

A Finding Aid to the Koplin Gallery and Koplin Del Rio Gallery Records, 1973-2006, in the Archives of American Art

Ricky Gomez and Stephanie Ashley

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund, administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee. The digitization of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative Pool, administered by the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum.

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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art

Title: Koplin Gallery and Koplin Del Rio Gallery records

Date: 1973-2006

Identifier: AAA.kopldelr

Creator: Koplin Del Rio Gallery

Koplin Gallery (Santa Monica, Calif.)

Extent: 4 Linear feet

Language: English .

Summary: The Koplin Gallery and Koplin Del Rio Gallery records measure 4.0 linear

feet and date from 1973 to 2006. The records document the history of the gallery primarily through exhibition and artist files. Files are typically comprised of correspondence with artists, artist statements and resumes, loan agreements, exhibition material such as announcements, catalogs, and price lists, photographs and slides of artwork and exhibitions, printed material documenting exhibitions at the gallery as well as the wider careers of many of the artists that exhibited there, and sound and video recordings about some of the artists and their work. Five gallery files provide scattered documentation of the gallery's history, Martha Koplin's career, and the transition to Koplin Del Rio Gallery with Eleana Del Rio as director, and include photographs of artist openings and other events at the gallery and

elsewhere.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 2007 and 2009 by Eleana Del Rio, gallery director and Martha Koplin, retired Koplin Gallery director.

Available Formats

The bulk of the collection was digitized in 2024 and is available on the Archives of American Art website. Material not digitized includes duplicates, blank versos of photographs, and some printed material and publications for which only the covers and/or relevant pages may have been digitized. Some artist printed material not related to Koplin Gallery has been selectively digitized.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Ricky Gomez in 2021. The collection was prepared for digitization and the finding aid was updated by Stephanie Ashley in 2024 and was digitized in 2024 with Federal support from the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative Pool, administered by the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum.

Preferred Citation

Koplin Gallery and Koplin Del Rio Gallery Records, 1973-2006. 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. Researchers interested in accessing born-digital records or audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

Gallery owner and educator Martha (Marti) Koplin opened Koplin Gallery in West Hollywood, California, in January 1982 with an exhibition of Joan Brown's sculptures and paintings, and constructions by Elena and Mary Siff. Koplin Gallery subsequently played an active role in the Los Angeles gallery and art scene mounting an eclectic range of exhibitions showing photography, sculpture, representational works, and abstract art.

In 1990 the gallery moved to Santa Monica before returning to West Hollywood in 1996. Eleana Del Rio joined the gallery in 1989 and became a principle in the gallery in 1998. By that time Koplin Gallery had become the representative of Rico Lebrun's estate and showed artists such as Darlene Campbell, James Doolin, Martha Mayer Erlebacher, Mineko Grimmer, Kerry James Marshall, and others. Martha Koplin retired in 2002 and formally announced the inauguration of the Koplin Del Rio gallery in 2003 with Eleana Del Rio as the director. Del Rio continues to operate Koplin Del Rio Gallery in Seattle, Washington.

Scope and Contents

The Koplin Gallery and Koplin Del Rio Gallery records measure 4.0 linear feet and date from 1973 to 2006. The records document the history of the gallery primarily through exhibition and artist files. Files are typically comprised of correspondence with artists, artist statements and resumes, loan agreements, exhibition material such as announcements, catalogs, and price lists, photographs and slides of artwork and exhibitions, printed material documenting exhibitions at the gallery as well as the wider careers of many of the artists that exhibited there, and sound and video recordings about some of the artists and their work. Five gallery files provide scattered documentation of the gallery's history, Martha Koplin's career, and the transition to Koplin Del Rio Gallery with Eleana Del Rio as director, and include photographs of artist openings and other events at the gallery and elsewhere.

Exhibition files document some of the group exhibitions, including a series of exhibitions of drawings, held at the gallery and exhibitions outside the gallery that Koplin Gallery contributed to such as a series of International Contemporary Art Fairs and Los Angeles International Art Invitationals.

Artist files document the gallery's relationship with many of the artists who exhibited there, and include records of solo exhibitions held at the gallery. Files include artist statements and resumes, slides of artwork and some installations at the gallery, printed material such as exhibition announcements, catalogs, press reviews of Koplin exhibitions, and

wider press coverage of many artists' careers, and scattered sound and video recordings including some interviews with artists. Artists particularly well represented in the series include Sandow Birk, Joan Brown, James Doolin, Gisele Freund, Mineko Grimmer, Rico Lebrun, David Ligare, and Kerry James Marshall.

