A. Jay Papers

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San Francisco Public Library, James C. Hormel LGBTQIA Center
San Francisco Public Library
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2016
Descriptive Summary
Title: A. Jay Papers
Dates: 1966-2009
Collection Number: GLC 117
Creator/Collector: Jay, A.
Extent: 1 cubic foot (1 box), 3 oversized boxes
Repository: San Francisco Public Library. James C. Hormel LGBTQIA Center
San Francisco, California 94102
Abstract: The papers contain original artwork for the gay erotic comic strip "Harry Chess: The Man From A.U.N.T.I.E." and many flyers for which A. Jay's art was used. In addition, the collection contains correspondence with other prominent gay artists such as Tom of Finland, Orsen (Mark Hadden), George Vye, Bill "The Hun," and Emile Norman. There are some photographs and original drawings; and there is some art design work, primarily video covers, for Le Salon.
Language of Material: English
Access
UNARRANGED COLLECTION. The collection is available for use during San Francisco History Center hours, with photographs available during Photo Desk hours.
Publication Rights
All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the City Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the San Francisco Public Library as the owner of the physical items.
Preferred Citation
A. Jay Papers. San Francisco Public Library. James C. Hormel LGBTQIA Center
Acquisition Information
Donated by Richard Kriegmont, January 5, 2016.
Biography/Administrative History
Allen J. Shapiro, who published his work under the name "A. Jay," was a prominent gay illustrator and cartoonist of the 1960s, 70s and 80s. He was a successor to Tom of Finland's iconic style and his work featured gay erotic situations. A. Jay is credited with the creation of the first gay comic strip, "The Adventures of Harry Chess: The Man from A.U.N.T.I.E." which appeared in New York's "Queen's Quarterly" magazine. As the founding Art Editor of the gay leather magazine "Drummer," Shapiro/Jay also gained notoriety for the erotic artwork he created for The Caldron and the Slot Bathhouse in San Francisco, in addition to posters and logos for many other gay bathhouses.
Scope and Content of Collection
The papers contain original artwork for the gay erotic comic strip "Harry Chess: The Man From A.U.N.T.I.E." and many flyers for which A. Jay's art was used. In addition, the collection contains correspondence with other prominent gay artists such as Tom of Finland, Orsen (Mark Hadden), George Vye, Bill "The Hun," and Emile Norman. There are some photographs and original drawings; and there is some art design work, primarily video covers, for Le Salon. The collection also includes Jack Fritscher's article "'My Life Was A Drawing Room Comedy...' Al Shapiro, A. Jay, and Harry Chess (The Passing of One of Drummer's First Daddies)."
Indexing Terms
Gay men--Comic books, strips, etc.
Sex--Comic books, strips, etc.
Gay men--Humor.
Caricatures and cartoons.
Gay erotic art.
Jay, A.--Archives.
Kriegmont, Richard.
Comic books, strips, etc.