



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Andres Serrano Papers,
1986-2013, in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

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

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Andres Serrano papers
Identifier:	AAA.serrandr
Date:	1986-2013
Extent:	2.8 Linear feet
Creator:	Serrano, Andres, 1950-
Language:	English
Summary:	The papers of photographer Andres Serrano measure 2.8 linear feet and date from 1986 to 2013. The collection documents Serrano's work as a photographer through correspondence, writings, professional files, personal business records, and printed materials.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The papers were donated by Andres Serrano in 2015.

Related Materials

Also at the Archives of American Art is an interview of Andres Serrano conducted by Frank H. Goodyear from July 29 to July 30, 2009 at Serrano's home in New York, N.Y. for the Archives of American Art.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2019.

Preferred Citation

Andres Serrano papers, 1986-2013. 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

Andres Serrano (1950-) is a photographer in New York, New York.

Serrano was born in New York City to Honduran and Afro-Cuban parents. He attended the Brooklyn Museum Art School from 1967 to 1969. In the late 1980s, he gained notoriety because of the controversy surrounding *Piss Christ*, a photograph depicting a crucifix submerged in Serrano's urine. The photograph was part of an exhibition, partially funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art. Along with Robert Mapplethorpe and other artists, Serrano became the target of conservative politicians who viewed the photograph as blasphemous resulting in pressure on the National Endowment for the Arts to stop using government money to fund artists deemed as offensive. Serrano's continued exploration of provocative subjects such as the Ku Klux Klan, the deceased, and human sexuality keeps him at the center of debates focused on the freedom of speech in art.

Serrano married artist Julie Ault in 1980. They separated in 1990 and divorced in 2005. He is now married to Irina Movmyga.

Scope and Contents

The papers of photographer Andres Serrano measure 2.8 linear feet and date from 1986 to 2013. The collection documents Serrano's work as a photographer through correspondence, writings, professional files, personal business records, and printed materials.

Correspondence is primarily professional and concerns photography projects, exhibitions, and events. Writings include artist statements and student papers by Serrano, manuscripts by Lucy R. Lippard and others, and interview transcripts. Professional files for various photography projects, including color photographs of portrait subjects, grant applications, and documentation for charities, travel, and exhibitions. Personal business records documenting Serrano's business dealings with galleries, legal issues, and documentation of artwork sales and consignments. Printed materials, including clippings, announcements, and periodicals document Serrano's career and issues such as free speech.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as five series.

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1987-2013 (Box 1; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 2: Writings, circa 1990-2008 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 3: Professional Files, 1987-2008 (Box 1-2; 1.0 linear feet)
- Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1986-2012 (Box 2-4; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Materials, 1987-2008 (Box 4; 0.2 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Hispanic American artists

Types of Materials:

Interviews

Names:

Lippard, Lucy R.

Occupations:

Photographers -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1987-2013

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1)

The majority of the series is professional correspondence pertaining to photography projects, exhibitions, and events. Some files may contain agreements and contracts. Much of the correspondence received in the late 1980s is related to the controversy surrounding the exhibition of Serrano's *Piss Christ*. Personal correspondence is with friends, family, artists, and romantic partners, and is located in the general files.

Box 1, Folder 1-3	General, 1987-1989 Includes correspondence with Julie Ault.
Box 1, Folder 4-6	General, 1991-1996
Box 1, Folder 7-9	General, 1999-2004
Box 1, Folder 10-13	General, 2005-2013
Box 1, Folder 14	General, undated
Box 1, Folder 15	Absolut Vodka Project, Regarding, 1998
Box 1, Folder 16	<i>Aperture Magazine</i> , 1994
Box 1, Folder 17	Australia, 1998 Includes correspondence with Kirkcaldy Davies Galleries.
Box 1, Folder 18	Central Michigan University, 1998
Box 1, Folder 19	Central and South America, 1997-1998
Box 1, Folder 20	Chicago, 1995-1999 Includes correspondence with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Randolph Street Gallery.
Box 1, Folder 21	Cuba, 1997-2002
Box 1, Folder 22	Exhibition in Philadelphia at Institute of Contemporary Art, Regarding, 1994
Box 1, Folder 23	Finland, 2000
Box 1, Folder 24	<i>i-D Magazine</i> , 1998

