



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Joan E. Biren Queer Film Museum Collection

NMAH.AC.1216

Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.

2010

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Joan E. Biren Queer Film Museum Collection
Date:	1931-2019
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1216
Creator:	Biren, Joan E.
Extent:	5 Cubic feet (8 boxes, 13 map-folders)
Language:	Collection is in English. Some materials are in Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish.
Summary:	Joan E. Biren (JEB) is an internationally recognized photographer and documentary artist. She assembled this collection as her Queer Film Museum. It consists of a variety of materials about and associated with queer films, both foreign and domestic.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Joan E. Biren Queer Film Museum Collection

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Donated to the Archives Center in 2010 by Joan E. Biren.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

Archives Center Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Collection (NMAH.AC.1146) contains an addendum of material donated by Biren in 2011.

Materials at Other Organizations

Collections of Joan E. Biren's personal and professional papers are located at Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

Processing Information

Processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., archives specialist, November, 2010; assisted by Theresa Worden, intern, Erin Walsh, intern, and supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist.

Preferred Citation

Joan E. Biren Queer Film Museum Collection, 1931-2019, undated, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

Collection open for research on site by appointment. Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

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Biographical / Historical

Joan E. Biren (1944-), also known professionally as JEB, is an internationally recognized lesbian photographer and documentary artist. She grew up in Washington, D.C. graduating from Mount Holyoke College in 1966. She later pursued graduate study at Oxford University and the American University. Biren was a vocal and out lesbian joining the women's liberation in the late 1960s and the lesbian movement in the early 1970s. A member of the Furies, she was an associate of authors Rita Mae Brown and Charlotte Bunch

Biren became known for her photographic documentation of late 20th century lesbian culture. Biren published two collections of her photography: *Eye to Eye: Portraits of Lesbians* (1979) and *Making a Way: Lesbians Out Front* (1987). Biren pursued filmmaking in the 1990s through her company Moonforce Media, Inc. She produced and directed the documentaries, *For Love and For Life* (1990) about the 1987 March on Washington and *A Simple Matter of Justice* (1993), about the April 1993 March on Washington. She is the creator (writer, director, and producer) of the award-winning film, *No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon* (2003) on two pioneers of the LGBT movement.

Over many years she assembled a collection of ephemera and materials relating to queer film. One of the accepted definitions of the word queer is, "Of or relating to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, or transgendered people". "Queer film" may be defined as any film or televised entertainment that has as a part of its subject matter or story line anything having to do with or pertinent to homosexuality (male or female), bisexuality, or transgendered people. Biren named her collection the Queer Film Museum and it was displayed in her home. The sign she created and hung on the basement door leading downstairs to the display of her collection (and coincidentally her laundry room) was meant to be ironic and read, "JEB's Queer Film Museum, Dirty Pictures & Clean Laundry". Biren amassed her collection, mostly by purchase, over the course of many years.

Some of the titles in the collection classified as "queer" were not specifically produced with the homosexual audience in mind but have come to be identified with homosexual culture, Greta Garbo's 1931 film *Queen Christina* for instance.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains material relating to lesbian-oriented motion pictures. The bulk of the collection consists of ephemera and film posters from theatrical releases in the United States. The collection also contains catalogues from video houses, film festivals, posters, and other material collected by Biren from on-line auction sites. Some of the items have Biren's annotations written within them. The collection contains material associated with United States releases and foreign releases. Production dates are year of first release. An oral history about the collection was conducted by intern Erin Walsh in 2019.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series.

Series 1: Posters and Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated

Series 2, Film Festival Programs, Queer Film Museum Files, and Related Material, 1975-2019, undated

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Bisexuality
- Documentary films
- Homosexuality
- Lesbian and gay experience
- Lesbianism
- Motion pictures
- Transgender people
- Transvestites

Types of Materials:

- Advertising
- Catalogs
- Postcards
- Posters -- 20th century
- Posters -- 21st century
- Programs -- 20th century

Container Listing

Series 1: Posters, Ephemera, and Oral History, 1931-2019, undated

Scope and Contents: Series 1: Posters and Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated, contains posters and ephemera (primarily postcards, pressbooks, production stills, lobby cards, and advertising ephemera) for theatrical productions, both domestic and foreign, documentaries, and posters for film festivals. There is also material relating to televised work and promotional material relating to television stations carrying LGBT related programming. The two subseries are arranged alphabetically.

Subseries 1, Posters, 1966-2010, is arranged by size, then alphabetically within the folder.

