



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the David Parrish
Papers, 1940-2009, bulk 1964-1998,
in the Archives of American Art

Erin Kinhart

January 18, 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 Note.....	2
Scope and Content Note.....	2
Arrangement.....	3
Names and Subjects	3
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1970-2000.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, 1964-2008.....	5
Series 3: Photographs, 1940, 1960s-2009.....	9
Series 4: Artwork, circa 1961-2002.....	10
Series 5: Printed Material, 1962-2009.....	11

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	David Parrish papers
Identifier:	AAA.parrdavi
Date:	1940-2009 (bulk 1964-1998)
Extent:	3.1 Linear feet
Creator:	Parrish, David, 1939-
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of Alabama photorealist painter David Parrish measure 3.1 linear feet and date from 1940 to 2009, with the bulk of the material from 1964 to 1998. Parrish's career is documented through scattered biographical material; correspondence with galleries, publishers, art organizations, and friends; photographs of Parrish, his studio, and artwork; original artwork by Parrish and others; and printed material.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The collection was donated by David Parrish in 2009.

Processing Information

The collection was processed to an intermediate level by Erin Kinhart in 2011.

Preferred Citation

David Parrish papers, 1940-2009, bulk 1964-1998. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment. Use of video recording requires advance notice.

Ownership and Literary Rights

The David Parrish papers 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

David Parrish (1939-) is a Photorealist painter living in Huntsville, Alabama.

Parrish was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and received his B.F.A. from the University of Alabama in 1961. He briefly moved to New York with plans to become a magazine illustrator, but was unable to find a permanent job. He moved to Huntsville, Alabama in 1962 and became a technical illustrator for Hayes International Corporation. Parrish continued painting at his home studio, moving away from the painting style he learned in school, and instead working on paintings derived from photographs. He left his job as a technical illustrator in 1971 and became a full-time painter. That same year he joined French & Company in New York as a gallery artist and had his first one-man show at Brooks Memorial Art Gallery in Memphis, Tennessee.

During the 1970s Parrish saw success as a first generation photorealist. He was represented from 1973 to 1976 by Sidney Janis Gallery, and then moved to Nancy Hoffman Gallery. In 1987 he joined Louis K. Meisel Gallery, and is still represented by them today. Parrish's motorcycle paintings became his early trademark, and during the late 1980s into the 1990s he painted complex, intricate porcelain still lifes of Marilyn Monroe, Elvis, and other pop culture icons. Parrish has shown his work in numerous group and solo shows, including many international shows, and is in the permanent collection of many museums.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Alabama photorealist painter David Parrish measure 3.1 linear feet and date from 1940 to 2009, with the bulk of the material from 1964 to 1998. Parrish's career is documented through scattered biographical material; correspondence with galleries, publishers, art organizations, and friends; photographs of Parrish, his studio, and artwork; original artwork by Parrish and others; and printed material.

Biographical material consists of resumes, one folder of financial records, brief artist statements written by David Parrish, and two essays about Parrish's works written by others. Also included is a VHS video recording of an interview with Parrish conducted by Bob Williams in 1997 in conjunction with an exhibition.

Correspondence is primarily of a professional nature and pertains to Parrish's relationships with various galleries, publishers, and arts organizations. Of note is correspondence with galleries that represented Parrish's work including French & Company, Sidney Janis, Nancy Hoffman, and Louis K. Meisel, and correspondence with fellow artist Don Eddy. Also included is a small amount of personal correspondence with friends and family.

Photographs of David Parrish include one baby photo, official portraits, photographs of him in his studio, with family and friends, and at exhibition openings. Also found are photographs and slides of his artwork, including gallery installations and early photographs of the interior of Nancy Hoffman Gallery.

Artwork includes a sketchbook kept by Parrish while a student at the University of Alabama, several ink drawings produced during his employment as a technical illustrator at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, and a few sketches by others. Printed material includes exhibition catalogs, announcements, and posters, newspaper clippings, press packets, and other gallery publications documenting Parrish's career as an artist.

