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Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Argus Gallery Records, 1927-1990, bulk 1960-1974, in the Archives of American Art

Christopher DeMairo

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund, administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee.

2021 June 22

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Argus Gallery records
Date:	1927-1990 (bulk 1960-1974)
Identifier:	AAA.argugall
Creator:	Argus Gallery (Madison, N.J.)
Extent:	8.6 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Argus Gallery records measure 8.6 linear feet and date from 1927 to 1990, with the bulk of the records dating from 1960 to 1974. The collection sheds light on the gallery's operations through administrative files, artist files, exhibition files, printed material, and photographs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 1993 by Edward and Verdenal Johnson and in 2002 by Verdenal Johnson.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Christopher DeMairo in 2021.

Preferred Citation

Argus Gallery records, 1927-1990. 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

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Biographical / Historical

The Argus Gallery was founded in Madison, New Jersey, in 1961 by Verdenal and Edward Johnson and E. Austin Goodwin. The gallery exhibited primarily contemporary artists, with several shows featuring nineteenth century artists, most notably from Maine and New Jersey.

Goodwin, who was a member of the art faculty at Newark State College, had left the gallery by 1964, and Edward Johnson, a high school counselor, and Verdenal Johnson, a high school teacher, took over operations.

During its years in business, Argus Gallery held solo shows for artists B. J. O. Nordfeldt, Henry Gullick, Seymour Lipton, German artist Adolf Konrad, and others. Group shows at the gallery included an annual college and university faculty show put together from sources across the country, and a British printmakers show. In addition to exhibitions, Argus Gallery organized artist demonstrations, offered youth and adult art classes, and held a lecture series hosted by art critic Clement Greenberg.

Scope and Contents

The Argus Gallery records measure 8.6 linear feet and date from 1927 to 1990, with the bulk of the records dating from 1960 to 1974. The collection sheds light on the gallery's operations through administrative files, artist files, exhibition files, printed material, and photographs.

Administrative files include papers related to gallery finances, other art organizations and institutions, the gallery's board of directors, several print workshops, and an artists program at Farleigh Dickinson University.

Artist files include biographical summaries, correspondence, exhibition ephemera, newspaper clippings, photographs, price lists, and inventories. Papers concerning exhibitions at the gallery consist of correspondence with donors, artists, and other institutions, mailing lists, publicity material, price lists, and photographic material.

Printed material consists of exhibition announcements and catalogs, newsletters and mailings published by the Argus Gallery and others, newspaper clippings and articles on the Argus gallery, its exhibitions, and other art-related topics, and three Argus Gallery scrapbooks of photographs, exhibition ephemera, and clippings.

Photographs includes snapshots and transparencies of the interior of the gallery, classes offered at the gallery, and mixed images of artists, artwork, and gallery shows.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as five series.

- Series 1: Administrative Files, 1958-1986 (Box 1; .8 linear feet)
 - Series 2: Artist Files, 1927-1990 (Box 1-5, 9; 4 linear feet)
 - Series 3: Exhibition Files, 1961-1970 (Box 5-6; 1 linear feet)
 - Series 4: Printed Material, 1957-1975 (Box 6-10; 2.5 linear feet)
 - Series 5: Photographs, 1960-1971 (Box 8; .4 linear feet)
-

Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Scrapbooks

Names:

Goodwin, E. Austin
Johnson, Edward F.
Johnson, Verdenal Hoag, 1924-

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- New Jersey -- Madison

Container Listing

Series 1: Administrative Files, 1958-1986

0.8 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: This series includes gallery expense records and financial summaries; board of directors meeting minutes, bylaws, and correspondence; correspondence, receipts, notes, and printed matter from printing workshops, organizations, and other art institutions; a proof of the gallery's logo; and artist billing records and addresses. Papers concerning Fairleigh Dickinson University's International Artists Program consist of printed matter and images from the event. Also found here is one folder of the Johnson's personal correspondence.

Box 1, Folder 1	A. Lublin and Delphic Arts, Prints, 1965-1966
Box 1, Folder 2	Addresses, Artists, 1961-1967
Box 1, Folder 3	Argus Gallery Logo, Proof, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	Billings by Artists, 1966-1967
Box 1, Folder 5	Board of Directors, Papers, 1961-1964
Box 1, Folder 6	Editions Alecto Limited, 1966-1968
Box 1, Folder 7	Expenses, 1961-1969
Box 1, Folder 8	Fairleigh Dickinson University, International Artists Program, 1961-1963
Box 1, Folder 9	Federated Art Associations of New Jersey, 1969-1974
Box 1, Folder 10-11	Financial Summaries and Lists, 1964-1968
Box 1, Folder 12	Johnson, Verdi and Edward, Personal Papers, 1969-1974, 1985-1986
Box 1, Folder 13	Newark Museum, 1966-1971
Box 1, Folder 14	Papers, Miscellaneous, 1971, undated
Box 1, Folder 15	Pratt Graphics Center, 1969-1971
Box 1, Folder 16	Print Council of America, 1961-1966
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Box 1, Folder 18	Ruskin Gallery, 1966
Box 1, Folder 19	State of New Jersey, 1965-1966

Box 1, Folder 20 Stockholders, Papers, 1961-1966

Box 1, Folder 21-22 Tamarind Lithography Workshop, 1958-1969

Box 1, Folder 23 Tax File, 1961-1974

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Series 2: Artist Files, 1927-1990, 1960-1974

4 Linear feet (Box 1-5, 9)

Scope and Contents: Artist files consist primarily of biographies, resumes, and correspondence, but may also include printed matter such as exhibition ephemera and newspaper clippings, photographs of artists and their work, papers related to shipping and loans, price lists, and inventories. The file pertaining to nineteenth century American artists includes photographs of artwork, information gathered from other museums and galleries, and related printed material.

