



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Nanette Carter Papers, 1972-2009, in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

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was provided by the Henry Luce Foundation.

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Nanette Carter papers
Date:	1972-2009
Identifier:	AAA.cartname
Creator:	Carter, Nanette
Extent:	4.9 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of African American abstract artist and educator Nanette Carter measure 4.9 linear feet and date from 1972 to 2009. The collection documents Carter's education and career through biographical materials, correspondence with artists and others, writings including notebooks documenting Carter's studies, exhibition files for Carter's solo and group exhibitions, files documenting teaching and other professional activities, research material including sound recordings for a book project on Carter's mentors, personal business records, and printed material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2019 by Nanette Carter as part of the Archives' African American Collecting Initiative funded by the Henry Luce Foundation.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2021.

Preferred Citation

Nanette Carter papers, 1972-2009. 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 audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

Nanette Carter (1954-) is an African American abstract artist and educator in New York, New York.

Carter was born in Columbus, Ohio, to Frances Hill and Matthew G. Carter. In 1960, Carter and her family, including her sister Bettye Carter Freeman, moved from Ohio to Montclair, New Jersey where her father became the city's first African American mayor. After graduating from Montclair High School, Carter attended Oberlin College studying studio art and art history. She spent her junior year abroad studying in Perugia, Italy and traveling through Europe and North Africa. Carter graduated from Oberlin in 1976 and continued her education at the Pratt Institute of Art receiving a Master of Fine Arts in 1978.

In the 1970s, Carter spent time in Sag Harbor where her parents had a house. She became involved with the local art scene through her college job at the Guild Hall Museum where she met artist Al Loving. Loving became a mentor to Carter and later curated one of her earliest group exhibitions, *Eastville Artists* (1979), featuring African American artists working in eastern Long Island, New York. Carter has continued to exhibit her artwork frequently throughout the United States, as well as overseas. She has been the recipient of numerous fellowships and grants including Bob Blackburn's Printmaking Workshop, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant, and the New York State Council on the Arts residency at Cinque Gallery.

In addition to her career as an artist, Carter has held teaching positions at various institutions including Dwight-Englewood School, Guild Hall Museum, City College of New York, Rhode Island School of Design, and the Pratt Institute of Art where she is a tenured professor.

Scope and Contents

The papers of African American abstract artist and educator Nanette Carter document Carter's education and career through 4.9 linear feet of papers dating from 1972 to 2009.

The collection includes biographical materials consisting of an address book, 11 appointment books, resumes, Carter's student records, and a sound recording of an interview with Carter and Vincent Smith for the radio program "Dialogues with Contemporary Artists." Correspondence is with Joan Digby, Bettye Freeman, Miriam Perlman, and various organizations regarding exhibitions, workshops, and employment. Carter's writings and notes include 13 notebooks documenting her studies and career activities, speech notes, and her student papers from Pratt Institute of Art.

Also found in the collection are exhibition files documenting Carter's solo and group exhibitions, and professional activity files consisting of Carter's teaching files, files regarding fellowships and grants, workshop records, and research material for a book project on female mentors that includes 5 sound recordings of Howardena Pindell and Marcia Lloyd. Carter's personal business records include consignment and sales records, contracts and agreements, and price lists; and printed materials consist of announcements and catalogs for Carter's exhibitions, event programs, posters, press releases, and other material relating to Carter's career as an artist.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as seven series.

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1972-1998 (0.7 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1976-2009 (1.2 linear feet; Boxes 1-2, OV 7)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1975-2002 (0.5 linear feet; Box 3)
- Series 4: Exhibition Files, 1976-2008 (0.7 linear feet; Boxes 3-4)
- Series 5: Professional Activity Files, 1977-2008 (0.7 linear feet; Box 4, OV 7)
- Series 6: Personal Business Records, 1979-2008 (0.4 linear feet; Boxes 4-5)

- Series 7: Printed Materials, 1979-2009 (0.7 linear feet; Boxes 5-6, OV 7)
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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:

African American artists
African American educators
African American painters
Women artists
Women educators
Women painters

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Freeman, Bettye
Pindell, Howardena, 1943-
Pratt Institute. Art School

Occupations:

Educators -- New York (State) -- New York
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1972-1998

0.7 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: The series contains Carter's address book and 11 appointment books ranging from 1982 to 1998, a sound recording of an interview with Carter by Vincent Smith for WBAI's "Dialogues with Contemporary Artists" in 1987, resumes, and Carter's student records from Montclair High School, Oberlin College, and her studies abroad in Italy. Also found are portions of Carter's records from the Pratt Institute which include some of her thesis material.

