, 1971; *Mario Merz* 1972; *Robert Motherwell: Recent Paintings*, 1972; *George Morrison Drawings*, 1973; *Nevelson: Wood Sculptures*, 1974; *Oldenburg: Six Themes*, 1975; *Morris Louis: The Veil Cycle*, 1977; *Photography by Linda Brooks*, 1977; *Noguchi's Imaginary Landscapes*, 1978; *George Segal: Sculptures*, 1978; and *Picasso: From the Musee' Picasso, Paris*, 1980.

Beginning in 1977 the Viewpoints series augmented the exhibition schedule featuring emerging artists oftentimes working in installation art and presented in-residence at the Walker. Among artists participating in the Viewpoints series were Judy Olausen, 1978; Richard Nonas, 1979, Susan Rothenberg, 1978; Ray Johnson, 1978; Suzanne Anker, 1979; Frank Gaard, 1980; and Kay Kurt, 1980.

Walker Art Center Permanent Collection shows were often grouped around a theme, such as *Echoes of Picasso*, 1980 which included works by Ellsworth Kelly, Anne Ryan and David Smith among others, and was a companion show to the large solo Picasso exhibition.

In addition to organizing exhibitions, the Walker Art Center was also a touring venue for exhibitions organized by other museums, including *Diane Arbus*, 1974 organized by the Museum of Modern Art; *Calder's Universe*, 1977 organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art; *Mark Rothko, 1903 - 1970: A Retrospective*, 1979 organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; and *Franz Marc: Pioneer of Spiritual Abstraction*, 1980 organized by the University Art Museum, Berkeley.

Reference

Artist Correspondence Database (artist correspondence.fp5): Can be used to locate correspondence with artists within WACA files.

Exhibition Chronology Database (WAC Ex Chron.FP5): Can be used to find out which artists were included in an exhibition, where an exhibition was held, who it was organized by or whether there was a catalogue or brochure for an exhibition. In WAC Ex Chron, exhibitions that open and close on the first of a month indicate that the exact dates of the exhibit are not known.

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Restrictions: None

Separation Note

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Access: by appointment only

See Exhibition folder list.