



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Ilse Getz Papers,
1928-1999, in the Archives of American Art

Carla De Luise

2006/10/01

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

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Arrangement.....	3
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Names and Subjects	3
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1934-1996.....	4
Series 2: Letters, circa 1950-1999.....	5
Series 3: Exhibition Files, circa 1944-1990.....	6
Series 4: Writings, circa 1928-1987.....	9
Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1956-1990.....	10
Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-1985.....	12

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Ilse Getz papers
Identifier:	AAA.getzilse
Date:	1928-1999
Extent:	3.4 Linear feet
Creator:	Getz, Ilse, 1917-
Language:	This collection is in English, French, German, and Italian.
Summary:	The papers of collage artist Ilse Getz measure 3.4 linear feet and date from 1928 through 1999, with the bulk of the papers dating from circa 1947-circa 1990. Her personal life is reflected through biographical material including a genealogy of the Bechhold family; marriage and death certificates; and writings that include journals, artist statement, poems and notes. The collection contains letters from friends, artists, collectors, and museum and art gallery representatives; exhibition files; and printed material relating to Getz's exhibitions. Also found are photographs, slides and transparencies of artwork.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The papers were donated in 2001 by Patricia Getz-Gentle, the daughter of Ilse Getz.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Carla De Luise in 2006.

Preferred Citation

Ilse Getz Papers, 1928-1999. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center.

Biographical / Historical

Ilse Getz (1917-1992) was born in Nuremberg, Germany and immigrated to the U.S. in 1933. She studied at the Art Students League with George Grosz and Morris Kantor and at the Ozenfant School. Getz was a

collage and construction artist active from the 1950s through the 1980. She exhibited at several galleries in New York City including the Bertha Schaefer Gallery and Rosenberg Gallery.

During her childhood, Ilse Getz (nee Bechhold) had been uprooted both from home and country. She was first displaced in 1929, when she was sent to Hamburg to live with her sister after her father committed suicide. In 1933, Ilse and her sister left Nazi Germany, and traveled to Italy, Spain, Cuba, and Mexico. Ilse joined immediate family in New York. In 1937, Ilse married lawyer David Getz and settled in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Three years later she had a child and became a naturalized citizen of the United States.

In 1942, while visiting her sister in Mexico, Getz created her first oil painting. Upon returning to New York, Ilse continued her artistic exploration and studied with George Grosz and Morris Kantor at the Art Students League. By 1945, Getz had already held her first solo exhibition at the Norlyst Gallery in New York.

Getz traveled extensively throughout her life, incorporating the experiences in her work. During 1947-1948, she traveled and worked in Europe, visiting Switzerland, France, Spain and Portugal among other countries before retiring for four months in Guarujá, Brazil. She destroyed most of the artwork created during that period and returned to New York City.

During the summer of 1956, Getz taught and exhibited at the Positano Art Workshop in Italy along with Piero Dorazio. She repeated the experience two years later. In 1958, Getz married her second husband, artist Manoucher Yektai. The following year, Getz and Yektai went to Yaddo in Saratoga Springs, New York after having received fellowships to the artists' community.

In 1960, Getz was commissioned by Richard Barr to create the set for Eugene Ionesco's play, *The Killer*. The venue was the Seven Arts Theater in New York City and she completed the set in five days. Getz spent the next two years in Paris where she was represented by the Iris Clert Gallery; she exhibited in France, Germany and England. In 1962, Getz returned to New York City and maintained a studio on the Upper East Side. Getz married for the third time in 1964 to Gibson Danes who was then the Dean of Yale School of Art and Architecture. The couple lived in New York and Connecticut, and eventually settled in Newtown, Connecticut.

Getz participated in national and international exhibitions and in solo and group shows. Her collages and constructions incorporate items such as dolls, toys, birds, eggs, playing cards, and game boards. In 1978, retrospective exhibitions of Getz's work were held at the Neuberger Museum in Purchase, New York and in her native city at the Kunsthalle Nürnberg. Retrospective exhibitions were also held in 1980 at the Goethe House and Alex Rosenberg Gallery.

Later in life, Getz suffered from advanced Alzheimer's disease. In 1992, Gibson Danes, fearful that he would no longer be able to properly care for his wife, took both his life and that of Ilse Getz. They were found dead in their garage from acute carbon monoxide toxicity after breathing the fumes of their idling car.

Scope and Contents

The papers of collage artist Ilse Getz measure 3.4 linear feet and date from 1928 through 1999, with the bulk of the papers dating from circa 1947-circa 1990. Her personal life is reflected through biographical material including a genealogy of the Bechhold family; marriage and death certificates; and writings that include journals, artist statement, poems and notes. The collection contains letters from friends, artists, collectors, and museum and art gallery representatives; exhibition files; and printed material relating to Getz's exhibitions. Also found are photographs, slides and transparencies of artwork.

