



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Stable Gallery Records, 1916-1999, bulk 1953-1970, in the Archives of American Art

Catherine S. Gaines

Funding for the digitization of this collection
was provided by the Lichtenstein Foundation.

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Stable Gallery records
Identifier:	AAA.stabgall
Date:	1916-1999 (bulk 1953-1970)
Creator:	Stable Gallery
Extent:	2.9 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English.
Summary:	<p>The Stable Gallery records measure 2.9 linear feet and are dated 1916-1999 (bulk 1953-1970). The gallery was known for its representation of the New York School. Records consist mainly of artist files containing biographical notes, correspondence, price lists, sales and payment information, printed matter, and photographs. A small number of gallery administrative and financial records are included, along with printed matter, photographs, and personal papers and estate records of gallery founder and owner Eleanor Ward. There are also reminiscences by gallery owner Eleanor Ward and her assistant Alan Groh, a sound cassette recording of Eleanor Ward, and a videoreel (1/2 inch) documentary of a 1973 Sotheby auction of works from the Robert C. Scull collection.</p>

Administrative Information

Provenance

The Stable Gallery records were the gift of the Estate of Eleanor Ward. In 1984, artist files were received from Alan Groh, executor of Ward's estate and her assistant at the Stable Gallery. Additional records were donated in 1997 by Buzz Miller on behalf of the Estate of Eleanor Ward; Mr. Miller was Alan Groh's partner and executor of his estate. Another addition was received in 1999 from Paul Gardner, executor of the Estate of Buzz Miller. A final addition of 0.2 linear feet was donated in 2019 by Nancy Berner, Alan Groh's niece.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with Eleanor Ward conducted by Paul Cummings, February 8, 1972.

Alternative Forms Available

The bulk of the collection was digitized in 2016 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website. Materials which have not been scanned include blank pages, blank versos of photographs, and duplicates. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned. Some of the recordings in this collection have been copied for research access and digital copies are available in the Archives of American Art offices.

Processing Information

Materials received a preliminary level of processing at some point after donation and were microfilmed onto reels 5821-5823. All materials were merged and described by Catherine S. Gaines in 2002. In 2007, the motion picture film material was preserved and transferred with funding provided by the Smithsonian Women's Committee. All materials were prepared for digitization by Judy Ng in 2016 and scanned with funding provided by the Lichtenstein Foundation. The 2019 addition was processed by Ryan Evans in 2019.

Preferred Citation

Stable Gallery records, 1916-1999, bulk 1953-1970. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

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 archival audiovisual recordings with no duplicate access copy requires advance notice.

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Historical Note

Established in 1953 by Eleanor Ward (1911-1984), the Stable Gallery derived its name from its first home, a former livery stable on Seventh Avenue at West 58th Street, New York City. Long interested in art and recognized for her "good taste" and "flair," Mrs. Ward had vaguely considered the idea of opening her own gallery for some time and received encouragement from Christian Dior, with whom she had worked in Paris. In 1952, opportunity arose to lease a suitable building that would later become a gallery. At first, Ward and a friend sold mannequins and made the large, empty space available for fashion photography; in December, she operated a Christmas boutique for a few weeks.

The Stable Gallery opened in 1953 with an exhibition of work by Ward's friend Mike Mishke, a commercial artist. She then arranged for the Stable Gallery to host a sequel to the 1951 *Ninth Street Show* (the initial show, organized by the Club with financial assistance from Leo Castelli, was held in an empty store on Ninth Street). The *New York Artists Annual*, better known as the *Stable Annual*, was selected by the artists themselves; this well-attended, widely-reviewed, and influential exhibition continued until 1957. Participating artists included Philip Guston, Franz Kline, Willem deKooning, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, Robert Rauschenberg, Ad Reinhardt, Richard Stankiewicz, and Jack Tworokov.

The Stable Gallery soon became a gathering place for artists, including some not in Stable's "stable." Over the years, the Stable Gallery presented the first one-man shows of Robert Indiana, Cy Twombly, and Andy Warhol. Among the artists closely associated with the gallery were: Joseph Cornell, Edward Dugmore, John Ferren, Alex Katz, Conrad Marca-Relli, Marisol, Joan Mitchell, Isamu Noguchi, Richard Stankiewicz, Cy Twombly, Jack Tworokov, and Wilfred Zogbaum. The gallery was known for dramatic, somewhat theatrical installations, and occasionally presented exhibitions beyond its usual focus (photographs by Hans Namuth and pre-Columbian sculpture, which personally interested Ward).

