



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the James Bassler Papers,  
1969-2003, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

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Archives of American Art  
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Washington, D.C. 20001  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	James Bassler papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.bassjame
<b>Date:</b>	1969-2003
<b>Extent:</b>	3 Linear feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Bassler, James
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of fiber artist James Bassler measure 3 linear feet and date from 1969 to 2003. The papers consist of biographical material, correspondence, personal business records, writings, professional files, printed material, and five scrapbooks. Much of the material was assembled by Bassler as supporting documentation for tenure at UCLA.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

James Bassler donated his papers in 2003 as part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

### Related Materials

The Archives also holds an interview of James Bassler conducted 2002 February 11-June 6, by Sharon K. Emanuelli, as part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2019.

### Preferred Citation

James Bassler papers, 1969-2003. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Use of archival audiovisual recordings with no duplicate copies requires advance notice.

## Biographical / Historical

Fiber artist and educator James Bassler (1933- ) is Professor Emeritus at UCLA. His weavings draw inspiration from Pre-Columbian, Andean, and Mexican textile traditions.

James Bassler was born to Margaret and Johnny Bassler, a major league baseball player who hooked rugs during the off-season. Bassler studied at University of California, Los Angeles where he would later teach from 1975 to 2000. Along with his wife Veralee, Bassler opened a crafts school in Oaxaca, Mexico in the early 1970s. Additionally, he established the fiber art program at the Appalachian Center for Crafts in Smithville, Tennessee (1980-1982) and was a summer faculty member at the Penland School of Crafts in Penland, North Carolina and the Arrowmount School for the Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Bassler and his wife Veralee live in Palm Springs, California.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of fiber artist James Bassler measure 3 linear feet and date from 1969 to 2003. The papers consist of biographical material, correspondence, personal business records, writings, professional files, printed material, and five scrapbooks. Much of the material was assembled by Bassler as supporting documentation for tenure at UCLA.

Biographical materials include resumes and writings about Bassler's father and siblings. Correspondence concerns exhibitions, lectures, projects, and Bassler's teaching career. Correspondents include Louise Allrich, Norman Cherry, Mildred Constantine, Kris Dey, Dominic Di Mare, Helen Drutt, Lillian Elliott, Betty Freudenheim, Teresa Huang, Eiko Ishioka, Ritzi and Peter Jacobi, Wojciech Jaskolka, Mi Koon Kim, Sherley Koteen, Gerhardt Knodel, Jack Lenor Larsen, Eudorah Moore, Gertrude Parker, Martin Peavy, Laurel J. Reuter, Ed Rossbach, and Paul Smith, among others. Among Bassler's professional files are items concerning his participation with the United States Department of State Art in Embassies program, his service as an expert witness for a legal case, and his teaching career at UCLA. One videocassette is a student's senior project. Five mixed media scrapbooks contain written statements, photographs of works of art, and printed material.

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## Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

- Series 1: James Bassler papers, 1969-2003 (Box 1-3; 1.8 linear feet)

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: James Bassler papers, 1969-2003

#### *1.8 Linear feet (Boxes 1-3)*

Biographical materials include resumes and writings about Bassler's father and siblings.

Correspondence concerns exhibitions, lectures, projects, and Bassler's teaching career. Correspondents include Louise Allrich, Norman Cherry, Mildred Constantine, Kris Dey, Dominic Di Mare, Helen Drutt, Lillian Elliott, Betty Freudenheim, Teresa Huang, Eiko Ishioka, Ritzi and Peter Jacobi, Wojciech Jaskolka, Mi Koon Kim, Sherley Koteen, Gerhardt Knodel, Jack Lenor Larsen, Eudorah Moore, Gertrude Parker, Martin Peavy, Laurel J. Reuter, Ed Rossbach, and Paul Smith, among others. Additional correspondence may be found in professional files.

Among Bassler's professional files are items concerning his participation with the United States Department of State Art in Embassies program, his service as an expert witness for a legal case, and his teaching and administrative career at UCLA. One videocassette is a student's senior project and runs about 25 minutes in length.

Printed materials include clippings, newsletters, and exhibition announcements and catalogs. Five mixed media scrapbooks contain written statements, photographs of works of art, and printed material. Also found are scattered photographs of works of art and a sketch of a working plan for a 14" by 14" hanging.

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Material, Resumes, circa 1977-circa 2000
Box 1, Folder 2	Biographical Material, on Bassler Family, 1996-2003
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence, Valentines Sent by James and Veralee Bassler, 2000s
Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence, 1969-1979
Box 1, Folder 5-6	Correspondence, 1980-1989
Box 1, Folder 7-8	Correspondence, 1990-1999
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence, 2000-2003
Box 1, Folder 10	Personal Business Records, 1970-1984
Box 1, Folder 11	Writings, on Art and Artist's Statement, circa 1970s-circa 2000s
Box 1, Folder 12	Professional Files, Center for Inter-American Relations, 1978
Box 1, Folder 13	Professional Files, Expert Witness, 1985
Box 1, Folder 14	Professional Files, Proposal for Group Exhibition, circa 1992

Box 1, Folder 15	Professional Files, Teaching Files, 1978-2000
Box 1, Folder 16	Professional Files, Teaching Files, Senior Video by Shai Hanuka, circa 1996 <i>1 Videocassettes (VHS)</i>
Box 1, Folder 17	Professional Files, US Department of State Art in Embassies Program, 1990s
Box 1, Folder 18	Printed Material, Clippings, 1960s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 19	Printed Material, Bulletins, Newsletters, and Press Releases, 1973-1995
Box 1, Folder 20-21	Printed Material, Exhibition Announcements, 1970s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 22-24	Printed Material, Exhibition Catalogs, 1970s
Box 2, Folder 1-5	Printed Material, Exhibition Catalogs, 1970s-2000s
Box 2, Folder 6	Printed Material, Reproductions of Works of Art, 1988
Box 2, Folder 7	Working Drawing, circa 1980s
Box 2, Folder 8	Photographs, of Works of Art and a Parade, circa 1980s
Box 3, Folder 1	Scrapbook 1, 1970s
Box 3, Folder 2	Scrapbook 2, 1983
Box 3, Folder 3-4	Scrapbook 3, 1980s-1990s
Box 3, Folder 5	Scrapbook 4, 1990s
Box 3, Folder 6	Scrapbook 5, Personal Statements, 1990s

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