Arrangement

This collection is organized into 6 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1934-1996 (Box 1, OV 5; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 2: Letters, circa 1950-1999 (Box 1; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 3: Exhibition Files, circa 1944-1990 (Box 1, 2, 4; 1.0 linear feet)
- Series 4: Writings, circa 1928-1987 (Box 2, 4; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1956-1990 (Box 2, 3, 4, OV 5; 1.0 linear feet)
- Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-1985 (Box 3; 0.5 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Women painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Diaries

Photographs

Occupations:

Collagists -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1934-1996

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 5)

Biographical material includes curriculum vitae, chronology of Ilse Getz's life, list of collectors, certificate of naturalization and passport, obituaries and death records for Ilse Getz and her husband Gibson Danes, memorial service program and certificate of devise, and a genealogy of the Bechhold family. This series also houses a scrapbook of clippings and exhibition announcements that document Getz's early artistic career. Researchers should note that some of the information in the scrapbook can also be found elsewhere in the collection, primarily in series 3 and 5 and additional material can be found in series 4.

Box 1, Folder 1	Curriculum Vitae, Chronologies, and List of Collectors, 1974, 1986
Box 1, Folder 2	Certificate of Naturalization and Passport, 1940, 1996
Box 1, Folder 3	Obituaries and Death Records, Ilse Getz and Gibson Danes, 1992
Box 1, Folder 4	Memorial Service Program, Certificate of Devise, and Condolence Letters, 1992-1993
Box 1, Folder 5	Bechhold Family Genealogy (includes Photocopies), circa 1934
Box 1, Folder 6	Clipping, Marriage Announcement, 1937
Box 1, Folder 7	Scrapbook, 1944-1947
Box 1, Folder 8	Research Foundation for Jewish Immigration, Inc., 1981-1982, circa 1984
Box 1, Folder 9	Supplemental Issue and Application Form for <i>Who's Who</i> publication, circa 1959
Box OV 5	Oversized, Research Foundation for Jewish Immigration, Inc. from box 1, folder 8

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Letters, circa 1950-1999

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series contains personal and professional letters written to Ilse Getz from friends, artists, museum and gallery representatives, and collectors. Personal letters from artists and gallery representatives are from Kenneth Armitage, Varujan Boghosian, Ludwig Charell, Virginia and Piero Dorazio, Theodoros Stamos, Mark Tobey, and Manoucher Yektai, among others. Professional letters from artists and museum and gallery representatives are included from Carol Anthony, Roy Davis, Louise Tolliver Deutschman, S. Lane Faison, Sigrid Freundorfer, Curt Heigl, Paul Jenkins, Jirko Jiri Chmelar, Hans Namuth, Pierre Restany, and Judith Rothschild among others. Also included are season's greeting cards from Sonia Delauney and Larry Aldrich. This series also houses letters pertaining to the 1978 retrospective exhibition *Ilse Getz - Bilder, Konstruktionen, Collagen*, which took place at the Kunsthalle Nürnberg in Germany. There are a few draft response letters written by Ilse Getz. Where dates are unknown, letters have been filed at the end of a folder.

Box 1, Folder 10-15	Letters to Ilse Getz, circa 1950-1989
Box 1, Folder 16	Allentown Art Museum and Phillip Hack, circa 1974-1978
Box 1, Folder 17	Carol Anthony, circa 1986-1988
Box 1, Folder 18	Sigrid Freundorfer, circa 1977-1981
Box 1, Folder 19	Kunsthalle Nürnberg, circa 1976-1999
Box 1, Folder 20	Joel Mallin, Collector (includes Financial Records), circa 1978-1986
Box 1, Folder 21	Monograph, <i>Collaging with Paper</i> , 1976-1978

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Exhibition Files, circa 1944-1990

1 Linear foot (Box 1, 2, 4)

Exhibition files may contain any or all of the following: sales and loan records; letters; photographs; publicity material; and price lists. Included in the printed material are announcements, catalogs, and clippings. Financial and publicity material relating to exhibitions are located at the beginning of the series. Individual files on exhibitions are listed chronologically. Some files may contain multiple exhibition information. Additional material can be found in series 2.

