



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Roger Shimomura Papers, 1965-1990, in the Archives of American Art

Jean Fitzgerald and Eden Orelove

October 24, 2011

Archives of American Art
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Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Roger Shimomura papers
Identifier:	AAA.shimroge
Date:	1959-2014
Creator:	Shimomura, Roger, 1939-
Extent:	13.6 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	<p>The papers of painter, printmaker, performance artist, and teacher Roger Shimomura measure 13.6 linear feet and date from 1959 to 2014. Found within the papers are biographical materials, correspondence, writings, notes, printed material, one scrapbook, and photographs. There is a 11.0 linear foot unprocessed addition to this collection donated in 2019 that includes comprehensive project files with initial sketches, technical diagrams, budgets, materials lists, collaborator correspondence, communications with gallerists, curators and venues, and related press clippings; professional correspondence; writings including notebooks related to performance and painting developments, diaristic dated entries, and two experimental notebooks with "diary entries" for 'An American Diary' project; personal business records containing loan records and budgets for projects and exhibitions, and contracts for performance and film commissions; printed material; scrapbooks; and photographs of installations and events. Also included are 17 videocassettes (U-matic) concerning Kabuki theater performances and other performances. Materials date from circa 1959-2014.</p>

Administrative Information

Provenance

Roger Shimomura donated a portion of his papers in 1990, as part of the Archives of American Art's Northwest Asian-American project in Seattle. Shimomura donated the bulk of the material in 2019.

Processing Information

The Roger Shimomura papers were processed by Jean Fitzgerald in 2001. A finding aid for the collection was created by Eden Orelove in 2011.

Preferred Citation

Roger Shimomura papers, 1959-2014. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

Researchers interested in accessing audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

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Biographical Note

Roger Shimomura (b. 1939) is a Japanese American painter, printmaker, performance artist, and teacher who has worked primarily in Kansas since 1969.

Roger Shimomura was born in 1939 in Seattle, Washington. He was a third generation Japanese-American and received his B.A. in Graphic Design from the University of Washington in 1961, and a M.F.A. in Painting from Syracuse University in 1969. Shimomura spent two childhood years in one of 10 concentration camps for Japanese-Americans during WWII, and later served as an officer in the United States Army from 1962 to 1965. He was active in the Japanese-American redress movement in the 1970s. Since the 1970s, Shimomura's work has combined American popular imagery with the Japanese ukiyo-e tradition.

He has had over 125 solo exhibitions of paintings and prints, as well as presented his experimental theater pieces at such venues as the Franklin Furnace, New York City, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and The Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Shimomura has been a visiting artist and lectured on his work at more than 200 universities, art schools, and museums across the country. Shimomura began teaching at the University of Kansas' Department of Art in 1969 and worked there until his retirement in 2004. At that time he started the Shimomura Faculty Research Support Fund, an endowment to foster faculty research in the Department of Art. Throughout his career, Shimomura has had numerous exhibitions and experimental theater pieces on a national level. In 1999, the Seattle Urban League designated a scholarship in his name that has been awarded annually to a Seattle resident pursuing a career in art. In 2002, the College Art Association presented him with the "Artist Award for Most Distinguished Body of Work," for his 4 year, 12-museum national tour of the painting exhibition, "An American Diary." Shimomura continues to live and work in Kansas.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of painter, printmaker, performance artist, and teacher Roger Shimomura measure 13.6 linear feet and date from 1965 to 1990. Found within the papers are biographical materials, correspondence, writings, notes, printed material, one scrapbook, and photographs.

Biographical materials include a photograph of Shimomura and a resume. The bulk of the papers consist of correspondence files about exhibitions, grants, performances, lectures, and the Japanese-American redress movement. Correspondence is with friends, colleagues, galleries, and with universities and colleges. Correspondents include Frank Chin, Akiko Day, Jonathan R. T. Hughes, and Wayne Miller. Writings and notes include Shimomura's artist's statement, scripts to four plays, and one folder of miscellaneous notes. The papers also include clippings, exhibition announcements, catalogs and miscellaneous printed material.

