



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Richard Artschwager Papers,
1959-2013, in the Archives of American Art

Joy Goodwin and Rihoko Ueno

Funding for the digitization of this collection was
provided by the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation.

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Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Richard Artschwager papers
Identifier:	AAA.artsrich
Date:	1959-2013
Extent:	5.6 Linear feet
Creator:	Artschwager, Richard, 1923-
Language:	Multiple languages The collection is in English, German, and Dutch.
Summary:	The papers of New York painter and sculptor Richard Artschwager measure 5.6 linear feet and date from 1959-2013. The papers include extensive correspondence, recorded talks and a lecture, exhibition files, printed material, and photographs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Richard Artschwager and his wife Ann Artschwager in 2013.

Related Materials

Also found among the resources at the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with Artschwager, March 3-28, 1972, conducted by Paul Cummings.

Available Formats

The bulk of the collection was digitized in 2017 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website. Materials which have not been scanned include blank pages, blank versos of photographs, and duplicates. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned. Audiovisual materials have been digitized for reference use and are available in the Archives of American Art offices.

Processing Information

This collection was processed to a minimal level and a finding aid prepared in 2014 by Joy Goodwin. The collection was more fully processed and prepared for digitization by Rihoko Ueno in 2017 with funding provided by the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation.

Preferred Citation

Richard Artschwager papers, 1959-2013. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original material requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

The Richard Artschwager papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

Biographical / Historical

Richard Artschwager (1923-2013) lived and worked in New York City and Hudson, New York and was known primarily for his paintings and sculptures. Artschwager was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up in New Mexico. As a youth, Artschwager showed a talent for drawing. He studied chemistry and mathematics at Cornell University. In 1944, Artschwager interrupted his studies to enlist in the U.S. Army. After the war, he returned to Cornell to complete his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1948. Encouraged by his first wife, Elfriede Wejmelka to develop his interest in art, Artschwager moved to New York to study at the Studio School of Amédée Ozenfant. His paintings and drawings from this period were featured in two group shows at the Terrain Gallery in 1957 and at the Art Directions Gallery on Madison Avenue in 1959, where they were recognized by Donald Judd.

In the 1950s, in order to support his family, Artschwager turned to designing and manufacturing modern furniture. His woodworking skills inspired him to create sculptures from utilitarian objects such as tables, chairs, and mirrors. He is best known for the use of building materials Celotex and Formica in his work and for inventing an abstract form he called "blps" reliefs, stencils or decals that were installed randomly in museum, gallery and public spaces. From the mid-1980s to late 1990s, Artschwager designed large scale projects, though he continued to incorporate everyday domestic objects in his sculptures and paintings.

In 1965, Artschwager was given his first one-man exhibition at the Castelli Gallery and he remained with the Gallery for thirty years. He was also represented by Mary Boone, David Nolan, and the Gagosian Gallery. In the 1980s, Artschwager served on the Visual Arts Policy Committee at the National Endowment of the Arts. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts in 1992. He was a visiting artist at New Mexico State University, Soka University, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and the University of Arizona. Artschwager's work was the subject of a major surveys, including the Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Neues Museum, and Serpentine Gallery. He participated in numerous international group shows including the Venice Biennale and Documenta in Kassel, Germany. The Whitney Museum of American Art honored Artschwager with two travelling retrospective exhibitions in 1988 and 2012. In late 2012, Artschwager had one-man shows at the Gagosian Gallery and David Nolan Gallery.

Richard Artschwager died at the age of 89 years in 2013. He is survived by his wife, Ann Sebring Artschwager and three children from previous marriages.

Scope and Contents

The papers of New York painter and sculptor Richard Artschwager measure 5.6 linear feet and date from 1959-2013. The papers include extensive correspondence, recorded talks and a lecture, exhibition files, printed material, and photographs.

Artschwager's correspondence is with museums, galleries, artists, art historians, academic institutions, and publishers and concerns exhibitions, speaking engagements, and teaching. Frequent correspondents include Lawrence Alloway, Leo Castelli Gallery, Gagosian Gallery, Galerie Franck + Schulte, Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Ivan Karp, Museum Ludwig, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Ingrid Schaffner, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Also found are letters from fellow artists, including William Copley, Eric Fischl, Ray Johnson, Louise Lawler, Sol Lewitt, Ed Ruscha, John Waters, and Betty Woodman. Some letters are annotated or illustrated with sketches by Artschwager.