Subseries 2, Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated, is arranged alphabetically by production title. This series includes postcards, mailings, lobby cards, pressbooks, advertising ephemera, and one set of trading cards (The Rocky Horror Picture Show).

Subseries 1.1: Posters, 1966-2010

Map-folder 1

Map-folder 1	Antonia's Line, 1995
Map-folder 1	Better Than Chocolate, 1999
Map-folder 1	Bound, 1996
Map-folder 1	But I'm a Cheerleader, 1999
Map-folder 1	Brother Outsider, 2003
Map-folder 2	Claire of the Moon, 1992
Map-folder 2	Dr. Jekyll & Mistress Hyde, 2003
Map-folder 2	Emilienne, 1975
Map-folder 2	Even Cowgirls Get the Blues, 1993
Map-folder 2	Fire, 1996
Map-folder 2	Forbidden Love, 1992
Map-folder 2	The Fox, 1967
Map-folder 2	French Twist, 1995
Map-folder 3	The Celluloid Closet (mounted on foam core), 1995

Map-folder 3	Desert Hearts (mounted on foam core), 1985
Map-folder 3	Forbidden Love (mounted on foam core), 1992
Map-folder 4	Fire, 1996
Map-folder 4	The Kids Are All Right, 2010
Map-folder 4	No Secret Anymore (mounted on foam core), 2003
Map-folder 4	The Real Ellen Story, 1997
Map-folder 5	Gia, 1998
Map-folder 5	Go Fish, 1994
Map-folder 5	The Group, 1966
Map-folder 5	High Art, 1998
Map-folder 5	The Hours, 2002
Map-folder 5	The Times of Harvey Milk, 1984
Map-folder 6	If These Walls Could Talk 2, 2000
Map-folder 6	The Incredibly True Adventures of 2 Girls in Love, 1995
Map-folder 6	I've Heard the Mermaids Singing, 1987
Map-folder 6	The Killing of Sister George, 1968
Map-folder 6	Kissing Jessica Stein, 2002
Map-folder 7	The Killing of Sister George (mounted on foam core), 1968
Box 8	The L Word (bus shelter size poster), 2003
Map-folder 8	Lustful Addiction, 2003
Map-folder 8	Myra Breckinridge, 1970
Map-folder 8	The Rocky Horror Picture Show re-release, 1998
Map-folder 8	The Secrets, 2007
Map-folder 8	When Night is Falling, 1995

Map-folder 9	Late Bloomer, 2004
Map-folder 9	The Legend of Lylah Clare, 1968
Map-folder 9	The Monkey's Mask, 2000
Map-folder 9	Personal Best, 1982
Map-folder 9	Saving Face, 2004
Map-folder 9	The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe, 1991
Map-folder 9	My Summer of Love, 2004
Map-folder 9	Therese and Isabelle, 1968
Map-folder 9	When Night is Falling, 1995
Map-folder 9	Windows, 1980
Map-folder 9	Word is Out, 1977
Map-folder 14	Silvia Ama a Raquel, 1978
Map-folder 10	Absolut Achievement Absolut Vodka (banner style advertisement)
Map-folder 10	Absolut Achievement Absolut Vodka (mounted on foam core)
Map-folder 10	15th Queer Film & Video Festival Vancouver Canada, 2003
Map-folder 10	Torino 18 Festival Internazionale di Film con Tematiche Omosessuali Torino Italy, 2003
Map-folder 11	"Queer Film & Video Festival Sing a Long The Wizard of Oz" Vancouver Canada, undated
Map-folder 11	Revisions: Lesbian & Gay Film Festival SUNY Albany New York signed by Laura Catalo, 1991
Map-folder 12	Way Out West Santa Fe New Mexico, 2004
Map-folder 12	"The Second Northwest International Lesbian Gay Film Festival" Evergreen State College Olympia Washington (one mounted on foam core), 1989
Map-folder 12	"The San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival" San Francisco California, 2003

Map-folder 13 "Seattle Lesbian & Gay Film Festival" Seattle Washington (mounted on foam core), 1997

