



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Mary Ann Scherr
Papers, 1941-2007, bulk 1960-2000,
in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art

Title: Mary Ann Scherr papers

Identifier: AAA.schemary

Date: 1941-2013
(bulk 1960-2000)

Extent: 4 linear feet

Creator: Scherr, Mary Ann, 1931-

Language: English

Collection is in English.

Summary: The papers of jeweler and designer Mary Ann Scherr measure 4.0 linear feet and date from 1941 to 2013, with the bulk of the material from 1960 to 2000. Scherr's career is documented through scattered biographical material; correspondence with museums, universities, professional entities, and colleagues; writings by her as well as professional and student writings about her; business records documenting projects and connections with institutions and organizations; news clippings, promotional ephemera, catalogs, posters, and other printed materials; and photographs of Scherr and of her artwork. An additional 2.0 linear feet donated in 2016 includes biographical material including information about Scherr's children, resumes and awards; personal and professional correspondence; teaching files and material regarding honorary degrees; project files pertaining to Scherr's "Body Monitors" jewelry; financial records including invoices for projects and supplies; photographs of Scherr with her designs, with others, and of works of art; artwork consisting of designs, illustrations, and computer clip art design; and printed material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Mary Ann Scherr in 2001, 2005, and 2008 under the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America. Additional material donated 2016 by Scott Scherr, Mary Ann Scherr's son.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with Mary Ann Scherr conducted by Mary Douglas, April 6-7, 2001.

Processing Information

The collection was processed to a minimal level, and a finding aid was prepared by Kimberley Henze in 2015. An addition received in 2016 remains unprocessed.

Preferred Citation

Mary Ann Scherr papers, 1941-2007, bulk 1960-2000. 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. Contact Reference Services for more information. Use of video recording requires advance notice.

Conditions Governing Use

The Mary Ann Scherr 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 / Historical

Mary Ann Scherr (1921-) is a jeweler and designer living in Raleigh, North Carolina. Scherr was born in Akron, Ohio, and trained at the Cleveland Institute of Art, The University of Akron, and Kent State University, among others. She has worked in illustration, automotive and toy design, fashion, and metalwork but is most renowned for her functional approach to jewelry design through "body monitors," high-tech utilitarian ornaments that monitor and react to the conditions of the wearer or the wearer's surroundings.

Scope and Contents

The papers of jeweler and designer Mary Ann Scherr measure 4.0 linear feet and date from 1941 to 2013, with the bulk of the material from 1960 to 2000. Scherr's career is documented through scattered biographical material; correspondence with museums, universities, professional entities, and colleagues; writings by her as well as professional and student writings about her; business records documenting projects and connections with institutions and organizations; news clippings, promotional ephemera, catalogs, posters, and other printed materials; and photographs of Scherr and of her artwork. An additional 2.0 linear feet donated in 2016 includes biographical material including information about Scherr's children, resumes and awards; personal and professional correspondence; teaching files and material regarding honorary degrees; project files pertaining to Scherr's "Body Monitors" jewelry; financial records including invoices for projects and supplies; photographs of Scherr with her designs, with others, and of works of art; artwork consisting of designs, illustrations, and computer clip art design; and printed material.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 6 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1948-2005 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-2007 (Box 1; 5 folders)
- Series 3: Writings, 1979-2005 (Box 1; 2 folders)
- Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1947-2004 (Box 1; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1950-2007 (Box 1-2; 1.2 linear feet)
- Series 6: Photographs, circa 1960-1999 (Box 2; 0.3 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Jewelry making
Women artists

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America

Occupations:

Goldsmiths -- North Carolina -- Raleigh
Jewelers -- North Carolina -- Raleigh

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1948-2005

0.1 linear feet (Box 1)

This series contains scattered biographical documents. Found here are awards and certificates; documents regarding Scherr's interactions with government entities, including a video-recorded Governor's Award interview on DVD; and family papers with photographs, news clippings, and brief resumes.

Box 1, Folder 1-2	Awards, 1960s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 3	Citizenship, 1960s-1990s
Box 1, Folder 4	Governor's Award Interview, 2005 <i>1 electronic disc (dvd)</i>
Box 1, Folder 5	Scherr Family: Mary Ann Scherr, circa 1965-2005
Box 1, Folder 6	Scherr Family: Samuel Scherr, 1948-2005
Box 1, Folder 7	Scherr Family: Randall Scherr, 1965-2005
Box 1, Folder 8	Scherr Family: Sydney Scherr, 1954-2005
Box 1, Folder 9	Scherr Family: Scott Scherr, 1952-2005
Box 1, Folder 10	Scherr Family: General, 1950s-2005

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1941-2007

5 folders (Box 1)

This series includes correspondence regarding special projects, exhibitions, and awards. Personal correspondence is comprised of congratulatory and anecdotal messages from friends and colleagues. Professional correspondence includes communications with museums, universities, and professional societies regarding art sales, submissions, and exhibitions.

Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence Regarding Body Monitors, 1973-1981
Box 1, Folder 12	Correspondence Regarding Torch Shield, 1978-1979
Box 1, Folder 13	Personal Correspondence, 1941-2000
Box 1, Folder 14-15	Professional Correspondence, 1962-2007

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Series 3: Writings, 1979-2005

2 folders (Box 1)

Writings include a book manuscript and academic paper by Scherr as well as student essays, academic papers, and an award nomination essay about the artist.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 16 | Writings By Mary Ann Scherr, 1979-2005 |
| Box 1, Folder 17 | Writings About Mary Ann Scherr, 1980-2002 |

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Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1947-2004

0.3 linear feet (Box 1)

Personal Business Records contains documents pertaining to Scherr's business activities, including news clippings, brochures, bulletins, collection records, correspondence, notes, illustrations, and images of art from projects with universities, professional groups, and museums. Most illustrations are photocopies, but there are some ink, graphite, and colored pencil original illustrations of jewelry as well.

Box 1, Folder 18-19	Academic Associations, 1980s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 20	ALCOA, 1974-1975
Box 1, Folder 21	Commissions, 1963-1999
Box 1, Folder 22	Design Projects, 1956-1992
Box 1, Folder 23	Industry Associations, 1976-2004
Box 1, Folder 24	Museum Collections, 1979-1998
Box 1, Folder 25	Patents and Legal, 1977-2004
Box 1, Folder 26	Permanent Collections, circa 1970-1984
Box 1, Folder 27	Project Illustrations: Books, 1955, 1977
Box 1, Folder 28	Project Illustrations: Jewelry, circa 1985
Box 1, Folder 29	Project Illustrations: Miscellaneous, 1947-1990s
Box 1, Folder 30	Smithsonian Institution, 1970s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 31	Smithsonian: Renwick Gallery, 1980s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 32	Smithsonian: Science/History, 1973-1979
Box 1, Folder 33	United States Steel, 1960s-1980s

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Series 5: Printed Material, 1950-2007

1.2 linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

This series includes photocopied book excerpts; a pack of craft-themed playing cards from the 2006 North Carolina Craft Exhibition; exhibition mailings and publicity materials; exhibition catalogs; professional journals and magazines in which Scherr is featured; clippings from newspapers, magazines, and web articles regarding the artist and her work; exhibition and event posters; two sales catalogs and one auction catalog; and printouts of web searches on the artist from a variety of years.

Box 1, Folder 34-35	Book Excerpts, 1975-2002
Box 1, Folder 36	Discover Craft NC Knowledge Cards, 2007
Box 1, Folder 37-39	Exhibition Announcements, Invitations, Brochures, 1963-2007
Box 1, Folder 40	Exhibition Catalogs, 1960s-1980s
Box 2, Folder 1-8	Exhibition Catalogs, 1961-2002
Box 2, Folder 9	Journals and Magazines, 1978-2000
Box 2, Folder 10-15	News Clippings, 1950-2000
Box 2, Folder 16-17	News Clippings on Body Monitors, circa 1970s-1990
Box 2, Folder 18	News Clippings on Cookie Jar, 1988
Box 2, Folder 19	News Clippings on Fashion/Style, 1956-1994
Box 2, Folder 20	News Clippings on Foreign Exhibitions, 1960s-1990s
Box 2, Folder 21-22	Posters, 1963-2000
Box 2, Folder 23	Sales and Auction Catalogs, 1982-1998
Box 2, Folder 24	Website Printouts, 1995-2002

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Series 6: Photographs, circa 1960-1999

0.3 linear feet (Box 2)

Photographs of Mary Ann Scherr include two formal portraits of the artist, one photograph of the artist at work, one photograph of the artist in her studio, and one photograph of the artist during her Today Show interview in 1985. Photographs of artwork consist of images of Scherr's jewelry on models or standing alone. Also found is one sheet of slides of artwork.

Box 2, Folder 25	Photographs of Mary Ann Scherr, 1963-1985
Box 2, Folder 26-30	Photographs of Artwork, circa 1960-1999
Box 2, Folder 31	Slides of Artwork, circa 1980

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Series 7: Unprocessed Addition to the Mary Ann Scherr Papers, circa 1941-2013

2 linear feet (Boxes 3-4)

Box 3-4

Unprocessed Addition, circa 1941-2013

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