



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Sylvia Fein Papers, 1936-2011, in the Archives of American Art

Erin Kinhart

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Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Biographical Note.....	2
Scope and Content Note.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1936-2010.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-2011.....	5
Series 3: Project Files, 1970-2011.....	8
Series 4: Writings by Others, circa 1940s-1994.....	10
Series 5: Printed Material, 1941-2010.....	11
Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-2000.....	12
Series 7: Artwork, 1941-1947.....	13
Series 8: Scrapbooks, circa 1940-2010.....	14

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Sylvia Fein papers
Identifier:	AAA.feinsylv
Date:	1936-2011
Creator:	Fein, Sylvia
Extent:	5.9 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of painter and author Sylvia Fein measure 5.9 linear feet and date from 1936 to 2011. The papers primarily document her friendships with other artists from the Wisconsin-based Magic Realist group, including Dudley Huppler, John Wilde, Marshall Glasier, and Karl Priebe, as well as her career as a painter and her work on the books <i>Heidi's Horse</i> and <i>First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking</i> . Documentation consists of scattered biographical material, extensive correspondence, project files, writings by Huppler and others, printed material, photographs, artwork by Wilde and Glasier, and scrapbooks.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2011 by Sylvia Fein.

Processing Information

The collection was processed in 2012 by Erin Kinhart.

Preferred Citation

Sylvia Fein papers, 1936-2011. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical Note

Sylvia Fein (1919-) is a painter and author in Martinez, California. She is part of the Magic Realist Group of artists that originated at the University of Wisconsin.

Fein was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and from 1938 to 1942 she studied art at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. While there she became friends with fellow artists Marshall Glasier, John Wilde, Dudley Huppler, and Karl Priebe. In 1942 she married William Scheuber and briefly had a factory job in Milwaukee testing switches for naval planes. From 1944 to 1947 Fein lived and traveled throughout Mexico. Much of the work produced during this period was included in a solo exhibition of her paintings at the Perls Galleries in 1946. She and her husband then moved to northern California and had a daughter, Heidi. During the 1950s and 1960s, Fein continued to paint in her home studio.

In 1973 Fein decided to take a break from painting and published two books, *Heidi's Horse* (1976) and *First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking* (1993). These works were greatly inspired by her friendship with art educator and researcher, Henry Shaefer-Simmern. In 2003 she resumed painting. She was featured in the group show, "With Friends: Six Magic Realists, 1940-1965" at the University of Wisconsin in 2005 and in a solo retrospective at the Bakersfield Art Museum in 2007. From 1970 to 2000 Fein was also active in the community of Pleasant Hill, California, as a member of several public services commissions.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of painter and author Sylvia Fein measure 5.9 linear feet and date from 1936 to 2011. The papers primarily document her friendships with other artists from the Wisconsin-based Magic Realist group, including Dudley Huppler, John Wilde, Marshall Glasier, and Karl Priebe, as well as her career as a painter and her work on the books *Heidi's Horse* and *First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking*. Documentation consists of scattered biographical material, extensive correspondence, project files, writings by Huppler and others, printed material, photographs, artwork by Wilde and Glasier, and scrapbooks.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 8 series:

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1936-2010 (Box 1, 8; 10 folders)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-2011 (Box 1-3; 2.3 linear feet)
- Series 3: Project Files, 1970-2011 (Box 3-4, 8; 1.2 linear feet)
- Series 4: Writings by Others, circa 1940s-1994 (Box 4; 4 folders)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1941-2010 (Box 4-5; 0.7 linear feet)
- Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-2000 (Box 5; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 7: Artwork, 1941-1947 (Box 5; 3 folders)
- Series 8: Scrapbooks, circa 1940-2010 (Box 5-7; 0.8 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Magic realism (Art)
Women artists

Women authors
Women painters

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks

Names:

Glazier, Marshall, 1902-
Huppler, Dudley, 1917-1988
Priebe, Karl J., 1914-1976
Wilde, John, 1919-2006

Occupations:

Authors -- Wisconsin
Painters -- Wisconsin

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1936-2010

10 Folders (Box 1, 8)

Scope and Contents: Found here are scattered biographical documents including a guest book from an exhibition, Fein's high school yearbook, a chronology, draft documents and layouts for her website, and documents from presentation on Fein's life using kinesthetic modeling.