A scrapbook contains clippings of articles that document Shimomura's career. Photographs are of artwork by other artists.

There is a 11.0 linear foot unprocessed addition to this collection donated in 2019 that includes comprehensive project files with initial sketches, technical diagrams, budgets, materials lists, collaborator correspondence, communications with gallerists, curators and venues, and related press clippings; professional correspondence; writings including notebooks related to performance and painting developments, diaristic dated entries, and two experimental notebooks with "diary entries" for 'An American Diary' project; personal business records containing loan records and budgets for projects and exhibitions, and contracts for performance and film commissions; printed material; scrapbooks; and photographs of installations and events. Also included are 17 video cassettes (U-matic) concerning Kabuki theater performances and other performances. Materials date from circa 1959-2014.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 7 series:

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1989-1990 (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1969-1990 (Boxes 1-3; 2.3 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1984, 1987-1989 (Box 3; 5 folders)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1975-1990 (Box 4; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 5: Scrapbook, 1975-1989 (Box 4; 1 folder)
- Series 6: Photographs, circa 1970s (Box 4; 1 folder)
- Series 7: Unprocessed Addition, circa 1959-2014 (Boxes 5-15; 11.0 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Study and teaching -- Kansas -- Lawrence
Asian American art
Asian American artists
Asian American painters
Asian American performance artists
Asian American printmakers
Japanese American art
Japanese American artists
Japanese American painting
Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- United States
Performance artists -- Kansas -- Lawrence
Printmakers -- Kansas -- Lawrence

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks
Scripts (documents)

Names:

Chin, Frank, 1940-
Day, Akiko
Hughes, Jonathan R. T.
Miller, Wayne

Occupations:

Painters -- Kansas -- Lawrence

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1989-1990

(Box 1; 1 folder)

Scope and Contents: Biographical material includes a photograph of Shimomura and a detailed resume.

Box 1, Folder 1 Biographical Material, 1989-1990

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1969-1990

(Boxes 1-3; 2.3 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is primarily with friends and colleagues including Frank Chin, Akiko Day, Jonathan R. T. Hughes, and Wayne Miller. Topics include the Japanese-American redress movement, lectures, performances, and exhibitions. A large portion of the correspondence is with galleries and concerns exhibitions and business matters. Other types of correspondence include grant applications and files about the exhibition "A Kansas Collection" (1986-1987) and the Seattle Transit Project (1986-1989).

Box 1, Folder 2	General Correspondence, undated
Box 1, Folder 3-20	General Correspondence, 1969-1990 (18 folders)
Box 1, Folder 21	Akiko Day, 1986-1989
Box 1, Folder 22-25	Frank Chin, 1978-1989 (4 folders)
Box 1, Folder 26	John Hughes, 1984-1990
Box 1, Folder 27	Wayne Miller, 1978-1990
Box 1, Folder 28-44	Miscellaneous Galleries, 1965-August 1983 (17 folders)
Box 2, Folder 1-5	Miscellaneous Galleries, September 1983-1987 (5 folders)
Box 2, Folder 6	"A Kansas Collection" Exhibition, 1986-1987
Box 2, Folder 7	Alberta College of Art, 1974-1976
Box 2, Folder 8	Center on Contemporary Art, 1989
Box 2, Folder 9	Cleveland State University, 1986-1988
Box 2, Folder 10	Denver Art Museum, 1974-1976
Box 2, Folder 11	Dobrick Gallery, 1976-1984
Box 2, Folder 12-13	Downtown Seattle Transit Project, 1986-1989 (2 folders)
Box 2, Folder 14	East Illinois University, 1986-1987
Box 2, Folder 15	Elaine Horwitch Gallery, 1976-1984