Box 1, Folder 1	Address Book, circa 1980
Box 1, Folder 2-9	Appointment Books, 1982-1998 Notes: 11 books
Box 1, Folder 10	Interview with Carter by Vincent Smith, WBAI "Dialogues with Contemporary Artists", 1987 1 Sound cassette
Box 1, Folder 11	Resumes, 1980s
Box 1, Folder 12	Student Records, Italian University for Foreigners, 1975
Box 1, Folder 13	Student Records, Montclair High School, 1972
Box 1, Folder 14	Student Records, Oberlin College, 1972-1976
Box 1, Folder 15-17	Student Records, Pratt Institute of Art, 1976-1978 Notes: Includes some of Carter's thesis material.

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1976-2009

1.2 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2, OV 7)

Scope and Contents: A significant amount of correspondence in the series is regarding employment, fellowships and grants, commissions, exhibitions, workshops, and other projects to which Carter diligently applied throughout her career. Other correspondence is with Joan Digby regarding a draft of Carter's biography for a book on collage, her sister and civil rights lawyer Bettye Freeman and the Freeman family, Barbara Sarvis, the Studio Museum in Harlem, friends, and other professional contacts. Also included are letters written by Carter and postcards from her parents sent while traveling.

Box 1, Folder 18-19	A, 1980-2001
Box 1, Folder 20-21	B, 1976-2002
Box 1, Folder 22	C, 1978-2009
Box 1, Folder 23	D, 1988-2004
Box 1, Folder 24	Digby, Joan, 1983 Notes: Includes draft of biography on Carter for book on collage.
Box 1, Folder 25	du Pont Visiting Artist Lecture Series, Regarding, 2000-2001
Box 1, Folder 26	E, 1981-2004
Box 1, Folder 27	F, 1980-2007
Box 1, Folder 28	Freeman, Bettye, 1979-2000 Notes: Includes correspondence from Freeman's daughters Eva and Leah.
Oversize 7	Freeman, Bettye, 1991 Notes: Contains a photograph of Freeman and her family.
Box 2, Folder 1	G, 1980-2005
Box 2, Folder 2	H, 1980-2005
Box 2, Folder 3	I, 1985-1992
Box 2, Folder 4	J, 1981-1998
Box 2, Folder 5	Jersey City Museum, 1988-2002
Box 2, Folder 6	K, 1980-1999
Box 2, Folder 7	L, 1976-2008

Box 2, Folder 8-9	M, 1983-2006
Box 2, Folder 10-11	N, 1981-2005
Box 2, Folder 12	Nichols, Derek G., 1988
Box 2, Folder 13	O, 1984-2004
Box 2, Folder 14-15	P, 1977-2008
Box 2, Folder 16	Parrish Art Museum, 1978-1998
Box 2, Folder 17	Perlman, Miriam, 1979-1985
Box 2, Folder 18	R, 1984-1999
Box 2, Folder 19-20	S, 1977-2009
Box 2, Folder 21	Sarvis, Barbara, 1986-1987
Box 2, Folder 22	Studio Museum in Harlem, 1978-2009
Box 2, Folder 23	Swanston Fine Arts, 1985
Box 2, Folder 24	T, 1978-2004
Box 2, Folder 25	U-V, 1983-1992
Box 2, Folder 26	W, 1977-2003
Box 2, Folder 27	Wenniger Graphics, 1986-1991
Box 2, Folder 28	Y, 1993-1994
Box 2, Folder 29	From Carter, 1981-2008 Notes: Includes handwritten letter drafts by Carter.
Box 2, Folder 30	From Carter's Parents, circa 1985-1998
Box 2, Folder 31-32	First Name Only, circa 1980-circa 2000

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Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1975-2002

0.5 Linear feet (Box 3)

Scope and Contents: Series contains writings and notes by Carter including artist and artwork statement drafts, notes on project proposals and for a speech celebrating the birthday of Michael Kenny, a speech for the unveiling of Carter's artwork at the Mudd Center at Oberlin College, papers from Carter's time as a student at the Pratt Institute, and at least 13 notebooks containing notes on various artforms, literature, and women in art. Notebooks documenting Carter's career activities include notes on exhibitions, art groups, and lists, as well as journal entries regarding her work and career, and drafts for job or fellowship opportunities.

Box 3, Folder 1	Artist and Artwork Statement Drafts, circa 1982
Box 3, Folder 2	Notebook, 17th Century Art in Europe, circa 1977
Box 3, Folder 3	Notebook, Aesthetics, circa 1978
Box 3, Folder 4-9	Notebooks, Career Activities, circa 1978-1990 Notes: 7 books
Box 3, Folder 10	Notebook, Literature and the Arts, circa 1978
Box 3, Folder 11	Notebook, Printmaking and Lithography, circa 1977
Box 3, Folder 12	Notebook, Studies in Italy, 1975
Box 3, Folder 13	Notebook, Women in Art, circa 1976
Box 3, Folder 14	Notes, France, 1980
Box 3, Folder 15	Notes on Project Proposals, 1988-1989
Box 3, Folder 16	Notes for Speech Given at Birthday Celebration for Michael Kenny, 2001
Box 3, Folder 17	Notes, Various, circa 1980s
Box 3, Folder 18	Speech for the Unveiling of Carter's Artwork at Mudd Center, Oberlin, 2002
Box 3, Folder 19	Student Papers, Pratt University, circa 1976