Box 1, Folder 1	Chronology, 2008
Box 1, Folder 2-3	Documentation for Sylvia Fein Website, circa 2008-2009 2 Folders
Box 1, Folder 4	Guest Book, 1965
Box 1, Folder 5	Kinesthetic Modeling Presentation, 2004, circa 2000 Notes: Oversized items housed in box 8
Box 1, Folder 6	Maxwell Galleries Consignments and Sales, 1962-1966
Box 1, Folder 7	Web Search Print-outs, 2007-2010
Box 1, Folder 8	Yearbook, 1936
Box 8	Kinesthetic Modeling Presentation, 2004, circa 2000 Notes: Oversized items from box 1, folder 5

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-2011

2.3 Linear feet (Box 1-3)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence, some illustrated, includes letters and postcards from friends and colleagues Marshall Glasier, John and Shirley Wilde, Dudley Huppler, Karl Priebe, Helen Ashman, Lee Hoiby, Klaus Perls, and Henry Shaefer-Simmern among others. Most correspondence in this series is of a personal, rather than professional nature, and the bulk of these letters date from the 1990s-2000s. Of note are almost daily letters in the form of mail art from Fein's husband's oncologist, Randall Oyer. Researchers should note that additional correspondence is included within Series 8: Scrapbooks.

Arrangement: Letters have been arranged alphabetically by last name. Letters from individuals who had correspondence with Fein of four letters or less are found within the miscellaneous folders.

Box 1, Folder 9-14	Sylvia Fein Letters to Family, 1968, 1965, 1960 6 Folders
Box 1, Folder 15	Ashman, Helen, 1942-1944
Box 1, Folder 16-18	Cozzolino, Robert, 2001-2010 3 Folders
Box 1, Folder 19	Dadian, Arnold, 2008, 1944
Box 1, Folder 20	Dissanayake, Ellen, 1997-2005
Box 1, Folder 21	Dreyfus, John, 1997-2001
Box 1, Folder 22	Duncan, Michael, 2006-2008
Box 1, Folder 23	Ezell, Carol, 2008-2009
Box 1, Folder 24	Gilmore, Bob, 1999
Box 1, Folder 25-32	Glasier, Marshall, circa 1942-1963, 1974-1975 8 Folders
Box 1, Folder 33	Graber, Sheila, 2005-2011
Box 1, Folder 34	Hoiby, Lee, 1969, circa 2002-2003, 1952
Box 1, Folder 35-44	Huppler, Dudley, 1941-1973 10 Folders
Box 1, Folder 45	Huppler, Dudley, 1987
Box 1, Folder 46-49	Huppler, Dudley - Undated Letters, circa 1942-1987 4 Folders
Box 1, Folder 50	Miller, Florence, circa 1970s

Box 1, Folder 51	Mody, Zarin, circa 2000-2002
Box 1, Folder 52	Neumeyer, Peter, circa 1963-1999
Box 2, Folder 1-21	Oyer, Randall, 2006-2011 21 Folders
Box 2, Folder 22	Partch, Harry, 1951-1964
Box 2, Folder 23	Perls Galleries, 1943-1949, 1956
Box 2, Folder 24	Priebe, Karl, 1944-1975
Box 2, Folder 25	Schaefer-Simmern, Henry and Gertrude, 1956-1973
Box 2, Folder 26	Scheuber, Heidi, 1998
Box 3, Folder 1	Vivas, Eliseo and Dorothy, circa 1957-1964
Box 3, Folder 2	Whitnah, Kerwin, circa 1971-1998
Box 3, Folder 3-4	Wilde, John, 1942-1966 2 Folders
Box 3, Folder 5-6	Wilde, John, 1991-2006 2 Folders
Box 3, Folder 7	Wilde, Shirley, circa 2007-2008
Box 3, Folder 8	Wilson, Frank, circa 2000-2002
Box 3, Folder 9	Winters-Montemayor, Elizabeth, 2007-2010
Box 3, Folder 10	Miscellaneous, A-B, 1972-2004
Box 3, Folder 11	Miscellaneous, C, 1987-2009
Box 3, Folder 12	Miscellaneous, D, circa 2000-2003, 1974
Box 3, Folder 13	Miscellaneous, F-G, 1955-2005
Box 3, Folder 14	Miscellaneous, H-K, circa 1962-2004
Box 3, Folder 15	Miscellaneous, L-M, circa 1964-2005
Box 3, Folder 16	Miscellaneous, N-R, circa 1966-2003
Box 3, Folder 17	Miscellaneous, S, circa 1956-2004

Box 3, Folder 18 Miscellaneous, T-W, 1953-2001

Box 3, Folder 19-21 Unidentified, First Names Only, circa 1964-2005
3 Folders

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Project Files, 1970-2011

1.2 Linear feet (Box 3-4, 8)

Scope and Contents: Found here are files maintained by Sylvia Fein for various projects. Files for her two book projects, *Heidi's Horse* (1976) and *First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking* (1993), include extensive correspondence, permission requests, photographs of the writing and publication process, film proposals, and press clippings. Materials regarding both books are filed together. Also found are project files for Fein's participation in Pleasant Hill, California, public services. Included are records of her work on the Architectural Review Commission and her 1980 run for city council. Project files for the opening of the Rosie the Riveter/ World War II Home Front National Historical Park include photographs, correspondence, a biographical statement, and press materials.

