



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Neil Welliver Papers, 1964-1981, in the Archives of American Art

Christopher DeMairo

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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:	Neil Welliver papers
Date:	1964-1981
Identifier:	AAA.wellneil
Creator:	Welliver, Neil
Extent:	1.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of painter and educator Neil Welliver measure 1.4 linear feet and date from 1964-1981. The collection documents Welliver's career through mixed professional and personal files that include correspondence, some exhibition material, writings, slides of art by others and of friends, and a video recording of a talk given by Welliver in 1974.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Neil Welliver in 1981 and 1999.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Christopher DeMairo in 2021.

Preferred Citation

Neil Welliver papers, 1964-1981. 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 born-digital records or audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

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Biographical / Historical

Neil Welliver (1929-2005) was a painter and educator from Millville, Pennsylvania.

Welliver earned his bachelor's degree from the Philadelphia College of Art and his Master of Fine Arts degree at Yale University where he studied under Josef Albers and Burgoyne Diller. By the late 1950s Welliver had developed his signature style of combining abstract and representational art, painting people and landscapes and other natural scenes. He taught at Cooper Union from 1953-1957 and at Yale University from 1955-1966. He then began working at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Fine Art, going on to become chairman before retiring in 1989. With the encouragement of Alex Katz and Lois Dodd, Welliver began spending time in Maine in the early 1960s, painting and exploring the natural landscape. By the 1970s, Welliver spent most of his time away from Philadelphia on his property in Lincolnville, Maine.

Welliver's solo shows included exhibitions at Alexandra Grotto in Philadelphia, Stable Gallery in New York, Tibor de Nagy Gallery in New York, and the Farnsworth Museum of Art in Maine. Group exhibitions that featured his work included *Five Landscape Paintings* (2006), University of Maine Museum of Art, *In The Country* (1987), The Bronx Museum of the Arts, *Annual Exhibition: Contemporary American Painting* (1972), Whitney Museum of American Art, and many others. His paintings can be found in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter and educator Neil Welliver measure 1.4 linear feet and date from 1964-1981. The collection documents Welliver's career through mixed professional and personal files that include correspondence, some exhibition material, writings, slides of art by others and of friends, and a video recording of a talk given by Welliver in 1974.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged as one series due to its small size.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Video recordings

Occupations:

Educators -- Maine
Educators -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia
Painters -- Maine
Painters -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia

Container Listing

Series 1: Personal and Professional Files, 1964-1981

1.4 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: The bulk of the series is comprised of mixed correspondence with friends, colleagues, galleries, museums, and fellow artists that covers a variety of topics including exhibitions, paintings, Welliver's personal life, art and critics, and other matters. Notable artists represented here include Mark Strand, Rackstraw Downes, and Red Grooms. Also found are several exhibition checklists and contracts, writings, slides from artists John Knowlton, Stanley Sporny, and author and photographer John Naar, and a video recording of a talk given by Welliver entitled "The Values of the Making of the Environment," at the University of Pennsylvania, delivered April 4, 1974, as part of the Fine Arts Lecture Series.

Box 1, Folder 1	Commencement Speech, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Contribution to Municipality of Lincolnville, Maine, 1977
Box 1, Folder 3-15	Mixed Correspondence, 1964-1981
Box 2, Folder 1-3	Mixed Correspondence, 1981, undated
Box 2, Folder 4	Directions; Joseph Hirshhorn, undated
Box 2, Folder 5	Exhibition, Checklist and Loan Form, 1978
Box 2, Folder 6	Exhibition, Department of Interior, Final Draft, 1976
Box 2, Folder 7	Polly Mudge Welliver Library Fund, circa 1977
Box 2, Folder 8	Printed Material, 1978, undated
Box 2, Folder 9	Slides, John Knowlton; Stanley Sporny; John Naar, 1976-1978
Box 2, Folder 10	"Values in the Making of the Environment," Talk by Welliver at University of Pennsylvania, 1974 1 Videocassettes (U-matic)
Box 2, Folder 11	Writings, "Neil Welliver," by William Sullivan, circa 1975

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