



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Claire Steinberg collection

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Claire James Steinberg collection
Date:	1973-1978
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.064
Creator:	Steinberg, Claire James
Extent:	714 Negatives (photographic) 152 Photographic prints 323 Slides (photographs) (Color) .21 Linear feet 7 Sound discs (CD) 3 Sound cassettes
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection includes travel logs as well as color and black and white 8x10 photographs made by Claire James Steinberg in 1976 among the Warao in Venezuela.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Claire James Steinberg, 2009.

Separated Materials

During her trip to Venezuela, Claire James Steinberg bought baskets, carved animals, and other objects from Warao villages which were donated to the museum along with the archive material. Object numbers are 26/7507-26/7569 and 26/8639. A selection of items has been linked below.

Burden/pack basket [26/7512](#)

Anteater figure [26/7561](#)

Manioc squeezer [26/7566](#)

Palm fiber hammock [26/7567](#)

Processing Information

Collection processed by Mattie Lewis, Archives Technician in 2024.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Claire James Steinberg collection, image #, NMAI.AC.064; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Access to NMAI Archives Center collections is by appointment only, Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Please contact the archives to make an appointment (phone: 301-238-1400, email: nmaiarchives@si.edu).

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Biographical / Historical

Claire James Steinberg (1942-) is a photographer in Los Angeles, California. She received her B.A. in Art from UCLA in 1966 before moving to New York to become the Picture Editor of Popular Photography Magazines and Annuals. In addition, she worked as a freelance photographer for People Magazine and as a travel writer. Steinberg taught photography classes for many years and her fine-art photographs are included in multiple museum collections including the Corcoran Gallery, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Paris Museum of Modern Art.

Scope and Contents

Claire Steinberg spent about a month (December 15, 1976- January 10) in Venezuela on a travel assignment for Westways magazine. She traveled with her husband John, visiting different towns and going on dugout boat trip up the Orinoco River to visit Warao villages. Kathy Hayes, a Peace Corps volunteer,

This collection contains 48 black and white 8x10 prints and 104 color 8x10 prints. The 323 slides are in color and the corresponding prints are labeled on the back with the slide number. The 18 contact sheets and 714 negatives are in black and white. The corresponding prints are labeled on the back with the contact sheet and frame numbers. Please note, some photographs are restricted for nudity. The locations listed were identified by Steinberg when she donated the collection.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in three series:

Series 1: Travel Preparation. This series includes travel guides, maps, directions, and research on Warao indigenous communities.

Series 2: Venezuela Travel. This series includes journal entries, photographs, audio material, and other ephemera from Steinberg's trip.

Series 2.1 Travel Documents

Series 2.2 Destinations, arranged alphabetically. **Series 3: Post Travel.** This series includes the article Steinberg wrote about her trip to Venezuela and a piece written about her.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Warao

Cultures:

Warao

Types of Materials:

Black-and-white negatives
Color slides -- 20th century
Ephemera
Photographs -- 20th century

Places:

Orinoco River (Venezuela and Colombia)
Venezuela

Container Listing

Travel preparation, 1973-1976, undated

.1 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series includes travel guides, maps of Venezuela with Steinberg's destinations marked, directions, and research on Warao indigenous communities and handicrafts.

Box 1, Folder 1 Travel guides, 1973-1976, undated
Notes: Contains three Venezuela travel guides from Sterling Publishing, Fodor's, and an unknown publication.

Box 1, Folder 2 Maps and directions, 1976
Notes: Maps of Venezuela marked with the places Steinberg visited and a set of driving directions in Spanish.

Box 1, Folder 3 Warao research, 1976, undated
Notes: This folder contains information about Warao communities and handicrafts.

Box 1, Folder 4 Peace Corps Statement, 1975
Notes: This folder contains a statement of purpose written by Kathy Hayes who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Venezuela. Her project was to assist Warao communities in finding ways of supporting their villages through handicrafts. Kathy helped facilitate the Orinoco river trip and accompanied Steinberg to the villages.

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Venezuela travel, 1976-1977

.08 Linear feet

323 Slides (photographs)

714 Negatives (photographic)

18 Contact prints

144 Photographic prints

7 Sound discs (CD)

3 Cassette tapes

Scope and Contents: This series contains the bulk of material in the collection and includes pictures, journal entries, and audio of Steinberg's travel in Venezuela. The included CDs are copies of the cassette tapes.

