



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Louis K. Meisel Gallery Selected
Records, 1964-2003 in the Archives of American Art

Joy Weiner

November 30, 2011

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
Biographical/Historical note.....	2
Scope and Contents note.....	2
Arrangement note.....	2
Names and Subjects	3
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Correspondence, 1964-2003.....	4
Series 2: Writings, circa 1970s.....	6
Series 3: Subject Files, 1974-1981.....	7
Series 4: Photographs, circa 1980s-1993.....	8

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	The Louis K. Meisel Gallery selected records
Identifier:	AAA.louikmei
Date:	1964-2003
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet
Creator:	Louis K. Meisel Gallery
Language:	English
Summary:	The Louis K. Meisel Gallery selected records measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1964-2003. The records of this New York gallery consist of correspondence with artists and other individuals, writings by Louis K. Meisel, subject files on Gregory Battcock and Jason Seley, and photographs. Correspondence documents the gallery's dealings with its artists.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Louis K. Meisel Gallery selected records were donated by Louis K. Meisel in 1990 and 2009.

Processing Information

The papers were processed to a minimal level by Joy Weiner in November 2011.

Preferred Citation

Louis K. Meisel Gallery selected records, 1973-2003. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

The Louis K. Meisel Gallery selected records 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.

Biographical Note

Louis K. Meisel (1942-) opened the Louis K. Meisel Gallery on Prince Street in the SoHo neighborhood of New York City in 1966. The gallery has promoted the work of realist painters, sculptors, and photographers. Louis K. Meisel Gallery has also championed another genre of American realism, the Pin-up; the gallery has an extensive collection of vintage and contemporary Pin-ups. Artists represented include: John Baeder, Robert Bechtle, Charles Bell, Chuck Close, Audrey Flack, Ronald Kleemann, Mel Ramos, and Theodoros Stamos, among others.

Born in 1942 in Brooklyn, Louis K. Meisel has had a varied career as an art dealer, writer, and collector. Meisel attended Columbia University, 1964 and the New School for Social Research in New York, 1963-1965. Credited with coining the phrase, Photorealism in the late 1960s, Meisel defined the qualities of the Photorealist artist.

Louis K. Meisel has written numerous books and articles on Photorealism, the American Pin-Up, and other art-related topics. He has also lectured at academic and art-related institutions, including the Arts and Crafts Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1978; Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, 1980, 2002; the Natural History Museum, Smithsonian Institution, 1993; and the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida, 2002. His collecting interests have been wide-ranging. In addition to his extensive collection of Photorealist paintings and Pin-up illustrations, Meisel is a collector of 1940s Moderne, tin toys, Art Deco statues, and naturalia.

Since 2000, Louis K. Meisel, in partnership with Frank Bernarducci, has operated the Bernarducci. Meisel. Gallery on 57th Street in New York as a venue for established and emerging artists.

Scope and Contents

The Louis K. Meisel Gallery selected records measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1964-2003. The records of this New York gallery consist of correspondence with artists and other individuals, writings by Louis K. Meisel, subject files on Gregory Battcock and Jason Seley, and photographs. Correspondence documents the gallery's dealings with its artists.

Among the correspondents are John Baeder, Chuck Close, Don Eddy, Richard Estes, Audrey Flack, Ralph Goings, Richard McClean, Theodoros Stamos, and others. Also found are letters from Larry Rivers, Anwar el-Sadat, Robert Hughes, and Tom Messer.

Writings include a typescript by Louis K. Meisel on becoming an art dealer. A subject file on art historian Gregory Battcock contains several reviews, scattered materials including letters, clippings, lists, press releases, and a photograph of Battcock with David Bourdon, Hilton Kramer, Rosalind Krauss, Barbara Rose, and others attending an International Art Association of Art Critics conference. There are subject files on Jason Seley containing photographs, correspondence, and printed materials.

Photographs include a photograph of Louis K. Meisel and his wife, Susan Meisel with Photorealists artists at a book party. Also found are photographs of John Baldesarri with Herbert and Dorothy Vogel; and Andy Warhol and Elizabeth Taylor.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 4 series:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1964-2003 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 2: Writings, circa 1970s (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 3: Subject Files, 1974-1981 (Box 1; 5 folders)
- Series 4: Photographs, circa 1980s-1993 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art galleries, Commercial -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Baeder, John
Baldessari, John, 1931-
Battcock, Gregory, 1937-
Bourdon, David
Close, Chuck, 1940-
Eddy, Don, 1944-
Estes, Richard, 1932-
Flack, Audrey
Goings, Ralph
Kramer, Hilton
Krauss, Rosalind E.
Meisel, Louis K.
Meisel, Susan Pear
Messer, Thomas M.
Rivers, Larry, 1925-2002
Rose, Barbara
Sadat, Anwar, 1918-1981
Stamos, Theodoros, 1922-1997
Taylor, Elizabeth, 1932-2011
Vogel, Dorothy
Vogel, Herbert
Warhol, Andy, 1928-

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1964-2003

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Correspondence is mostly professional in content; topics center on artist's activities, discussions on Photorealism, exhibitions and sales of artwork. Also included in the files are artist's statements, clippings, photographs; and illustrated letters and greeting cards, some original artwork. Of interest, are letters from Theodoros Stamos to Louis K. Meisel about his work. Also found are letters from several prominent individuals, such as Robert Hughes, Thomas Messer, Joan Mondale, and Anwar al-Sadat.

