



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Hester Diamond papers, 1950-2022, in the Archives of American Art

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Hester Diamond papers
<b>Date:</b>	1950-2022
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.diamhest
<b>Creator:</b>	Diamond, Hester
<b>Extent:</b>	7 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of New York art collector, dealer, and interior designer Hester Diamond measure 7.0 linear feet and date from 1950 to 2022. The collection comprises biographical materials containing diaries, home improvement and collection plans, Diamond's art history notes, and other items; art collection files consisting of appraisals, expenses, early business dealings conducted by Harold Diamond, and other records; correspondence from dealers offering artworks to Diamond; professional files documenting Diamond's mineral collection, her work on VISTAS, and other activities; printed materials consisting of clippings about Diamond, business cards, and a published book about the art collection; and photographic materials of home decor and works of art.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2022 by The Estate of Hester Diamond via David Diamond, co-executor.

### Related Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds an oral history interview with Hester Diamond conducted on October 4-5, 2017 for the Archives of American Art.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2024.

### Preferred Citation

Hester Diamond papers, 1950-2022. 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 born-digital records in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

Hester Diamond (1928-2020) was an art dealer, collector, and interior designer in New York, N.Y. Diamond was born in Bronx, N.Y. to David and Edith (née Wilbur) Klein. She received a B.A. degree in English from Hunter College in Manhattan where she frequented art museums. She married art dealer Harold Diamond in 1950. The couple shared a love of art and began collecting soon after they had married. After Harold's death in 1982, she married Ralph Kaminsky who died in 2012. In 2015, she married David S. Wilson. Along with managing the art collection, Diamond was an interior designer, a founder of VISTAS, Virtual Images of Sculpture in Time and Space, and was president of the Medici Archive Project. Diamond died in 2020 in Manhattan, N.Y.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of New York art collector, dealer, and interior designer Hester Diamond measure 7.0 linear feet and date from 1950 to 2022. The collection comprises biographical materials, art collection files, dealer files, professional files, printed materials, and photographic materials.

Biographical materials consist of two diaries, an appointment book, home improvement files that include plans to accommodate Diamond's art collection, Diamond's art history class notes, Wilbur family history, and a few other items.

Diamond's files documenting her art collection consist of alphabetical binders containing information on the artworks, expense binders documenting conservation and other work done to the artworks and photography, and other files relating the collection. Included are photographs of the collection by Bruce Schwarz along with location information, as well as Harold Diamond's correspondence with Ben Nicholson, Willem de Kooning, Antoine Pevsner, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and other artists in the 1950s.

Dealer files consist mainly of correspondence to Diamond offering information on artworks available to purchase; however, the donor noted that Diamond did not accept most of the offers. Diamond's professional files documenting her activities outside of the art collection include material regarding her mineral collection, VISTAS publishing, Medici Archive Project, and other activities. Printed materials consist of clippings about Diamond, business cards, a published book about the Diamond art collection, and a few other items. Photographic materials are of home decor, furniture, and works of art.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 6 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1950-2019 (1.2 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 2: Art Collection Files, 1950s-2020 (2.7 linear feet; Boxes 2-4)
- Series 3: Dealer Files, 1987-2019 (1.0 linear foot; Boxes 4-5)
- Series 4: Professional Files, circa 1994-2019 (1.7 linear feet; Boxes 5-7)
- Series 5: Printed Materials, circa 1989-2020 (0.2 linear feet; Box 7)

- Series 6: Photographic Materials, circa 1970-2022 (0.2 linear feet; Box 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:

Art -- Collectors and collecting  
Women art dealers

### Types of Materials:

Diaries

### Names:

De Kooning, Willem, 1904-1997  
Hepworth, Barbara, Dame, 1903-1975  
Moore, Henry, 1898-1986  
Nicholson, Ben, 1894-

### Occupations:

Art dealers -- New York (State) -- New York

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1950-2019

#### 1.2 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: The series contains an appointment book, a certificate from the Metropolitan Museum, opera ephemera, passports, two diaries discussing travel and professional activities in the 1990s, home improvement files that include plans to accommodate Diamond's art collection, and Wilbur family history. Also included are notes for several art history classes attended by Diamond.