Travel documents, 1976-1977

.08 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This subseries contains a travel schedule, log book of expenses, journal entries, and ephemera from the trip.

Box 1, Folder 5 Schedule and log book, 1976-1977

Box 1, Folder 6 Journal entries, 1976-1977
Notes: This folder contains handwritten journal entries and a typed edited copy Steinberg wrote during the Orinoco river trip in dugout boats.

Box 1, Folder 7 Travel ephemera, 1976-1977
Notes: This folder contains a sticker, a postcard, and flyers Steinberg picked up during her trip.

Destinations, 1976-1977

323 Slides (photographs)

18 Contact sheets

714 Negatives (photographic)

144 Photographic prints

7 Sound discs (CD)

3 Cassettes

Scope and Contents: This subseries contains photographs and audio recordings of places Steinberg visited in Venezuela. The folders are arranged alphabetically by place name.

Box 2, Sheet 5-6; Angel Falls, 1976-1977

Photo-folder 1; 12 Photographic prints
 Photo-folder 2; 35 Slides (photographs)
 Box 2, Sheet 40, 44; 24 Negatives (photographic)
 Box 2, Sheet 24 1 Contact sheet
 Notes: Photographs of Angel Falls. Slides are numbered 140-222, with numbers missing. Color prints are of slides 149, 184, 192, 193, 203, 210, and 220. Black and white prints are frame 34 and 35 from contact print 7.

Photo-folder 3; Caracas, 1976-1977
 Photo-folder 4; 70 Slides (photographs)
 Box 2; 6 Photographic prints
 Box 1, Folder 8, Disk 3 Sound discs (CD)
 dig_001, dig_002, 2 Cassette tapes
 dig_004; 237 Negatives (photographic)
 Box 3, Cassette 7 Contact sheets
 AV_001, AV_002; Notes: Photographs and audio recordings taken in Caracas. Slides are numbered 1-115 and 128-138, with some numbers missing. The color print is of slide 23. Black and white prints are of frames 7 and 17 of contact sheet 5, frame 10 of contact sheet 10, and frames 10 and 24 from contact sheet 11.
 Box 2, Sheet 19-22, 27-30;
 Box 2, Sheet 38-42, 47-51

Box 2, Sheet 6-7; Choroni, 1976-1977
 Photo-folder 5 24 Slides (photographs)
 5 Photographic prints
 Notes: Photographs taken in Choroni. Slides are numbered 224-295 with missing numbers. Prints are of slides 230, 239, 245, 271, and 293.

Box 2, Sheet 4; Colonia Tovar, 1976-1977
 Box 2, Sheet 30-31; 4 Slides (photographs)
 Box 2, Sheet 51-52 2 Contact sheets
 40 Negatives (photographic)
 Notes: Photographs taken in Colonia Tovar, a mountain town with German architecture. Slides are numbered 140-222 with some numbers missing.

Box 2, Sheet 8, 10, 11, 13, 17; Dau Waja, 1976-1977
 Box 2, Sheet 20, 33; 51 Slides (photographs)
 Box 2, Sheet 39-40, 53-54; 2 Contact sheets
 Photo-folder 6; 44 Negatives (photographic)
 Photo-folder 7; 31 Prints
 Photo-folder 8; Notes: Photographs from Dau Waju, a small Warao village on the Orinoco River of five families. Slides are numbered 332-335, 362-392, 394, 396-400, 417-426, 428, and 430 with some missing numbers. Color prints are from slides 7, 37, 333, 337, 378, 379, 381-384, 389-390, 392, 396, 400, 417, 419, 421, and 426. Black and white prints are frames 26, 28, and 38 from contact print 3 and frames 6, 22, and 26 from contact print 16. Some photos are restricted for nudity.
 Photo-folder 9

