



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Ramona Solberg Papers, 1926-2007, in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

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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/>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Ramona Solberg papers
Date:	1926-2007
Identifier:	AAA.solbramo
Creator:	Solberg, Ramona
Extent:	8.3 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of jeweler and educator Ramona Solberg measure 8.3 linear feet and date from 1926 to 2007. The collection documents Solberg's career through biographical materials including interview transcripts, correspondence between Solberg and friends and colleagues including Russell and Marjorie Day and Malathi Ramswarthy, organizational and professional files, printed materials, artwork including jewelry sketches, photographs of Solberg and her work, and motion picture films containing footage of artwork and travel.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Ramona Solberg papers were donated in 2003 by Ramona Solberg and in 2008 by Ramona Solberg's estate via Larry Metcalf, executor, as part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

Related Materials

Also in the Archives of American Art is an interview of Ramona Solberg conducted on March 23, 2001 by Vicki Halper for the Archives of American Art's Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, in Solberg's apartment, Seattle, W.A.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2022.

Preferred Citation

Ramona Solberg papers, 1926-2007. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

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 records in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Ramona Solberg (1921-2005) was a jeweler and educator in Seattle, W.A.

Solberg was born in Watertown, S.D. but moved to Seattle as a baby. She enlisted in the Women's Army Corps in 1943 and served until 1950. Over the course of her service, she had the opportunity to travel around the United States, as well as abroad to Heidelberg and Stuttgart. After leaving the Army, Solberg used her GI benefits to study jewelry making and textiles in Mexico at Bellas Artes and the University of Michoacan. She received both her Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts degrees from the University of Washington in 1951 and 1953. Solberg taught high school before becoming an associate professor at Washington State College from 1956 to 1967. She returned to her alma mater, the University of Washington, in 1967 to teach until her retirement in 1983. In 1972, she published, *Inventive Jewelry-Making*, a book for beginners. She became a fellow at the American Craft Council in 1975 and won the Washington State Governor's award in 1987.

Solberg died in 2005.

Scope and Contents

The papers of jeweler and educator Ramona Solberg measure 8.3 linear feet and date from 1926 to 2007. The collection documents Solberg's career through biographical materials including interview transcripts, correspondence, organizational and professional files, printed materials, artwork including jewelry sketches, photographs of Solberg and her work, and motion picture films containing footage of artwork and travel.

Biographical materials contain Solberg's Women's Army Corps records, student records, awards and diplomas, material for Solberg's memorial service, a Christmas newsletter by Solberg, interview transcripts and notes, and a detailed chronology of Solberg's life events and career accomplishments.

Correspondence is between Solberg, various friends and colleagues including Russell and Marjorie Day, Malathi Ramswarthy, and others, and with her nephew's partner Sharon Dwinnell-Smith, who served as the point of contact during Solberg's hospitalization in 2004 and after her death in 2005.

A set of organizational files includes correspondence, agreements, printed and photographic materials, sales information, loan forms, and other material regarding exhibitions, workshops, and other events. Solberg's professional files include annotated calendars, workshop material, files containing personal letters and material concerning a film project on Solberg by Jack Stoops, drafts and photographs for Solberg's book *Inventive Jewelry-Making*, instructional material, research and notes on beads, a few exhibition files, and teaching and travel files.

Printed materials include booklets, brochures and pamphlets, clippings, announcements and catalogs for Solberg's exhibitions, flyers, and a poster. Artwork includes Solberg's childhood drawings, jewelry sketches, and a few other items. Photographic materials include photos of Solberg, travel, and works of art, in addition to approximately 40 motion picture film strips containing footage of artwork and travel.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 7 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1939-2007 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1, OV 9)
 - Series 2: Correspondence, 1966-2007 (0.7 linear feet; Box 1)
 - Series 3: Organizational Records, 1955-2007 (1.0 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
 - Series 4: Professional Files, circa 1955-2006 (2.0 linear feet; Boxes 2-4, OV 10)
 - Series 5: Printed Materials, circa 1957-2006 (0.5 linear feet; Boxes 4-5)
 - Series 6: Artwork, 1926-circa 2000 (0.2 linear feet; Box 5, OV 11)
 - Series 7: Photographic Materials and Motion Picture Film, circa 1940-circa 1990s (3.0 linear feet; Boxes 5-8, FC12)
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Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Decorative arts
United States. Army. Women's Army Corps
Women artists

Names:

Day, Marjorie
Day, Russell
Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Ramswathy, Malathi
Stoops, Jack D.