Box 1, Folder 25	Invitation to American Embassy in Norway, Regarding, 2000
Box 1, Folder 26-28	Italy, 1998-2000 Includes correspondence with Marco Noire Contemporary Art and Alfonso Artiaco.
Box 1, Folder 29	Magazines, 1999-2002
Box 1, Folder 30	Photology Gallery Regarding <i>America</i> Project, 2003
Box 1, Folder 31	Rubell Family Collection, 2000
Box 1, Folder 32	Spain and Portugal, 1999-2000
Box 1, Folder 33	Sweden, 1991-1998
Box 1, Folder 34	Thesis Advisor Request, 1998

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Series 2: Writings, circa 1990-2008

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Writings include manuscripts for articles by Lucy R. Lippard and others, astrological charts, interview transcripts, notes, statements, and student papers about Serrano.

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| Box 1, Folder 35 | Article Manuscripts, circa 1990
Includes "Andres Serrano: The Spirit and the Letter of Body Politics" by Lucy R. Lippard, "Wasting it in the Age of AIDS: John Miller's and Andres Serrano's 'Bad Boy' Sublimination" by G. Roger Denson, and an untitled manuscript by William Niederkorn. |
| Box 1, Folder 36 | Astrological Charts, 2007-2008 |
| Box 1, Folder 37 | Interview Transcripts, circa 1990
Includes drafts and transcripts of interviews with Serrano conducted by Christian Walker, Derek Guthrie of the New Art Examiner, Susan Morgan, and unidentified interviewers. |
| Box 1, Folder 38 | Notes, circa 1990
Includes notes from a trip to Miami. |
| Box 1, Folder 39 | Statements, 1989-1997
Includes statements on artwork, censorship, National Endowment for the Arts funding, as well as artist statements. |
| Box 1, Folder 40 | Student Papers About Serrano, 1991-1998 |

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Series 3: Professional Files, 1987-2008

1 Linear foot (Box 1-2)

Professional files contain material on projects including Serrano's celebrity photograph series for *Cut* magazine, advertising, charity work, and photo production, along with files for *The Morgue Series*, *Pieta II*, and Serrano's exhibition *Shit* (2008). Travel files include correspondence regarding travel arrangements, speaking engagements, and events related to exhibitions, publications, and other projects.

Box 1, Folder 41-42	General, circa 1997-2006
Box 1, Folder 43	Advertising, 2000-2002
Box 1, Folder 44	<i>Big Magazine</i> , Model Information, undated
Box 1, Folder 45	Celebrity Portraits, Digital Prints, 2002
Box 1, Folder 46	Celebrity Portraits, Information to be Filed, 1999-2003
Box 1, Folder 47	Celebrity Portraits, John Waters, circa 1998 Includes copies of Waters's portrait by Serrano and greeting cards from Waters.
Box 1, Folder 48	Celebrity Portraits, Letters to Celebrities, 1998-2003 Includes invoices to <i>Cut</i> magazine.
Box 1, Folder 49	Celebrity Portraits, Miscellaneous, 1998-1999
Box 1, Folder 50	Celebrity Portraits, Yoko Ono, 1999 Includes copies of Ono's portrait by Serrano for clearance authorization.
Box 2, Folder 1	Charities, Audrey Hepburn Children's Fund Artwork Donation, 2000
Box 2, Folder 2	Charities, Art for Arts Sake, 1998
Box 2, Folder 3	Charities, The Creative Coalition Event Supporting the First Amendment, 1997-1998
Box 2, Folder 4	Charities, Public A.R.T. Billboard Project, 1994 Includes writings by participants about the experience of creating an anti-drug billboard with Serrano.
Box 2, Folder 5	Charities, Various, 1998-2004
Box 2, Folder 6	Collector Mailing Lists, circa 1990
Box 2, Folder 7	<i>Cut</i> Magazine Project, 1998-2000

