



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Nancy Davidson Papers,
1970s-2016, in the Archives of American Art

Hilary Price

2017 August 25

Archives of American Art
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Nancy Davidson papers
Identifier:	AAA.davinanc
Date:	1970s-2016
Extent:	5 Linear feet
Creator:	Davidson, Nancy, 1943-
Language:	Collection is in English.
Summary:	<p>The papers of New York based interdisciplinary artist Nancy Davidson measure 5 linear feet and date from 1970s-2016. The collection includes biographical material, correspondence, illustrated notebooks and notes, gallery and exhibition files, printed material, photographic material, and two sketchbooks. Nearly one linear foot of correspondence arranged chronologically is both personal and professional. Notable correspondents include Michiko Itatani, Joyce Kozloff, Eunice Lipton, Sabra Moore, and Nancy Spero. Galleries and museums include Marianne Denson Gallery; Museum of Contemporary, Chicago; N.A.M.E. Gallery, of which Davidson was an artist member; the Walker Art Center; and White Columns. Over thirty notebooks capture Davidson's work process, evolution of ideas, related sketches in pen and pencil, reflections from readings and lectures, and notes from critiques with fellow artists Rosemary Mayer, Joyce Kozloff, Ray Yoshida, and Richard Halstead. A large sequence of printed material includes announcements, books, bulletins, newsletters, calendars, clippings, exhibition catalogs, periodicals, press releases, programs, and a few other items of printed matter relating to Davidson's professional career.</p>

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated to the Archives of American Art in 2016 by Nancy Davidson.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Hilary Price in 2017.

Preferred Citation

Nancy Davidson papers, 1970s-2016. 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. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

The Nancy Davidson 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

Nancy Davidson (1943-) is an interdisciplinary artist working primarily in sculpture and installation in New York, NY. She grew up in Chicago and received a Bachelor's degree from Northeastern Illinois University, a BFA from the University of Illinois, Chicago, and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. After completing her graduate degree in 1975, Davidson began her professional career in Chicago before moving to New York in 1979. While initially working in painting and drawing, Davison has become most well known for her works in sculpture investigating the feminized body. She has exhibited at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., and in numerous galleries across the country. Davidson was a professor at Purchase College SUNY from 1984-2008.

Scope and Contents

The papers of New York based interdisciplinary artist Nancy Davidson measure 5 linear feet and date from 1970s-2016. The collection includes biographical material, correspondence, illustrated notebooks and notes, gallery and exhibition files, printed material, photographic material, and two sketchbooks. Nearly one linear foot of correspondence arranged chronologically is both personal and professional. Notable correspondents include Michiko Itatani, Joyce Kozloff, Eunice Lipton, Sabra Moore, and Nancy Spero. Galleries and museums include Marianne Denson Gallery; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; N.A.M.E. Gallery, of which Davidson was an artist member; the Walker Art Center; and White Columns. Over thirty notebooks capture Davidson's work process, evolution of ideas, related sketches in pen and pencil, reflections from readings and lectures, and notes from critiques with fellow artists Rosemary Mayer, Joyce Kozloff, Ray Yoshida, and Richard Halstead. A large sequence of printed material includes announcements, books, bulletins, newsletters, calendars, clippings, exhibition catalogs, periodicals, press releases, programs, and a few other items of printed matter relating to Davidson's professional career.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as seven series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1978-2015 (0.9 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1970s-2000s (0.8 linear feet; Box 1-2)
- Series 3: Illustrated Notebooks and Notes, 1970s-2010 (1.6 linear feet; Box 2-4)
- Series 4: Gallery and Exhibition Files, 1976-2002 (0.3 linear feet; Box 4)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1970s-2010s (1.3 linear feet; Box 4-5)
- Series 6: Photographic Material, 1990s (1 folder; Box 5)
- Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1980, circa 1990 (2 folders; Box 5)

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
Installations (Art) -- New York -- New York
Sculptors -- New York (State) -- New York
Women artists -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Sketchbooks
Sketches

