A Finding Aid to the Dwan Gallery
Records, 1959-circa 1982, bulk
1959-1971, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Hanson

Funding for the digitization of this collection was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview ........................................................................................................ 1
Administrative Information .............................................................................................. 1
Biographical / Historical ............................................................................................... 2
Scope and Contents ........................................................................................................ 3
Arrangement ..................................................................................................................... 3
Names and Subjects ........................................................................................................ 3
Container Listing ............................................................................................................ 5
Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Dwan Gallery records
Identifier: AAA.dwangall
Date: 1959-circa 1982
(bulk 1959-1971)
Extent: 2.3 Linear feet
Creator: Dwan Gallery
Language: The collection is in English.
Summary: The Dwan Gallery records measure 2.3 linear feet and consist primarily of files of exhibitions curated by Virginia Dwan at Dwan Galleries in Los Angeles (1959-1967) and New York (1965-1971). Found within this nearly comprehensive set of exhibition files may be lists of exhibited works, price lists, photographs, slides or color transparencies of installations, invitations, full-size posters, magazine and newspaper clippings and exhibition catalogs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
The Dwan Gallery records were donated in 1996 by Virginia Dwan, the former owner of the gallery.

Separated Materials
Dwan Gallery exhibition catalogs that were donated to the Archives in 1989 were transferred to the Smithsonian Institution American Art and National Portrait Gallery Library.

Bard College's Center for Curatorial Studies and Art in Contemporary Culture holds Dwan Gallery materials related to exhibitions in the Library and Archives.

Related Materials
Also found within the Archives of American Art is an interview with Virginia Dwan conducted March 21 through June 1, 1984 by Charles Stuckey.

Available Formats
The collection was digitized in its entirety in 2013 and is available via the Archives of American Art's website.
Processing Information

The records were fully processed and described by Jayna M. Hanson in 2008. In 2013, the papers were digitized with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Preferred Citation


Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

The Dwan 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.

Biographical / Historical

In 1959, Virginia Dwan opened her first gallery on 1091 Broxton Avenue in the Westwood Village neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. Her independent wealth allowed her to open a gallery without worrying about business and sales. Three years after opening, the Dwan Gallery moved into a new Westwood Village space especially designed to express the gallery's contemporary aesthetic. In 1965, Virginia Dwan moved to New York City and founded an east coast branch of the Dwan Gallery at 29 West 57th Street.

Early exhibitions at the Dwan Gallery showed Abstract Expressionist artists and works of art from New York which Dwan consigned from other galleries. After traveling to New York and France, Virginia Dwan's interests and tastes manifested in exhibitions by 1961 with Yves Klein. Through Klein, Dwan made connections to other Nouveaux Réalistes artists that the gallery featured in solo and group shows. Later exhibitions featured Land and Minimilist artists. Dwan recognized that many of her shows were not considered salable but continued to show the avant-garde. She saw the gallery as an opportunity to expose the public to different styles of art.

Virginia Dwan maintained a close and personal relationship with many of her artists. She allowed large stipends to gallery artists and invited them to spend time at her home in Malibu, California. When working with artists concentrating on found objects, Dwan would accompany them on scavenger hunts and shopping trips. In the case of Robert Smithson and other Land Art artists, she traveled to offsite locations to visit works of art in progress. Dwan relied on her longtime gallery director, John Weber to interact with collectors as she preferred to maintain her connection with the artists.

The Dwan Gallery Los Angeles closed in mid-1967 but the New York branch remained open. By 1971, Virginia Dwan felt pressure to support her thirteen artists through a period of economic insecurity. She decided to close the gallery secretly and only informed her artists at the last minute. The final exhibition at Dwan Gallery New York closed in June of 1971.
Scope and Contents

The Dwan Gallery records measure 2.3 linear feet and consist primarily of files of exhibitions curated by Virginia Dwan at Dwan Galleries in Los Angeles (1959-1967) and New York (1965-1971). Found within this nearly comprehensive set of exhibition files may be lists of exhibited works, price lists, photographs, slides or color transparencies of installations, invitations, full-size posters, magazine and newspaper clippings and exhibition catalogs.

