



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Cinque Gallery  
Records, 1959-2010, bulk 1976-2004,  
in the Archives of American Art

Harriet E. Shapiro

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Archives of American Art  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Cinque Gallery records
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.cinqgall2
<b>Date:</b>	1959-2010, bulk 1976-2004
<b>Extent:</b>	1.1 Linear Feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Cinque Gallery
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Summary:</b>	The Cinque Gallery records measure 1.1 linear feet and date from 1959 to 2010, with the bulk of materials dating from 1976 to 2004. The gallery's mission was to exhibit African-American artists, to educate the public about their work, and to offer art programs to the community. This is documented by financial, administrative and legal records, ancillary correspondence, printed material, and photographs. Also included are limited artists' files and subject files. Materials dated before and after the gallery's years of operation relate to African-American community organizations and were compiled by former Executive Director, Ruth Jett.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The records were donated to the Archives of American Art in 2013 by Ruth M. Jett, former Executive Director of Cinque Gallery.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed to a minimal level by Harriet E. Shapiro in 2014. The Archives of American Art has implemented minimal processing tactics when possible in order to increase information about and access to more of our collections. Minimal processing included arrangement to the series and folder levels. Generally, items within folders were simply verified with folder titles, but not arranged further. Folders within boxes were not numbered. The collection was rehoused in archival containers and folders, but not all staples and clips were removed.

### Preferred Citation

Cinque Gallery records, 1959-2010, bulk 1976-2004. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

Use of original materials requires an appointment.

## Conditions Governing Use

The Cinque Gallery records 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.

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## Biographical / Historical

The Cinque Gallery (est. 1969) was an art gallery in New York City founded in 1969 by African-American artists Romare Bearden, Norman Lewis, and Ernest Crichlow. It was established to exhibit the work of both new and established African-American artists, and to provide community educational programs.

Cinque sponsored more than 300 exhibitions in a number of New York City venues, as well as travelling exhibitions in the New York and New England areas before closing in 2004. The Gallery was funded by public and individual contributors, such as the Romare Bearden Foundation, Philip Morris Companies and the Andy Warhol Foundation.

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## Scope and Contents

The Cinque Gallery records measure 1.1 linear feet and date from 1959 to 2010, with the bulk of materials dating from 1976 to 2004. The Gallery's mission was to exhibit African-American artists, to educate the public about their work, and to offer art programs to the community. This is documented by financial, administrative and legal records, ancillary correspondence, printed material, and photographs. Also included are limited artists' files and subject files. Materials dated before and after the Gallery's years of operation relate to African-American community organizations and were compiled by former Executive Director, Ruth Jett.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 7 series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1970-2008 (Box 1; 1 folder)
  - Series 2: Subject Files, 1988-2010 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
  - Series 3: Administrative Records, 1976-2007 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
  - Series 4: Artists' Files, 1983-2005 (Box 1, OV 4; 0.1 linear feet)
  - Series 5: Financial and Legal Records, 1969-2005 (Boxes 1-2; 0.2 linear feet)
  - Series 6: Printed Material, 1959-2005, bulk 1976-2005 (Box 2; 0.2 linear feet)
  - Series 7: Photographs, 1980s-2001 (Box 3, OV 4; 0.2 linear feet)
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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 -- Exhibitions

Art galleries, Commercial -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Bearden, Romare, 1911-1988

Crichlow, Ernest, 1914-2005

Jett, Ruth M.

Lewis, Norman, 1909-1979

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Correspondence, 1970-2008

*1 folder (Box 1)*

Cinque Gallery correspondence mostly involves business operations, funding efforts, and personnel matters. Many of the letters are addressed to Ruth Jett, Executive Director. There are occasional hand written notes and holiday cards. Of note are letters to interested persons regarding a February 10, 2004 meeting to discuss reviving the Gallery after its closing earlier in the year.

Box 1, Folder 1          Correspondence, 1970-2008  
[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 2: Subject Files, 1988-2010

*0.1 Linear Feet (Box 1)*

*Box 1, Folder 2*

The Lenox Terrace Association file includes a draft proposal to research the role of the African-American home in the socialization of former slaves; also found are notes on former residents such as baseball player Roy Campanella, comedian "Moms" Mabley, musician Charlie Mingus, and politicians Charles Rangel and Percy Sutton. A file on the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture includes the 1988-89 membership directory.