	Includes invoices, contract, and correspondence regarding the coordinator's performance during the project.
Box 2, Folder 8	Digital Prints, circa 2000
Box 2, Folder 9-10	Grant Applications and Related Records, 1987-1990 Includes applications to The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, New York Foundation for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Cintas Fellowship, and others.
Box 2, Folder 11	Inventory and Price Lists, circa 1997
Box 2, Folder 12	Letters of Recommendation by Serrano, 1999-2004
Box 2, Folder 13	<i>The Morgue Series</i> , circa 1992 Includes press, outline, and a writing by Serrano about his experience at a morgue.
Box 2, Folder 14	Name Tags, undated
Box 2, Folder 15	Photo Production Assistant, 1998 Contains documents regarding the hiring of Karolina Henke as Serrano's assistant.
Box 2, Folder 16	Photo Production, Backdrops, circa 2000
Box 2, Folder 17	Photo Production, Studio and Equipment Rentals, circa 2003
Box 2, Folder 18	<i>Pieta II</i> , Regarding Purchase by University of Alabama, 1992 Includes letters supporting Serrano and information regarding a dispute between Virginia Commonwealth University and the National Endowment for the Arts.
Box 2, Folder 19-22	<i>Piss Christ</i> Press, 1988-1989 Includes a statement by Serrano attached to letter from Ted Potter, Executive Director at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, to Representative Sidney Yates regarding a proposed amendment to the National Endowment for the Arts funding procedures.
Box 2, Folder 23	Resumes, circa 1990
Box 2, Folder 24	<i>Shit</i> (2008) Exhibition at Yvon Lambert Gallery, 2008
Box 2, Folder 25	Stationary Typesetting, 1993
Box 2, Folder 26-27	Travel, Atlanta, 1990-1999

Includes contracts, research material on the Ku Klux Klan, and writings and notes by Serrano about his experiences photographing the KKK.

Box 2, Folder 28	Travel, France, 1991-2000
Box 2, Folder 29	Travel, Japan, 1991-2000
Box 2, Folder 30	Travel, Los Angeles, 1990-1999
Box 2, Folder 31	Travel, New Orleans, 1991
Box 2, Folder 32	Travel, San Francisco, 1989-1990
Box 2, Folder 33	Travel, St. Louis, 1991

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Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1986-2012

0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 2-4)

The series includes financial records, legal files that include records for Serrano's lawsuit with Stux Gallery, and documentation of artwork sales, consignments, and loans through various galleries. Also included are consignment files for sales and purchases of antiques.

Box 2, Folder 34-36	Agreements, 1991-2006 Includes agreements for reproductions, donations, exhibitions, and other projects with <i>New York Magazine</i> , Hallmark Cards, the band Metallica, galleries, and others.
Box 2, Folder 37-40	Consignments, Antiques, 1995-2003
Box 2, Folder 41	Exhibition Licenses, 2007-2012
Box 2, Folder 42-43	Financial, General, 1992-1995
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Financial, Receipts, 1987-1994
Box 3, Folder 3	Financial, Statements for Photograph Processing, 1998
Box 3, Folder 4-5	Galleries, General, 2000-2005
Box 3, Folder 6	Galleries, Groninger Museum (Netherlands), 1996
Box 3, Folder 7	Galleries, National Gallery of Victoria, 1997-1998 Includes press concerning the vandalism of Serrano's artwork.
Box 3, Folder 8-9	Galleries, Paula Cooper Gallery, circa 2000
Box 3, Folder 10	Galleries, Yvon Lambert Gallery, 2003-2004
Box 3, Folder 11	Insurance Certificate, <i>Meat Weapon</i> for Edith C. Blum Art Institute, 1990
Box 3, Folder 12	Insurance, <i>Piss Christ</i> Damage, 1998
Box 3, Folder 13-14	Invoices, Magazine Work, 2000-2003 Includes material related to Serrano's work with <i>Newsweek</i> and the <i>New York Times</i> magazine.
Box 3, Folder 15	Lawsuit, Apartment Rental Dispute, 1986
Box 4, Folder 1-2	Lawsuit, Stux Gallery, 1991-1993

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Series 5: Printed Materials, 1987-2008

0.2 Linear feet (Box 4)

Printed materials consists of a poetry booklet signed by Puma Perl, brochures and programs, invitations, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and periodicals and clippings that mostly pertain to Serrano, art and free speech, and arts funding.

Box 4, Folder 3	Booklet, 2008 Contains a booklet of poetry by Puma Perl titled <i>Belinda and Her Friends</i> signed by Perl to Serrano.
Box 4, Folder 4	Brochures and Programs, 1991-1995
Box 4, Folder 5-8	Clippings, circa 1991-2007
Box 4, Folder 9	Event Invitations, circa 1993
Box 4, Folder 10	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1987-1994
Box 4, Folder 11	Periodicals, 1987-2005

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