



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Charles Fred Sexton papers

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
Scope and Contents.....	1
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Charles Fred Sexton papers
Identifier:	AAA.sextchar
Date:	1956-1992
Creator:	Sexton, Charles F.
Extent:	2.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 2000 by Carmel Sexton.

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.

Biographical / Historical

Painter, printmaker: San Francisco, Calif. Born 1956. Died 1991. Sexton was born in San Francisco and grew up in nearby Milpitas. He attended classes at San Jose City College while still in high school graduating in 1974. In 1978 he moved to San Francisco with Scott England, a fellow student at Ayer High School in Milpitas. Sexton worked for several years before enrolling at the San Francisco Art Institute where he met Jerome Caja. The two entered into an artistic friendship that lasted until Charles's death. Sexton and Caja made a pact that the ashes of the first to die would be used by the survivor as a paint ingredient. As a result, there are several portraits of Charles, one on a tray as if it were the head of John the Baptist. Interest in the unconventional and macabre was shared by the two. A symbolist artist, Sexton rarely explained his works except in his poems and other writings. Many of his works were based on dreams, those of his friends as well as his own dreams. He considered his best work to be "A conversation with God" it features a brown body with different colored heads facing a deity wearing a mask. His works also depicted the devastation of AIDS and its effects on society, not only the gay community. Sexton died of complications associated with AIDS.

Scope and Contents

Drawings, prints, works on paper, personal writings, photographs, memorabilia, juvenilia (early drawings, school pictures, etc.), and a Sexton portrait of Jerome Caja.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Names:

Caja, Jerome, 1958-1995

Occupations:

Artists -- California -- San Francisco