Box 1, Folder 2	Cinque Gallery History, 2003, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Lenox Terrace Association, 2009, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 1988-2010

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## Series 3: Administrative Records, 1976-2007

### *0.1 Linear Feet (Box 1)*

This series includes a Cinque Gallery banner, samples of mass mailings and printed material used in fundraising, as well as notes relating to fundraising events. Miscellaneous records include a detailed subject outline of Gallery operations, Board matters, development efforts, and program ideas. There also is a list of selected grants and awards (1964-1988), and a certificate of appreciation presented to Ruth Jett from the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Box 1, Folder 5	Cinque Gallery Banner, undated
Box 1, Folder 6	Fundraising Materials, 1986-2007, undated
Box 1, Folder 7	Miscellaneous, 1976-2004, undated

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## Series 4: Artists' Files, 1983-2005

### *0.1 Linear Feet (Box 1, OV 4)*

This series consists of biographical information pertaining to: Charles Alston, Romare Bearden, Ernest Crichlow, Michael Cummings, Carl Davis, Nadine DeLawrence, Robin Holder, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Joanne McFarland, Virginia Evans Smit, and others. In addition, there is printed material such as clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, including some relating to Cinque exhibitions.

Box 1, Folder 8-9            Cinque Gallery Artists, 1983-2005, undated

Box OV 4                    Oversized Artists File Material (Davis), from Box 1, folder 8, undated

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## Series 5: Financial and Legal Records , 1969-2005

### *0.2 Linear Feet (Boxes 1-2)*

This series includes bank statements, checks, and carbon copies of contribution receipts. There are reports prepared for the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Department of State, ledger pages, and "Charts of Accounts." Also found are tax records, budgets, and exhibition price lists. Among the legal records are bylaws, a certificate of incorporation, loan and exhibition agreement forms.

Box 1, Folder 10-11	Bank Statements and Checks, 1989-1999
Box 1, Folder 12	Budgets, 1999-2005
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Contribution Receipts, 1989-2003
Box 2, Folder 3	Financial Reports and Ledgers, 2003, 1986, undated
Box 2, Folder 4	Legal Documents and Contracts, 1969-2005, undated <a href="#">Image(s)</a>
Box 2, Folder 5	Price Lists, 1995-2003, undated
Box 2, Folder 6	Tax Records, 1977-2005

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## Series 6: Printed Material, 1959-2005

### *0.2 Linear Feet (Box 2)*

This series includes announcements, invitations, and catalogs of group and solo exhibitions held at Cinque Gallery; exhibitors are Romare Bearden, Ernest Crichlow, Edward Clark, and Charles Alston. Also found are gallery press releases and a newsletter. Miscellaneous printed items relating to Cinque Gallery are a general brochure, exhibition reviews, and Ruth Jett's business card. Of the other miscellaneous printed items, an invitation from the American Society of African Culture to attend its 1959 Conference of Negro Writers is of particular note.

Box 2, Folder 7-8      Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1983-2005, undated

Box 2, Folder 9      Press Releases and Newsletters, 1969, 1990-1999  
[Image\(s\)](#)

Box 2, Folder 10      Miscellaneous Printed Items, 1959-1981, undated  
[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 7: Photographs, 1980s-2001

### *0.2 Linear Feet (Box 3, OV 4)*

Photographs are of Cinque Gallery events, its founders, and Ruth Jett. Events include the gallery's 2001 gala, the 1990 Crichlow exhibition opening, a program for children, and a dinner honoring Pinter Hughes. Among the identified individuals are Ernest Crichlow, Ruth Jett, and Norman Lewis. This series also contains a small number of negatives, mostly of the 2001 gala, and 35-mm color slides of artwork, mainly by A. W. Cowans.

Box 3, Folder 1	Artwork, undated
Box 3, Folder 2	Cinque Gallery Gala, 2001
Box 3, Folder 3	Exhibition and Sale at Edward Clark's Studio; Cinque 25th Anniversary, Public Theater , 1994, undated
Box 3, Folder 4	Exhibition Openings, 1988-1990s, undated
Box 3, Folder 5	Hughes' Dinner and Children's Program, 1990s
Box 3, Folder 6	Ruth Jett, Artists, Other Individuals , 1980s-2001, undated <i>Oversized material housed in OV 4</i>
Box OV 4	Oversized Photographs (Ruth Jett and Unidentified), from Box 3, Folder 6, undated

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