A small series of gallery files provides some documentation about Martha Koplin's founding vision for the gallery, her career as a gallery owner, speaker, and art juror, and Eleana Del Rio's involvement in and transition to director of the gallery. Also found are scattered correspondence about events, other event records, and some gallery press and publicity items. Two folders of snapshots are primarily of artist openings and other events at the gallery.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as three series.

- Series 1: Exhibition Files, 1982-2004 (0.6 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 2: Artist Files, 1973-2006 (3.3 linear feet; Boxes 1-4)
- Series 3: Gallery Files, 1982-2005 (0.1 linear feet; Box 4)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Interviews Sound recordings Video recordings

Names:

Brown, Joan, 1938-1990
Del Rio, Eleana
Doolin, James (James Lawrence), 1932-2002
Koplin Gallery (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Koplin, Martha
Marshall, Kerry James, 1955-

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- California

Container Listing

Series 1: Exhibition Files, 1982-2004

0.6 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents:

Exhibition files document some of the group exhibitions held at the gallery, including a series of seven exhibitions of drawings that were held at the gallery between 1991 and 2004. Also found are records of exhibitions that Koplin Gallery contributed to such as a series of International Contemporary Art Fairs and Los Angeles International Art Invitationals.

Exhibition files typically consist of correspondence documenting promotions and exhibition logistics, price lists, loan agreements, invoices, press releases, printed material, and some photographic material showing artwork and installations. One file documents Martha Koplin's role as juror for the Thirty-first Annual Delata Art Exhibition at the Arkansas Art Center in 1988 and includes correspondence, a copy of Koplin's address, a catalog of the exhibition she juried, and press reviews.

Arrangement: Records are arranged alphabetically by title of exhibition.

Available Formats:

Series was digitized in entirety, with the exception of duplicates, blank versos of photographs, and

some publications for which only the covers and/or relevant pages have been digitized.

Box 1, Folder 26, Item	Figure Heads & Red Herrings (May-June 1996) Curated by Robbie Conal, Video Recording
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Box 1, Folder 9	Eleven Former L. A. Artists Who Went to N.Y. (April-June 1982) Curated by Ellie Blankfort , 1982
Box 1, Folder 8	Drawings VII: A Group Exhibition (July-September 2004), 2004
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Box 1, Folder 1	A British View: Four Artists: Ken Kiff, Ian McKeever, Kevin Sinnott, and Michael Kenny (February-March 1988), 1988

1 Videocassettes (VHS)

Video recording loop *Winkin' Blinkin' Nod* with Peter Jennings, Tom Brokaw, and Dan Rather. Notes:

Box 1, Folder 11	The Figure in Context (July-August 1987), 1987
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Box 1, Folder 19	Olympiad: Summer 1984 (July-August 1984), 1984 Image(s): "Olympiad: Summer 1984"
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Box 1, Folder 22	Views: Interior & Exterior (April-May 1985), 1985
Box 1, Folder 23	Exhibition Printed Material, Miscellaneous, 1990-1994, 2004-2005
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Series 2: Artist Files, 1973-2006

3.4 Linear feet (Boxes 1-4)

Scope and Contents:

Artist files further document the gallery's exhibition history and include press releases, price lists, resumes and artist statements, announcement cards, catalogs, press coverage, and scattered photographs and slides of exhibition installations for many of the solo exhibitions held at the gallery. Additionally, artist files include photographs and slides of artwork and press coverage extending well beyond the gallery to provide more extensive documentation of the careers and exhibition histories of many of the individual artists.

There is substantial documentation for Joan Brown, whose work was showcased in six exhibitions at the gallery, including the inaugural 1982 exhibition, and substantial correspondence and exhibition records for James Doolin, French photographer Gisele Freund, Mineko Grimmer, David Ligare, Kerry James Marshall, and others. Correspondence typically documents the gallery's interest in an artist's work, exhibition logistics, loans, and the facilitation of commissions for artists such as Mineko Grimmer and John Nava, and offers insight into the career ebbs and flows of many of the artists represented.

Files labeled "correspondence and exhibitions" typically contain general correspondence with the artists and correspondence related to exhibitions of their work at the gallery, as well as gallery press releases, price lists, artist statements, announcements, press reviews, and photographs and slides of exhibitions. Press coverage of exhibitions at other galleries and museums are generally arranged separately as indicated in the container listing.

