A Finding Aid to the Irving Blum Gallery and Ferus Gallery Announcements, 1961-1973, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Hanson

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

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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Irving Blum Gallery and Ferus Gallery announcements
Identifier: AAA.irviblum
Date: 1961-1972
Extent: 0.2 Linear feet
Creator: Irving Blum Gallery
Language: English
Summary: The Irving Blum Gallery and Ferus Gallery announcements consist of 32 announcements for exhibitions at the Los Angeles Ferus Gallery (1957-1966) and its successor the Irving Blum Gallery (1966-circa 1972). Exhibition announcements are for many exhibitions of southern California contemporary and pop artists, as well as New York artists. Artists represented by announcements include John Altoon, Don Bachardy, Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, Robert Irwin, Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Craig Kauffman, Roy Lichtenstein, Edward Moses, Kenneth Noland, Ad Reinhardt, Ed Ruscha, Frank Stella, and Andy Warhol, among others.

Administrative Information

Provenance
Mrs. Rochella Orchard donated the Ferus Gallery and Irving Blum Gallery announcements on February 22, 1979.

Related Material
Also found at the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with Irving Blum conducted by Paul Cummings on May 31-June 23, 1977.

Alternative Forms Available
This site provides access to the records of Irving Blum Gallery (Los Angeles, Calif.) in the Archives of American Art that were digitized in 2009. The records have been scanned in their entirety, and total 32 images.

Processing Information
The collection was microfilmed on reel 3002 upon receipt. Later, the collection was fully processed and described by Jayna Hanson in October 2008 and scanned in 2009 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.
Preferred Citation


Restrictions on Access

The collection has been digitized and is available online via AAA’s website.

Ownership and Literary Rights

The Irving Blum Gallery and Ferus Gallery announcements 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.

Historical Note

In 1957, Walter Hopps (1932-2005) and Edward Kienholz (1927-1994) opened the contemporary art Ferus Gallery on North La Cienega Boulevard in Los Angeles, California. Kienholz sold his share to Irving Blum (b. 1930) one year later. Hopps left in 1962 to become curator and, later, director of the Pasadena Art Museum. Ferus Gallery closed in 1966 and Irving Blum maintained sole ownership and changed the gallery's name to Irving Blum Gallery.

Ferus Gallery was the first gallery in the Los Angeles area to show contemporary American art, and focused heavily on contemporary Southern California artists, such as John Altoon, Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, Wallace Berman, Robert Irwin, Craig Kauffman, Ed Kienholz, Ed Moses, Richard Ruben, among many others. Likewise, Ferus Gallery helped to solidify the reputations of many established New York artists, including Roy Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns, Frank Stella, Richard Diebenkorn, Andy Warhol, and others.


In 1957 the gallery was temporarily closed after LAPD officers arrested and charged Wallace Berman with obscenity over work in his exhibition. It was his first and last solo show.

In 1962 "Andy Warhol: Campbell's Soup Cans" was Andy Warhol's first solo pop art exhibition and the first exhibition of the Soup Cans. Five of the canvases sold for $100 each, but Blum bought them back to keep the set intact.

Irving Blum designed many of the exhibition announcements for the gallery with a graphic aesthetic.

In 2007, "The Cool School" was released, a documentary film about the Ferus Gallery and its eccentric artists.
Scope and Content Note

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Although these announcements are scattered, they provide insight to and documentation of the southern California LA art scene and the Beat era. The exhibition announcements themselves are quite unique.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 2 series:

- Series 1: Ferus Gallery Announcements, 1961-1965 (Box 1; 20 folders)
- Series 2: Irving Blum Gallery Announcements, 1969-1972 (Box 1; 12 folders)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
Art galleries, Commercial -- California -- Los Angeles

Names:
Altoon, John, 1925-
Bachardy, Don, 1934-
Bell, Larry, 1939-
Bengston, Billy Al
Ferus Gallery (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Irwin, Robert, 1928-
Johns, Jasper, 1930-
Judd, Donald, 1928-
Kauffman, Craig, 1932-
Lichtenstein, Roy, 1923-1997
Moses, Ed, 1926-
Noland, Kenneth, 1924-
Reinhardt, Ad, 1913-1967
Ruscha, Edward
Stella, Frank
Warhol, Andy, 1928-
Container Listing

Series 1: Ferus Gallery Announcements, 1961-1965

20 Folders (Box 1)

Exhibition announcements for Ferus Gallery arranged in chronological order. Exhibition announcements for Ferus Gallery arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 1  
John Altoon and Richard Ruben, 1961 September 18
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 2  
Robert Irwin, 1962 May 8
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 3  
John Altoon, 1962 October 15
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 4  
Billy Al Bengston, 1962 November 12
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 5  
Joseph Cornell, 1962 December 10
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 6  
Frank Stella, 1963 February 18
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 7  
Roy Lichtenstein, 1963 April 1
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 8  
Edward Moses, 1963 April 29
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 9  
Altoon, Bell, Bengston, Defoe, Irwin, Kauffman, Lobdell, Mason, Moses, Price, Ruben, Ruscha, 1963 June 17
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 10  
Larry Bell, 1963 November 4
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 11  
Kenneth Price, 1964 March 3
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 12  
Robert Irwin, 1964 April 7
Box 1, Folder 13  Streeter Blair, 1964 May 4
Box 1, Folder 14  Josef Albers, 1964 September 15
Box 1, Folder 15  Philip Rich, 1965 January 5
Box 1, Folder 16  Frank Stella, 1965 January 26
Box 1, Folder 17  Larry Bell, 1965 October 26
Box 1, Folder 18  Edward Ruscha, 1965 November 16
Box 1, Folder 19  Richard Ruben, circa 1961
Box 1, Folder 20  Billy Al Bengston, circa 1961

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Series 2: Irving Blum Gallery Announcements, 1969-1972

12 Folders (Box 1)

Exhibition announcements for the Irving Blum Gallery arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 21  Donald Judd, 1969 September 16
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 22  Kelly, Morris, Reinhardt, Stella, Warhol, 1969 December 9
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 23  Don Bachardy, 1970 March 10
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 24  Jasper Johns, 1970 April 21
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 25  Michael Balog, 1970 November 3
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 26  Thirties Style: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Images, 1970 December 8
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 27  Richard Diebenkorn, 1971 January 12
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 28  Frank Stella, 1971 November 9
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 29  Kenneth Noland, 1971 November 9
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 30  Tom Holste, 1972 January 18
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 31  John Duff, 1972 November 14
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 32  Craig Kauffman, 1972 December 12
Image(s)

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