Much of the material in the collection includes recent annotations by Parrish describing his involvement with the projects and exhibitions, and identifying friends and colleagues.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 5 series:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1970-2000 (Box 1; 8 folders)
 - Series 2: Correspondence, 1964-2008 (Box 1, 5; 0.9 linear feet)
 - Series 3: Photographs, 1940, 1960s-2009 (Boxes 1-2, 5; 0.4 linear feet)
 - Series 4: Artwork, circa 1961-2002 (Boxes 2, 5; 5 folders)
 - Series 5: Printed Material, 1962-2009 (Boxes 2-4; 1.5 linear feet)
-

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Artists' studios -- Photographs
Photo-realism

Types of Materials:

Drawings
Essays
Interviews
Photographs
Resumes
Sketchbooks
Video recordings

Names:

Eddy, Don, 1944-
French & Company (New York, N.Y.)
George C. Marshall Space Flight Center -- Officials and employees
Hoffman, Nancy
Janis, Sidney, 1896-1989
Meisel, Louis K.
Nancy Hoffman Gallery
University of Alabama -- Students
Williams, Bob

Occupations:

Painters -- Alabama

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1970-2000

(Box 1; 8 folders)

This series contains scattered biographical material. Found here are four resumes, one folder of financial records including invoices and receipts, brief artist statements written by David Parrish, and two essays about Parrish's works written by others. Also included is a videocassette recording (VHS) of an interview with Parrish conducted by Bob Williams in 1997 in conjunction with an exhibition.

Box 1, Folder 1	Address List, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	"David Parrish Exhibition and Interview by Bob Williams" (1997), 1997-1998 <i>(1 videocassette)</i>
Box 1, Folder 3	Financial Records, 1971-2000
Box 1, Folder 4	Resumes, 1970, 1972
Box 1, Folder 5	Resume for Louis K. Meisel Gallery, 1995
Box 1, Folder 6	Resume for Nancy Hoffman Gallery, 1981
Box 1, Folder 7	Writings by David Parrish regarding his artwork, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Writings by Others regarding David Parrish artwork, circa 1973, 1981

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Correspondence, 1964-2008

(Box 1, 5; 0.9 linear feet)

Within this series is correspondence primarily of a professional nature and pertains to Parrish's relationships with various galleries, publishers, and arts organizations. Topics of correspondence typically concern exhibitions and other art related events. Of note is correspondence with galleries that represented Parrish's work including French & Company, Sidney Janis, Nancy Hoffman, and Louis K. Meisel, and correspondence with fellow artist Don Eddy. Also included is a small amount of personal correspondence with friends and family.

Correspondence is arranged alphabetically by name with the exceptions of the first folder of the series which contains a birthday card to David Parrish from his wife Kay.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 9 | Card to David Parrish from Kay Parrish, circa 1993 |
| Box 1, Folder 10 | Allied Publications, Inc., 1965 |
| Box 1, Folder 11 | <i>Art in America</i> , 1973 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | A, Miscellaneous, 1969-1985 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexander, Martha • American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters • Artists Against Nuclear Arms • artSouth • Awards in the Visual Arts |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | B, Miscellaneous, 1969-1994 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bamberg, Barrie • Beilin, Howard • Bernard Danenberg Galleries • Birmingham Art Association • Boise Art Museum • Boston Corporate Art • Bothwell, Joseph • Brain Trust, Inc. • Brooks Memorial Art Gallery • Butler Institute of American Art |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | C, Miscellaneous, 1964-1982 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabral, Edward • Capricorn Galleries • Charman, Montague • Cinecorp • City of Huntsville • Cleveland Institute of Art • Cohen, Byron • Costello, Irene • Crandell, Mrs. George McCord • Cystic Fibrosis Foundation |

