



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Mel Ramos Papers, 1959-1984, in the Archives of American Art

Erin Kinhart

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Latino Initiatives Pool, administered by the Smithsonian Latino Center.

2018/12/10

Archives of American Art
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Mel Ramos papers
Date:	1959-1984
Identifier:	AAA.ramomel
Creator:	Ramos, Mel, 1935-2018
Extent:	0.6 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of California pop artist and teacher Mel Ramos measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1959 to 1984. The collection documents Ramos's career as an artist through correspondence with Lawrence Alloway, Dwan Gallery, Roy Lichtenstein, David Stuart, and Tom Wesselman, among others; a few inventories, invoices, and loan agreements; documentation of his work with the San Francisco Art Institute; and exhibition announcements and catalogs. Writings include two manuscripts on Ramos and the Pop Art movement, a one-page interview of Ramos, and poetry by Robin Skelton. Of interest in the collection, are files containing photographs, photo-collages, and clippings used for paintings such as "Elephant Seal," "Virnaburger," and "Manet's Olympia."

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Mel Ramos in July 1985.

Related Materials

Also found at the Archives of American Art is an interview of Mel Ramos conducted on May 15, 1981, by Paul Karlstrom.

Available Formats

The collection is available on microfilm reels 3652-3653 at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Erin Kinhart in 2018.

Preferred Citation

Mel Ramos papers, 1959-1984. 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

Mel Ramos (1935-2018), born Melvin John Ramos, was a painter, pop artist, and teacher in California. Ramos was born in Sacramento, California. In 1955 he married Leta Helmers, who served as a model for many of his early paintings. Ramos received his M.A. from Sacramento State College in 1958 and taught a Mira Loma High School. In 1963 his work was included in *Six More*, a major exhibition of Pop Art at the Los Angeles County Museum. One year later he had his first solo show in New York at Bianchini Gallery. In 1965, he began showing his art at David Stuart Gallery in Los Angeles. Ramos also had a long career (1966-1997) as a professor at California State University, East Bay.

Scope and Contents

The papers of California pop artist and teacher Mel Ramos measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1959 to 1984. The collection documents Ramos's career as an artist through correspondence with Lawrence Alloway, Dwan Gallery, Roy Lichtenstein, David Stuart, and Tom Wesselman, among others; a few inventories, invoices, and loan agreements; documentation of his work with the San Francisco Art Institute; and exhibition announcements and catalogs. Writings include two manuscripts on Ramos and the Pop Art movement, a one-page interview of Ramos, and poetry by Robin Skelton. Of interest in the collection, are files containing photographs, photo-collages, and clippings used for paintings such as "Elephant Seal," "Virnaburger," and "Manet's Olympia."

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection, the papers are arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Hispanic American artists
Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- California
Pop art

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Works of art

Names:

Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990
Lichtenstein, Roy, 1923-1997
Thiebaud, Wayne
Wesselmann, Tom, 1931-2004

Occupations:

Painters -- California -- Oakland

Container Listing

Series 1: Mel Ramos Papers, 1959-1984

0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: The papers of California pop artist and teacher Mel Ramos measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1959 to 1984. The collection documents Ramos's career as an artist through correspondence with Lawrence Alloway, Dwan Gallery, Roy Lichtenstein, David Stuart, and Tom Wesselman, among others; a few inventories, invoices, and loan agreements; documentation of his work with the San Francisco Art Institute; and exhibition announcements and catalogs. Writings include two manuscripts on Ramos and the Pop Art movement, a one-page interview of Ramos, and poetry by Robin Skelton. Of interest in the collection, are files containing photographs, photo-collages, and clippings used for paintings such as "Elephant Seal," "Virnaburger," and "Manet's Olympia."

Box 1, Folder 1-2	Correspondence, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence, 1959-1962
Box 1, Folder 4-5	Correspondence, 1963
Box 1, Folder 6-8	Correspondence, 1964
Box 1, Folder 9-14	Correspondence, 1965
Box 1, Folder 15-16	Correspondence, 1966
Box 1, Folder 17-19	Correspondence, 1967
Box 1, Folder 20-23	Correspondence, 1968
Box 1, Folder 24-29	Correspondence, 1969
Box 1, Folder 30-33	Correspondence, 1970
Box 1, Folder 34-36	Correspondence, 1971
Box 2, Folder 1	Loan Agreements and Inventory of Artwork, 1967-1971
Box 2, Folder 2-3	Receipts and Invoices, circa 1968-1971
Box 2, Folder 4	Business Records, Miscellaneous, circa 1960-1967
Box 2, Folder 5	San Francisco Art Institute, 1966-1968
Box 2, Folder 6	Subject File, "Francois Gerard - Cupid & Psyche", circa 1960s

Box 2, Folder 7	Subject File, "Botticelli - Venus", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 8	Subject File, "Boucher - Miss O'Murphy", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 9	Subject File, "J. L. David - L'Amour et Psyche", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 10	Subject File, "Elephant Seal", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 11	Subject File, "Ingres - Le Grande Odalisque", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 12	Subject File, "Manet's Olympia", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 13	Subject File, "Modigliani Nudo Coricato Alla Modigliani", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 14	Subject File, "Navajo - Nudo", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 15	Subject File, "Picot's L'Amor et Psyche", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 16	Subject File, "Speiser Commission", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 17	Subject File, "Velasquez - Rokeby", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 18	Subject File, "Virnaburger", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 19	Unidentified Source Material, circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 20	Artwork, "Study for Salami/Modigliani #4", circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 21	Writings, circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 22	Exhibition Announcements, 1960s-1981
Box 2, Folder 23	Exhibition Catalogs, 1968, 1980, 1984
Box 2, Folder 24	Printed Material, Miscellaneous, circa 1960s-1970s

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