Artists that held exhibitions at the Dwan Gallery in New York and Los Angeles include: Robert Goodnough, Robert Richenburg, Larry Rivers, Philip Guston, Yves Klein, Salvatore Scarpitta, Arakawa, Martial Raysse, Ad Reinhardt, Arman, Franz Kline, Edward Kienholz, Claes Oldenburg, Niki de Sainte Phalle, Joan Mitchell, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Morris, Dan Flavin, Raymond Parker, Kenneth Snelson, Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt, Robert Smithson, and Anastasi. Also, the exhibition files are nearly comprehensive and include: Language to be Looked at and/or Things to be Read annual series (1967-1970), Boxes (1964), Earth Works (1968), My Country 'tis of Thee (1962) and 10 (1967 and 1968). Many of the multiple artist shows were created and organized by gallery director John Weber and/or Virginia Dwan. Many of these exhibition files include full-sized posters and panoramic photos showing installations.

Also found are records created by a consulting firm hired by the Dwan Gallery to inventory the exhibition files prior to donation to the Archives of American Art. These guides appear at the beginning of each series and outline a chronology of exhibitions held at each branch.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into two series:

• Series 1: Los Angeles Exhibition Files, 1959-1967, after 1981 (Box 1-2, 5, OV6, OV8; 1.3 linear feet)
• Series 2: New York Exhibition Files, 1965-1971, after 1982 (Box 2-4, OV7; 1.0 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Abstract expressionism
Art -- California -- Los Angeles -- Exhibitions
Art -- New York (State) -- New York -- Exhibitions
Art galleries, Commercial -- California -- Los Angeles
Art galleries, Commercial -- New York (State) -- New York
Artists -- United States
Earthworks (Art)
Minimal art

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Slides (photographs)
Names:

Anastasi, William, 1933-
Andre, Carl, 1935-
Arakawa, Shusaku, 1936-
Arman, 1928-2005
Dwan Gallery (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Dwan Gallery (New York, N.Y.)
Dwan, Virginia
Flavin, Dan, 1933-
Goodnough, Robert, 1917-
Guston, Philip, 1913-1980
Kienholz, Edward, 1927-
Klein, Yves, 1928-1962
Kline, Franz, 1910-1962
LeWitt, Sol, 1928-2007
Mitchell, Joan, 1926-1992
Morris, Robert, 1931-2018
Oldenburg, Claes, 1929-
Parker, Raymond, 1922-
Rauschenberg, Robert, 1925-2008
Raysse, Martial, 1936-
Reinhardt, Ad, 1913-1967
Richenburg, Robert
Rivers, Larry, 1925-
Saint-Phalle, Niki de, 1930-
Scarpitta, Salvatore, 1919-
Smithson, Robert
Snelson, Kenneth, 1927-2016
Weber, John, 1932-2008

1.3 Linear feet (Box 1-2, 5, OV6, OV8)

Found within this series may be lists of exhibited works, price lists, photographs, slides or color transparencies of installations, invitations, full-size posters, magazine and newspaper clippings and exhibition catalogs. Noteworthy exhibitions include artists Robert Goodnough, Raymond Parker, Yves Klein, Salvatore Scarpitta, Arakawa, Martial Raysse, Robert Rauschenberg, Niki de Sainte Phalle, Claes Oldenburg, Larry Rivers and Kenneth Snelson. Other important exhibitions include Boxes (1964), My Country 'tis of Thee (1962), and 10 (1967).

This series is arranged in chronological order according to the opening date of each exhibition. Exhibition posters and photos of installations were placed into oversized folders.

This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 1  Guides to Los Angeles Exhibitions, after 1981
Image(s): Guides to Los Angeles Exhibitions

