# Table of Contents

Collection Overview ........................................................................................................ 1  
Administrative Information ........................................................................................... 1  
Biographical / Historical............................................................................................... 1  
Scope and Contents........................................................................................................ 2  
Arrangement................................................................................................................... 2  
Names and Subjects ....................................................................................................... 2  
Container Listing ........................................................................................................... 3  
  Series 1: Sonia Gechtoff papers, 1950-1980............................................................. 3
Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Sonia Gechtoff papers
Identifier: AAA.gechsoni
Date: 1950-1980
Creator: Gechtoff, Sonia, 1926-2018
Extent: 0.4 Linear feet
Language: English.
Summary: The papers of abstract expressionist painter Sonia Gechtoff measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1950 to 1980. The scattered papers include artwork, biographical material, correspondence, personal business records, photographs, printed material, and writings by Gechtoff.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
Sonia Gechtoff donated her papers to the Archives of American Art in 1980.

Processing Information
The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2020.

Preferred Citation

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
The Archives of American Art makes its archival collections available for non-commercial, educational and personal use unless restricted by copyright and/or donor restrictions, including but not limited to access and publication restrictions. AAA makes no representations concerning such rights and restrictions and it is the user's responsibility to determine whether rights or restrictions exist and to obtain any necessary permission to access, use, reproduce and publish the collections. Please refer to the Smithsonian's Terms of Use for additional information.

Biographical / Historical

Sonia Gechtoff (1926-2018) was a painter and printmaker active in San Francisco, California, and New York City, New York.
Gechtoff was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and raised in San Francisco, California. Her parents, Ethel (Etya) and Leonid Gechtoff, were active in the art industry--her mother ran art galleries and her father was a successful painter. Gechtoff studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and, after graduation, moved to San Francisco where she became acquainted with Beat culture and continued her studies at the San Francisco Art Institute. Over the course of her career her style moved toward abstract expressionism. Her works were included at the Guggenheim Museum’s Younger American Painters in 1954.

Gechtoff married artist Jim Kelly and together they moved to New York City in the late 1950s, where she continued to paint and was active in the New York art world. Additionally, Gechtoff taught at various institutions later in her career.

With Kelly, Sonia Gechtoff had two children, Susannah and Miles. She died in 2018 in New York City.

Scope and Contents

The papers of abstract expressionist painter Sonia Gechtoff measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1950 to 1980. The scattered papers include artwork, biographical material, correspondence, personal business records, photographs, printed material, and writings by Gechtoff.

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Abstract expressionism
Women artists
Women painters

Occupations:

Painters -- California -- San Francisco
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York
Container Listing

Series 1: Sonia Gechtoff papers, 1950-1980

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents:
Artworks consist of rough sketches of Gechtoff's paintings that specify dimension and creation dates. Biographical materials include resumes and biographical sketches. The bulk of Gechtoff's correspondence focuses on the exhibition and gallery representation of her works. Correspondents include Carnegie Institute, Fairweather-Hardin Gallery, Ferus Gallery, Oakland Art Gallery, Poindexter Gallery, San Francisco Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Walker Art Center. Also found are letters written by Gechtoff to her family in the late 1960s while she was in Europe.

Personal business records contain loan receipts, a letter of representation from the Ferus Gallery, and a faculty contract with the California School of Fine Arts. Photographs are of works of art and exhibitions. Printed materials include exhibition announcements and catalogs, and clippings. Writings by Gechtoff include a short story, a poem, an open letter to the Women's Caucus for Art, and a notebook used as an exercise in her painting procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 1</th>
<th>Artwork, circa 1970s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 2</td>
<td>Biographical Material, 1963-1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 3-6</td>
<td>Correspondence, 1950-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 7</td>
<td>Personal Business Records, 1954-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 8-11</td>
<td>Photographs, 1960s-1970s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 12-14</td>
<td>Printed Material, 1956-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 15-16</td>
<td>Writings by Sonia Gechtoff, 1953-circa 1975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Return to Table of Contents