- Box 1, Folder 15 D-E, Miscellaneous, circa 1975-1985
- Dempsey, Jack and Debbie
 - Eddy, Don
 - Edith C. Blum Art Institute
 - Emporia State University
 - Escalmel, Francois
- Box 1, Folder 16 French & Company, Inc. (Nancy Hoffman), 1971-1972
- Box 1, Folder 17 F, Miscellaneous, 1977-1988
- Fagaly, William A.
 - Federal Communications Commission
 - Felt, Joanne
 - Fisher, Mildred
 - Fisher, Robert
 - Flint Institute of Art
 - Friedman, Marvin Ross
- Box 1, Folder 18 G, Miscellaneous, 1973-1994
- Galerie Des 4 Mouvements
 - Grable, Beverly
 - Gray, Michael (includes photograph of David Parrish)
 - Green, John
 - Greenville County Museum of Art
 - Grisham, Betty
- Box 1, Folder 19 Huntsville Museum of Art, 1977-2003
- Box 1, Folder 20 H, Miscellaneous, 1979-1994
- Harry N. Abrams, Inc.
 - Haws, Mrs. Frank Phillip
 - Heritage Foundation of Franklin and Williamson County
 - Hochmann, J.
 - Howe, Maureen
 - Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
- Box 1, Folder 21 Journal of the American Medical Association, 1970
- Box 1, Folder 22 J, Miscellaneous, 1974-1981
- J. B. Lippincott Company
 - Jordan, Rudy
- Box 1, Folder 23 Kaplan, Richard, 1975-1978
- Box 1, Folder 24 K, Miscellaneous, 1969-1985
- Kahan, Mitchell
 - Kansas City Art Institute
 - Kayo News

- Kissick, Kathleen
 - Klein, E. L.
 - Kinpit, Donald
- Box 1, Folder 25 Lawson, Tom, 1998
(Oversized items housed in Box 5)
- Box 1, Folder 26 Louis K. Meisel Gallery, 1978-2008
- Box 1, Folder 27 L, Miscellaneous, 1969-1977
- La Medusa
 - Les Editions De La Revue Moderne
 - Linesch, Corinne Skinner
- Box 1, Folder 28 Maltby Family, circa 1975-2000
- Box 1, Folder 29 Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 1979-1994
- Box 1, Folder 30 Morgan Art Gallery, 1978-1980
- Box 1, Folder 31 M, Miscellaneous, 1975-1994
- Maralyn Wilson Gallery
 - McDaris Exhibit Group
 - Meiers, Mrs. J. Fred
 - Mississippi Art Association
 - Moreno-Lacalle, Peter
 - Motor 16
 - Mount Holyoke College
- Box 1, Folder 32-34 Nancy Hoffman Gallery, 1977-1985
(3 Folders)
- Box 1, Folder 35 National Museum of American Art, 1980-1982
- Box 1, Folder 36 Norek, Justyn, 1976-1977
- Box 1, Folder 37 N-P, Miscellaneous, 1979-1984
- National Endowment for the Arts
 - Orr, Marcus
 - Philip Morris, Inc.
- Box 1, Folder 38 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1979-1981
- Box 1, Folder 39 Russell, Jeff, circa 1978-1987
- Box 1, Folder 40 R-S, Miscellaneous, 1978-1993

- Richards, Norm
- San Antonio Museum Association
- San Jose State University
- Sheinkopf, Paul R.
- Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art
- Spacex '89 Exhibition
- Sparks, Mrs. H. Claxton
- Stewart, Boardman

Box 1, Folder 41	Schaul, Ellie, 1970-1983
Box 1, Folder 42-43	Sidney Janis Gallery, 1973-1976 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 44	Skipper, Mr. and Mrs. G. C., 1978-1991
Box 1, Folder 45	Society of Fine Arts, University of Alabama, 1993-1995
Box 1, Folder 46	T-V, Miscellaneous, 1977-2000 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taylor, Jacqueline (Westpac Gallery)• Uhlich, Robert Steadman• University of Alabama• University of Nebraska• University of Tennessee• Visual Publications
Box 1, Folder 47	W, Miscellaneous, 1978-1984 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• W. C. Bradley Co.• Warren, Jo Anne• Westbury Graphics• <i>Who's Who in American Art</i>
Box 5, Folder	Oversize Correspondence, Tom Lawson, 1998 (Oversized item from Box 1, Folder 25)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Photographs, 1940, 1960s-2009

(Box 1-2, 5; 0.4 linear feet)

Photographs of David Parrish include one baby photo, official portraits, photographs of him in his studio, with family and friends, and at exhibition openings. Also found are photographs of his artwork, including gallery installations and early photographs of the interior of Nancy Hoffman Gallery. This series also includes some photographs sent to Parrish from his friend and fellow artist Jeff Russell. Most of these photographs include annotations written on the back by Parrish.