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Series 4: Exhibition Files, 1976-2008

0.7 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4)

Scope and Contents: Files in the series contain loan and shipping agreements, artwork lists, correspondence, exhibition floor plans, and other material relating to individual exhibitions. The files document some of Carter's earliest exhibitions beginning in 1976 with a benefit for the Bridgehampton Child Care and Recreation Center organized by the Eastville Artists, a group of African American artists active in Sag Harbor, New York and other nearby communities. The rest of the series includes material for Carter's solo and group exhibitions spanning 30 years.

Box 3, Folder 20	Bridgehampton Child Care and Recreation Center Annual Art Show (1976), 1976
Box 3, Folder 21	Women Celebrate Women (1978), Nassau County Museum, 1978
Box 3, Folder 22	Eastville Artists (1979), Guild Hall Museum, 1979
Box 3, Folder 23	The 1970's: Prints and Drawings by Afro-American Artists (1980), 1980
Box 3, Folder 24	Illusions of Space (1981), First Women's Bank, 1981
Box 3, Folder 25	Brooklyn Museum National Print Exhibition (1981), 1981
Box 3, Folder 26	Enroute (1981), Studio Museum in Harlem, 1981
Box 3, Folder 27	A New Energy Museum (1981), Project Union Square Third Collective, 1981
Box 3, Folder 28	Voices Expressing What Is (1981), Action Against Racism in the Arts - Westbeth Gallery, 1981
Box 3, Folder 29	Black Achievement in the Arts (1982), Equitable Life Assurance, 1982
Box 3, Folder 30	Oceans of Air (1983), Ericson Gallery, 1983
Box 3, Folder 31	"Hudson Valley '85" (1985), Mid-Hudson Art and Science Center, 1985
Box 3, Folder 32	Celebration (1987), AT&T Corporate Education Center Gallery, 1987
Box 3, Folder 33	Mixed Material: Collage, Assemblage, Mixed Media (1987-1988), Gallery 66, 1987
Box 3, Folder 34	Divergencies (1988), Montclair Art Museum, 1987-1988
Box 3, Folder 35	Expressions: Black Art '88 (1988), National Coalition of 100 Black Women, 1988
Box 3, Folder 36	Who's Uptown: Harlem '87 (1988), Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 1987-1988

Box 3, Folder 37	Four Views, Four African American Artists (1990), Dowd Fine Arts Gallery, 1990
Box 3, Folder 38	"Southampton College Show" (1991), 1991 Notes: Folder contains photocopy of guest book.
Box 3, Folder 39	In Full Effect (1991), Riffe Gallery - Ohio Arts Council, 1990
Box 3, Folder 40	The Expanding Circle: A Selection of African American Art (1992), Bristol - Myers Squibb Gallery, 1991-1992
Box 3, Folder 41	Nature's Themes (1992), Franklin and Marshall College, 1992
Box 3, Folder 42	Show at Sande Webster Gallery, 1993
Box 3, Folder 43	Jazz Impressions (1993), University Fine Arts Center (Amherst, M.A.), 1993
Box 3, Folder 44	Multiple Dialogues: Expressions in Abstraction (1993), Painted Bride Art Center, 1993
Box 3, Folder 45	Jazz Y Son (1995), Pratt Manhattan Gallery, 1995
Box 4, Folder 1	Bearing Witness: Contemporary Works by African American Women Artists (1996), 1997-1998
Box 4, Folder 2	New Works (1997), Rathbone Gallery - The Sage Colleges, 1997
Box 4, Folder 3	Segments (1998), Daura Gallery at Lynchburg College, 1998
Box 4, Folder 4	Women Artists in Celebration of Lois Mailou Jones (1999), National Arts Club, 1998-1999
Box 4, Folder 5	Allu'sion (2004), Rongio Gallery, 2004
Box 4, Folder 6	Different Ways of Seeing: The Expanding World of Abstraction (2005), Noyes Museum of Art, 2005-2006
Box 4, Folder 7	Fluid Borders (2005), Swartley Gallery at Dwight-Englewood School, 2004-2005
Box 4, Folder 8	Driven to Abstraction (2006), New York State Museum, 2006
Box 4, Folder 9	"Walter Gropius Masters Workshop Series" (2006), Huntington Museum of Art, 2006
Box 4, Folder 10	In Context: The Language of Abstraction Continues (2008), Henry Street Settlement House, 2007-2008

Box 4, Folder 11

Pratt Prints (2009), Brazil, 2008

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Series 5: Professional Activity Files, 1977-2008

0.7 Linear feet (Box 4, OV 7)

Scope and Contents: Series contains correspondence, printed material, consignment forms, contracts, application drafts, acceptance and rejection letters, and other material related to funding or job opportunities, workshops and fellowships, and other professional group activities.