When the block where the Stable Gallery stood was razed in 1960 to make way for a high rise apartment building, Mrs. Ward moved her gallery to 33 East 74th Street, where she was able to maintain an apartment

for herself upstairs. Quite abruptly, Ward closed the Stable Gallery in 1970, noting changes in the art scene, growing commercialization, and a loss of enthusiasm that made the gallery merely a business for her. Alan Groh (1923-1996), who started as Eleanor Ward's assistant in 1956 and was eventually named gallery director, became director of A. M. Sachs Gallery. Mrs. Ward traveled widely and acted as an art consultant to selected clients.

Scope and Content Note

The Stable Gallery records measure 2.9 linear feet and are dated 1916-1999 (bulk 1953-1970). The gallery was known for its representation of the New York School. Records consist mainly of artist files containing biographical notes, correspondence, price lists, sales and payment information, printed matter, and photographs. A small number of gallery administrative and financial records are included, along with printed matter, photographs, personal papers, and estate records of gallery founder and owner Eleanor Ward. There are also reminiscences by gallery owner Eleanor Ward and her assistant Alan Groh, a sound cassette recording of Eleanor Ward, and a videoreel (1/2 inch) documentary of a 1973 Sotheby auction of works from the Robert C. Scull collection.

The Stable Gallery's administrative records includes both general correspondence and copious letters from Eleanor Ward to Alan Groh, her assistant regarding gallery business, lists, floor plans, financial records, printed matter, and photographs of unidentified artwork and exhibition installations. There are also reminiscences by gallery owner Eleanor Ward and Alan Groh, a cassette recording of Eleanor Ward, and a film recording of a 1973 Sotheby auction of works from the Robert C. Scull collection. Additional Stable Gallery administrative and financial information, as well as related printed matter is included with the artist files.

Artist files contain biographical notes, correspondence, price lists, printed matter, and photographs of artists and artwork. The correspondence includes memoranda regarding payments to artists and sales information. Among the printed matter is documentation of the Stable Gallery and other exhibitions, reviews, and miscellaneous articles. Unfortunately, no records about the famous Stable Annuals held between 1953 and 1957 survive.

Artwork consists of 4 sketchbooks and loose sheets with charcoal drawings by unidentified artist(s).

The Eleanor Ward papers include miscellaneous personal papers and records concerning her estate. Photographs in the series are of Eleanor Ward, friends and family, parties, and the interior and exterior of Ward's Connecticut house.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as four series:

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Administrative Records, 1955-1986 (0.5 linear feet; Boxes 1, 4, 5)
- Series 2: Artist Files, 1952-1997 (1.6 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 3: Artwork, circa 1955-1970 (3 folders; Box 4)
- Series 4: Eleanor Ward Papers, 1916-1999 (0.5 linear feet; Boxes 2-4, 5)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art, Modern -- 20th century -- Exhibitions
Art, Modern -- 20th century -- New York (State) -- New York
New York school of art

Types of Materials:

Drawings
Photographs
Sketchbooks
Sound recordings
Video recordings

Names:

Groh, Alan, 1923-1996
New York School of poets and painters
Scull, Robert, 1917-1986 -- Art collections
Ward, Eleanor, 1912-1984

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- New York (State)

Container Listing

Series 1: Administrative , 1955-1986

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1, 4)

Scope and Contents: The Stable Gallery's administrative records includes both general correspondence and correspondence between Eleanor Ward and her assistant Alan Groh regarding gallery matters from abroad, lists, floor plans, and printed matter of a general nature, or ones concerning multiple artists. Financial material includes banking and investment records, miscellaneous sales, and invoices. Photographic material is of exhibition installations and unidentified artwork. There are also reminiscences by gallery owner Eleanor Ward and Alan Groh, a sound cassette recording of Eleanor Ward, and a videoreel (1/2 inch) documentary of a 1973 Sotheby auction of works from the Robert C. Scull collection. Additional Stable Gallery administrative and financial information, as well as related printed matter are included with the artist files.

Arrangement: Materials are arranged by document type.

Available: This series has been scanned in its entirety, with the exception of the 2019 addition.

