



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to The Alternative Museum records, 1975-2006, in the Archives of American Art

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical	2
Scope and Contents	2
Arrangement	2
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	
Series 1: Administrative Files, 1976-1999	3
Series 2: Exhibition Files, 1992-2000	4
Series 3: Printed Material, 1975-2006	6
Series 4: Photographic Material, 1975-1999	8

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	The Alternative Museum records
Date:	1975-2006
Identifier:	AAA.altemuse
Creator:	Alternative Museum (New York, N.Y.)
Extent:	4.2 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The records of The Alternative Museum date from 1975 to 2006 and measure 4.2 linear feet. The records document the museum's history through administrative files, exhibition files, printed material, and photographic material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 2007 by The Alternative Museum via co-founders Geno Rodriguez and Jan Rooney.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Ricky Gomez in 2024.

Preferred Citation

The Alternative Museum records, 1975-2006. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center. Researchers interested in accessing born-digital records or audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

The Alternative Museum (1975-2000), also known as The Alternative Center For International Arts Inc., was founded as an alternative exhibition space in New York City by Geno Rodriguez and Jan Rooney in 1975. Alternative Museum was founded in response to a segregated art world and sought to bring white and minority artists together under one roof. In 1976, it launched its World Music Program which showcases music from around the world. In April 2000 The Alternative Museum closed its doors and supported only virtual exhibitions.

Scope and Contents

The records of The Alternative Museum date from 1975 to 2006 and measure 4.2 linear feet. The records document the museum's history through administrative files, exhibition files, printed material, and photographic material. Administrative files consist of a history of the museum, By-laws and mission statements, leases, certificates of incorporation, inspection records, some correspondence, and some Board of Director's meeting agendas and minutes. Exhibition files include loan agreements, some correspondence, artist resumes and statements, checklists, and some photographs and slides of artist works. Exhibition files only cover exhibitions held at the museum during the 1990s. Printed material consists of "exhibition schedules" containing announcements, press releases, some clippings and articles, and some exhibition catalogs. Also included are unbound binders of clippings, exhibition calendars, and exhibition catalogs not present in "exhibition schedule" files. Among the many artists who have participated in exhibitions include: Luis Cruz Azaceta, Hannah Wilke, David Hammonds, Alfredo Jaar, Leon Golub, Andres Serrano, and Tseng Kwong Chi. Photographic material consists of photographs of the interior of the museum, and both photographs and slides of exhibition installations.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into four series.

- 1. Administrative Files, 1976-1999 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
 - 2. Exhibition Files, 1992-2000 (1.7 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
 - 3. Printed Material, 1975-2006 (1.8 linear feet; Boxes 2-4)
 - 4. Photographic Material, 1975-1999 (0.5 linear feet; Boxes 4-5)
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Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Asian American artists
Latino and Latin American artists

Names:

Rodriguez, Geno
Rooney, Jay

Functions:

Art museums -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Administrative Files, 1976-1999

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Administrative files consist of a history of the museum, By-laws and mission statements, leases, certificates of incorporation, inspection records, a small amount of correspondence, and Board of Director's meeting agendas and minutes.

Box 1, Folder 1	Charter and By-Laws, 1976-1995
Box 1, Folder 2	Certificates of Incorporation, 1976-1977
Box 1, Folder 3	Floor Plans, 1979-1993
Box 1, Folder 4-5	Correspondence, 1980-1999
Box 1, Folder 6	Inspections, 1983-1988
Box 1, Folder 7	Leases, 1985-1995
Box 1, Folder 8	Board Meetings, 1995-1999
Box 1, Folder 9	History and Mission Statements, 1999
Box 1, Folder 10	Miscellaneous, 1995-1999

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Exhibition Files, 1992-2000

1.7 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Exhibition files include loan agreements, correspondence, artist resumes and statements, checklists, and photographs and slides of artist works. Exhibition files only cover exhibitions held at the museum during the 1990s.