Occupations:

Jewelers -- Washington (State)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1939-2007

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 9)

Scope and Contents: The series contains awards and certificates, Christmas newsletters by Solberg updating friends on her year, curriculum vitae, diplomas, interview transcripts and notes for an interview conducted by L. Harrington and for an interview titled "Ethnic Gem Hunt." Also found here are planning and printed materials for Solberg's memorial service, passports and vaccination cards, records from Solberg's service in the Women's Army Corps during the 1940s, student records from the University of Washington and other institutions Solberg attended, and a chronology of Solberg's life and career. The chronology includes information on Solberg's education, committees, films and books, travel, lectures and exhibitions, and donations listed by year.

Box 1, Folder 1	Army Records, 1943-1949
Box 1, Folder 2	Awards and Certificates, 1958-2004 Notes: Includes related correspondence and printed materials.
Oversize 9	Awards and Certificates, circa 1982
Box 1, Folder 3	Christmas Newsletters by Solberg, 1978-2005
Box 1, Folder 4	Chronology of Solberg's Life and Career, 2007
Box 1, Folder 5	Curriculum Vitae, circa 1965-circa 1980
Box 1, Folder 6	Diplomas, 1939-1957
Box 1, Folder 7	Interview Transcripts and Notes, circa 1970s Notes: Includes transcript of "Ethnic Gem Hunt" and notes for an interview of Solberg by L. Harrington.
Box 1, Folder 8	Memorial at Bellevue Art Museum, 2005
Box 1, Folder 9	Passports and Vaccination Cards, 1980-2000
Box 1, Folder 10	Student Records from University of Arizona, Paper on Beads, 1964
Box 1, Folder 11	Student Records, General, 1950-1963

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1966-2007

0.7 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: A large portion of the correspondence is between Sharon Dwinnell-Smith, the partner of Solberg's nephew John, and Solberg's friends and colleagues. Dwinnell-Smith was the point of contact during Solberg's stay at the hospital in 2004 and after her death in 2005. Correspondents include Russell and Marjorie Day, John Heffley, Maple Young, Malathi Ramswathy, Ron Ho, and others. General correspondence primarily contains professional exchanges between Solberg and various galleries, museums, and other organizations.

Box 1, Folder 12	Day, Russell and Marjorie, 1998-2006
Box 1, Folder 13	Dwinnell-Smith, Sharon and John Heffley, 1988-2007
Box 1, Folder 14	Dwinnell-Smith, Sharon and Maple Young, 2005-2007
Box 1, Folder 15	Notebook of Email Correspondence Between Dwinnell-Smith and Solberg's Friends Regarding Solberg's Hospital Stay, 2004
Box 1, Folder 16-17	General, 1966-2005
Box 1, Folder 18	Ramswathy, Malathi, 2004-2005
Box 1, Folder 19-21	Regarding Solberg After Her Death, 2005-2006

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Series 3: Organizational Records, 1955-2007

1 Linear foot (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Series includes correspondence, agreements, printed materials, photographic materials, sales information, and loan forms, as well as material regarding exhibitions, workshops, and other professional activities performed by Solberg over her long career as an artist and educator.

Arrangement: Original arrangement of the donor, in alphabetical order by organization name, has been retained.

Box 1, Folder 22-23	American Craft Council, 1957-2004
Box 1, Folder 24	Bellevue Art Museum, 1978-2004
Box 1, Folder 25	Bellevue Community College, 1980
Box 1, Folder 26	Boise State College, 1972-1973
Box 1, Folder 27	Cheney Cowles Gallery, 1962-1982
Box 1, Folder 28	Craft Alliance Gallery, 1978-2002
Box 1, Folder 29	De Cordova Museum, 1974
Box 1, Folder 30	Design Center Philippines, 1977
Box 1, Folder 31	Downtown Bon National Gallery, 1981
Box 1, Folder 32	The Elements, 1976-1981
Box 1, Folder 33	Facere Jewelry Art Gallery, 1990-2006
Box 2, Folder 1	Factory of Visual Art, 1976-1979
Box 2, Folder 2	Florida Society of Goldsmiths, 2000-2002
Box 2, Folder 3	Friends of the Crafts, 1969-1983
Box 2, Folder 4	Gallery One, 1977-2006
Box 2, Folder 5	Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, 1981
Box 2, Folder 6	Henry Art Gallery, 1957-1996
Box 2, Folder 7	Lamda Rho, 1982-2006
Box 2, Folder 8	Mobilia Gallery, 1996-2001