Formats:

Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence, Miscellaneous, 1961-1970
Box 5, Folder 1	Correspondence, Miscellaneous, circa 1957-1970
Box 5, Folder 2-3	Correspondence, Eleanor Ward to Alan Groh, circa 1957-1960
Box 1, Folder 2	<p>Documentary, Auction, 1973 1 Videoreels (1/2 inch) (Original) 2 Videocassettes (Digital Betacam) (Duplicate) 1 Videocassettes (VHS) (Duplicate)</p> <p>Notes: <i>Anthology of the New York Art Scene</i> (work in progress). A selection of fifty works from the collection of Robert C. Scull at auction, Parke-Bernet Galleries. A documentary showing some of the contemporary artworks sold, narrated by Rene Metsch. Artists whose works are represented include Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Robert Indiana. Includes an interview with Eleanor Ward of the Stable Gallery. Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 1.</p>
Box 5, Folder 4	Floor Plans, Gallery and Apartment, circa 1950s
Box 1, Folder 3	<p>Interview (Eleanor Ward), circa 1969-1970 1 Sound cassette (Original)</p> <p>Notes: Ward reminiscing about the Stable Gallery and discussing with Rupert and Bonnie [?] the possibility of writing a book about her experiences as an art dealer.</p>
Box 1, Folder 4	Writings, Interview Transcript (E. Ward with Paul Cummings for the Archives of American Art), 1972, 1986

Box 1, Folder 5	Writings, Memoir by Alan Groh (with Groh's résumé), circa 1971-1973
Box 1, Folder 6	Writings, Notes and Lists, circa 1955-1975
Box 1, Folder 7	Financial Records (banking, investments, miscellaneous sales, and invoices), 1956-1971
Box 1, Folder 8	Printed Material, Clippings, 1958-1988
Box 1, Folder 9	Photographs, Graham Foundation Exhibition, circa 1955-1970
Box 1, Folder 10	Photographs, Unidentified Exhibitions, circa 1961
Box 1, Folder 11	Photographs, Unidentified Sculpture, circa 1955-1970
Box 1, Folder 12	Negatives, Unidentified Artwork, circa 1955-1970
Box 4, Folder 1	Oversized Auction Recordings from Box 1, Folder 2, 1973

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Series 2: Artist Files, 1952-1997

1.6 Linear feet (Box 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Artist files contain various combinations of biographical notes, correspondence, price lists, printed matter, and photographs of artwork. The correspondence includes memoranda regarding payments to artists and sales information. Among the printed matter is documentation of the Stable Gallery and other exhibitions, reviews, and miscellaneous articles. There are no files for some artists (e.g. Louise Bourgeois, Hans Namuth, Robert Rauschenberg, Jon Schueler) who are known to have exhibited with the gallery. A few of the artists for whom files exist may not have been associated with the Stable Gallery, but perhaps were of interest as potential gallery artists or for Ward's private collection. In a small number of instances, material post-dating the closing of Stable Gallery has been added.

Arrangement: Materials are arranged alphabetically by artist name.

Available Formats: The bulk of this series has been scanned. In some cases exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned.

Box 1, Folder 13	Anderson, Jeremy R., 1954-1957
Box 1, Folder 14	Biala, Janice, circa 1970
Box 1, Folder 15	Birmelin, Robert, 1963-1967
Box 1, Folder 16	Boghosian, Varujan, 1963-1965
Box 1, Folder 17	Borgrave, Elie, 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 18	Briggs, Ernest, 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 19	Brooks, James, circa 1957
Box 1, Folder 20	Brustlein, Daniel, 1962
Box 1, Folder 21	Bultman, Fritz, 1954-1958
Box 1, Folder 22	Burlin, Paul, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 23	Burri, Alberto, 1953-1957
Box 1, Folder 24	Cage, John, 1958
Box 1, Folder 25	Carone, Nicholas, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 26	Cavallon, Giorgio, 1954-1960
Box 1, Folder 27	Chase, Janet, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 28	Cornell, Joseph, 1954-1968

Box 1, Folder 29	Cox, Jan, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 30	de Kooning, Elaine, 1955-1956
Box 1, Folder 31	Diebenkorn, Richard, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 32	Downing, Thomas, 1963-1965
Box 1, Folder 33	Dugmore, Edward , 1953-1958 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 1, Folder 34	Engman, Robert, 1960-1963
Box 1, Folder 35	Ernesto , 1957 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 1, Folder 36	Ferren, John , 1954-1959
Box 1, Folder 37	Ferren, John (photographs), circa 1955-1960 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 1, Folder 38	Fiore, Joe, 1954-1956
Box 1, Folder 39	Garrigues, Ron, 1963-1964
Box 1, Folder 40	Goodnough, Robert , circa 1955-1960 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 1, Folder 41	Graham, John D., 1961
Box 1, Folder 42	Heller, Dorothy, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 43	Hyde, Solomon, circa 1955-1960
Box 1, Folder 44	Indiana, Robert (biographical materials), 1962-1968
Box 1, Folder 45	Indiana, Robert (correspondence), circa 1962-1968
Box 1, Folder 46	Indiana, Robert (correspondence), 1962-1963
Box 1, Folder 47	Indiana, Robert (correspondence), 1964-1965
Box 1, Folder 48	Indiana, Robert (correspondence), 1966
Box 1, Folder 49	Indiana, Robert (correspondence), 1967
Box 1, Folder 50	Indiana, Robert (correspondence), 1968