Scattered sound and video recordings include news items about some of the gallery's exhibitions including shows for Ida Applebroog, Robbie Conal, and Sarah Perry; interviews with Robbie Conal, Lezley Saar, and Ken Twitchell; and recordings of artists including Ida Applebroog, Joan Brown, Peter Dean, and Gisele Freund talking about their work. Also found are video recordings about various installations by Mineko Grimmer and related performances, and a work by Robbie Conal.

Arrangement:

Artist files are arranged alphabetically by artist and record type thereafter.

Available Formats:

Series has been digitized in entirety, with the exception of duplicates, blank versos of photographs, and some printed material and publications for which only the covers and/or relevant pages may have been digitized. Some artist printed material not related to Koplin Gallery has been selectively digitized.

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Box 4, Folder 22 Box 4, Folder 23 Box 4, Folder 24 Box 4, Folder 25 Box 4, Folder 26 Box 4, Folder 27 Box 4, Folder 28	Notes: Interview on KCRW's "art spot" about Saar and her exhibition at Koplin Gallery. Tony Scherman, Correspondence and Exhibitions, circa 1986-1989 Tony Scherman, Printed Material, Other Galleries/Press, 1984-1995 Tony Scherman, Slides of Artwork and Exhibition Installations, 1980s Terry Schoonhoven, Correspondence and Exhibitions, 1982-1994 Terry Schoonhoven, Photographs and Transparencies of Artwork, 1971-1990s Terry Schoonhoven, Printed Material, Other Galleries/Press, 1979-2001 Terry Schoonhoven, Slides of Artwork, 1970s-1990s

Box 4, Folder 32	Kent Twitchell, Printed Material, Other Galleries/Press, 1970s-2003 Notes: Includes reproductions and postcards of Twitchell's artwork
Box 4, Folder 19, Item 2	Ken Twitchell, Video Recording of ABC Interview, 1998 March 6 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 4, Folder 33	Yuriko Yamaguchi, Correspondence and Exhibitions, 1991-2006
Box 4, Folder 34	Yuriko Yamaguchi, Photographs and Slides of Artwork and Exhibitions, 1980s-2003
Box 4, Folder 35	Yuriko Yamaguchi, Printed Material, Other Galleries/Press, circa 1990-2000
Box 4, Folder 36	Yuriko Yamaguchi, Printed Material, Other Galleries/Press, 2001-2005
Box 4, Folder 37	Elyn Zimmerman, circa 1978-1985, 1996

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Series 3: Gallery Files, 1982-2005

0.1 Linear feet (Box 4)

Scope and Contents:

Series consists primarily of correspondence, resumes, printed material, and photographs, about the gallery and directors Martha Koplin, and Eleana Del Rio.

Martha Koplin's files includes biographical statements by and about Koplin, resumes, and 2 editions of newsletters produced by Koplin Gallery, as well as printed material about the gallery and events, records of Koplin serving as an exhibition juror and a speaker, and other correspondence. Also found are records related to the gallery's moves to Santa Monica in 1990 and back to West Hollywood in 1996 including a price list supplement for the 1990 location inaugural exhibition, press, and announcements.

A file for Eleana Del Rio includes Marti Koplin's formal announcement of her retirement from Koplin Gallery enclosed with the newly renamed Koplin Del Rio Gallery's announcement for it's inaugural exhibition. Also found is a resume for Del Rio and press about her and the gallery, and a thank you letter.

Of additional note are two folders of snapshots of artist openings at the gallery from 1982 to the mid-1990s. The photos picture many of the artists who exhibited at the gallery and also include scattered snapshots of Martha Koplin and others attending events outside the gallery. Since it appears that many of these photos were removed from an album at some point, they have been left together to retain their original context.

Arrangement:

Series is arranged alphabetically by folder title. Photographs are arranged chronologically.

Available

Series has been digitized in entirety.

Box 4, Folder 38	Eleana Del Rio, 2004-2005
Box 4, Folder 39	Martha Koplin, 1980s-1991
Box 4, Folder 40	Martha Koplin, 1992-2000
Box 4, Folder 41	Photographs of Artist Opening Receptions and Other Events, 1982-1989
Box 4, Folder 42	Photographs of Artist Opening Receptions and Other Events, 1990-1995

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