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Box 1, Folder 28	Amino, Leo, 1962-1964
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Box 2, Folder 17	British Artists, Correspondence, 1966-1968
Box 2, Folder 18	Bross, Albert, 1966
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Box 2, Folder 21	Burkert, Robert, 1965-1966
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Box 5, Folder 48	Woods, Gerald, 1966-1968
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Box 5, Folder 50	Ziemann, Richard C., 1963-1965
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Series 3: Exhibition Files, 1961-1970

1 Linear foot (Box 5-6)

Scope and Contents: Files consist of correspondence with donors, artists, and other institutions, mailing lists, publicity material, exhibition entry forms, research material, price lists, photographs, slides, negatives, and some records of sales. Several files include printed matter such as catalogs, announcements, and newspaper clippings.

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Box 5, Folder 53	College and University Arts Faculty Show, Artist Correspondence, 1963-1964
Box 5, Folder 54	College and University Arts Faculty Show, Artist Request Cards, circa 1964
Box 6, Folder 1	College and University Arts Faculty Show, Department Mailing Lists, circa 1963
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Box 6, Folder 8	Summer Show, 1963
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Box 6, Folder 19	Maine Through the Eyes of its Artists (1966), 1963-1970

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Box 6, Folder 21	Water Color Show; Forsyth, Slides, 1967
Box 6, Folder 22	Crafts at Argus Gallery, Photographs, undated
Box 6, Folder 23	Argus Exhibitions, Photographs, undated
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Series 4: Printed Material, 1957-1975

2.5 Linear feet (Box 6-10)

Scope and Contents: Found here are exhibition announcements and catalogs, newsletters, and various mailings published by the Argus Gallery as well as other museums and galleries; newspaper clippings and articles on the Argus gallery, its exhibitions, and other art topics; three Argus Gallery scrapbooks of clippings, photographs, and exhibition ephemera; and a cultural resource directory. In addition to printed matter, some of the subject folders include photographs. Scattered correspondence may also be found in the folders of other museums and galleries.

Box 6, Folder 25-26	Argus Gallery Announcements, Mailings, and Schedules, 1960s
Box 6, Folder 27	Argus Gallery Exhibition Catalogs, 1960s
Box 7, Folder 1	Argus Gallery Newspaper Clippings, 1962-1964
Box 7, Folder 2	Argus Gallery Newsletter, 1961-1966
Box 9	Argus Gallery, Scrapbook, 1961-1963
Box 10	Argus Gallery, Scrapbook, 1963-1964
Box 10	Argus Gallery, Scrapbook, 1965-1967
Box 7, Folder 3-4	Newspaper Clippings and Publications, Other, 1962-1974
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Box 8, Folder 3	Hunterdon Art Center, 1964-1973
Box 8, Folder 4	Kennedy Galleries, 1971-1973
Box 8, Folder 5	Montclair Art Museum, 1961-1970
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Box 8, Folder 7-8	Newark Museum, 1957-1974
Box 8, Folder 9	New Jersey State Museum, 1966-1971
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Box 8, Folder 11	Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1962-1974
Box 8, Folder 12-13	Miscellaneous Publications, Other Galleries and Museums, circa 1960s-1970s
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Box 8, Folder 15	Subject Material, Folk Art, circa 1960s
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Box 8, Folder 17	Subject Material, Kinetic Art, 1969
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Box 8, Folder 19	Subject Material, Primitive Art, circa 1960s
Box 8, Folder 20	The Cultural Resources of Boston, 1965

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Series 5: Photographs, 1960-1971

0.4 Linear feet (Box 8)

Scope and Contents: Series includes snapshots and transparencies of the Argus Gallery's interior, youth and adult classes offered at the gallery, and mixed images of artists, artwork, and gallery shows. Also found here are several photographs taken during the Fairleigh Dickinson University Art Seminars and Institute including snapshots of Dick Stewart, Eddie Johnson, and Leonard Kesl.

Box 8, Folder 21	Argus Gallery, Photographs and Negatives of Classes at the Gallery, 1963, undated
Box 8, Folder 22	Argus Gallery, Opening, December 10, 1961
Box 8, Folder 23	Argus Gallery, Photographs, undated
Box 8, Folder 24	Argus Gallery II, Photographs, undated
Box 8, Folder 25	Argus Gallery, Transparencies, July 1963
Box 8, Folder 26	Mr. and Mrs. Johnson; Frances V. Hoag, undated
Box 8, Folder 27	Artist Slides, Miscellaneous, 1962-1966
Box 8, Folder 28	Miscellaneous Artwork and Snapshots, 1971, undated
Box 8, Folder 29	Mixed Artists Pictures and Shows, Negatives, 1960s
Box 8, Folder 30	Fairleigh Dickinson University, Art Seminars and Institute, Photographs, 1960s

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