



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Susan Cummins Gallery Records, 1984-2002, bulk 1990-2001, in the Archives of American Art

Christopher DeMairo

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund, administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee.

2022 September 15

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Susan Cummins Gallery records
Date:	1984-2002
Identifier:	AAA.susacumg
Creator:	Susan Cummins Gallery
Extent:	6.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Susan Cummins Gallery records measure 6.4 linear feet and date from 1984 to 2002, with the bulk of the records dating from 1990 to 2001. The collection sheds light on the California gallery's artists and operations through administrative records, artists' files, printed materials, photographic materials, audiovisual recordings, correspondence, and more. Also included are two files relating to art panels and lectures given by Susan Cummins.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2003 by Susan Cummins, gallery founder and owner, as part of the Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with Susan Cummins conducted by Jo Lauria, October 22, 2009

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Christopher DeMairo in 2022.

Preferred Citation

Susan Cummins Gallery records, 1984-2002. 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. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

Susan Cummins Gallery was a contemporary art gallery established in 1984 in Mill Valley, California. The gallery was most well-known for its exhibition of American jewelry and other studio craft objects. In the 1990s, the gallery moved into a larger space and began exhibiting paintings and drawings as well. Most exhibitions held at the gallery were solo shows rotated monthly. Over the years, major artists shown at Cummins Gallery include Joyce Scott, June Schwarcz, Bruce Metcalf, Jamie Bennett, Dominic Di Mare, and Bob Ebendorf. The gallery closed in 2002. Group shows include *Faceted Glass* (1984)--the gallery's first show, *Outcasts: Jewelry from Junk* (1992), *The Weight of Gold: Invitational Group Show* (1993), and *Jewelry as an Object of Installation* (2001).

Susan Cummins was born December 27, 1946, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Growing up, her family moved around to several states but mostly settled in the west coast. After high school, Cummins went on an American Field Service trip to Europe, and it was during her trip that she decided to study art in college. She attended Scripps College, studied under Arthur Stevens, and wrote her thesis on Rodin's relationship to dance. After college, Cummins moved to Washington, D.C. and struggled to find work in her field. She briefly volunteered at the National Museum of American Art and had worked for the Black Man's Development Center and a government lab before moving back to the west coast. She moved to Mill Valley and began running The Fireworks, a ceramics shop owned by a former college friend, Beth Changstrom. In 1983, Cummins and Changstrom took over the Horizon Gallery's space in Mill Valley and founded Beth Changstrom Ceramics and Susan Cummins Gallery. Throughout her tenure running the gallery, Cummins was close friends with some of her artists, especially Bruce Metcalf, Dominic Di Mare, and Bob Ebendorf. Cummins helped found Art Jewelry Forum in 1997 to promote and educate the collecting public about jewelry. She has served on the boards of the American Craft Council (2018 Honorary Fellow) and the Headlands Center for the Arts; she is the current director of the Rotasa Foundation.

Scope and Contents

The Susan Cummins Gallery records measure 6.4 linear feet and date from 1984 to 2002, with the bulk of the records dating from 1990 to 2001. The collection sheds light on the California gallery's artists and operations through administrative records and artists' files. Administrative records include group show exhibition files, gallery exhibition announcements, newspaper and magazine clippings, cassette tapes, and papers from panels and lectures given by Cummins. Artists' files mainly consist of correspondence, resumes, exhibition announcements, articles about the artist, show reviews, and photographic materials. Some of the files include exhibition materials such as price lists, correspondence with other galleries and institutions, photos, and some sales records. Artists featured include Joyce Scott, June Schwarcz, Bruce Metcalf, Jamie Bennett, Dominic Di Mare, Thomas Mann, Keith Lewis, Bob Ebendorf, and Sandra Enterline.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as two series.

