



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Jerry Dreva Papers, 1964-1984, in the Archives of American Art

Ricky Gomez

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Jerry Dreva papers
Date:	1964-1984
Identifier:	AAA.drevjerr
Creator:	Dreva, Jerry, 1945-1997
Extent:	1 Linear foot
Language:	Some materials are in Spanish and Italian.
Summary:	<p>The Jerry Dreva papers measures 1.0 linear foot and dates from circa 1963-1982. The papers include biographical information; rare printed material; scrapbooks; correspondence consisting of letters of support for the exhibition DREVA/GRONK 1968-78: Ten Years of Art/Life (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, 1978) and mail art; zines and small artist books exchanged with collaborators and friends; material documenting Dreva's relationship with performance artist, Gronk, including staged photographs, candid snapshots, correspondence, and ephemera, chronicling their shared practice, and the glam Hollywood, activist Chicana/o, and queer scenes in 1970s and 80s Los Angeles. Also included are two small labeled vinyl albums, one of which appears to have been used in a piece of artwork.</p>

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated in 2020 by Patrick Veda, a family attorney and the executor of Dreva's mother's estate.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Ricky Gomez in 2022.

Preferred Citation

Jerry Dreva papers, 1964-1984. 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 References Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

Jerry Dreva (1945-1997) was a performance artist, writer, activist, and teacher based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Los Angeles, California. Dreva was a leader in the mail art movement during the 1970s and 1980s. He was a founding member (together with Robert J. Lambert) of Les Petites Bon-Bons, a flamboyantly attired musical group that never played a single concert. In fact, they never so much as picked up an instrument. Instead they dressed as glitter rock musicians of the era (1970's) and were frequently featured in newspapers and magazines.

Scope and Contents

The Jerry Dreva papers measures 1.0 linear foot and dates from circa 1963-1982. The papers include biographical information; rare printed material; scrapbooks; correspondence consisting of letters of support for the exhibition DREVA/GRONK 1968-78: Ten Years of Art/Life (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, 1978) and mail art; zines and small artist books exchanged with collaborators and friends; material documenting Dreva's relationship with performance artist, Gronk, including staged photographs, candid snapshots, correspondence, and ephemera, chronicling their shared practice, and the glam Hollywood, activist Chicana/o, and queer scenes in 1970s and 80s Los Angeles. Also included are two small labeled vinyl albums.

Correspondence consists of letters to friends and institutions for which Dreva created mail and graphic art for. Some of the individuals include: Vittore Baroni, John Jack, The Gay Activists Alliance, Michael Scott, and Sandy Robertson. Also included are files of mail art created by Dreva or sent to him by friends and other artists.

Professional files consist of some invoices and receipts, material related to the "Dreva/Gronk 1968-1978 Ten Years of Art/Life" exhibition, work for Mohammed publication company in Italy, certificates, a vinyl record produced by Le Petite Bon-Bons, and a scrapbook.

Printed material consists of clippings, announcements and posters, editions of Mainman Newsletter, "Despair" comic book, "How I Became Rich and Famous" by Captain Zerox, and "Mail Art Show" exhibition catalog.

Photographic material consists of photographs of Dreva, photographs of Dreva and Gronk, photographs of Le Petite Bon-Bons band members and various famous rock stars, and candid shots.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into four series

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1972-1983 (0.5 linear feet; Box 1)
 - Series 2: Professional Activity Files, 1975-1984 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
 - Series 3: Printed Material, 1964-1979 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
 - Series 4: Photographic Material, circa 1975-1979 (0.1 linear feet; Box 1)
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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:

Activists (LGBTQ)
Artists (LGBTQ)
Gay artists
Latino and Latin American artists
Mail art
Sound recordings

Names:

Gronk, 1954-

Occupations:

Authors -- California -- Los Angeles
Educators -- California -- Los Angeles
Performance artists -- California -- Los Angeles
Performance artists -- Wisconsin -- Milwaukee

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1972-1983

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1)

Arrangement: The series is arranged in alphabetical order. Folders of mail art are at the end of the series arranged in chronological order.