Box 1, Folder 22-23	Artwork Sales and Loan Records, circa 1958-1990
Box 1, Folder 24-25	Publicity Material, 1944-1989
Box 1, Folder 26	Price Lists, Various Exhibitions, 1959-1963, circa 1977-1982
Box 1, Folder 27	<i>Third Annual Invitation Exhibition by Regional Artists</i> , Guild Hall, East Hampton, New York, 1951
Box 1, Folder 28	Multiple Exhibitions, Bertha Schaefer Gallery, New York, New York, circa 1954-1964
Box 1, Folder 29	<i>Paintings and Collages by Ilse Getz and Ilse Getz Paintings</i> , Gump's Gallery, San Francisco, California, 1957-1960
Box 1, Folder 30	<i>Ilse Getz: Collage Paintings</i> (1960), Widdifield Gallery, New York, New York, 1959-1960
Box 1, Folder 31	<i>The Battered City</i> Donated Getz Artwork, Dartmouth College Hopkins Center, Hanover, New Hampshire, circa 1960-1989
Box 1, Folder 32	Multiple Exhibitions, Iris Clert Gallery, Paris, France, circa 1961-1974
Box 1, Folder 33	<i>Collage Paintings and Boxes</i> (1966), and <i>Ilse Getz, Constructions, Collages and Paintings</i> (1978), Elaine Benson Gallery, Bridgehampton, New York, 1966, circa 1977-1978
Box 1, Folder 34	<i>Ilse Getz</i> Dartmouth College Hopkins Center Art Galleries, Hanover, New Hampshire, circa 1967
Box 1, Folder 35	Multiple Exhibitions, Gimpel Weitzenhoffer Ltd., New York, New York, circa 1972-1978
Box 1, Folder 36	<i>Paintings and Constructions</i> Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts, and Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, Pennsylvania, circa 1973

- Box 1, Folder 37 *Ilse Getz: Oils, Constructions* (1975), Galerie Kostiner-Silvers, Inc., Montreal, Canada, circa 1974-1975
- Box 2, Folder 1 Multiple Exhibitions, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut, 1974-1988
- Box 2, Folder 2 Permanent Collection, Joseph and Olga Hirshhorn and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., circa 1975-1981
- Box 2, Folder 3 *Ilse Getz: Retrospective 1957-1977* (1978), Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York, 1977-1978
- Box 2, Folder 4 *Ilse Getz Recent Works: Boxes, Constructions and Collages* (1980), Alex Rosenberg Gallery, New York, New York, circa 1978-1981
- Box 2, Folder 5 Multiple Exhibitions, Stamford Museum & Nature Center, Stamford, Connecticut, 1978, 1984-1988
- Box 2, Folder 6 *Collages and Constructions* (1978), and *Face Off* (1988), Washington Art Association, Washington Depot, Connecticut, 1978, 1987-1988
- Box 2, Folder 7 *Ilse Getz Retrospective: Boxes, Constructions, and Collages* (1980), Goethe House, New York, New York, 1980-1982
- Box 2, Folder 8 *Three Friends* (1984), and *The Woman from Nostalgia to Neuralgia* (1985), Paris-New York-Kent Gallery, Kent, Connecticut, circa 1980-1985
- Box 2, Folder 9 Multiple Exhibitions, Silvermine Guild Center for the Arts, New Canaan, Connecticut, circa 1981-1988
- Box 2, Folder 10 *Ilse Getz: Key West Winters, Newtown Summers* (1982), Alex Rosenberg Gallery, New York, New York, circa 1982-1984
- Box 2, Folder 11 Various Charity Exhibitions, circa 1983-1987
- Box 2, Folder 12 *Ilse Getz: Selections from the 70s and 80s* Almquist Gallery, New Preston, Connecticut, circa 1986
- Box 2, Folder 13 *Women Artists of Connecticut* (1987), The Connecticut Gallery, Marlborough, Connecticut, circa 1986-1988
- Box 2, Folder 14 *Constructions* Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, Connecticut, 1988
- Box 2, Folder 15 *All About Woman* Paris-New York-Kent Gallery, Kent, Connecticut, 1990

- Box 2, Folder 16 *East Hampton Avant-Garde: A Salute to the Signa Gallery* Guild Hall Museum, East Hampton, New York, 1990
- Box 2, Folder 17-20 Various Exhibitions, circa 1944-1989
- Box 4, Folder 1 Artwork Sales and Loan Records from box 1, folder 22-23
- Box 4, Folder 2 *Paintings and Constructions* Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts, and Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, Pennsylvania from box 1, folder 36

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Writings, circa 1928-1987

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2, 4)

Writings contain an artist statement, notes, journals, poems by Getz and Barbara Guest, and a transcribed interview from 1977 of Ilse Getz conducted by Carl Heigl. Also found is an illustrated travel journal created in 1947 in which Getz recorded her experiences while visiting Spain. Included in the material is a journal from Getz's youth in which friends and acquaintances wrote notes and drawings to her. Writings by others include a statement by Paul Jenkins titled, "Thoughts around Ilse." This series is arranged according to material type and chronologically.