Box 2, Folder 9	Northwest Bead Society, 1975-2003
Box 2, Folder 10	Northwest Designer Craftsmen, 1981-2000
Box 2, Folder 11	OXOXO Gallery, 2000
Box 2, Folder 12	Penland School of Crafts, 1980-2000
Box 2, Folder 13	Phrateres Alumnae, 1999-2003
Box 2, Folder 14	Portland Organizations (Oregon), 1973-1978
Box 2, Folder 15	Pratt Fine Arts Center, 1990-2006
Box 2, Folder 16	Renwick Gallery, 1981-2003
Box 2, Folder 17	S, Miscellaneous Organizations, circa 1990-2005
Box 2, Folder 18	Seattle Art Museum, 1962-2000
Box 2, Folder 19	Seattle Metals Guild, 2000-2007
Box 2, Folder 20	Smithsonian Institution, 1990-2005
Box 2, Folder 21	Sybaris Gallery, 1993-2001
Box 2, Folder 22	Tacoma Art Museum, 1989-2005
Box 2, Folder 23	Washington Art Association, 1955-1958
Box 2, Folder 24	Whatcom Museum of History and Art, 1970-1978
Box 2, Folder 25	World Crafts Council, 1973-1978

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Series 4: Professional Files, circa 1955-2006

2 Linear feet (Boxes 2-4, OV 10)

Scope and Contents: The series includes 22 annotated calendars documenting Solberg's appointments and activities for nearly 30 years, artist statements, donations of artwork, jury panel files, lecture and workshop material, letters of recommendation written by Solberg, material on Solberg collected by Vicki Halper, teaching material, and 2 books of weaving samples.

Also included is a file for Jack Stoops Film Productions containing project material for a film on Solberg and personal correspondence between Stoops, Solberg, and Dwinnell-Smith; drafts, photographs, a proposal, correspondence, and other related material for Solberg's book *Inventive Jewelry-Making*; and a general business file containing price lists, receipts, and other material. There are files for the exhibitions *Findings: The Jewelry of Ramona Solberg, Objects: USA*, and the Philadelphia Craft Show, and research material on beads that includes a paper by Solberg, writings on jewelry as personal adornment, and notes on beads of different cultures. Instructional materials consist of instructions on jewelry making along with illustrations. Travel files contain printed material on local arts, travel ephemera, and some photographs.

Box 2, Folder 26-29	Annotated Calendars, 1977-2005 Notes: 22 calendars
Box 2, Folder 30	Artist Statements, circa 1990s
Box 2, Folder 31	Donations, General, 1975-2005
Box 2, Folder 32	Donations, Tacoma Art Museum, 1990-2006
Box 2, Folder 33	Donations, Wing Luke Museum, 1981-2001
Box 2, Folder 34	Exhibition, Findings: The Jewelry of Ramona Solberg (2001), 2000-2002
Box 2, Folder 35	Exhibition, Objects: USA (1969), 1969-1977
Box 2, Folder 36	Exhibition, Philadelphia Craft Show (1977), 1977
Box 2, Folder 37	General Business Records, circa 1975-2001
Box 2, Folder 38-39	Instructional Material, circa 1970s-circa 1990s
Box 2, Folder 40	Inventive Jewelry-Making Book, circa 1970s
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Inventive Jewelry-Making Book, circa 1970s Notes: Includes published copy with inscription written by Solberg to "Ron."
Oversize 10	Inventive Jewelry-Making Book, circa 1970s
Box 3, Folder 3	Jack Stoops Film Productions, 1971-2006

Box 3, Folder 4	Jury Panels, 1971-1981
Box 3, Folder 5	Lecture and Workshop Material, 1972-2002
Box 3, Folder 6	Letters of Recommendation by Solberg, 1970-2004
Box 3, Folder 7-9	Material on Solberg Collected by Vicki Halper, circa 1955-circa 2000
Box 3, Folder 10-13	Publicity, 1955-2005
Box 3, Folder 14	Research Material on Beads, 1960s-1970s
Box 3, Folder 15-16	Teaching, Course Material, 1970s
Box 3, Folder 17-19	Teaching, Professional Record Binder, circa 1974
Box 3, Folder 20	Teaching, University of Washington, 1969-1980
Box 3, Folder 21	Teaching, General, 1965-circa 1995
Box 4, Folder 1-8	Travel Files, circa 1973-2004
Box 4, Folder 9	Travel Group Information, circa 1970s
Box 4, Folder 10-12	Weaving Sample Books, circa 1970s Notes: 2 books

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Series 5: Printed Materials, circa 1957-2006

0.5 Linear feet (Boxes 4-5)

Scope and Contents: Booklets, brochures and pamphlets, clippings, announcements and catalogs for Solberg's exhibitions, flyers, and a poster are found in this series.