The collection includes a lecture and recorded talks by Richard Artschwager held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, and the Carpenter Center of the Visual Arts, Harvard University, and other venues. One of the recordings is from the "Conversations with Contemporary Artists" series of the Museum of Modern Art. Also included in this series is a recorded discussion with artists Alex Katz and Elizabeth Murray and art critics Michael Kimmelman and Peter Schjeldahl.

Exhibition files are found for exhibitions held at Adair Margo Gallery, Lorence Monk Gallery, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Cornell University, and numerous others, including many in Europe. Files typically contain correspondence, price lists, announcements, printed material, photographs, and a few sound and video recordings.

Printed material includes invitations and announcements as well as posters, reproductions, and brochures, mostly related to Richard Artschwager's exhibitions. Newspaper and magazine clippings document exhibition openings and the critical reception of his work.

There are also a few photographs including images of Leo Castelli by Hans Namuth used by Artschwager in preparing for his portrait of Castelli.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 5 series.

- Series 1: Correspondence, circa 1970-2013 (Boxes 1-3; 3.0 linear feet)
- Series 2: Talks and Lecture, 1985-2009 (Box 4; 0.8 linear feet)
- Series 3: Exhibition Files, 1973-2007 (Boxes 4-5; 1.0 linear feet)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1959-2012 (Boxes 5-6, OV 7; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 5: Photographs, circa 1973, 2007 (Box 6, OV 8; 0.1 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Study and teaching
Art critics
Art, Modern -- 20th century
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York
Sculptors -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Illustrated letters

Photographs
Sketches
Sound recordings
Transcripts
Video recordings

Names:

Adair Margo Gallery
Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990
Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts
Castelli, Leo
Copley, William Nelson, 1919-1996
Cornell University.
Fischl, Eric, 1948-
Gagosian Gallery
Galerie Franck + Schulte
Harvard University
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art
Johnson, Ray, 1927-
Karp, Ivan C., 1926-2012
Katz, Alex, 1927-
Kimmelman, Michael
Lawler, Louise
LeWitt, Sol, 1928-2007
Leo Castelli Gallery
Lorence-Monk Gallery (New York, N.Y.)
Murray, Elizabeth, 1940-
Museum Ludwig
Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Museum of Modern Art (New York, N.Y.)
Namuth, Hans
Neuendorf, Hans
Ruscha, Edward
Schaffner, Ingrid
Schjeldahl, Peter
Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture
University of Wisconsin
Waters, John, 1946-
Whitney Museum of American Art
Woodman, Betty, 1930-

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, circa 1970-2013

3 Linear feet (Boxes 1-3)

Richard Artschwager's correspondence is with museums, galleries, artists, art historians, academic institutions, collectors, and publishers. Subjects include the scheduling of exhibitions, loans, preparation of catalog essays; speaking engagements and teaching positions; Artschwager's participation in art-related events; and requests for reproduction rights, provenance and biographical information. Also included are letters by Artschwager that discuss his work and the work of other artists. Among the correspondents are Lawrence Alloway, Gagosian Gallery, Galerie Franck + Schulte, Galerie Neuendorf, Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Ivan Karp, Kunsthalle Basel, Leo Castelli Gallery, Mary Boone Gallery, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Museum of Modern Art, Ingrid Schaffner, Dorothy and Herbert Vogel, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Letters from artists include Bill Copley, Eric Fischl, Ray Johnson, Louise Lawler, Gerhard Mack, and Betty Woodman. Found are scattered letters from John Baldesarri, Damien Hirst, Dorothea Rockburne, Ed Ruscha, and Holly Solomon. Also included are a few letters illustrated by Artschwager. There are letters from Ann Sebring Artschwager acting on behalf of her husband.