Box 2, Folder 21	Artist's Statement, 1973
Box 2, Folder 22	Artists, Critics, and Students on Ilse Getz, circa 1966-1987
Box 2, Folder 23	Journal, Drawing and Notes to Ilse Bechhold from Friends and Acquaintances, 1928-1938
Box 2, Folder 24	Journal, Recollections of Travels in Spain (includes Artwork), 1947
Box 2, Folder 25	Journal (includes Poems and Sketches), circa 1953-1958
Box 2, Folder 26	Notes, Biographical, undated
Box 2, Folder 27	Notes, Travel, circa 1984
Box 2, Folder 28	Notes, Various Galleries and Miscellaneous, circa 1984-1987
Box 2, Folder 29	Poems, circa 1952-1987
Box 2, Folder 30	Poem, Barbara Guest, circa 1962
Box 2, Folder 31	Transcribed Interview with Ilse Getz conducted by Carl Heigl, 1977
Box 4, Folder 3	Poem, 1975

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1956-1990

1 Linear foot (Box 2, 3, 4, OV 5)

Printed material contains announcements, invitations, solo and group exhibition catalogs, and clippings pertaining to Getz's artistic career. Also included are posters for exhibitions in which Getz participated with a monograph of the *Artist's Christmas Cards* which features a reproduction of Getz's work.

Included within the material are an acquisitions report from Dartmouth College Museums & Galleries and an annual report from the Wadsworth Atheneum, which list the gift of Getz's work to the institutions. Also found are group exhibition catalogs including *Collage International: From Picasso to the Present*, Contemporary Arts Museum, 1958; *Cinquante Ans de "Collages"* Musée d'Art et d'Industrie, 1964; and *Grandes Femmes Petits Formats*, Micro-Salon 1974, inscribed by Iris Clert-Christofle. Solo exhibition catalogs include *Ilse Getz, Collage Paintings*, Tibor Nagy Gallery, 1962; *Ilse Getz, Paintings, Collages, Constructions* Neuberger Museum, and Kunsthalle Nürnberg, 1978; and *Ilse Getz, Boxes, Collages, & Constructions* Alex Rosenberg Gallery and Goethe House, 1978, among others. Magazine and newspaper clippings include reviews of Getz's work by Larry Campbell, Henry Lehmann, Virginia Mann, Vivien Raynor, and Sidney Tillim.

Box 2, Folder 32	Institutional Reports, Annual and Acquisitions, 1979
Box 2, Folder 33-36	Exhibition Announcements, circa 1945-1989
Box 3, Folder 1-8	Exhibition Catalogs, Group Exhibitions, circa 1947-1989
Box 3, Folder 9	Exhibition Catalogs, Solo Exhibitions, 1962-1982
Box 3, Folder 10	Gallery Guide Clippings, 1965, 1978-1984
Box 3, Folder 11-14	Magazine Clippings, 1957-1984 Oversized material housed in box 4, folder 5
Box 3, Folder 15-18	Newspaper Clippings, 1957-1990 Oversized material can be found in box 4, folders 6-8
Box 3, Folder 19-20	Transcribed Clippings, circa 1944-1989
Box 3, Folder 21	Magazines, 1961, 1978
Box 3, Folder 22	Monograph, <i>Artist's Christmas Cards</i> , 1979
Box 3, Folder 23	Newsletter, Yaddo, 1983
Box 4, Folder 4	Exhibition Posters, 1957-1958 Oversized material housed in OV 5
Box 4, Folder 5	Magazine Clippings from box 3, folders 11-14

Box 4, Folder 6-8	Newspaper Clippings from box 3, folders 15-18
Box 4, Folder 9	Newspaper Clippings, Kunsthalle Nürnberg, 1978
Box 4, Folder 10	Monthly and Bi-Monthly Newspapers, 1978-1986
Box OV 5	Oversized, Newspaper Clippings, 1947
Box OV 5	Oversized, Exhibition Posters from box 4, folder 4

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-1985

0.5 Linear feet (Box 3)

This series contains photographs, slides and transparencies of Ilse Getz's artwork. Images of artwork primarily consist of Polaroids. Also included are slides and negatives of Ilse Getz in her Newtown, Connecticut studio as well as a photograph of her New York City studio and apartment. Also included is a photograph of Getz's friend and fellow artist, Theodoros Stamos.

Box 3, Folder 24	Negatives of Artwork, circa 1958
Box 3, Folder 25	Photograph of Theodoros Stamos and Miscellaneous, undated
Box 3, Folder 26	Photograph of Studio and Apartment in New York City, circa 1940-1954
Box 3, Folder 27	Photographs and Slides of Artwork, circa 1944-1950, circa 1985
Box 3, Folder 28	Photographs (including Polaroids) and Slides of Artwork in Collections, undated
Box 3, Folder 29-31	Polaroids of Artwork in Collections, undated
Box 3, Folder 32	Slides of Artwork, circa 1970-1979
Box 3, Folder 33	Slides and Negatives of Ilse Getz and Studio, circa 1970-1974
Box 3, Folder 34-35	Transparencies of Artwork, undated

[Return to Table of Contents](#)