Box 4, Folder 13-14	Booklets, circa 1957-circa 1980
Box 4, Folder 15	Brochures and Pamphlets, 1964-1994
Box 4, Folder 16-18	Clippings, circa 1970s-circa 1990s
Box 4, Folder 19	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Solberg, circa 1970-2001
Box 5, Folder 1-3	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Solberg, 1961-2002
Box 5, Folder 4	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Others, 1972-2006
Box 5, Folder 5	Flyers, circa 1990s
Box 5, Folder 6	Poster, 1978

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Series 6: Artwork, 1926-circa 2000

0.2 Linear feet (Box 5, OV 11)

Scope and Contents: The series contains childhood drawings and sketches of jewelry designs by Solberg, colored papers with camel patterns, and silhouette images of jewelry and tools.

Box 5, Folder 7	Camel Design on Color Paper, circa 1980s
Box 5, Folder 8	Childhood Drawings by Solberg, 1926
Box 5, Folder 9	Sketches of Jewelry Designs, circa 1980-circa 2000
Oversize 11	Sketches of Jewelry Designs, circa 1980-circa 2000
Box 5, Folder 10	Silhouette Images of Jewelry and Tools, circa 1980s

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Series 7: Photographic Materials and Motion Picture Film, circa 1940-circa 1990s

3 Linear feet (Boxes 5-8, FC 12)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of photographic prints, digital prints, negatives and transparencies, motion picture film strips, and a large quantity of slides. The majority of the series documents Solberg's extensive travels and works of art by Solberg and other craft artists. Some sets of slides were collected by Solberg for use during talks and lectures, as well as for her book *Inventive Jewelry-Making* and other projects. Other photographic materials are personal snapshots, portraits of Solberg, Solberg in her studio, and Solberg in her Women's Army Corps uniform. Also included in the series are approximately 40 film strips containing footage of travel in various countries and works of art.

Box 5, Folder 11	Solberg, circa 1940-circa 1995
Box 5, Folder 12	Solberg in Studio, 1970s
Box 5, Folder 13-14	Personal Snapshots, circa 1945-circa 1985
Box 5, Folder 15	Travel, circa 1947-circa 1995
Box 7, Folder 1-16	Travel, circa 1970s-circa 1980s Notes: The folder numbers correspond with the slide boxes contained in box 7.
Box 5, Folder 16	Travel, List from Box 7, Folder 3, circa 1980s
Box 5, Folder 17	Works of Art, Costumes, 1970s-1980s
Box 5, Folder 18	Works of Art for Talk on Travel Influence and Gold / Talk on Glass, 1970s-1980s
Box 5, Folder 19-25	Works of Art, circa 1970s-circa 1990s
Box 6, Folder 1-14	Works of Art, circa 1970s-circa 1990s
Box 8, Folder 1-18	Works of Art, circa 1970s-circa 1980s Notes: The folder numbers correspond with the slide boxes contained in box 8.
Box 6, Folder 15	Motion Picture Film Strips, Label Images, circa 1970s Notes: The original film strips were combined to form a single film reel that can be found in FC 12.
Item FC 12	Motion Picture Film Strips, circa 1970s 1 Film reel (16mm) Notes: 47 tiny reels were compiled together to create this film reel. Titles include: Pan - Guat-Neckl f11 second choice - masked dancer baroque church Peru children's stich 13-14 Milta- Wall C/U Chichi festival viola's (lighter) dancing dogs out-takes people pot weaving peru 1516 tile bench alamera

clay turkey pre-col? (trim) 2 candleabra 1-2 folk mus backstrad
wearer guateman bolivian children's stich 13-14 dyes lady with
uuliaca out pan lady with lambs out take c/u girl moon folk mus.
3-4 2 p. c. pots - mus of art shot out mola p61 pre col back
strad lady clay 13-14 fragment pre-colomb. Strid fabric 13-14
teo teo long view 2an 5/6 gods eye 3-d peruvian ---CUTOFF
peru gourd out action 4D sideways model house with figure mex
bull part peru glazed 15 lac plate 11-12 folk mus mitla temp
det. stone p.c. jaguar Ron's red rug 200m wooden toy buck
horse + rider 21 det.candle 1-2 folk mus spiked pot panama
hat factory 11-12 dancer-yellow skirt ng. llamas pile of clay pots
24 p's slide mkt - colored yarns out 2nd take choc-mul c/u clay
animals 5/6 crosses - h.g. out takes aros of anzrero straw hats
small p. mache mask red shot mk blankets col degus as ? 5/6
black seive

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