Box 1, Folder 1	Appointment Book, 2019
Box 1, Folder 2	Certificate, Fellow for Life at the Met, 2009
Box 1, Folder 3	Class Notes, Artist Couples, 2007
Box 1, Folder 4	Class Notes, Italian Altar Piece, circa 2003
Box 1, Folder 5	Class Notes, Helen Baroque Architecture, 1993
Box 1, Folder 6	Class Notes, Italian Renaissance Architecture, 1995
Box 1, Folder 7	Class Notes, Leo Steinberg Lectures, 1991-1993
Box 1, Folder 8	Class Notes, Northern Altar Piece, 2009
Box 1, Folder 9	Class Notes, Studies in Italian Painting, 2004
Box 1, Folder 10	Diaries, 1994-1998 Notes: 2 diaries
Box 1, Folder 11	Home Improvements, 2012
Box 1, Folder 12	Home Improvements, 2019
Box 1, Folder 13-18	Home Improvements, "19D Refurnishing", circa 2007
Box 1, Folder 19	Lists, 1991-2012
Box 1, Folder 20	Opera Ephemera, circa 2000s
Box 2, Folder 1	Opera Ephemera, circa 2000s
Box 2, Folder 2	Passports, 2003-2012 Notes: 2 passports

Box 2, Folder 3

Wilbur Family History, 1950-2008

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## Series 2: Art Collection Files, 1950s-2020

### 2.7 Linear feet (Boxes 2-4)

Arrangement: The series is divided into 3 subseries.

- 2.1: Alphabetical Binders of Works in Art Collection
- 2.2: Art Collection Expense Binders
- 2.3: Other Files Related to the Art Collection

Scope and Contents: Diamond maintained detailed records on the artwork in her collection. These records have been divided into 3 subseries for alphabetical binders of collection records, collection expenses, and other files relating to the art collection. Note that binders have been disbound and material was placed into archival folders in original order.

Alphabetical binders contain appraisal forms, written descriptions of artwork, photographs, born digital material, and transactional forms. Collection expense binders consist of records relating to work done on artworks such as conservation and photography. Other files related to the collection include Harold Diamond's files of correspondence with Ben Nicholson, Henry Moore, Antoine Pevsner, Willem de Kooning, Barbara Hepworth, and other artists documenting the purchase of artworks and the early stages of the Diamond art collection. Also included are conservation agreements, framing records, and location information and photographs on digital media of the Diamond art collection by Bruce Schwarz.

### Subseries 2.1: Alphabetical Binders of Works in Art Collection, circa 1980-2020

Box 2, Folder 4	Antwerp-Lederer, circa 2000 Notes: Includes 2 electronic discs (CD).
Box 2, Folder 5-6	Alessandro-Bernard, circa 2000-2020 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD).
Box 2, Folder 7	Barry X Ball, circa 2010
Box 2, Folder 8	Bernard van Orley, circa 2008 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD) and 1 flash drive.
Box 2, Folder 9-10	Bernini, circa 1980-circa 2015
Box 2, Folder 11	Bernini, Loan to Rijksmuseum, 2002-2019
Box 2, Folder 12-13	Berruguete-del Cour, circa 1999-circa 2017 Notes: Folder 13 includes 2 electronic discs (DVD/CD).
Box 2, Folder 14-15	Degler-Dumpling Master, circa 1985-circa 2009
Box 2, Folder 16-17	De Voghel, circa 2000
Box 2, Folder 18	Dosso Dossi, circa 1999
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Filippino-French Eagle, circa 1999-circa 2017



	Notes: Folder 1 includes 1 electronic disc (CD).
Box 3, Folder 3	Flemish Hansaltar, 2004 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD).
Box 3, Folder 4	Garofalo-Heemskerck, circa 1993-2006
Box 3, Folder 5	Johanneschussel-Kern, circa 1990-2014
Box 3, Folder 6	Lederer-Lombardo, 2002-2013
Box 3, Folder 7	Lombardo-Yellin, circa 2000 Notes: Includes 2 electronic discs (CD/DVD).
Box 3, Folder 8	Antonio Lombardo, circa 2000
Box 3, Folder 9	Lenckhardt-Permoser, circa 2005-2020
Box 3, Folder 10	Lux-Lille Adoration, 1999-2014 Notes: Includes 2 electronic discs (CD).
Box 3, Folder 11	Master of Ashmollean Predella, circa 2010
Box 3, Folder 12	Master of Lille Adoration, circa 1980-circa 2005 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD).
Box 3, Folder 13	Master of San Trovaso, circa 2010 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD).
Box 3, Folder 14	M. Schongau Retable, circa 2010 Notes: Includes 3 electronic discs (CD).
Box 3, Folder 15	Master of San Trovaso-Mazzuoli, circa 2000s
Box 3, Folder 16	Netherlandish Miniature-Rococo Table, 1989-2015
Box 3, Folder 17	Permoser, circa 2010
Box 3, Folder 18	Pieter Coecke van Aelst, circa 2010
Box 3, Folder 19	Sibilio-Yellin, 1999-2014
Box 3, Folder 20	Jacob van Oostanen, 1995
Box 3, Folder 21	States of Man, 2017
Box 3, Folder 22	St. Michael and the Rebell Angel, circa 2019