This series also includes project files documenting Fein's retrospective "Wondrous Life: Paintings and Drawings by Sylvia Fein," at the Bakersfield Art Museum in 2007. Included are correspondence, exhibition photographs, planning documents, and the exhibition catalogs and announcements.

Arrangement: The series is arranged as 3 subseries:

Missing Title:

- Subseries 3.1: *Heidi's Horse* and *First Drawings*, 1970-2011
- Subseries 3.2: Pleasant Hill Public Services, 1970-2008
- Subseries 3.3: Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park, 2002-2010
- Subseries 3.4: "Wondrous Life: Paintings and Drawings by Sylvia Fein," 2006-2008

3.1.: *Heidi's Horse* and *First Drawings*, 1970-2011

Box 3, Folder 22	Correspondence, "Looking for a Publisher," 1985-1992, 1970-1974
Box 3, Folder 23-35	Correspondence, 1974-2011 13 Folders
Box 3, Folder 36	"Daily Log" Notebook, 1976-1977
Box 3, Folder 37	Donata Elschenbroich Film Project, 2000-2005
Box 3, Folder 38	Film Proposal, circa 1970s
Box 3, Folder 39-41	Permission Requests and Photograph Orders, 1976-2001 3 Folders
Box 3, Folder 42	Photographs, 1972-1990s
Box 3, Folder 43	Press Clippings, 1976-2009
Box 4, Folder 1-5	Press Clippings, 1976-2009 5 Folders Notes: Oversized items housed in box 8
Box 8	Oversized Press Clippings, 1976-2009

Notes: Oversized items from box 4, folders 1-5

3.2:: Pleasant Hill Public Services, 1970-2008

Box 4, Folder 6-9 Architectural Review Commission, 1970, 1981-2008
4 Folders

Box 4, Folder 10-11 City Council Election, 1980
2 Folders

Box 4, Folder 12 Fee Abitration Program, 1998-1999

Box 4, Folder 13 Miscellaneous Records, 1979-circa 2001

Box 4, Folder 14-16 Photographs, circa 1979-2000, 2002
3 Folders

3.3:: Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park, 2002-2010

Box 4, Folder 17-20 Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park, 2002-2010
4 Folders

3.4:: "Wondrous Life: Paintings and Drawings by Sylvia Fein," 2006-2008

Box 4, Folder 21 Correspondence, 2007-2008

Box 4, Folder 22 Photographs, circa 2007

Box 4, Folder 23 Planning Documents, 2006-2007

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Writings by Others, circa 1940s-1994

4 Folders (Box 4)

Scope and Contents: Found here is a dissertation on Henry Schaefer-Simmern and a draft outline written by Schaefer-Simmern. Also found are several short writings by Dudley Huppler.

Box 4, Folder 25	Dissertation by Raymond C. Berta, 1994
Box 4, Folder 26-27	Writings by Dudley Huppler, 1987, circa 1940s 2 Folders
Box 4, Folder 28	Chapter Outline from <i>The Essence of Form</i> by Henry Schaefer-Simmern, 1968

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Printed Material, 1941-2010

0.7 Linear feet (Box 4-5)

Scope and Contents: Printed material consists of books, including two written by Sylvia Fein, magazines and news clippings documenting her activities, and a few exhibition catalog and announcements, primarily from her early career. Also found are files of printed material which Fein compiled to document the careers of her friends and fellow artists including Marshall Glasier, John Wilde, Dudley Huppler, and Karl Priebe. These files contain exhibition announcements, catalogs, and news clippings. Researchers should note that a large amount of printed material is also found within Series 8: Scrapbooks.