Box 1, Folder 51	Indiana, Robert (contract, writings, notes), 1965
Box 2, Folder 1	Indiana, Robert (printed material, photographs), 1962-1968
Box 2, Folder 2	Insley, Robert, 1968
Box 2, Folder 3	Katz, Alex , 1960-1962
Box 2, Folder 4	Katz, Alex (photographs), circa 1960-1962 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 2, Folder 5	Krasner, Lee, circa 1955-1960
Box 2, Folder 6	Loew, Michael, circa 1955-1960
Box 2, Folder 7	Marca-Relli, Conrad , 1954-1959
Box 2, Folder 8	Marca-Relli, Conrad (photographic material), circa 1954-1959
Box 2, Folder 9	Marisol, 1961-1965
Box 2, Folder 10	Mitchell, Fred, 1955-1957
Box 2, Folder 11	Mitchell, Joan (biographical material), 1959-1962
Box 2, Folder 12	Mitchell, Joan (correspondence), circa 1954-1979
Box 2, Folder 13	Mitchell, Joan (correspondence), 1954-1962 Image(s): Mitchell, Joan (correspondence): 1954-1967, 1979
Box 2, Folder 14	Mitchell, Joan (correspondence), 1963-1979
Box 2, Folder 15	Mitchell, Joan (clippings), circa 1957-1965
Box 2, Folder 16	Mitchell, Joan (printed material), 1952-1965
Box 2, Folder 17	Mitchell, Joan (notes, photographs), circa 1955-1975 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 2, Folder 18	Morris, Kyle, 1956-1958
Box 2, Folder 19	Motherwell, Robert, 1955
Box 2, Folder 20	Nesbitt, Lowell, 1967, 1970
Box 2, Folder 21	Noguchi, Isamu, 1954-1961
Box 2, Folder 22	Opper, John, 1961

Box 2, Folder 23	Ortman, George, 1957-1961
Box 2, Folder 24	Pace, Stephen, circa 1955-1960
Box 2, Folder 25	Plate, Walter, 1956-1959
Box 2, Folder 26	Reynal, Jeanne , 1956-1957 Notes: Includes photographs of Jain temple, the artist, and exhibition installation.
Box 2, Folder 27	Sihvonen, Oli, 1963-1964
Box 2, Folder 28	Stankiewicz, Richard, 1959-1969, 1982
Box 2, Folder 29	Thek, Paul, 1970, 1990
Box 2, Folder 30	Twombly, Cy, 1953-1958 Notes: Includes photograph of the artist.
Box 2, Folder 31	Tworkov, Jack, 1957-1961
Box 2, Folder 32	Warhol, Andy, 1962-1997
Box 2, Folder 33	Welliver, Neil, 1962-1964
Box 2, Folder 34	Zakanych (a.k.a. Zakanitch), Robert, 1968
Box 2, Folder 35	Zanartu, Henrique, 1954-1955
Box 2, Folder 36	Zogbaum, Wilfred, 1957-1961

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Series 3: Artwork, circa 1955-1970

3 Folders (Box 4)

Scope and Contents: Artwork consists of 4 sketchbooks and loose sheets with charcoal drawings by unidentified artist(s).

Arrangement: Materials are arranged by document type.

Available: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Formats:

Box 4, Folder 2	Sketchbooks, Vol. 1-2, circa 1955-1970
Box 4, Folder 3	Sketchbooks, Vol. 3-4, circa 1955-1970
Box 4, Folder 4	Sketches (loose sheets; includes a few ballpoint pen drawings), circa 1955-1970

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Series 4: Eleanor Ward Papers, 1916-1999

0.5 Linear feet (Box 2-4, 5)

Scope and Contents: The Eleanor Ward papers consists of miscellaneous personal papers and records concerning her estate, in addition to miscellaneous books, exhibition catalogs, and clippings. These include clippings about Eleanor Ward's New York apartment and her house in Connecticut. Also included are two exhibition catalogs, *A Contemporary Collection of Painting and Sculpture Selected from the Collection of Eleanor Ward*, Lyman Allen Museum, 1965, and *In Honor of Alan Groh '49: The Buzz Miller Collection of American Art*, Bayley Art Museum, University of Virginia, 1999 (the collection was acquired mainly from Stable Gallery and donated in honor of Alan Groh, Ward's close friend and long-time assistant).