Box 1, Folder 11	List of Publications for Exhibitions, 1999
Box 1, Folder 12	Exhibitions List, 2000
Box 1, Folder 13-14	"10 Artists as Catalysts" (1993), 1992-1993
Box 1, Folder 15-19	"Luminous Image" (1997), 1996-1997 1 Electronic discs (CD) Notes: CD is labeled, "The Luminous Image"
Box 1, Folder 20	"Nervous Systems: Heidi Kumao" (1997), 1996-1997
Box 1, Folder 21-22	"Expansion Art I: Artists of Our Time" (1997), 1994-1997
Box 1, Folder 23	"Ray Abeyta: Convergence" (1997), 1997
Box 1, Folder 24-25	"Ok Sang Lim: In the Spirit of Resistance" (1997), 1996-1997
Box 1, Folder 26-27	Shuh Min Lin: Sun Gazing" (1998), 1996-1998
Box 2, Folder 1-2	"Expansion Arts II" (1997-1998), 1997-1998
Box 2, Folder 3	"The Pursuit of Happiness" (1999), 1999
Box 2, Folder 4-6	"Artist as Patron" (1999), 1999
Box 2, Folder 7-11	"Mouse: An American Icon" (1998), 1994-1998
Box 2, Folder 12-16	"Expansion Arts: Artists of Our Time III" (1999), 1994-1999 2 Floppy discs Notes: Floppy Disk 1 is labeled "Incrisis Collection" Floppy Disk 2 is unlabeled.
Box 2, Folder 17	Digital Exhibition, circa 2000 5 Electronic discs (CD) Notes: Disc 1 is labeled, "Angie Eng." Disc 2 is labeled, "Angie Eng Empty Velocity." Disc 3 is labeled, "Yael Kanarek." Disc 4 is labeled, "Tina La Porta Work Samples."

Disc 5 is labeled, "Air world Demo CD Jennifer & Kevin McCoy."

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Printed Material, 1975-2006

1.8 Linear feet (Boxes 2-4)

Scope and Contents: Printed material consists of "exhibition schedules" containing announcements, press releases, clippings and articles, and exhibition catalogs. Also included are unbound binders of clippings, exhibition calendars, and exhibition catalogs not present in "exhibition schedule" files. Among the many artists who have participated in exhibitions include: Luis Cruz Azaceta, Hannah Wilke, David Hammonds, Alfredo Jaar, Leon Golub, Andres Serrano, and Tseng Kwong Chi.

Arrangement: It appears most of the series was originally kept in binders and was pre-processed using that arrangement. The pre-processed arrangement is maintained.

Box 2, Folder 18	Exhibition Schedules, 1975-1976
Box 2, Folder 19	Exhibition Schedules, 1976-1977
Box 2, Folder 20	Exhibition Schedules, 1977-1978
Box 2, Folder 21	Exhibition Schedules, 1978-1979
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Exhibition Schedules, 1979-1980
Box 3, Folder 3	Exhibition Schedules, 1980-1981
Box 3, Folder 4-5	Exhibition Schedules, 1981-1982
Box 3, Folder 6-7	Exhibition Schedules, 1982-1983
Box 3, Folder 8-9	Exhibition Schedules, 1983-1984
Box 3, Folder 10-12	Exhibition Schedules, 1984-1985
Box 3, Folder 13	Exhibition Schedules, 1985-1986
Box 3, Folder 14	Exhibition Schedules, 1986-1987
Box 3, Folder 15	Exhibition Schedules, 1988-1989
Box 3, Folder 16-17	Exhibition Schedules, 1989-1990
Box 3, Folder 18	Exhibition Schedules, 1990-1991
Box 3, Folder 19-20	Exhibition Schedules, 1991-1992
Box 3, Folder 21-22	Exhibition Schedules, 1993-1994
Box 3, Folder 23	Exhibition Schedules, 1994-1995

Box 3, Folder 24	Exhibition Schedules, 1995-1996
Box 3, Folder 25-26	Exhibition Schedules, 1996-1997
Box 3, Folder 27	Exhibition Schedules, 1997-1998
Box 3, Folder 28	Exhibition Schedules, 1998-1999
Box 3, Folder 29	Exhibition Schedules, 2000
Box 3, Folder 30	Exhibition Schedules, 2001
Box 3, Folder 31	Exhibition Press, 1975-1980
Box 4, Folder 1-3	Exhibition Press, 1980-1989
Box 4, Folder 4-5	Exhibition Press, 1990-1995
Box 4, Folder 6	Exhibition Press, 1995-2000
Box 4, Folder 7-9	"Music Press", 1980-1994
Box 4, Folder 10	"Music Series", 1981-1991
Box 4, Folder 11-13	Exhibition Calendars, 1979-1996
Box 4, Folder 14-19	Exhibition Catalogs, 1979-2006

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Photographic Material, 1975-1999

0.5 Linear feet (Boxes 4-5)

Scope and Contents: Photographic material consists of photographs of the interior of the museum, and both photographs and slides of exhibition installations.

Box 4, Folder 20	Museum Space, undated
Box 4, Folder 21	Exhibition Installations, 1975-1980
Box 4, Folder 22-23	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1991-1994
Box 4, Folder 24	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1994-1995
Box 4, Folder 25	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1995-1996
Box 4, Folder 26	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1996-1997
Box 5, Folder 1	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1996-1997
Box 5, Folder 2	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1997-1998
Box 5, Folder 3	Slides, Exhibition Installations, 1998-1999

[Return to Table of Contents](#)