Many of the letters have attachments, e.g., curricula vitae and artist's statements; business related material, e.g., informational sheets, scattered price lists, receipts, consignments; layouts of exhibition space; and printed material including clippings, exhibition announcements and invitations, and reviews; and photographs of artwork. The folders labeled "First Names" contain mostly postcards and thank you notes from people who signed off with the given name and did not include a surname. Some of the correspondence is in German.

Letters are filed alphabetically by the personal or corporate name. Correspondence with individuals is generally filed according to the name of the organization with which they were associated.

Commercially produced holiday and greeting cards, correspondence that only included first names, and correspondence where names were illegible were grouped together towards the end of the series and arranged chronologically.

The bulk of this series has been scanned. Birthday and greeting cards were not scanned. Other materials that were not scanned include duplicates, blank pages, and blank versos of photographs.

Box 1, Folder 1	Akademie Der Bildenden Kunste Munchen, 2000-2001 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 2	Alfonso Artiaco Gallery, 1996-2006 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 3	Alveryd, Bo, 1987-2003 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 4	American Academy of Arts and Letters, 1994, 2002-2006 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 5	Architectural League, 1981-1984

	Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 6	<i>Artforum</i> , 1997-2002 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 7	Art Institute of Chicago, 1972-1975 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 8	Artschwager, Richard - Outgoing, 1972-circa 1996 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 9	Artschwager, Richard - Outgoing, circa 1997-1999 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 10	Artschwager, Richard - Outgoing, circa 2000-2001 Image(s)
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Box 1, Folder 12	Artschwager, Richard - Loyalty Oath Incident, 1972-1975 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 13	Asheville Art Museum, 1998-1999 Image(s)
Box 1, Folder 14	Ac-An, Miscellaneous , 1982-2005 Image(s): Ac-An, Miscellaneous : 1982-2005
Box 1, Folder 15	Ar, Miscellaneous, 1972-2009 Image(s): Ar, Miscellaneous: 1972-2009
Box 1, Folder 16	As-Ax, Miscellaneous, 1989-2005 Image(s): As-Ax, Miscellaneous: 1989-2005
Box 1, Folder 17	Barth, Hannelore, 1998-2011 Image(s): Barth, Hannelore: 1998-2011
Box 1, Folder 18	Bartman/Chuck Close Project, 1998-1999 Image(s)
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Box 1, Folder 20	Belot, Judin, 2004-2005

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Box 1, Folder 21	Ba, Miscellaneous, 1976-2008 Image(s): Ba, Miscellaneous: 1976-2008
Box 1, Folder 22	Be, Miscellaneous, 1974-2009 Image(s): Be, Miscellaneous: 1974-2009
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Box 1, Folder 34	Ca-Ch, Miscellaneous, 1976-2010 Image(s): Ca-Ch, Miscellaneous: 1976-2010
Box 1, Folder 35	Ci-Cr, Miscellaneous, 1976-2006

- [Image\(s\): Ci-Cr, Miscellaneous: 1976-2006](#)
- Box 1, Folder 36 Daniel Weinberg Gallery, 1974-1981
[Image\(s\): Daniel Weinberg Gallery: 1974-1981](#)
- Box 1, Folder 37 Deichtorhallen Hamburg, 1993-1994
[Image\(s\): Deichtorhallen Hamburg: 1993-1994](#)
- Box 1, Folder 38 Donald Young Gallery, 1997-2000, 1987
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- Box 1, Folder 39 Dunkelman Gallery, 1972-1973
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- Box 1, Folder 40 D, Miscellaneous, 1972-2008
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- Box 1, Folder 41 Elias Fine Art, 1998-1999
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- Box 1, Folder 42 E, Miscellaneous, 1982-2006
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- Box 1, Folder 43 Fisher Landau Center for Art, 1997-2004
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- Box 1, Folder 44 Fisk, George and Neva, 1983-2009
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- Box 1, Folder 45 Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation, 1997-2008
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- Box 1, Folder 48 Galerie Christian Meyer and Renate Kainer, 1998-1999
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Box 2, Folder 19	Leo Castelli, Floor Plans, 1987 Image(s)
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- Box 2, Folder 36 National Endowment for the Arts, 1974-1999
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- Box 2, Folder 37 Nationalgalerie Berlin, 2009-2010
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- Box 2, Folder 38 Nerl, Louise, 1997-2002
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- Box 2, Folder 41 Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974-1976
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Box 3, Folder 13	Tang Teaching Museum, 2002-2003 Image(s)
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Box 3, Folder 15	Tetamore, Ragna and Donald, 2000-2002 Image(s): Tetamore, Ragna and Donald: 2000-2002
Box 3, Folder 16	Torlen, Michael, 1986-2007 Image(s): Torlen, Michael: 1986-2007
Box 3, Folder 17	Toronto Book Fair, 1997 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 18	T, Miscellaneous, 1977-2007 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 19	Unckell, Hildegard and Hans-Georg, 1982-1984 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 20	University of Iowa School of Art, 2004-2006 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 21	U, Miscellaneous, 1974-2007 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 22	Verlag fur Moderne Kunst Nurnberg, 2001-2002 Image(s)
Box 3, Folder 23	Voici, 1999-2001 Image(s)
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- Box 3, Folder 28 W, Miscellaneous, 1973-2011
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- Box 3, Folder 29 Xavier Hufkens, 1995-1999
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- Box 3, Folder 34 Birthday and Holiday Cards, circa 1990- circa 2000
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- Box 3, Folder 39 First Names, 2000-2004
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- Box 3, Folder 40 First Names, 2005-2011