Box 2, Folder 16	Franel Gallery, Tokyo, 1975-1985
Box 2, Folder 17	Gallery Heian, Kyoto, 1976-1977
Box 2, Folder 18-19	Greg Kucera Gallery, 1984-1990 (2 folders)
Box 2, Folder 20	Iowa State University, 1988-1990
Box 2, Folder 21	Kansas City Art Institute, 1975
Box 2, Folder 22	Kiku Gallery, 1978-1981
Box 2, Folder 23	Locus, 1985-1988
Box 2, Folder 24	Loyola University, 1986-1989
Box 2, Folder 25	Memorial Union Gallery, 1975-1976
Box 2, Folder 26	Michael Wyman Gallery, 1974-1975
Box 2, Folder 27-28	Morgan Art Gallery, 1976-1988 (2 folders)
Box 2, Folder 29-30	Polly Friedlander Gallery, 1973-1982 (2 folders)
Box 2, Folder 31	Pyramid Galleries, Ltd., 1975-1987
Box 2, Folder 32-33	Sebastian-Moore Gallery, 1977-1986 (2 folders)
Box 2, Folder 34	University of California-Davis, 1976-1977
Box 2, Folder 35	University of Kansas, 1973-1978
Box 2, Folder 36	University of North Dakota, 1975
Box 2, Folder 37	Woodside-Braseth Galleries, 1980-1984
Box 2, Folder 38-40	Individual Sales and Inquiries, 1973-1989 (3 folders)
Box 2, Folder 41-43	Grant Applications, 1970-1975 (3 folders)
Box 3, Folder 1-11	Grant Applications, 1976-1989

(11 folders)

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Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1984, 1987-1989

(Box 3; 5 folders)

Scope and Contents: Writings include Shimomura's artist's statement, scripts to "The Funky Odori", "Trans-Siberian Excerpts" (1987), "Seven Kabuki Plays Project" (1987), and "California Sushi" (1989). A single folder of notes includes an illustrated list and a list of participators in the 1984 Asian-American History Theatre Summer Workshop.

Box 3, Folder 12	Artist's Statement, undated
Box 3, Folder 13	"The Funky Odori" Script, undated
Box 3, Folder 14	"Trans-Siberian Excerpts" Script, 1987
Box 3, Folder 15	"Seven Kabuki Plays" Project Script, 1987
Box 3, Folder 16	"California Sushi" Script, 1989
Box 3, Folder 17	Miscellaneous, 1984

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Series 5: Printed Material, 1975-1990

(Box 4; 0.2 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Printed material includes clippings, exhibition announcements, catalogs, and miscellaneous printed material.

Box 4, Folder 1	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, undated, 1975-1983
Box 4, Folder 2	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1984-1990
Box 4, Folder 3	Clippings, 1980-1985
Box 4, Folder 4	Clippings, 1986-1990
Box 4, Folder 5	Clippings, undated, 1975-1979
Box 4, Folder 6	Miscellaneous, undated, 1976

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Series 6: Scrapbook, 1975-1989

(Box 4; 1 folder)

Scope and Contents: The scrapbook series includes a compilation of photocopied articles documenting Shimomura's career from the mid 1970s until the late 1980s.

Box 4, Folder 7	Scrapbook, 1975-1989
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Series 7: Photographs, circa 1970s

(Box 4; 1 folder)

Scope and Contents: Photographs are of works of art by other artists.

Box 4, Folder 8	Works of Art by Others, circa 1970s
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Series 7: Unprocessed Addition, 1959-2014

Scope and Contents: The unprocessed addition includes comprehensive project files with initial sketches, technical diagrams, budgets, materials lists, collaborator correspondence, communications with gallerists, curators and venues, and related press clippings; professional correspondence; writings including notebooks related to performance and painting developments, diaristic dated entries, and two experimental notebooks with "diary entries" for 'An American Diary' project; personal business records containing loan records and budgets for projects and exhibitions, and contracts for performance and film commissions; printed material; scrapbooks; and photographs of installations and events. Also included are 17 videocassettes (U-matic) concerning Kabuki theater performances and other performances. Materials date from circa 1959-2014.

Box 5	Unprocessed Papers
Box 6	Unprocessed Papers
Box 7	Unprocessed Papers
Box 8	Unprocessed Papers
Box 9	Unprocessed Papers
Box 10	Unprocessed Papers
Box 11	Unprocessed Papers
Box 12	Unprocessed Papers
Box 13	Unprocessed Papers
Box 14	Unprocessed Papers
Box 15	Unprocessed Papers

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