Subseries 1.2: Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated

Box 1, Folder 1	21, 2002
Box 1, Folder 2	50 Ways of Saying Fabulous, 2005
Box 5, Folder 1	99 Women publicity still mounted, 1969
Box 1, Folder 3	200 American, 2003
Box 1, Folder 4	Aimee & Jaguar, 1999
Box 5, Folder 2	Aimee & Jaguar pressbook cover mounted, 1999
Box 1, Folder 5	All My Children, undated
Box 1, Folder 6	Bad Girls Behind Bars, 2005
Box 1, Folder 7	Bar Girls, 1995
Box 1, Folder 8	Bar Talk, 2002
Box 1, Folder 9	Before Stonewall, 1984
Box 1, Folder 10	Better Than Chocolate, 1999
Box 1, Folder 11	Black Aura on an Angel, 2004
Box 1, Folder 12	Blood and Roses, 1960
Box 1, Folder 13	Bound, 1996
Box 5, Folder 4	Bound pressbook page mounted, 1996
Box 1, Folder 14	Boys Don't Cry, 1999
Box 1, Folder 15	Boys on the Side, 1995
Box 1, Folder 16	Breaking Up Really Sucks, , 2001
Box 1, Folder 17	Brother Outsider, 2003
Box 1, Folder 18	Brother to Brother, 2004

Box 7, Folder 1	But I'm a Cheerleader and The Eyes of Tammy Faye beach ball advertising, undated
Box 1, Folder 19	By Hook or By Crook, 2001
Box 1, Folder 20	The Celluloid Closet, 1995
Box 1, Folder 21	Chained Girls, 1965
Box 5, Folder 5	The Children's Hour lobby card mounted and pressbook, 1961
Box 1, Folder 22	Christopher Street, 2002
Box 1, Folder 23	Claire of the Moon, 1992
Box 1, Folder 24	Class Queers, 2003
Box 1, Folder 25	Club Q: The Legendary Dance Party for Women, 2003
Box 1, Folder 26	Clean Sober and Positive, undated
Box 1, Folder 27	Dangerous Living – Coming Out in the Developing World, 2003
Box 1, Folder 28	D.E.B.S., 2004
Box 1, Folder 29	Deep Inside, 1981
Box 1, Folder 30	Desert Hearts, 1985
Box 1, Folder 31	Desperate Remedies, 1994
Box 1, Folder 32	Dildo Diaries, 2002
Box 7, Folder 2	DirectTV LOGO compact mirror advertising, undated
Box 5, Folder 6	The Dirty Girls publicity still mounted, 1964
Box 1, Folder 33	Divided Loyalties, 2001
Box 1, Folder 34	Double Dare, 2004
Box 1, Folder 35	Drag Nuns in Tinseltown, 2005
Box 1, Folder 36	Eden's Curve, 2003
Box 1, Folder 37	Farm Family, 2004
Box 1, Folder 38	The Fluffer, 2001

Box 5, Folder 7	The Fourth Sex lobby card, 1961
Box 5, Folder 8	The Fox publicity still and tear sheets mounted, 1968
Box 5, Folder 9	The Fox lobby cards, 1968
Box 5, Folder 10	The Fox pressbook, 1967
Box 5, Folder 11	The Fox Candid Press newspaper, 1968
Box 1, Folder 39	The Fox, 1967
Box 1, Folder 40	Foxfire, 1995
Box 5, Folder 12	La Fuga lobby card, 1966
Box 1, Folder 41	Gasoline, 2003
Box 1, Folder 42	Gaydar, 2002
Box 1, Folder 43	Gay Hollywood, 2003
Box 1, Folder 44	Gay Propaganda, 2002
Box 1, Folder 45	Gia, 1998
Box 1, Folder 46	The Gift, 2003
Box 1, Folder 47	The Girl, 2000
Box 1, Folder 48	Girl Play, 2004
Box 1, Folder 49	Go Fish, 1994
Box 1, Folder 50	Gold, 2005
Box 1, Folder 51	Hearts Cracked Open, 2004
Box 5, Folder 13	Henry & June publicity still mounted, 1990
Box 7, Folder 2	Here TV "gay tv is here" necklace with sunscreen advertisement, undated
Box 1, Folder 52	Hide and Seek, 1996
Box 7, Folder Unknown	High Art instant 35mm camera advertising on box, 1998
Box 5, Folder 14	High Art advertisement mounted, 1998