[Image\(s\): First Names: 2005-2011](#)

Box 3, Folder 41

Unidentified, 1984-2009

[Image\(s\)](#)

Box 3, Folder 42

Loose Envelopes, circa 1994-2000

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 2: Talks and Lecture, 1985-2009

0.8 Linear feet (Box 4)

Recorded talks and lectures include those held at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, Museum of Modern Art, Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami, Florida. Included is a panel discussion that was held in conjunction with a group exhibition featuring Richard Artschwager's work at the Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht, Netherlands; also included are the museum's interviews with the artists, including Artschwager, Steve Ginakos, Peter Saul, and John Tweedle.

Talks by others consists of a panel discussion moderated by Judy Dobrzynski between art critics Michael Kimmelman and Peter Schjeldahl and artists Alex Katz and Elizabeth Murray.

Talks and lectures are arranged in chronological order.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Box 4, Folder 1 | Talk at Madison, Wisconsin, 1985
<i>2 sound discs (cd)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 2 | Talk, "Objecthood and Theatricality" (1 of 2), 1999
<i>Includes 1 sound disc (CD).</i>
Image(s) |
| Box 4, Folder 3 | Talk, "Objecthood and Theatricality" (2 of 2), 1999
Image(s) |
| Box 4, Folder 4 | Talk, "Beitrag, Richard Artschwager", 2001
<i>1 videocassettes (vhs)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 5 | Talk, <i>B. Magazin</i> ; "Richard Artschwager", 2003
<i>1 videocassettes (vhs)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 6 | Lecture, Skowhegan School, 2004
<i>2 electronic discs (cd)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 7 | Talks, Three PowerPoint Presentations, 2004-2006
<i>3 electronic discs (cd)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 8 | Talk, "Conversations with Contemporary Artists" series, Museum of Modern Art, 2006
<i>1 sound discs (cd)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 9 | Panel Discussion and Interviews, "Exile on Main Street", 2009
<i>1 videodiscs (dvd)</i>
<i>2 electronic discs (dvd)</i> |
| Box 4, Folder 10 | Talk by Others, "So Much Art, So Little Time: The Critics Role in the Art World", 2000
<i>1 videocassettes (vhs)</i> |

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Series 3: Exhibition Files, 1973-2007

1 Linear foot (Boxes 4-5)

This series mostly contains files on Artschwager's solo and group exhibitions in the United States and Europe from the 1990s-2000s. Materials include biographical information, correspondence and memoranda, fact sheets, exhibition plans, checklists, sketches of layouts, contracts, loan agreements, cost estimates and receipts. Among the printed materials are press releases, exhibition catalogs, photographs of exhibition installations, and video and sound recordings related to exhibitions. Also found are Artschwager's annotations on drafts of catalog essays.

Additional materials related to Artschwager's exhibitions can also be found in Series 1: Correspondence and Series 4: Exhibition Files.