Arrangement: Materials are arranged by document type.

Available Formats: The bulk of this series has been scanned. In some cases exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned. Elements from the 2019 addition have not been scanned.

Box 2, Folder 37	Correspondence , circa 1965-1983 Notes: Includes letters from Ad Reinhardt.
Box 2, Folder 38	Estate Records , circa 1982-1986 Notes: Includes will and personal/art inventories.
Box 2, Folder 39	Financial Records, 1966-1976
Box 2, Folder 40	Floorplan, "The Barnhouse" , 1964
Box 2, Folder 41	Artifact, Cigarette Holder , circa 1950
Box 3, Folder 1	Published Materials, Books, 1916-1978 Notes: <i>Odette: A Fairy Tale for Weary People</i> (1916) by Ronald Firbank; <i>Poésies</i> (1943) by Paul Valéry; <i>Fishtiary</i> (1978, poems) by Michael Braude, drawings by Ralph Carpentier; and <i>The Bel Canto Pet</i> (circa 1920-1970). Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 5.
Box 3, Folder 2	Published Materials, Clippings, Eleanor Ward, circa 1960-1984
Box 3, Folder 3	Published Materials, Clippings, Food and Recipes, circa 1975-1980
Box 3, Folder 4	Published Materials, Clippings, Health and Beauty, circa 1975-1980
Box 3, Folder 5	Published Materials, Clippings, Miscellaneous, circa 1975-1980
Box 3, Folder 6	Published Materials, Exhibition Catalogs, 1965-1999 Notes: <i>Contemporary Collection of Painting and Sculpture from the Collection of Eleanor Ward</i> ; <i>Small Works by Artist Members, Annual Guild Hall Artist Members, 1983</i> ; <i>Hubert Long</i> ; and <i>Buzz Miller Collection of American Art</i> .
Box 3, Folder 7	Published Materials, Paul Verlaine, circa 1970

1 Sound discs (vinyl)

Box 3, Folder 8	Photographs, Eleanor Ward, 1958-1980
Box 3, Folder 9	Photographs, Eleanor Ward with Others , circa 1950-1962 Notes: With Christian Dior, Alan Groh, Buzz Miller, and unidentified individuals.
Box 5, Folder 4	Photographs, Eleanor Ward and Alan Groh, circa 1959
Box 3, Folder 10	Photographs, Family [?] , circa 1950-1980 Notes: Great nephew Toby Ferguson, nephew Robert Ferguson III, niece Darryl Ferguson, and unidentified individuals.
Box 3, Folder 11	Photographs, Individuals , circa 1960-1980 Notes: Alan Groh, Buzz Miller, and unidentified individuals.
Box 5, Folder 5	Photographs, Joan Mitchell with Sister (via Alan Groh), circa 1960s
Box 3, Folder 12	Photographs, Groups , circa 1950-1980 Notes: Mainly parties, some at Ward's home; few individuals are identified.
Box 3, Folder 13	Photographs, Groups (parties), circa 1975-1980
Box 3, Folder 14	Photographs, Places, Ward's "Barnhouse" (exterior views), circa 1970-1980
Box 3, Folder 15	Photographs, Places, Ward's "Barnhouse" (interior views), circa 1970-1980
Box 3, Folder 16	Photographs, Places, Ward's Connecticut Summer House , circa 1960
Box 3, Folder 17	Photographs, Places, Unidentified , circa 1979
Box 3, Folder 18	Photographs, Dog, circa 1965-1970
Box 3, Folder 19	Photographs of Artwork, Still Life with Eleanor as Eleanor of France, circa 1980 Notes: Drawing by Josef Levi with photocopies of art historical references.
Box 3, Folder 20	Negatives of Artwork, Pre-Columbian Sculpture from the Ward Collection, circa 1955-1975
Box 4, Folder 6	Oversized Book from Box 3, Folder 1, 1954 Notes: <i>Bruno Caruso</i> (1954) by Leonard Sinisgalli

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