



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Stanley Twardowicz Papers, 1942-2009, bulk 1942-1981, in the Archives of American Art

Harriet E. Shapiro

April 5, 2011

Archives of American Art
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives of American Art |
| Title: | Stanley Twardowicz papers |
| Identifier: | AAA.twarstan |
| Date: | 1942-2009 |
| Creator: | Twardowicz, Stanley, 1917- |
| Extent: | 1.1 Linear feet |
| Language: | English . |
| Summary: | The papers of painter and photographer Stanley Twardowicz measure 1.1 linear feet and date from 1942-2009, with the bulk of the papers dating from 1942-1981. The papers contain biographical material, scrapbooks, letters, printed material, photographs, and audio and video recordings regarding the career of Stanley Twardowicz as a painter and photographer. |

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers were donated to the Archives of American Art in 2010 by Lillian Dodson, widow of Stanley Twardowicz.

Processing Information

The collection was processed by Harriet E. Shapiro in 2011.

Preferred Citation

Stanley Twardowicz papers, 1942-2009, bulk 1942-1981. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment. Use of archival audiovisual recordings with no duplicate access copy requires advance notice.

Conditions Governing Use

Material created by Twardowicz: The donor has retained all intellectual property rights, including copyright, that they may own.

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Biographical Note

Stanley Twardowicz (1917-2008) was a painter, photographer and teacher. He is associated with the 1950's Abstract Expressionists of the Cedar Tavern in Greenwich Village, New York and with Beat Generation poet Jack Kerouac.

Twardowicz was born Stanley Jon Leginsky in July, 1917, but took his godfather's surname at age 20 when he married. After working at various jobs, in 1940 Twardowicz enrolled in Detroit's Meininger's Art School.

In 1946 Twardowicz was awarded a scholarship to the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine, his first exposure to a creative arts community. There he met Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Jack Levine and Philip Guston. Through his associations at Skowhegan, Twardowicz obtained a teaching position at Ohio State University. He taught there until 1951, becoming friends with fellow instructor, Roy Lichtenstein. Twardowicz married (Ruth) Ann Mandel in 1949 and they lived in an artists' community near Guadalajara, Mexico. Twardowicz then travelled in Europe, his work edging towards an expressionist technique and mood. By 1953 Twardowicz painted in a fully abstract manner.

Upon his return to the States, Twardowicz frequented the Cedar Tavern in Greenwich Village, New York, where he met and was deeply influenced by Abstract Expressionists such as Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline and Jackson Pollock. During this time he had one-man shows and participated in group shows at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He was represented in the Museum of Modern Art's travelling exhibition "Young American Painters."

In 1956 Twardowicz received a Guggenheim Fellowship in creative painting and moved to Northport, Long Island, where he befriended area artists Jules Olitski and George Grosz. Between 1958 and 1970 the Peridot Gallery in New York presented annual one-man shows of Twardowicz's work. Twardowicz also participated in numerous major group shows at institutions such as the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Twardowicz began his long teaching career at Hofstra University in 1964, where he met his third wife, Lillian Dodson, a fellow artist. Twardowicz's career as a photographer also prospered. Edward Streichen, then Director of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, selected six of Twardowicz's photographs for the Museum's permanent collection. In June, 1967 Tardowicz took photographs of Jack Kerouac in his Lowell, Massachusetts home, which became the subject of an art book portfolio called *Stashou and Yasho*.

During the 1990's there was renewed interest in Twardowicz's work with a show at Mitchell Algu's Gallery in Soho, New York City. In 2001, the Phoenix Art Museum celebrated Twardowicz's contributions as a Color Field painter with a retrospective exhibition "Moving Color."

Twardowicz died on June 12, 2008 in Northport, Long Island.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of painter and photographer Stanley Twardowicz measure 1.1 linear feet and date from 1942-2009, with the bulk of the papers dating from 1942-1981. The papers contain biographical material, scrapbooks, letters, writings, printed material, photographs, and audio and video recordings regarding the career of Stanley Twardowicz as a painter and photographer.

Biographical material consists of various curriculum vitae, a list of exhibitions and awards from 1942-1954, and typed excerpts from reviews of Twardowicz's one-man shows at Contemporary Arts Gallery during 1951.

Writings include an unpublished hand-written 70 page memoir by Twardowicz entitled "A Life with No Tears" covering the artist's early life through 1970, a master's thesis "Stanley Twardowicz, Tracing the Roots of an American Modernist" by Kim Greer Verzyl written in 1978, and a 2008 writing by Gerald Nicoisa which describes his relationship with Twardowicz.

Scrapbooks are two disbound volumes organized by years. They contain the artist's collection of exhibition announcements, catalogs, and lists; press clippings; letters advising of awards and fellowships; and Ohio State Fair ribbons for excellence in fine art.

Printed materials and related items consist of chronological files that retain their original order. Found are printed materials relating to exhibitions, letters, and audio visual materials. Of particular interest is the 1956 letter advising Twardowicz that he has been awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in creative painting.