Box 5, Folder 15	Higher Learning lobby card, 1995
Box 5, Folder 16	Hung Up lobby card, 1969
Box 1, Folder 53	I Am (formerly Out & About), 2010
Box 1, Folder 54	I Want What I Want, 1972
Box 1, Folder 55	If These Walls Could Talk 2, 2000
Box 5, Folder 17	If These Walls Could Talk 2 publicity still mounted, 2000
Box 5, Folder 18	If These Walls Could Talk 2 Lesbian News article, 2000
Box 1, Folder 56	In Good Conscience, 2004
Box 1, Folder 57	In Their Absence, 2003
Box 1, Folder 58	Just Because of Who We Are, 1986
Box 1, Folder 59	The Kids Are All Right, 010
Box 6, Folder 1	The Killing of Sister George pressbook, 1968
Box 1, Folder 60	Kissing Jessica Stein, 2002
Box 1, Folder 61	The L Word, 2003-2005, undated
Box 7, Folder 1	The L Word paper tiara advertising, 2003
Box 1, Folder 62	Ladies Tea, 2002
Box 1, Folder 63	The Lancebian, 2002
Box 1, Folder 64	Late Bloomers, 1996
Box 1, Folder 65	Laurel Canyon, 2002
Box 1, Folder 66	Let's Get Frank, 2003
Box 6, Folder 2	Lianna Extra Perversion, 1983
Box 1, Folder 67	Love Life, 2003
Box 1, Folder 68	Madchen in Uniform, 1931
Box 6, Folder 3	Madchen in Uniform pressbook cover mounted, 1931

Box 1, Folder 69	Mango Kiss, 2004
Box 1, Folder 70	Mistaken Identity, 2005
Box 1, Folder 71	Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing, 2005
Box 1, Folder 72	My Summer of Love, 2004
Box 1, Folder 73	Nico and Dan, 2001
Box 1, Folder 74	No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, 2003
Box 7, Folder 2	No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon promotional buttons, 2003
Box 1, Folder 75	Not All Parents Are Straight, 1988
Box 1, Folder 76	On the Low, 2005
Box 1, Folder 77	Out for a Change: Addressing Homophobia in Women's Sports, 1994
Box 1, Folder 78	P.S. Your Cat is Dead, 2002
Box 1, Folder 79	Paternal Instinct, 2004
Box 1, Folder 80	People Like Us: Making "Philadelphia", 2003
Box 6, Folder 4	Personal Best lobby card and advertisement mounted, 1991
Box 1, Folder 81	Piki & Poko Adventures in Starland, 2003
Box 1, Folder 82	The Politics of Fur, 2002
Box 6, Folder 5	The Politics of Fur poster, 2002
Box 1, Folder 83	Polyester, 1981
Box 1, Folder 84	Precious Moments, 2003
Box 1, Folder 85	Pretty Ladies, 2002
Box 6, Folder 6	Prey for Rock and Roll article from Lesbian News, 2003
Box 2, Folder 1	Queen Christina, 1933
Box 6, Folder 7	Queen Christina publicity still mounted and reproduction poster, 1933, undated

Box 6, Folder 7	Queer as Folk advertising fans, 2000
Box 7, Folder 2	Queer as Folk necklace advertising, undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Queer as Folk, 2000
Box 2, Folder 3	Queer Son, 1993
Box 2, Folder 4	The Rocky Horror Picture Show, 1980
Box 2, Folder 5	Rights and Reactions, 1987
Box 2, Folder 6	Rise Above, 2003
Box 2, Folder 7	The Runaway, 1972
Box 6, Folder 8	The Seducers publicity still mounted, 1970
Box 2, Folder 8	Show Me Love, 1999
Box 7, Folder 3	Showtime cable channel balloon advertising, 2002
Box 2, Folder 9	Stand By, 2003
Box 2, Folder 10	Stonewall, 1996
Box 2, Folder 11	Straight Out, 2003
Box 2, Folder 12	Summer Blues, 2002
Box 2, Folder 13	Superfag, 2003
Box 2, Folder 14	Talk to Her, 2002
Box 2, Folder 15	The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me, 2000
Box 2, Folder 16	Therese and Isabelle, 1968
Box 6, Folder 9	Therese and Isabelle publicity still and lobby card mounted, 1968
Box 2, Folder 17	The Times of Harvey Milk, 1984
Box 2, Folder 18	Tipping the Velvet, 2003
Box 6, Folder 10	Tipping the Velvet lobby card mounted, 2003
Box 2, Folder 19	Tom Clay Jesus, 2002

Box 2, Folder 20	Trembling Before God, 2001
Box 6, Folder 11	The Twilight Girls lobby card, 1961
Box 2, Folder 21	Unhung Heroes, 2002
Box 2, Folder 22	Venus Boyz, 2002
Box 2, Folder 23	Wave Babes, 2003
Box 2, Folder 24	When Night is Falling, 1995
Box 6, Folder 12	X Y & Zee publicity still mounted and lobby card, 1972
Box 5, Folder 3	Triptych: Better Than Chocolate Go Fish and The Incredibly True Adventures of 2 Girls in Love, 1994-1999
Box 7, Folder 1	High Art, 35 mm camera advertising, undated
Box 4, Folder 15	Oral History with Joan E. Biren (JEB), 2019-11-19 Notes: This oral history was conducted by Erin Walsh (Archives Center intern) at Joan Biren's home on November 19, 2019.