Box 3, Folder 23	Viola, 2016 Notes: Includes 6 memory cards.
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### Subseries 2.2: Art Collection Expense Binders, 1989-2020

Box 3, Folder 24	Investment Related Expenses, A-D, circa 2005-2020
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Box 4, Folder 1	Investment Related Expenses, A-D, circa 2005-2020
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Box 4, Folder 2-3	Investment Related Expenses, D-M, circa 2005-2019
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Box 4, Folder 4-5	Investment Related Expenses, M-Z, circa 2003-2019
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Box 4, Folder 6	Investment Related Expenses, A-Z, Diamond Art Collections Corp., 1989-2020
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### Subseries 2.3: Other Files Related to the Art Collection, 1950s-2013

Box 4, Folder 7	Conservation Agreements, 1991-2012
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Box 4, Folder 8	Frames, 1992-1993
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Box 4, Folder 9	Harold Diamond, Art Dealings, 1950s-1970s
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Box 4, Folder 10	Harold Diamond, Art Dealings, circa 1970s-1980s
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Box 4, Folder 11	Harold Diamond, Art Dealings, 1950s-1992
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Box 4, Folder 12	Harold Diamond, Correspondence, 1950s
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Box 4, Folder 13	Harold Diamond, Correspondence, 1950s
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Box 4, Folder 14	Harold and Hester Diamond, Correspondence from Barbara Hepworth, 1950s
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Box 4, Folder 15	Location Information and Photographs of Collection by Bruce Schwarz, circa 2013 Notes: Includes 10 discs (CD/DVD) and 9 flash drives.
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## Series 3: Dealer Files, 1987-2019

### 1 Linear foot (Boxes 4-5)

Scope and Contents: The files in this series contain correspondence and other records regarding artworks of interest to Diamond. The material was received from the donor with a note explaining that most of the artworks offered were not bought by Diamond.

Box 4, Folder 16	Alex Wengraf Limited, 1990
Box 4, Folder 17	Andrew Butterfield Fine Arts, circa 2016
Box 4, Folder 18	Anthony Roth Fine Arts Ltd., 1990-1993
Box 4, Folder 19	Arcadia Cerri, 2015
Box 4, Folder 20	Blumka Gallery, circa 1990
Box 4, Folder 21	Christie's, circa 1990
Box 5, Folder 1	Daniel Katz Ltd., circa 1995-2007
Box 5, Folder 2	Deutsche Bank, circa 2008 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD).
Box 5, Folder 3	Dino Tommasso, 2011
Box 5, Folder 4	Dirk Holger, 2008
Box 5, Folder 5	Fergus McCaffrey, 2019
Box 5, Folder 6	Galerie Ratton-Ladriere, 2004
Box 5, Folder 7	G. Sarti, circa 2004
Box 5, Folder 8	Jack Shainman, 2011
Box 5, Folder 9-10	Marco Grassi, 1990-2009
Box 5, Folder 11	Michael Simpson, 2001-2003
Box 5, Folder 12	Moretti, 2003-2010
Box 5, Folder 13	Otto Naumann Ltd., circa 1989-circa 2015
Box 5, Folder 14	Richard Johnsen, 1993-1994
Box 5, Folder 15	Sam Fogg, 2008-2013

Box 5, Folder 16	Sascha Mehringer, 2005-2018
Box 5, Folder 17	Senger Bamberg, 1987
Box 5, Folder 18	Simon Dickinson Ltd., circa 1995-circa 2005
Box 5, Folder 19	Sotheby's, 1997-2010
Box 5, Folder 20	Stephen Mazoh and Co., Inc., circa 1995
Box 5, Folder 21	Various, 1989-2002
Box 5, Folder 22	Whitfield Fine Art, 2004
Box 5, Folder 23	Wildenstein and Co. Inc., 1996-2011

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## Series 4: Professional Files, circa 1994-2019

### 1.7 Linear feet (Boxes 5-7)

Arrangement: The series is divided into 2 subseries.