Files are arranged in chronological order by exhibition date.

The bulk of the material in this series has been digitized. Duplicates and blank versos of photographs. In some cases, printed materials have only had their covers, table of contents, and relevant pages scanned.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Box 4, Folder 11 | Application Summary Sheets, 1976-1978
Image(s) |
| Box 4, Folder 12 | Adair Margo Gallery - <i>Reach for Sublime</i> (1989), 1989
Image(s): Adair Margo Gallery - Reach for Sublime (1989): 1989 |
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- Box 5, Folder 14 Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami - *Richard Artschwager: 'Painting' Then and*
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Box 5, Folder 15

Staatliche Graphische Sammlung - *Richard Artschwager: Bilder, Zeichnungen, Objekte 1960-2002* (2003-2004), 2001-2004

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Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles - *A Minimal Future? Art as Object 1958-1968* (2004), 1997-2004

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Box 5, Folder 17

Group Shows at Leo Castelli Gallery, 1973-1992

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Series 5: Printed Material, 1959-2012

0.7 Linear feet (Boxes 5-6, OV 7)

Newspaper and magazine clippings consist of exhibition announcements and reviews of the artist's work. A list of citations records the reviews of Artschwager's early solo and group exhibitions, providing the name of the reviewer, publication, and date. Also found are exhibition invitations, posters, reproductions, and brochures. Some of the clippings are in German.

Folders are arranged by format and thereafter in chronological order.

The bulk of the material in this series has been digitized. Duplicates have not been scanned. In some cases, printed materials have only had their covers, table of contents, and relevant pages scanned.

Box 5, Folder 18	Event Invitations, 1991-1999 Image(s)
Box 5, Folder 19	Event Invitations, 2000-2002 Image(s): Event Invitations: 2000-2002
Box 5, Folder 20	Event Invitations, 2003-2004 Image(s): Event Invitations: 2003-2004
Box 5, Folder 21	Event Invitations, 2005-2011 Image(s): Event Invitations: 2005-2011
Box 5, Folder 22	Exhibition Announcements, circa 1965-1975 Image(s)
Box 5, Folder 23	Exhibition Announcements, 1976-1980 Image(s): Exhibition Announcements: 1976-1980
Box 5, Folder 24	Exhibition Announcements, 1981-1985 Image(s): Exhibition Announcements: 1981-1985
Box 5, Folder 25	Exhibition Announcements, 1986-1990 Image(s): Exhibition Announcements: 1986-1990
Box 5, Folder 26	Exhibition Announcements, 1991-1999 Image(s): Exhibition Announcements: 1991-1999
Box 6, Folder 1	Exhibition Announcements, 2000-2004 Image(s): Exhibition Announcements: 2000-2004
Box 6, Folder 2	Exhibition Announcements, 2005-2012 Image(s): Exhibition Announcements: 2005-2012
Box 6, Folder 3	Posters, 1980-2009

	Image(s) Oversized posters housed in OV 7.
Box 6, Folder 4	Press Releases, 1978-1992 Image(s)
Box 6, Folder 5	Reproductions, circa 1980-circa 1987 Image(s)
Box 6, Folder 6	Clippings, 1965-1969 Image(s)
Box 6, Folder 7	Clippings, 1973-1979 Image(s): Clippings: 1973-1979
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Box 6, Folder 9	Clippings - List of Citations, 1959-1969 Image(s)
Box 6, Folder 10	Brochures, 1987-2011 Image(s)
Box OV 7	Oversized Posters scanned with material from Box 6, Folder 3, 1980-2009

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Series 6: Photographs, circa 1973, 2007

0.1 Linear feet (Box 6, OV 8)

Photographs include Hans Namuth's images that were used by Artschwager as source material for his portrait of Leo Castelli. An unidentified photograph presumably was also used for art reference.

The series has been fully digitized.

Box 6, Folder 11	"Art Act" photograph, 2007 Image(s)
Box 6, Folder 12	Leo Castelli photographs, circa 1973 Image(s) Oversized photographs housed in OV 8.
Box OV 8	Oversized Leo Castelli Photographs scanned with material from Box 6, Folder 12, circa 1973

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