Correspondence, including files with individual artists, is arranged alphabetically; letters within the folders are filed in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 1	A-B, 1965-1999 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adams Davidson Galleries• Basq, Carlos• Benke, Ernest• Brunelli, Anthony J.• Bull, Frances
Box 1, Folder 2	D, 1982-1986 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• De Andrea, John• Doyle, Joe
Box 1, Folder 3	H-M, 1969-1985 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hanson, Duane• Hess, Thomas• Hughes, Robert• Louis K. Meisel Gallery (exhibition invitation)• Mendenhall, Jack• Mondale, Joan• Morley, Frances• Mott, E.
Box 1, Folder 4	O-P, 1964-1978 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oppenheim, Dennis• Rivers, Larry• Sadat, Anwar El• Louis K. Meisel Gallery (exhibition invitation)• Shestack, Mel• Mondale, Joan• Morley, Frances• Mott, E.
Box 1, Folder 5	W, 1973-1980 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wilson, Gahan

- Wyeth, James

Box 1, Folder 6	Baeder, John, 1980-1993, undated
Box 1, Folder 7	Bechtle, Bob, 1973-1985, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Blackwell, Tom, 1983, undated
Box 1, Folder 9	Close, Chuck, 1976-2000, undated
Box 1, Folder 10	Cottingham, Tom, 1973-1998, undated
Box 1, Folder 11	Eddy, Don, 1980-1983, undated
Box 1, Folder 12	Estes, Richard, 1980-1989
Box 1, Folder 13	Flack, Audrey, 1983-1984
Box 1, Folder 14	Goings, Ralph, 1973-1993
Box 1, Folder 15	Kleemann, Ronald, 1973-1981, undated
Box 1, Folder 16	McClellan, Richard, 1973-1993, undated
Box 1, Folder 17	Parrish, David, 1973-2003
Box 1, Folder 18	Ramos, Mel, 1974-1991
Box 1, Folder 19	Ruckle, Ernest, 1972-1985, undated
Box 1, Folder 20	Salt, John, 1979-2002
Box 1, Folder 21	Stamos, Theodoros, 1967-1981
Box 1, Folder 22	Unidentified Correspondents (surnames omitted), 1976, undated

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Writings, circa 1970s

1 Folder (Box 1)

This series contains a typescript of Louis K. Meisel's "The World Needs Art (Therefore Dealers)." In this article-length piece, Meisel writes about the preparation an individual should undertake before becoming an art dealer. He also describes in detail how the dealer should renovate a gallery space as well as select and arrange artwork for display.

Box 1, Folder 23

Writings by Louis K. Meisel, circa 1970s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Subject Files, 1974-1981

5 Folders (Box 1)

This series includes subject files on Gregory Battcock and Jason Seley. There are typescripts of Battcock's review of a book party for the art historian Robert Rosenbaum and his reviews of exhibition openings at the Museum of Modern Art and the Institute for Art and Urban Resources. Also found are letters, scattered lists, clippings, press releases, and a photograph of Gregory Battcock with David Bourdon, Hilton Kramer, Rosalind Krauss, and Barbara Rose at the International Art Association of Art Critics conference. Four folders of materials on Jason Seley include printed materials, photographs, and correspondence

Box 1, Folder 24 Gregory Battcock, 1974-1977

Box 1, Folder 25-28 Jason Seley, 1965-1981
4 Folders

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Photographs, circa 1980s-1993

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series includes a color photograph of Louis K. Meisel and his wife, Susan Meisel, at a party held at his New York City loft for his book, *Photorealism Since 1980*. Included in the group shot are John Baeder, Richard Estes, Audrey Flack, Ralph Goings, Ronald Kleemann, Jack Mendenhall, John Salt, among others.

Also found are black and white photographs of artists with others: Andy Warhol with Elizabeth Taylor at a benefit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and John Baldessari with Herbert and Dorothy Vogel at an exhibition opening for Kenneth Noland at the Whitney Museum in New York.

Photographs are arranged by subject and thereafter filed in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 29 Photograph of Louis K. Meisel with Photorealist Artists, 1993

Box 1, Folder 30 Photographs of Artists with Others, circa 1980s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)