- Series 1: Administrative Records, 1984-2001 (Box 1; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 2: Artists' Files, 1984-2002 (Box 2-7; 5.9 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

American studio craft movement
Jewelry -- Collectors and collecting

Names:

Cummins, Susan
Ebendorf, Robert, 1938-
Hu, Mary Lee, 1943-
Metcalf, Bruce, 1949-
Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America
Scott, Joyce J., 1948-

Occupations:

Painters -- California

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- California

Container Listing

Series 1: Administrative Records, 1984-2001

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Printed materials consist of clippings about Susan Cummins Gallery, the gallery's exhibits, artists, and other art-related topics, mostly concerning jewelry; and one catalog from the exhibition, *Beyond the Obvious: Rethinking Jewelry* (2000), held at the San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum and curated by Cummins. Group show exhibition files include two cassette tapes from *Why Painting?* (1992), and from *The Weight of Gold* (1993), artist statements, exhibition labels, correspondence, and price lists. Cummins's professional papers include lecture notes, transcripts, writings, and press releases. Susan Cummins' Panel and lecture files include transcripts, notes, reference material, and scant correspondence.

Box 1, Folder 1	Bay Area Artists and Collections; Berkson, Sonnit, Parmenter, undated 1 Cassette tape
Box 1, Folder 2	Exhibition, <i>Why Painting?</i> (1992), circa 1992 2 Cassette tapes
Box 1, Folder 3	Exhibition, <i>The Weight of Gold: Invitational Group Show</i> (1993), 1993
Box 1, Folder 4-5	Exhibition Announcements, Solo Shows, circa 1984-2001
Box 1, Folder 6	Exhibition Announcements, Group Shows, 1984-2001
Box 1, Folder 7	Images of Artwork, 1997 1 Electronic discs (CD)
Box 1, Folder 8-9	Printed Material, 1989-2000
Box 1, Folder 10	Susan Cummins, Panel, "Carried by the Current-Narrative Imagery", 1992-1993
Box 1, Folder 11	Susan Cummins, Panels, Lectures, and Notes, undated

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Series 2: Artists' Files, 1984-2002

5.9 Linear feet (Box 1-7)

Scope and Contents: Artists' files mainly consist of correspondence, resumes, exhibition announcements, articles about the artist, show reviews, and photographic materials. Some of the files include exhibition materials such as price lists, correspondence with other galleries and institutions, photos, and some sales records. Several audiovisual recordings from artists' interviews, panels, and exhibitions are also present.

Box 1, Folder 12	Alepedis, Efharis, 2001-2002
Box 1, Folder 13	Arleo, Adrian, Martha Holt, and Gail Caulfield; "Nature/Figure", undated 1 Videocassette
Box 1, Folder 14	Barnaby, Margaret, 1986-2001
Box 1, Folder 15	Baum, Jan, 1998
Box 1, Folder 16	Bean, Bennett, January 1990 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 1, Folder 17	Bennett, Jamie, 1997-2001
Box 1, Folder 18	Bennet, Jamie and Bob Ebendorf, Lecture, March 1990 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 1, Folder 19	Browne, Kathleen, 1994-2002
Box 1, Folder 20	Buszkiewicz, Kathy, 1996-2001
Box 2, Folder 1	Cathey, Stuart, 1995-2002
Box 2, Folder 2	Class, Petra, 1994-2001
Box 2, Folder 3	Cooperman, Andrew, 1995-1999
Box 2, Folder 4	Cummins, Paul, 1995
Box 2, Folder 5-6	Da Silva, Marilyn, 1994-2000
Box 2, Folder 7	Deal, Nancy, 1998-1999
Box 2, Folder 8	Dill, Lesley, 1996-2000
Box 2, Folder 9-11	Ebendorf, Robert, 1984-1999
Box 2, Folder 12-14	Enterline, Sandra, 1988-2002
Box 2, Folder 15-16	Faulkenhagen, Diane, 1997-2002