Photo-folder 10; Box 2, Sheet 13-15	El Pajal, 1976-1977 4 Slides (photographs) 2 Photographic prints Notes: Photographs taken in El Pajal. The slides are numbered 444-445 and 481-482. The color prints are of slides 444 and 445.
Box 2, Sheet 15-16; Box 2, Sheet 34; Box 2, Sheet 36-37, 54-55; Photo-folder 11; Photo-folder 12	Margarita Island, 1976-1977 14 Slides (photographs) 1 Contact sheet 36 Negatives (photographic) 7 Prints Notes: Photographs from Margarita Island. Slides are numbered 521-527 and 530-557 with some numbers missing. Color prints are of slides 527, 842, and 557. Black and white prints are of frames 11, 12, 16, and 32 from contact sheet 17.
Box 2, Sheet 7-8; Box 2, Sheet 23; Box 2, Sheet 42-43; Photo-folder 13; Photo-folder 14	Maturin, 1976-1977 5 Slides (photographs) 1 Contact sheet 13 Negatives (photographic) 4 Prints Notes: Photographs taken in in Maturin. Slides are numbered 299-309 and 319 with some numbers missing. Color prints are of slides 309 and 319. Black and white prints are frames 7 and 8 from contact sheet 6.
Box 2, Sheet 8-10, 12-13, 16; Box 2, Sheet 23, 25; Box 2, Sheet 43, 55, 56; Photo-folder 15; Photo-folder 16; Photo-folder 17	Orinoco River, 1976-1977 20 Slides (photographs) 2 Contact sheets 55 Negatives (photographic) 18 Photographic prints Notes: Photos taken on the Orinoco River while visiting Warao villages. Slides are numbered 320, 323-329, 344, 359-361, 393, 395, 412, 414, 416, 432-433, and 559 with some missing. Color prints are of slides 320, 323-325, 327-328, 357, 393, 395, and 414. Black and white prints are of frames 17 and 30 from contact sheet 6.
Box 2, Sheet 11-12; Photo-folder 18	Perdonalis, 1976-1977 10 Slides (photographs) 2 Photographic prints Notes: Photographs taken in Perdonalis. Slides are numbered 401-411 and 413 with missing numbers. Color prints are of slides 444 and 445.
Box 2, Sheet 15; Box 2, Sheet 18; Box 2, Sheet 36	Puerta La Cruz, 1976-1977 5 Slides (photographs) 1 Contact sheet 30 Negatives (photographic) Notes: Photographs taken in Puerta La Cruz. Slides are numbered 500-508 and 528 with some missing.

Box 2, Sheet 9, 12-15, 17;
 Box 3, Cassette AV_003;
 Box 1, Folder 8, Disk dig_003, dig_005-dig_007;
 Box 2, Sheet 20, 23, 25-26, 32, 35;
 Box 2, Sheet 39, 43, 44-47, 52, 53, 56;
 Photo-folder 19;
 Photo-folder 20;
 Photo-folder 21;
 Photo-folder 22;
 Photo-folder 23;
 Photo-folder 24

Santo Domingo, 1976-1977
 67 Slides (photographs)
 1 Cassette tape
 6 Contact sheets
 122 Negatives (photographic)
 53 Prints
 4 Sound discs (CD)
 Notes: Photographs taken in Santo Domingo, a large Warao village. Slides are numbered 329-331, 336-443, 345-356, 358, 427, 429, 431, 434-443, 446-480, and 483-186 with some numbers missing. Color prints are of slide 329, 336-337, 339, 342, 349, 352, 355, 356, 358, 427, 429, 431, 434, 441, 446, 450, 456, 468, and 472. Black and white prints are frames 2, 5, 7-10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21 from contact sheet 8, frames 2, 3, 7, 17-18, 31, and 36 from contact sheet 9, frames 11 and 13 from contact sheet 15, frame 28 from contact sheet 16, and frame 26 from contact sheet 18.

Box 2, Sheet 7-8;
 Box 2, Sheet 24-25;
 Box 2, Sheet 43-46;
 Photo-folder 25

Tucapita, 1976-1977
 9 Slides (photographs)
 2 Contact sheets
 26 Negatives (photographic)
 4 Photographic prints
 Notes: Photographs taken in Tucapita. Slides are numbered 310-317 and 321. Color prints are of slides 313-316.

Photo-folder 26

Yakera Gallery, 1976-1977
 8 Prints

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Post travel, 1977-1978

.03 Linear feet

Notes: This series contains the travel article Steinberg wrote about her trip to Venezuela and an article written about her photography.

Box 1, Folder 9

"The Venezuela Way", 1977
 Notes: Carbon copy and magazine version of article "The Venezuela Way" written by Steinberg for Westways Magazine.

Oversize 1

"Claire Steinberg's Secret", 1978
 Notes: Article in California Living about Steinberg.