Photographs include pictures of the artist and ones taken by Twardowicz. Twardowicz's photographs are of Roy Lichtenstein, David Smith, Jules Olitski, Roy Parker, Mike Kanemitsu, Betty Parsons, Lillian Dodson (the artist's wife), and Jack Kerouac. There also is a photograph by Dorothy Lichtenstein of Twardowicz, Parker, Dodson and Roy Lichtenstein and casual snapshots of the artist and friends and family.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 5 series:

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1951-2008 (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 2: Writings, 1951-2008 (Box 1; 0.1 linear ft.)
- Series 3: Scrapbooks, 1942-1951 (Box 1; 0.25 linear ft.)
- Series 4: Printed Material and Related Items, 1946-2009 (Box 1; 0V 2; 0.6 linear ft.)
- Series 5: Photographs, circa 1960-1979 (Box 1; 3 folders)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Photographers -- New York (State)

Types of Materials:

Awards
Drawings
Memoirs
Photographs
Resumes
Scrapbooks
Sound recordings
Theses
Video recordings

Names:

Contemporary Arts (Gallery)
Dodson, Lillian
John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
Kerouac, Jack, 1922-1969
Lichtenstein, Dorothy
Lichtenstein, Roy, 1923-1997 -- Photographs
Museum of Modern Art (New York, N.Y.)
Nicosi, Gerald

Ohio State Fair
Olitski, Jules, 1922-2007
Parker, Raymond, 1922- -- Photographs
Smith, David, 1906-1965 -- Photographs
Verzyl, Kim Greer
Whitney Museum of American Art

Occupations:

Painters -- New York (State)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1951-2008

(Box 1; 1 folder)

Scope and Contents: Biographical material consists of curriculum vitae, lists of exhibitions and awards.

Arrangement: Letters relating to awards and fellowships received by Twardowicz, in addition to various other biographical materials, are contained in the Scrapbooks (series 3) and Printed Materials and Related Items (series 4).

Box 1, Folder 1 Biographical Material, 1951-2008

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Series 2: Writings, 1951-2008

(Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Writings consist of an unpublished hand-written 70 page autobiographical memoir "A Life with No Tears" by Twardowicz. The file also contains a master's thesis "Stanley Tardowicz, Tracing the Roots of an American Modernist" written by Kim Greer Verzyl in 1978, which includes Verzyl's edited October 30, 1976 interview of Twardowicz. Also found is a writing concerning Twardowicz by Gerald Nicoisa, July 10, 2008.

Box 1, Folder 2 By Twardowicz, 1951-2008

Box 1, Folder 3 About Twardowicz, 1978

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Series 3: Scrapbooks, 1942-1951

(Box 1; 0.25 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Scrapbooks (two volumes) mainly consist of exhibition announcements, catalogs, brochures and lists, newspaper and magazine clippings, and letters advising of awards and fellowships. Also found are three ribbons from the Ohio State Fairs of 1949 and 1951.

Arrangement: Both volumes, removed from three-ring binders, retain their original collation.

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| Box 1, Folder 4-5 | Volume 1, 1944-1948 (1 volume, disbound; 2 folders) |
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| Box 1, Folder 6-7 | Volume 2, 1949-1951 (1 volume, disbound; 2 folders) |
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Series 4: Printed Material and Related Items, 1946-1981

(Box 1, OV 2; 0.6 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Printed material and related items consist of exhibition announcements and catalogs, press clippings, and letters from associates and institutions such as the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art. Exhibition catalogs are from galleries in Rome, Italy and San Paulo, Brazil as well as local galleries and institutions. There are no files for the years 1971 and 1977.

Also found is an audio cassette recording of a 1974 interview with Twardowicz by Rob Carter done for WHPC radio in New York on the occasion of Twardowicz's exhibition at the Heckscher Museum in Huntington, Long Island and a VHS-C video "Stan's Painting Show," September, 1995, Lanning Gallery, Columbus, Ohio.

Of note are the April, 1956 letter advising Tardowicz that he has won a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation in Creative Painting (1956 file) and photocopies of two drawings of Tardowicz by an unidentified artist (1979 file).

Arrangement: This series retains the chronological order established by the creator.

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|---------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 8-29 | Chronological files, 1946-1970 (22 folders) |
| Box 1, Folder 30-34 | Chronological files, 1972-1976 (5 folders) |
| Box 1, Folder 35-38 | Chronological files, 1978-2009 (4 folders) |
| Box OV 2, Folder | Chronological files, 1960-1970 (oversized items from box 1, folder 20-21; box 1, folder 23; box 1, folder 29) |

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Series 5: Photographs, circa 1960-1979

(Box 1; 3 folders)

Scope and Contents: The Photographs series consists of 33 photographs, six in color, including artists' portraits taken by Twardowicz, photographs of Twardowicz and other artists, and photographs of friends and family, including a photograph of what is presumably Twardowicz and his younger brother as children. There is one group photograph taken by Dorothy Lichtenstein. Most of the photographs are undated. However, some bear hand written identifications on the reverse sides.

Photographs of artists include: David Smith, Jules Olitski, Roy Lichtenstein, and Roy with Dorothy Lichtenstein, Ray Parker and Ray and Lil Parker. Photographs with identified subjects are "Stan and Ann," Kenso Olcata and Betty Parsons, and a group photograph of Bill Shotwell, Jack Kerouac and Lillian Dodson, Twardowicz's wife.

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| Box 1, Folder 39 | Twardowicz, photographer, photographs of artists, circa 1960-1979 |
| Box 1, Folder 40 | Dorothy Lichtenstein, photographer, group photograph, undated |
| Box 1, Folder 41 | Miscellaneous, undated |

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