Also included are five sound cassettes containing interviews with Howardena Pindell and Marcia Lloyd for a book project titled "Mentors: A Female Perspective in the Visual Arts" and teaching files from Dwight-Englewood School, Rhode Island School of Design, and Guild Hall.

Box 4, Folder 12	Applications for Jobs, Fellowships, Grants, and Projects, circa 1980-1995
Box 4, Folder 13	Archives of American Art Mailbox Auction, 1992
Box 4, Folder 14	Black Artists Meeting Agendas, 1978-1979
Box 4, Folder 15	Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College Fellowship, 1991-1992
Box 4, Folder 16	Cinque Gallery, 1983-1988
Box 4, Folder 17	Cinque Gallery, Nadine de Lawrence Memorial Fund, 1993
Box 4, Folder 18	Creative Capital Funding, 1999
Box 4, Folder 19	Dialogues in the Visual Arts Panel, 2008
Box 4, Folder 20	East End Artists Incorporated, 1977-1978
Box 4, Folder 21	Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, 1997-2005
Box 4, Folder 22	Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant Program, 1998
Box 4, Folder 23-25	"Mentors: A Female Perspective in the Visual Arts" Book Project, circa 1988 Notes: Includes 5 sound cassettes labeled with the names Mr. and Mrs. Howard Pindell, Howardena, and Marcia Lloyd.
Box 4, Folder 26	"Merging at the Crossroads" Symposium Panel at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, 1999
Box 4, Folder 27	National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, 1979-1993
Box 4, Folder 28	New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, 1990-1999
Box 4, Folder 29	Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, 1989-2000
Box 4, Folder 30	Pondside Press Workshop, 1992

Box 4, Folder 31	Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Tapestries, 1989-1990
Oversize 7	Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Tapestries, Blueprint of Proposed Site, 1989
Box 4, Folder 32	Professional Activity Lists, 1981-1999
Box 4, Folder 33	Robert Blackburn's Printmaking Workshop, 1989-2003
Box 4, Folder 34	Teaching Evaluations, 1981-1997
Box 4, Folder 35	Teaching, Guild Hall, 1977-1994
Box 4, Folder 36	Teaching, Dwight-Englewood School, 1978-2005
Box 4, Folder 37	Teaching, Rhode Island School of Design, 2002-2003
Box 4, Folder 38	Teaching, Women's Studio Workshop Contract, 1984
Box 4, Folder 39	Tougaloo Art Colony Workshop, 1998-1999
Box 4, Folder 40	Triangle Artists' Workshop, 1991-1999
Box 4, Folder 41	Wheeler Foundation Grant, 1996

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Series 6: Personal Business Records, 1979-2008

0.4 Linear feet (Boxes 4-5)

Scope and Contents: Files include artwork donation and reproduction permission forms, consignment and sales records, legal contracts and agreements, financial records, price lists, print documentation forms, and receiving forms.

Box 4, Folder 42	Artwork Donations, 1993-2008
Box 4, Folder 43	Artwork Reproduction Permissions, 2003-2007
Box 4, Folder 44-45	Consignments and Sales, 1981-2003
Box 5, Folder 1	Contracts and Agreements, 1979-2008
Box 5, Folder 2	Financial Records, 1987-1995
Box 5, Folder 3	Price Lists, 1987-1994
Box 5, Folder 4	Print Documentation, 1991
Box 5, Folder 5	Receiving Forms, 1992-2008

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Series 7: Printed Materials, 1979-2009

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

Scope and Contents: The bulk of the material in this series documents Carter's career through clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, flyers, pamphlets, posters, and press releases.

Box 5, Folder 6	Artwork Reproductions, circa 1986
Box 5, Folder 7	Booklets, 1998
Box 5, Folder 8	Bulletin, 1998
Box 5, Folder 9	Clippings, 1981-2007
Box 5, Folder 10	Event Programs, 1986-1998
Box 5, Folder 11-14	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Carter, 1978-1999
Box 6, Folder 1-2	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Carter, 2001-2004
Box 6, Folder 3	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Carter, 2005
Box 6, Folder 4-5	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Carter, 2006-2009
Box 6, Folder 6	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Others, 1983-1985
Box 6, Folder 7	Flyers, 1982-2007
Box 6, Folder 8	Invitations, 1979-1991
Box 6, Folder 9	Pamphlets, 1980
Oversize 7	Posters, 1981-1994
Box 6, Folder 10	Press Releases, 1979-1999

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