Box 1, Folder 2  Stanley Twardowicz, 1959 October 19
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 3  Various Artists: Prints, 1959 November 17
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 4  Drawings, Watercolors, Collages, 1959 December 12
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 5  Matsumi Kanemitsu, 1960 January 19
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 6  Reginald Pollack: Recent Paintings, 1960 February 9
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 7  Friedel Dzubas, 1960 March 8
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 8  Paul Brach, 1960 April 4
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 9  Robert Goodnough, 1960 May 2
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 10 Seymour Boardman: Paintings, 1960 May 31
Box 1, Folder 11  Harry Nadler, 1960 June 27
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 12  *15 of New York*, 1960 October 10
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 13  Robert Richenburg, 1960 November 14
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 14  Various Artists, 1960 December 19
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 15  Stanley Twardowicz, 1961 January 9
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 16  Stephen Pace, 1961 March 6
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 17  Larry Rivers, 1961 February 6
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 18  Franz Kline and Philip Guston, 1961 April 3
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 19  Raymond Parker, 1961 May 1
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 20  Yves Klein: *Le Monochrome*, 1961 May 29
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 21  Salvatore Scarpitta, 1961 June 24
  Image(s)
  Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 22  Joan Mitchell, 1961 September 18
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 23  *Six Sculptors*, 1961 October 16
Box 1, Folder 24  Matsumi Kanemitsu, 1961 November 13
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 25  Robert Goodnough, 1962 January 27
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 26  Ad Reinhardt, 1962 February 4
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 27  Robert Rauschenberg, 1962 March 4
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 28  William Waldren, 1962 April 1
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 29  Arman, 1962 May 13
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 30  Various Artists, 1962 June 11
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 31  Harry Nadler, 1962 July 9
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 32  Various Artists, 1962 September 7
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 33  Raymond Parker, 1962 October 7
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 34  My Country 'tis of Thee, 1962 November 18
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 35  Matsumi Kanemitsu: Recent Paintings, 1962 December 16
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 36  Martial Raysse, 1963 January 6
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 37  Dealer's Choice, 1963 February 10
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 38  Franz Kline: Memorial, Paintings 1950-1961, 1963 March 3
Box 1, Folder 39  Larry Rivers, 1963 April 15
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 1, Folder 40  Jean Tinguely, 1963 May 13
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 1, Folder 41  Edward Kienholz, 1963 June 17
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 42  Claes Oldenburg, 1963 October 1
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 43  Sven Lukin, 1963 October 27
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 44  Ad Reinhardt: Recent Paintings, 1963 November 24
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 1, Folder 45  Various Artists, 1963 December 29
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 46  Niki de Sainte Phalle, 1964 January 5
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 47  Boxes, 1964 February 2
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in Box 5

Box 1, Folder 48  William Waldren, 1964 March 1
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 1, Folder 49  Arakawa: Diagrams, 1964 March 29
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 1, Folder 50  Martial Raysse, 1964 May 4
Box 2, Folder 1  Gallery Artists, 1964 June 1

Box 2, Folder 2  New York, New York, 1964 June 29

Box 2, Folder 3  Edward Kienholz: 3 Tableaux, 1964 September 29

Box 2, Folder 4  James Rosenquist, 1964 October 27

Box 2, Folder 5  Lucas Samaras, 1964 November 24

Box 2, Folder 6  Arena of Love, 1965 January 1

Box 2, Folder 7  Oldenburg, Whitman, Dine and Talbert, 1965 February 9

Box 2, Folder 8  Dakota Daley and Nicholas Quennell, 1965 March 16

Box 2, Folder 9  Robert Rauschenberg: Drawings, 1965 April 13

Box 2, Folder 10  Charles Frazier, 1965 May 11

Box 2, Folder 11  Various Artists, 1965 June 8

Box 2, Folder 12  Mark Di Suervo: Two Large Works, 1965 September 29

Box 2, Folder 13  Larry Rivers, 1965 November 16
Box 2, Folder 14  Various Artists , 1965 December 21
    Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 15  Allen D'Archangelo , 1966 January 18
    Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 16  Neil Williams , 1966 February 15
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 2, Folder 17  Robert Morris: Sculpture, 1966 March 15
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 2, Folder 18  Arakawa, 1966 May 10
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6, OV8

Box 2, Folder 19  Various Artists , 1966 May 10
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 2, Folder 20  Robert Grosvenor , 1966 April 12
    Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 21  Summer Show, 1966 July 5
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6, OV8

Box 2, Folder 22  Anthony Magar and Forrest Myers , 1966 October 4
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 2, Folder 23  David Novros: Five Paintings, 1966 November 1
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6, OV8

Box 2, Folder 24  John Chamberlain , 1966 November 29
    Image(s)
    Oversized material housed in OV6, OV8

Box 2, Folder 25  Kenneth Snelson , 1967 January 9
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 2, Folder 26  DWNY at DWLA, 1967 February 7
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 2, Folder 27  Carl Andre: Cuts, 1967 March 8
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 2, Folder 28  Sol LeWitt, 1967 April 4
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 29  10, 1967 May 2
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV6

Box 2, Folder 30  Martial Raysse: Retrospective, 1967 June 31
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV8

Box 5  Oversized Boxes Catalog, 1964 February 2
Material scanned with Box 1, F47

Oversize 6  Oversized Exhibition Posters, 1960-1967
Material scanned with Box 1, F8, 12-13, 15, 19-21, 24, 43, 46, 48, 50 and Box 2, F9, 13, 16-18, 21-25, 27, 29

Oversize 8  Oversized Photographs, 1963-1967
Material scanned with Box 1, F38, 40, 44, 49-50 and Box 2, F2, 5-6, 8-9, 18-19, 23-24, 26, 30

Return to Table of Contents

1 Linear foot (Box 2-4, OV7)

Found within this series may be lists of exhibited works, price lists, photographs, slides or color transparencies of installations, invitations, full-size posters, magazine and newspaper clippings and exhibition catalogs. Noteworthy exhibitions include artists Arakawa, Anastasi, Kenneth Snelson, Sol LeWitt, Robert Smithson, Carl Andre, Dan Flavin, and Walter De Maria. Other important exhibitions include 10 (1966), Language to be Looked at and/or Things to be Read (1967-1970), and Earth Works (1968).