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Series 2: Film Festival Catalogues Queer Film Museum Files and Related Material, 1975-2010, undated

Scope and Contents: Series 2, Film Festival Programs, Queer Film Museum Files, and Related Material, 1975-2010, undated, includes film festival catalogues and ephemera related to festivals. This series also contains reference files Biren compiled on the titles in her collection and queer film in general. This series includes a program from the Persistent Vision 2001 convention. The Reel Affirmations catalogues for the years 1993 and 1996 are annotated by Biren.

Box 2, Folder 25	"Austin Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival" Austin Texas, undated
Box 2, Folder 26	Iris Films Festival Washington D.C., 1975
Box 2, Folder 27	Lesben Film Festival Berlin Germany, 2001
Box 2, Folder 28	Lesbisch-Schwule Filmtage Hamburg Hamburg Germany, 2001
Box 2, Folder 29	Long Island Gay & Lesbian Film Festival Long Island New York, 2003
Box 2, Folder 30	National Gay and Lesbian Film Tour, 1991
Box 2, Folder 31	Netherlands Transgender Film Festival, 2001-2003
Box 2, Folder 32	Newfest New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival New York New York, 2003
Box 2, Folder 33	The 4th Northwest International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival Olympia Washington, 1991
Box 2, Folder 34-37	Outfest Los Angeles California, 1997-2005
Box 2, Folder 38	"Philadelphia International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival" Philadelphia Pennsylvania, 1999
Box 2, Folder 39	Q Doc Portland Queer Documentary Film Festival Portland Oregon, 2007
Box 6, Folder 13	"Planet Q Lesbian & Gay Film Festival" newspaper Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, 1999
Box 2, Folder 40	Portland Lesbian and Gay Film Festival Portland Oregon, 2003
Box 2, Folder 41-52	Reel Affirmations Washington D.C., 1991-2004
Box 6, Folder 14	Reel Affirmations III Washington D.C., 1993
Box 3, Folder 1-4	Reel Affirmations Washington D.C., 2005-2008
Box 3, Folder 5	Reeling '96: The Chicago Lesbian and Gay International Film Festival Chicago Illinois, 1996

Box 6, Folder 15	Rehobeth Beach Independent Film Festival, 1999
Box 3, Folder 6-8	San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Film Festival San Francisco California, 1991, 1999, 2001
Box 3, Folder 9	Southwest Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, 2004
Box 3, Folder 10	Torino Film Festival Torino Italy, 2003
Box 3, Folder 11	Tranny Fest San Francisco California, 2003
Box 3, Folder 12	Queer Film Museum signage, undated
Box 3, Folder 13	Queer Film Museum display labels, undated
Box 3, Folder 14	Inventory, undated
Box 3, Folder 15	Descriptions, 2002-2004, undated
Box 3, Folder 16	Movie reviews, 2002-2010, undated
Box 3, Folder 17	Book reviews, 2004-2005, undated
Box 3, Folder 20	Vendors, 2002-2004, undated
Box 3, Folder 21	JEB's VHS only video collection, undated
Box 4, Folder 1	Moonforce Media, 1975-1980
Box 4, Folder 2	Persistent Vision, 2001
Box 4, Folder 3	Symposium: Out of the Closet and into the Vaults, 2006
Box 4, Folder 4	TLA Video catalogues, 1990-2005
Box 4, Folder 5	Wolfe Video catalogues, 1999, undated
Box 4, Folder 6	Frameline catalogues, 2002-2003
Box 4, Folder 7	Out in Video newsletter, 1991-1993
Box 4, Folder 8	MW Metro Weekly, 1999
Box 4, Folder 9	Diva Magazine, April 2002
Box 4, Folder 10	LVA: Lesbians in the Visual Arts and the Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Historical Society, 2002

Box 4, Folder 11	Advertisements, 1980-2005, undated
Box 4, Folder 12	Pamphlets, undated
Box 4, Folder 13	Reference file: Lesbian and Gay film and video, 1986-1996, undated
Box 4, Folder 14	Clipping file: LGBT film and video, 1990-2000, undated
Box 6, Folder 16	Variety "Gay Hollywood" article, 2000

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