



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Esther Bear Gallery
Records, 1928-1985, bulk 1954-1977,
in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

Funding for the processing of this collection was
provided by the Smithsonian Women's Committee.

2021/01/27

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Esther Bear Gallery records
Identifier:	AAA.estebeag
Date:	(bulk 1954-1977) 1928-1985
Extent:	5.7 Linear feet
Creator:	Esther Bear Gallery (Santa Barbara, Calif.)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The records of Santa Barbara, California art gallery, Esther Bear Gallery, measure 5.7 linear feet and date from 1928 to 1985, with the bulk of the records dating from 1954 to 1977. The collection comprises administrative records that include exhibition files, photographs, records documenting the gallery's operations, and files for the Donald Bear Collection and Endowment Fund; professional correspondence with artists, clients, and galleries regarding exhibitions, sales and loans, and other business dealings; and artist files for Thomas Cornell, Antonio Frasconi, Ynez Johnston, Miguel Marina, Alfred Martinez, and Nina de Creeft Ward, among others.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Esther Bear Gallery records were donated by Esther Bear in 1978 and 1987.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art are the Donald Bear papers, 1923-1960.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reels 3986-3987. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2021.

Preferred Citation

Esther Bear Gallery records, 1928-1985. 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.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

The Esther Bear Gallery was a commercial art gallery located in Santa Barbara, California, that specialized in contemporary art. The gallery exhibited artists such as Leonard Baskin, Antonio Frasconi, Rico Lebrun, Lee Mullican, Nina de Crefft Ward, Cady Wells, and other prominent artists including Donald Bear, husband of the gallery's owner Esther Bear and director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art from 1940 to 1952. Esther Bear retired in 1977.

Scope and Contents

The records of Santa Barbara, California art gallery, Esther Bear Gallery measure 5.7 linear feet and date from 1928 to 1985, with the bulk of the records dating from 1954 to 1977. The collection comprises administrative records that include exhibition files, photographs, records documenting the gallery's operations, and files for the Donald Bear Collection and Endowment Fund; professional correspondence with artists, clients, and galleries regarding exhibitions, sales and loans, and other business dealings; and artist files for Thomas Cornell, Antonio Frasconi, Ynez Johnston, Miguel Marina, Alfred Martinez, and Nina de Crefft Ward, among others.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as three series.

- Series 1: Administrative Records, 1941-1981 (1.5 linear feet; Boxes 1-2, OV 8)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1928-1975 (0.5 linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 3: Artist's Files, 1941-1982 (3.7 linear feet; Boxes 3-7, OV 8)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Women art dealers

Types of Materials:

Drawings

Names:

Bear, Donald, 1905-1952

Frasconi, Antonio

Johnston, Ynez, 1920-

Martinez, Alfred

Ward, Nina de Creeft

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- California -- Santa Barbara

Container Listing

Series 1: Administrative Records, 1941-1981

1.5 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2, OV 8)

Files in the series consist of shipping records, publisher files, client and gallery files, press reviews, price lists, files for the Donald Bear Collection and Endowment Fund, and material on African art and UCLA graduates. Also included are exhibition files for "Five Artists" (1975), group and print exhibitions, prospective shows, and the gallery's *Sculpture Show* (1967-1974). Photos in the photographs files are of the American Academy in Rome, artists, Native American art, and works of art.

Box 1, Folder 1	Academy of Arts and Letters, 1974
Box 1, Folder 2	Adele Bednarz Gallery, 1967-1970
Box 1, Folder 3	Advertising and Rate Sheets, 1961-1965
Box 1, Folder 4	Affiliates of Art, 1964-1974
Oversize 8	Affiliates of Art, circa 1970
Box 1, Folder 5-6	African Art, 1970-1975
Box 1, Folder 7	Art Dealers Association of Southern California, 1971-1973
Box 1, Folder 8	Artist's Biographical Material, circa 1972
Box 1, Folder 9	Art Magazine Subscriptions, 1961-1970
Box 1, Folder 10	<i>Art Week</i> , 1970-1973
Box 1, Folder 11	Artwork, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 12	Atlantic-Richfield Co., 1969-1975
Box 1, Folder 13	Bear Home Addition, 1962-1971
Box 1, Folder 14	Bear Vehicle Documents, 1970
Box 1, Folder 15	Bekins Moving and Storage, 1962-1972
Box 1, Folder 16	Berlin Artists, 1962-1964