This series is arranged in chronological order according to the opening date of each exhibition. Exhibition posters have been placed into oversized folders.

This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 2, Folder 31 
Guides to New York Exhibitions, after 1982
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 32 
Edward Kienholz: The Beanery, 1965 November 23
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 2, Folder 33 
Arakawa: For Instance, Instant, 1966 January 4
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 2, Folder 34 
Anastasi: Sound Object, 1966 February 1
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 2, Folder 35 
Tom Doyle, 1966 March 1
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 2, Folder 36 
Kenneth Snelson, 1966 April 12
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 2, Folder 37 
Sol LeWitt, 1966 May 10
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 38 
10, 1966 October 4
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 1 
Michael Steiner, 1966 November 1
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7
Box 3, Folder 2  Robert Smithson, 1966 November 29
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 3  Scale Models and Drawings, 1967 January 7
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 4  Edward Kienholz: Concept Tableaux, 1967 February 4
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 5  Richard Baringer, 1967 March 4
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 6  David Novros: Paintings, 1967 April 1
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 7  Anastasi: Six Sites, 1967 April 29
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 8  Language to be Looked at and/or Things to be Read, 1967 June 3
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 9  Tim Doyle, 1967 October 7
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 10  Arakawa, 1967 November 4
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 11  Carl Andre: Periodic Table, 1967 December 2
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 12  Kenneth Snelson, 1968 January 6
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 13  Sol LeWitt: 46 3 Part Variations, 1968 February 3
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 14  Robert Smithson, 1968 March 2
Box 3, Folder 15
Michael Steiner, 1968 March 30
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 16
Charles Ross: Prisms, 1968 April 27
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 17
Language II, 1968 May 25
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 18
Earth Works, 1968 October 5
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 19
Dan Flavin: Cool White, etc., 1968 November 2
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 20
Erwin Heerich: Cardboard Sculpture, 1968 November 30
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 21
Fred Sandback: Five Situations, 1969 January 4
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 22
Robert Smithson: Lake Site-Nonsite, 1969 February 1
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 23
Charles Ross: Prisms, 1969 March 1
Image(s)
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 3, Folder 24
Walter De Maria: Bed of Spikes, 1969 March 29
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 25
Carl Andre, 1969 April 26
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 1
Language III, 1969 May 24
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 2
Sol LeWitt: Wall Drawing, 1969 October 4
Box 4, Folder 3  
Arakawa: *Decisive Ending*, 1969 November 1  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 4  
*Dwan, 10 Years*, 1969 November 29  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 5  
*Image(s)*

Box 4, Folder 6  
Dan Flavin: *Cornered Installations*, 1970 February 7  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 7  
Kenneth Snelson, 1970 March 7  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 8  
Fred Sandback, 1970 April 4  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 9  
Anastasi: *Sculpture*, 1970 May 2  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 10  
Anastasi: *Continuum*, 1970 May 16  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 11  
*Language IV*, 1970 June 2  
*Image(s)*

Box 4, Folder 12  
Richard Long: *Sculpture*, 1970 October 3  
*Image(s)*

Box 4, Folder 13  
Robert Smithson: *Great Salt Lake, Utah*, 1970 October 31  
*Image(s)*  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 14  
Gallery Artists, 1970 November 28
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 15  
Charles Ross: *Sunlight Dispersion*, 1971 January 6  
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 16  
Robert Ryman: *Paintings*, 1971 February 6  
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 17  
Carl Andre, 1971 April 3  
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 18  
Sol LeWitt: *Paintings and Drawings*, 1971 May 1  
Image(s)

Box 4, Folder 19  
Dan Flavin: *to Barnett Newman*, 1971 March 6  
Image(s)  
Oversized material housed in OV7

Box 4, Folder 20  
Final Exhibition, Gallery Artists, 1971 June 1  
Image(s)

Oversize 7  
Oversized Exhibition Posters, 1965-1971  
Material scanned with Box 2, F32-36, 38, Box 3, F1-3, 5, 7, 10-12, 14-16, 21, 23, and Box 4, F3-4, 6-10, 13, 19

*Return to Table of Contents*