Names:

Halstead, Richard
Itatani, Michiko
Kozloff, Joyce
Lipton, Eunice
Marianne Deson Gallery
Mayer, Rosemary
Moore, Sabra
Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, Ill.)
N.A.M.E. Gallery
Spero, Nancy, 1926-2009
Walker Art Center
White Columns (Gallery)
Yoshida, Ray

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1978-2015

0.9 Linear feet (Box 1)

Biographical material dates from 1978-2015 and contains an address book; over twenty daily agendas; a financial ledger; grant documentation including the Pollock-Krasner and Guggenheim awards; faculty and tenure records; residency and fellowship records; resumes; and ephemera relating to Davidson and Greg Drasler's wedding.

Box 1, Folder 1	Address Book, 1980s
Box 1, Folder 2-9	Agendas, 1980s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 10	Financial Ledger, 1998-2000
Box 1, Folder 11	Grants, 1978-2015
Box 1, Folder 12	Purchase College, Tenure Review, 1984-2000
Box 1, Folder 13	Residencies and Teaching Fellowship, 1980-2007
Box 1, Folder 14	Resumes, circa 1990-2003
Box 1, Folder 15	Wedding, 1985-1986

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1970s-2000s

0.8 Linear feet (Box 1-2)

Correspondence dates from 1970s-2000s and is both personal and professional. Correspondents include family, friends, artists, as well as galleries and museums. Items including letters, postcards, greeting cards, and memos provide insight into Davidson's artistic network and document details of her group and solo exhibition history. Notable correspondents include Michiko Itatani, Joyce Kozloff, Eunice Lipton, Sabra Moore, and Nancy Spero. Galleries and museums include Marianne Denson Gallery; Museum of Contemporary, Chicago; N.A.M.E. Gallery, of which Davidson was an artist member; the Walker Art Center; and White Columns.

Box 1, Folder 16-17	Chronological Correspondence, 1970s
Box 2, Folder 1-6	Chronological Correspondence, 1980s
Box 2, Folder 7-11	Chronological Correspondence, 1990s
Box 2, Folder 12	Chronological Correspondence, 2000s

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Series 3: Illustrated Notebooks and Notes, 1970s-2010

1.6 Linear feet (Box 2-4)

Over thirty notebooks, the majority of which are illustrated, date from 1970s-2010. Kept from the time Davidson was a student in Chicago, the notebooks capture her work process, evolution of ideas, related sketches in pen and pencil, reflections from readings and lectures, and notes from critiques with fellow artists Rosemary Mayer, Joyce Kozloff, Ray Yoshida, and Richard Halstead. A few of the books also contain diary entries of a more personal nature. Two files of loose notes relating to Davidson's work, as well as printed material, source material, photographs, and sketches, are arranged at the end of the series.

Box 2, Folder 13	Illustrated Notebook, 1971-1974
Box 2, Folder 14	Illustrated Notebook, 1974-1975
Box 2, Folder 15	Illustrated Notebook, 1974-1976
Box 3, Folder 1	Illustrated Notebook, 1976-1979
Box 3, Folder 2	Illustrated Notebook, Yaddo, 1979-1980
Box 3, Folder 3	Illustrated Notebook, 1983-1985
Box 3, Folder 4	Notebooks (2), 1985-1989, 1986
Box 3, Folder 5	Notebooks (3), 1987-1990
Box 3, Folder 6	Illustrated Notebooks (3), 1990-1999
Box 3, Folder 7	Illustrated Notebook, "'Breathless' Script/Video", 1999
Box 3, Folder 8	Illustrated Notebooks (4), circa 2000
Box 3, Folder 9	Illustrated Notebooks (4), 2000-2001
Box 3, Folder 10	Illustrated Notebooks (4), "Corcoran Project", "Remembrances", 2002-2003
Box 3, Folder 11	Illustrated Notebooks (2), 2004
Box 3, Folder 12	Illustrated Notebooks (3), circa 2005-2006
Box 3, Folder 13	Illustrated Notebooks (4), 2005-2006
Box 4, Folder 1	Illustrated Notebooks (3), 2007