Box 1, Folder 17	Betty Parsons Gallery, 1965-1970
Box 1, Folder 18	Book Sales, 1973-1974
Box 1, Folder 19	Brewer, Donald (La Jolla Museum of Art), 1961-1965
Box 1, Folder 20	Cart and Crate, 1965-1969
Box 1, Folder 21	Chisholm, Hugh, 1967-1969
Box 1, Folder 22	Christmas Group Exhibitions, 1963-1975
Box 1, Folder 23-24	Clippings, 1962-1981
Box 1, Folder 25	Consignments to Esther Bear Gallery, 1962-1970
Box 1, Folder 26	Consignments from Esther Bear Gallery, 1969-1974
Box 1, Folder 27	Dalzell Hatfield Galleries, 1960-1969
Box 1, Folder 28	Dauber, Florence (Art Services), 1965-1971
Box 1, Folder 29	Delinquent Accounts, 1962-1975
Box 1, Folder 30-31	Donald Bear Collection, 1941-1976
Box 1, Folder 32	Donald Bear Endowment Fund, circa 1952-1977
Box 1, Folder 33	Esther Robles Gallery, 1962-1972
Box 1, Folder 34	Export Declaration Forms, circa 1960
Box 1, Folder 35-42	Exhibitions, 1960-1975
Box 2, Folder 1-4	Exhibitions, 1968-1974
Box 2, Folder 5	Felix Landau Gallery, 1963-1968
Box 2, Folder 6	Fine Arts Patrons of Newport Harbor, 1965-1966
Box 2, Folder 7	Gehenna Press, 1964-1966
Box 2, Folder 8	Graphics Price Lists, 1969

Box 2, Folder 9	Halpert, Edith (Downtown Gallery), 1963-1966
Box 2, Folder 10	Henry Seldis Memorial Fund, 1978
Box 2, Folder 11	Hitchcock, Ellwood, 1961-1966
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Box 2, Folder 13	Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, 1962-1969
Box 2, Folder 14	Kennedy, William and Ben Garber, 1962-1966
Box 2, Folder 15	Law for Artists' Reference, circa 1965
Box 2, Folder 16	Long Beach Museum of Art, 1966-1973
Box 2, Folder 17	Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Art Rental Gallery, 1962-1974
Box 2, Folder 19	Margo Leavin Gallery, 1970-1972
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Box 2, Folder 21-24	Photographs, circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 25	REA Express, 1974
Box 2, Folder 26	Reviews, 1967-1969
Box 2, Folder 27	Rex Evans Gallery, 1962-1965
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Box 2, Folder 29	R.M. Light and Co., 1962-1965
Box 2, Folder 30	Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital, 1968-1969
Box 2, Folder 31	Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Rental Gallery, 1971-1975
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Box 2, Folder 33	Sheinbaum, Stanley, 1965-1968
Box 2, Folder 34	Smith, Eloise (Cowell College), 1968-1970
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Box 2, Folder 36	Springer, Rudolf (Galerie Springer Berlin), 1965
Box 2, Folder 37	Terry Dintenfass Inc., 1966-1969
Box 2, Folder 38	UCLA Graduates, 1962-1966
Box 2, Folder 39	Wagner, Corydon, 1975
Box 2, Folder 40	Worthington, Jules S., 1972
Box 2, Folder 41	Zeitlen, Jacob (Zeitlin and Ver Brugge Booksellers), 1961

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1928-1975

0.5 Linear feet (Box 2)

Correspondence is with artists, galleries, clients, and art related businesses and organizations regarding exhibitions, sales of artwork, loans, and other business matters. Files may include printed materials, forms, or other materials related to the correspondence.

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Box 2, Folder 46	E, 1961-1968
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Box 2, Folder 51	K, 1962-1972
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Box 2, Folder 57	Q, 1964-1971
Box 2, Folder 58	R, 1962-1970
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Series 3: Artist's Files, 1941-1985

3.7 Linear feet (Boxes 3-7, OV 8)

The series contains correspondence, artist's statements, photographs of artwork and artists, printed materials, financial records, and loan agreements for artists Thomas Cornell, Antonio Frasconi, Ynez Johnston, Miguel Marina, Alfred Martinez, Nina de Creeft Ward, among others.

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Box 3, Folder 14	Bassler, Robert and Lynn, 1969-1971
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