- 4.1: Alphabetical Files, circa 1994-2019
- 4.2: Other Professional Files, 2003-2019

Scope and Contents: Diamond's professional files are divided into 2 subseries that include a set of alphabetical files and files for activities outside of her art collection dealings.

The alphabetical files consist of business forms, correspondence, and printed materials that relate to her art collection, as well as material on the Medici Archive Project, VISTAS, and records for artworks owned by her sons. Files for other professional activities contain records for Diamond's mineral collection, files and a scrapbook on furniture and decorative arts, VISTAS publishing, and proposals for a walker company.

### Subseries 4.1: Alphabetical Files, circa 1994-2019

Scope and Contents: The folder titles were taken from the binder labels. The binder contents are in alphabetical; however, Diamond did not alphabetize the material by a unified method. Researchers may see titles that are the first or last names of artists, titles of artworks, or a theme or subject.

Box 5, Folder 24	A-B, circa 2000-circa 2018
Box 5, Folder 25	C, circa 1994-2018
Box 5, Folder 26	D-E, 1995-2019
Box 5, Folder 27	F-H, 2004-2019
Box 6, Folder 1	I-K, circa 2000s
Box 6, Folder 2	L, circa 2000s
Box 6, Folder 3-4	M, circa 2001-2019
Box 6, Folder 5	N-R, circa 2001-2017
Box 6, Folder 6	S-T, 2006-2018
Box 6, Folder 7	U-Y, circa 1995-2019

### Subseries 4.2: Other Professional Files, 2003-2019

Box 6, Folder 8	Business Proposals for Walker Company, 2014
Box 6, Folder 9	Compassion and Choices, Meeting Agendas, circa 2015

Box 6, Folder 10	Design Ideas, circa 2018
Box 6, Folder 11	Membership Records, 2003-2016
Box 6, Folder 12-17	Mineral Collection Binders, 2007-2012, 2019
Box 7, Folder 1	Mineral Collection Binders, 2012, 2019
Box 7, Folder 2	Mineral Collection Binder, Expenses and Lists, circa 2012-2019
Box 7, Folder 3	Mineral Collection, John Trinchillo Consignments, 2014-2019
Box 7, Folder 4	Mineral Collection, Rods, circa 2015 The "folder" is a slide box containing several clear rods. The rods were received from the donor in a bag labeled "minerals."
Box 7, Folder 5	Mineral Collection, Sotheby's, 2019
Box 7, Folder 6-7	Richard Wagner, The Ring Disc Project, 1995-1999
Box 7, Folder 8	VISTAS (Virtual Images of Sculpture in Time and Space), circa 2015 Notes: Includes 1 electronic disc (CD).

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## Series 5: Printed Materials, circa 1989-2020

### 0.2 Linear feet (Box 7)

Scope and Contents: Materials in the series consist of copies of catalog material, published essays about the German Renaissance, clippings about Diamond, and a published copy of the book *Property from the Collection of Hester Diamond*.

Box 7, Folder 9	Book, <i>Property from the Collection of Hester Diamond</i> , 2004
Box 7, Folder 10	Business Card Books, circa 1990s
Box 7, Folder 11	Clippings About Diamond, 2008-2020
Box 7, Folder 12	Copies of Catalog Material, circa 2010
Box 7, Folder 13	Copies of Essays about the German Renaissance, circa 2010
Box 7, Folder 14	Miscellaneous, circa 1989

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## Series 6: Photographic Materials, circa 1970-2022

### 0.2 Linear feet (Box 7)

Scope and Contents: Photographs in the series are of furniture including pieces owned by Diamond, decorative objects, miscellaneous works of art, and a binder of room designs.

Box 7, Folder 15	Furniture and Decorative Objects, circa 1970-2009
Box 7, Folder 16	Furniture Owned by Diamond in 1970s-1990s, 2022
Box 7, Folder 17	Rococo Table, circa 2010
Box 7, Folder 18	Room Designs Photo Binder, circa 1980s
Box 7, Folder 19-20	Works of Art, circa 1980s-2000s

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