Photographs are arranged by subject matter.

Box 1, Folder 48-52	Photographs of David Parrish, 1940, 1960s-circa 2000s <i>(5 folders)</i> (Includes one baby photo, photos of Parrish with paintings, and official portraits)
Box 2, Folder 1	David Parrish in His Studio, 1984
Box 2, Folder 2	Family Photographs, 1984-1985
Box 2, Folder 3	Exhibition Openings, circa 1990s
Box 2, Folder 4	Exhibitions, 2004, 2009
Box 2, Folder 5	Nancy Hoffman Gallery, circa 1970s
Box 2, Folder 6	Jeff Russell's Studio and Summer House, circa 2009
Box 2, Folder 7	Artwork, "Jack" Painting in Studio, circa 1993
Box 2, Folder 8-10	Artwork, circa 1980s-2009 <i>(3 folders; oversized items housed in Box 5)</i>
Box 2, Folder 11	Slides of Artwork, circa 1971-1990s
Box 5, Folder	Oversize Photographs of Artwork, circa 1980s-2009 <i>(Oversized items from Box 2, Folders 8-10)</i>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Artwork, circa 1961-2002

(Box 2, 5; 5 folders)

Artwork includes a sketchbook kept by Parrish while a student at the University of Alabama, several ink drawings produced during his employment as a technical illustrator at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, and ink sketches by his mother, Jemima Parrish. Also found is a diagram sketched by Jeff Russell.

Box 2, Folder 12	Drawings for Marshall Space Flight Center, 1960s <i>(Oversized items housed in Box 5)</i>
Box 2, Folder 13	Sketchbook, circa 1961
Box 2, Folder 14	Ink Sketches by Jemima Parrish, 2002, undated
Box 2, Folder 15	Drawing by Jeff Russell, "How to Build the Frank Owens Stretcher," undated
Box 5, Folder	Oversize Drawings of Marshall Space Flight Center, 1960s <i>(Oversized items from Box 2, Folder 12)</i>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Printed Material, 1962-2009

(Box 2-4; 1.5 linear feet)

Printed material includes exhibition publications, such as catalogs, announcements, and posters, newspaper clippings, press packets, and other gallery publications. Most of the material found here documents Parrish's career, and often he includes a handwritten note with the publication describing his involvement. Some catalogs and announcements are for exhibitions which Parrish attended but did not participate.

Folders are arranged alphabetically by type of material. Items within each folder are arranged chronologically.

Box 2, Folder 16	<i>Art Now Gallery Guide</i> , 1981, 1993-2003
Box 2, Folder 17	Book, <i>Contemporary American Realism Since 1960</i> , Frank H. Goodyear, Jr., 1981
Box 2, Folder 18-20	Exhibition Announcements, 1969-2008 (3 folders)
Box 2, Folder 21-29	Exhibition Catalogs, 1962-1998 (9 folders)
Box 3, Folder 1	Exhibition Posters, circa 1973-1984
Box 3, Folder 2	Gallery Price Lists, 1998, undated
Box 3, Folder 3-6	Magazines, 1966-1985 (4 folders)
Box 4, Folder 1	Magazines, 1993-1995, 2007
Box 4, Folder 2	Museum Bulletins and Brochures, circa 1968-1990s
Box 4, Folder 3-9	Newspaper Clippings, 1967-1999, 2009, undated (7 folders)
Box 4, Folder 10	Press Packet for <i>David Parrish: Photorealism</i> , 1996
Box 4, Folder 11	Press Packet for <i>The Detailed Image</i> , 1986
Box 4, Folder 12	Press Releases, 1979, 2000
Box 4, Folder 13	Proofs for Exhibition Catalog, <i>David Parrish at Louis K. Meisel Gallery</i> , circa 1990

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Box 4, Folder 14 | Tear Sheets for Louis K. Meisel Gallery, 1989 |
| Box 4, Folder 15 | Website Printouts, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, 1998 |

[Return to Table of Contents](#)