Scope and Contents: Correspondence consists of letters to friends and institutions for which Dreva created mail and graphic art for. Some of the individuals include: Vittore Baroni, John Jack, The Gay Activists Alliance, Michael Scott, and Sandy Robertson. Also included are files of mail art created by Dreva or sent to him by friends and other artists.

Box 1, Folder 1	Remora Coast, 1978
Box 1, Folder 2	A-C, 1972-1982
Box 1, Folder 3	Count Fanzini, 1973-1974
Box 1, Folder 4	D-H, 1972-1981
Box 1, Folder 5	John Jack, 1974-1976
Box 1, Folder 6	I-N, 1973-1983
Box 1, Folder 7	Sandy Robertson, 1977
Box 1, Folder 8	O-R, 1973-1980
Box 1, Folder 9	Michael Scott, 1977
Box 1, Folder 10	S-Z, 1974-1980
Box 1, Folder 11-15	Mail Art, 1974-1984
Box 1, Folder 16	Miscellaneous, 1974-1982

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Series 2: Professional Activity Files, 1973-1984

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Professional files consists of some invoices and receipts, material related to the "Dreva/Gronk 1968-1978 Ten Years of Art/Life" exhibition, work for Mohammed publication company in Italy, certificates, a vinyl record produced by Le Petite Bon-Bons, and a scrapbook.

Arrangement: Series is arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 17	Invoices and Receipts, 1973-1978
Box 1, Folder 18	"Dreva/Gronk 1968-78 Ten Years of Art/Life" Exhibition, 1974, 1978
Box 1, Folder 19	Notes Towards an Interview and Beyond, 1978
Box 1, Folder 20	Mohammed, 1979
Box 1, Folder 21	Certificates, circa 1984
Box 1, Folder 22	Revolutionary Peoples Constitutional Convention, undated
Box 1, Folder 24	Bon Bon Record, undated 1 Sound discs (vinyl)
Box 1, Folder 25	Mail Art Scrapbook, undated
Box 1, Folder 26	Miscellaneous, 1975-1978

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Series 3: Printed Material, 1964-1979

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Printed material consists of clippings, announcements and posters, editions of Mainman Newsletter, "Despair" comic book, "How I Became Rich and Famous" by Captain Zerox, and "Mail Art Show" exhibition catalog.

Arrangement: Series is arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 27	Clippings, 1964-1979
Box 1, Folder 28	Announcements and Posters, 1967-1978
Box 1, Folder 29	"20th Century Fun, A Selection of Songs by Ian Whitcomb", 1973
Box 1, Folder 30	Mainman Newsletters, 1973-1974
Box 1, Folder 31	"How I Became Rich and Famous" by Captain Zerox, 1974
Box 1, Folder 32	"Dead Fingers Talk...", 1977
Box 1, Folder 33	"Patti, de lame pour lame", 1978
Box 1, Folder 34	Patti Smith Rockin' Demonica, 1979
Box 1, Folder 35	"Despair" Comic Book, circa 1979
Box 1, Folder 36	"Phallus: A Book of Dreams" by John Duncan, 1979
Box 1, Folder 37	"Mail Art Show" Exhibition Catalog, undated
Box 1, Folder 38	"Gary Gilmore's Eyes", undated
Box 1, Folder 39	Miscellaneous, 1972-1979

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Series 4: Photographic Material, circa 1975-1979

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Photographic material consists of photographs of Dreva, photographs of Dreva and Gronk, photographs of Le Petite Bon-Bons band members and various famous rock stars, and candid shots.

Box 1, Folder 40	Jerry Dreva, circa 1977
Box 1, Folder 41	Dreva and Gronk, circa 1975
Box 1, Folder 42	Les Petite Bon-Bons and Various Rock Groups and Artists, circa 1976-1979
Box 1, Folder 43	Exhibitions and Performances, circa 1975
Box 1, Folder 44	Miscellaneous, circa 1975

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