Box 4, Folder 29	Book, <i>Consciousness of Artistic Form</i> by Henry Schaefer-Simmern, 2003
Box 4, Folder 30	Book, <i>First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking</i> by Sylvia Fein, 1993
Box 4, Folder 31	Book, <i>Heidi's Horse</i> by Sylvia Fein, 1976
Box 5, Folder 1	Book, <i>The Lesson Book</i> by Dudley Huppler, 1946
Box 5, Folder 2-3	Exhibition Catalogs and Announcements, 1943-2005 2 Folders
Box 5, Folder 4	Map of Europe, circa 1960
Box 5, Folder 5	Magazines, 1946, 2006
Box 5, Folder 6	News Clippings, 1960-2004
Box 5, Folder 7	Newsletter, <i>The Echoboard</i> , 1957-1960
Box 5, Folder 8-10	Printed Material regarding Marshall Glasier, circa 1941-2008 3 Folders
Box 5, Folder 11	Printed Material regarding Dudley Huppler, 1944-2007
Box 5, Folder 12-14	Printed Material regarding Harry Partch, circa 1952-2005 3 Folders
Box 5, Folder 15	Printed Material regarding Karl Priebe, 1944-1977
Box 5, Folder 16	Printed Material regarding Henry Schaefer-Simmern, 1952-1977
Box 5, Folder 17-19	Printed Material regarding John Wilde, circa 1948-2010 3 Folders
Box 5, Folder 20-21	Miscellaneous Printed Material, 1960-2009 2 Folders

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-2000

0.2 Linear feet (Box 5)

Scope and Contents: Found here are one photograph of Sylvia Fein with John Wilde and photocopies of photographs of Fein and her husband William Scheuber during World War II. The bulk of the photographs depict other artists including Dudley Huppler, Marshall Glasier, and Karl Priebe, as well as artwork by Marshall Glasier and John Wilde. Included within the photographs of Dudley Huppler are group photographs depicting Huppler with Gertrude Abercrombie, Karl Priebe, and John Wilde. Two portraits of Dudley Huppler were taken by George Platt Lynes and Carl Van Vechten. Researchers should note that additional photographs of Sylvia Fein are found within Series 8: Scrapbooks.

Box 5, Folder 22	Sylvia Fein and William Scheuber (Photocopies), circa 1940-1946
Box 5, Folder 23	Sylvia Fein and John Wilde, circa 1941
Box 5, Folder 24-26	Dudley Huppler, circa 1945-1972 3 Folders
Box 5, Folder 27	Marshall Glasier, circa 1950s-1968
Box 5, Folder 28-29	Marshall Glasier, Artwork, circa 1955-1968 2 Folders
Box 5, Folder 30	Marshall Glasier, Negatives, circa 1990s, 1955
Box 5, Folder 31	Karl Priebe, 1974, circa 1940s
Box 5, Folder 32	Henry Schaefer-Simmern, circa 1972
Box 5, Folder 33	John Wilde, Artwork, 1967-2000

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 7: Artwork, 1941-1947

3 Folders (Box 5)

Scope and Contents: Included are pencil drawings by Marshall Glasier and John Wilde and one oil painting on board by John Wilde called *The Raven and the Fox*.

Box 5, Folder 34 Drawings by Marshall Glasier, circa 1943-1947

Box 5, Folder 35 Drawings by John Wilde, circa 1944

Box 5, Folder 36 Painting by John Wilde, 1941

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 8: Scrapbooks, circa 1940-2010

0.8 Linear feet (Box 5-7)

Scope and Contents: Scrapbooks were created by Sylvia Fein to document her career and activities from 1940 to the present. Included are letters, newspaper clippings, exhibition catalogs and announcements, price lists for works of art, and photographs.

Arrangement: Scrapbook materials have been removed from binders and plastic binder sleeves and housed in archival folders. The original order of the documents has been maintained.

Box 5, Folder 37-39	Scrapbook "1940-1945", circa 1940-1945 3 Folders
Box 5, Folder 40-41	Scrapbook "1945-1950", circa 1945-1950 2 Folders
Box 5, Folder 42-43	Scrapbook "1951-1960", circa 1950-1961 2 Folders
Box 6, Folder 1	Scrapbook "1951-1960", circa 1950-1961
Box 6, Folder 2-5	Scrapbook "1961-1965", circa 1960-1965 4 Folders
Box 6, Folder 6-9	Scrapbook "1966-2000", circa 1966-2000 4 Folders
Box 6, Folder 10	Scrapbook "2001-2004", circa 2000-2004
Box 7, Folder 1	Scrapbook "2001-2004", circa 2000-2004
Box 7, Folder 2-4	Scrapbook "2004-2006", circa 2002-2006 3 Folders
Box 7, Folder 5-6	Scrapbook "2006-present", circa 2006-2010 2 Folders

[Return to Table of Contents](#)