Box 2, Folder 17-18	Flynn, Pat, 1990-2000
Box 2, Folder 19	Ford, Margaret, April 1993 1 Cassette tape
Box 2, Folder 20	Fuller, Betsy, "Jewelry Stories", undated 1 Cassette tape
Box 2, Folder 21	Gilbert, Karen, 1997-2001
Box 2, Folder 22	Gleason, Angela, 2001
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Goodman, Christina, 1995-2002
Box 3, Folder 3-6	Granlick, Lisa, 1989-2000
Box 3, Folder 7	Gray, Myra Mimlitsch, 1993-2000
Box 3, Folder 8	Harris, Alfred, 1998
Box 3, Folder 9	Harvey, Mielle, 1999-2001
Box 3, Folder 10-12	Heinrich, Barbara, 1988-2000
Box 3, Folder 13	Heinrich, Barbara, Photos of Artwork, 1990s
Box 3, Folder 14-15	Hu, Mary Lee, 1993-2000
Box 3, Folder 16-17	Hu, Mary Lee, Slides of Artwork, 1990s-2000
Box 3, Folder 18	Iversen, John, 1996-1997
Box 3, Folder 19	Kang, Yeon-Mi, 1999-2000
Box 3, Folder 20	Kao, Joana, 1996-2001
Box 4, Folder 1	Kusumoto, Mariko, 1994-2000
Box 4, Folder 2-3	Kranitzky, Robin and Kim Overstreet; Lost and Found, 1988-2001
Box 4, Folder 4-5	Lewis, Keith, 1994-1999
Box 4, Folder 6-8	Lewis, Lewis, Photographic Materials, circa 1990s-2001
Box 4, Folder 9	Lewis, Keith, Printed Material, 1990s
Box 4, Folder 10-11	Lillie, Jacqueline, circa 1999-2002

Box 4, Folder 12	Mann, Thomas, Interviewed by Jill Henry for "State of the Arts," KUSP-FM, August 1988 1 Cassette tape
Box 4, Folder 13	Mann, Thomas, "Techno-Romantic Jewelry Objects"; Installation, Slide Lecture, and Studio Tour, undated 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 4, Folder 14-15	Metcalf, Bruce, 1989-2001
Box 4, Folder 16	Metcalf, Bruce, Photographic Materials, 1990s-2001
Box 4, Folder 1	Metcalf, Bruce, Photographic Materials, 1990s-2001
Box 5, Folder 2	Metcalf, Bruce, Printed Material, 1990s
Box 5, Folder 3-5	Mitchell, Valerie, 1990s
Box 5, Folder 6	Miro, Darcy, circa 1999
Box 5, Folder 7-8	Nahser, Heidi, 1990s-2002
Box 5, Folder 9	Plassman, Elke, 1999-2002 Notes: File includes 2 CDs.
Box 5, Folder 10-11	Raible, Kent, 1990s
Box 5, Folder 12	Rath, Tina, 1999-2002 Notes: File includes one CD.
Box 5, Folder 13	Ross, D.X., 1991-2000
Box 5, Folder 14	Russmeyer, Axel, 1995-1997
Box 5, Folder 15	Rydmark, Cheryl, 1995-2001
Box 5, Folder 16	Schwarcz, June, 1991-2000
Box 5, Folder 17-19	Schwarcz, June, Photographic Materials, 1989-2001
Box 6, Folder 1-3	Schwarcz, June, Printed Material, 1990s-2002
Box 6, Folder 4-5	Scott, Joyce, 1994-2001
Box 6, Folder 6-9	Scott, Joyce, Printed Material, 1990s-2001
Box 6, Folder 10	Shaw, Samuel, 1994-1998
Box 6, Folder 11	Sherman, Sandra, 1998

Box 6, Folder 12	Slemmons, Kiff, 1987-2000
Box 6, Folder 13-15	Slemmons, Kiff, Photographic Materials, 1990s-2001
Box 6, Folder 16-17	Slemmons, Kiff, Printed Material, 1992-2000
Box 6, Folder 18	Suydam, Didi, 1988-1998
Box 6, Folder 19	Trask, Jennifer, 2000-2001
Box 6, Folder 20	White, Heather, 1998-1999
Box 7, Folder 1-2	Windels, Martina, 1994-1998
Box 7, Folder 3-4	Williamson, Roberta, 1989-1999
Box 7, Folder 5-6	Williamson, Roberta, Printed Material, 1990s

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