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|-------------------|--|
| Box 4, Folder 2 | Notebooks (3), "Venice", 2007-2009 |
| Box 4, Folder 3 | Illustrated Notebooks (3), "Pilchuck Notes", 2008-2010 |
| Box 4, Folder 4-5 | Notes about Work, 1970s-1980s |

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Series 4: Gallery and Exhibition Files, 1976-2002

0.3 Linear feet (Box 4)

Gallery and exhibition files date from 1976-2002 and document several exhibitions and galleries that have represented Davidson's work over the years. Items include correspondence, loan agreements, price lists, floor plans, writings, guest books, and printed material. Additional correspondence with galleries and museums is arranged in Series 2: Correspondence.

Box 4, Folder 6	Dorsky Gallery, <i>nobutsaboutit</i> (1998), 1998
Box 4, Folder 7	Emily Peterson Gallery, 1999
Box 4, Folder 8	Habor Theadore Gallery, <i>Nancy Davidson: Paintings on Paper</i> (1981), 1979-1981
Box 4, Folder 9	Regina Gouger Miller Gallery, <i>Plenty</i> (2002), 2001-2002
Box 4, Folder 10	The Renaissance Society, <i>Space Transformation</i> (1976), 1976
Box 4, Folder 11	Richard Anderson Gallery, <i>Nancy Davidson: Theater</i> (1991), 1991
Box 4, Folder 12	Robert Miller Gallery, <i>Nancy Davidson</i> (2001), circa 2001
Box 4, Folder 13	Shoshana Wayne Gallery, 1997-1999
Box 4, Folder 14	Stadtische Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz, 1999-2001

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Series 5: Printed Material, 1970s-2010s

1.3 Linear feet (Box 4-5)

Printed material dates from 1970s-2010s and includes announcements, annotated books, books released in Japan, bulletins, newsletters, calendars, clippings, exhibition catalogs, periodicals, press releases, programs, and a few other items of printed matter relating to Davidson's professional career. The items in this series provide extensive documentation of the dozens of group and solo exhibitions Davidson participated in, as well as the careers of her artist friends.

Box 4, Folder 15-17	Announcements, 1970s-2000s
Box 4, Folder 18	Books, 2000-2001, 1977
Box 4, Folder 19	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1975-2001
Box 4, Folder 20	Calendars, 1976-2001
Box 4, Folder 21-22	Clippings, 1970s-2000s
Box 4, Folder 23-24	Exhibition Catalogs, 1970s
Box 5, Folder 1-2	Exhibition Catalogs, 1980s
Box 5, Folder 3-7	Exhibition Catalogs, 1990s
Box 5, Folder 8	Exhibition Catalogs, 2000s
Box 5, Folder 9	Exhibition Catalogs, 2010s
Box 5, Folder 10	Periodicals, 1995, 1998, 1978
Box 5, Folder 11	Press Releases, 1977-2001
Box 5, Folder 12	Programs, 1994-2012
Box 5, Folder 13-14	Other Printed Matter, 1970s-2000s

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Series 6: Photographic Material, 1990s

1 Folder (Box 5)

The photographic material found here dates from 1990s and includes photographic prints, slides, and negatives. The prints are of artworks, an exhibition installation, and Davidson participating in an artist panel discussion. The slides, negatives, and other prints are of dresses and fabrics, possibly used as source material for Davidson's sculptures.

Box 5, Folder 15

Photographic Material, 1990s

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Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1990, circa 1980

2 Folders (Box 5)

Two sketchbooks, one dating from circa 1980 and one from circa 1990, contain predominantly figurative sketches in pen, pencil, and marker.

Box 5, Folder 16 Sketchbook, "Picasso Crying Woman, Studies of Hands", circa 1980

Box 5, Folder 17 Sketchbook, circa 1990

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