Finding Aid for the Sam Erenberg papers, 1965-2012

Sheila Prospero
Descriptive Summary

Title: Sam Erenberg papers
Date (inclusive): 1965-2012
Number: 2012.M.52
Creator/Collector: Erenberg, Sam
Physical Description: 17 Linear Feet (24 boxes, 2 flatfile folders) and computer media (676 GB [109 files])
Repository: The Getty Research Institute
Special Collections
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100
Los Angeles 90049-1688
reference@getty.edu
URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10020/askref
(310) 440-7390

Abstract: The papers highlight Erenberg's career as a painter, bookmaker, filmmaker, and installation and performance artist. The archive includes correspondence, photographs, and project files documenting Erenberg's exhibition history; relations with artists, curators, and gallerists; and the development of various projects including experimental films, installations, and artists' books.

Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the catalog record for this collection. Click here for the access policy.

Language: Collection material is in English.

Biographical / Historical Note

American artist Sam Erenberg is a painter, bookmaker, filmmaker, and installation and performance artist. Born in 1943, he grew up in the Baldwin Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. His interest in art began after being inspired by exhibitions of Salvador Dali and hard-edge painting during the early 1960s. He enrolled in the Chouinard Art Institute (now known as the California Institute of the Arts) to study painting in 1965, and it was there that he met his wife, Elena Mary Siff. In 1969, they moved to the artistic community of Topanga Canyon, where Erenberg socialized with musicians and artists including Wallace Berman and George Herms. Inspired by a creative community, Erenberg worked on several films with local artist friends and reinforced his interest in filmmaking.

Erenberg received his BA in Art from California State University, Northridge in 1974 and an MFA from the University of California Santa Barbara two years later. In Santa Barbara, Erenberg became more involved with performance art and started making artists' books for his first performance piece. After graduate school, Erenberg became part of the exhibition committee for the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum and curated exhibitions for artists such as Chris Burden and Laurie Anderson. Erenberg was actively involved in the art community in Santa Barbara, where he also had several solo and group exhibitions. He continued to live in Santa Barbara with his family until 1993 and moved back to Los Angeles the following year.

Erenberg's films, installations, books, and paintings have been exhibited throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and Central America and are included in collections worldwide including the Kunstmuseum Bern (Switzerland), Wexford Arts Centre (Ireland), and the UCLA Armand Hammer Museum. He currently lives and works in Santa Monica.

Access
Open for use by qualified researchers, except audiovisual materials, which are unavailable until reformatted, and materials in Box 24, which are sealed until 2066.

Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
hd.handle.net/10020/cifa2012m52

Acquisition Information
Gift of Sam Erenberg. Acquired in 2012.

Processing History
Processed by Sheila Prospero under the supervision of Kit Messick in July 2014 and from January to June 2015. One videotape was added to the collection in 2018; audiovisual materials are unavailable until reformatted. Digital materials were processed by Laura Schroffel in 2017. Files require further processing and can be requested by contacting reference.

Digitized material
Selected recordings were digitized and are available online: http://hdl.handle.net/10020/2012m52av

Appraisal
Leopard test volume backup digital files were not retained in this collection according to the Library's digital preservation and privacy policies.

Separated Materials
Fifty-three monographs and two serials were transferred to the library. These publications may be found by searching the library catalog for the Sam Erenberg Collection.

Scope and Content of Collection
The Sam Erenberg papers highlight the artist's career as a painter, bookmaker, filmmaker, and installation and performance artist. The collection includes correspondence and project files documenting Erenberg's exhibition history; relations with artists, curators, and gallerists; and the development of several large-scale installation projects. Also featured are films he created between 1967 and 1977, and works of art by other artists.

Series I contains both personal and business correspondence from 1965 to 2010. It includes personal letters from Erenberg's family, as well as letters from artists such as Ciel Bergman and Stephen Westfall, and mail art from James Lee Byars. The majority of the business correspondence relates to applications for fellowships, grants, residency programs, and teaching positions, as well as art submissions and exhibition proposals. Also included are papers documenting gallery consignments, artists' book projects, and other miscellaneous business papers.

The project files in Series II form the bulk of the archive and document Erenberg's artistic career. Included are papers related to various projects such as exhibitions, installations, artists' books, performances, lectures, and fellowships. The papers comprise correspondence, clippings, project notes, drafts, invoices, and ephemera. Some files include photographs and audiovisual material. Additionally, this series contains original works by Erenberg including raw footage of his experimental films between 1967 and 1977. Photographic documentation of artworks and notebooks are filed at the end of the series.

The archive also contains Erenberg's collection of works and ephemera by artists in Series III. Works include prints, drawings, and photographs by artists such as Byars and Karen Atkinson.

Series IV contains miscellaneous or unidentified papers, personal photographs, and audiovisual material. Of particular note is an audio recording of Marcel Duchamp speaking at The Art of Assemblage at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1961.

Arrangement

Subjects - Topics
Art, American -- California -- 20th century
Performance art
Installations (Art)
Artists' books
Public art -- California

Genres and Forms of Material
Black-and-white negatives -- 20th century
Photographs, Original
Video art -- United States -- 20th century
Color photographs
Color negatives
Black-and-white photographs -- 20th century
Video recordings -- United States -- 20th century
Series I. **Correspondence, 1965-2010**

Physical Description: 2.5 Linear Feet(6.5 boxes)

Scope and Content Note

Series I contains both personal and business correspondence from 1965 to 2010. It includes personal letters from Erenberg's family, as well as letters from artists such as Ciel Bergman and Stephen Westfall, and mail art from James Lee Byars. The majority of the business correspondence relates to applications for fellowships, grants, residency programs, and teaching positions, as well as art submissions and exhibition proposals. Also included are papers related to gallery consignments, artists' book projects, and other miscellaneous business correspondence. Some files also contain invoices and ephemera.

Arrangement

Personal correspondence arranged alphabetically. Business correspondence arranged by subject.

**Personal, 1965-2010**

Some files contain personal photographs accompanying letters. Color materials have been separated for conservation purposes.

  - box 2, folder 1: Letters, 2001
  - box 17, folder 1: Color slide, undated

  - box 17, folder 2: Color photograph, 1996

  - box 3, folder 13-14: Various, 1979-2008

  - Bergman, Ciel, 1995-2002

Scope and Content Note

Unidentified correspondence.

Photo of Stansbury Island, Utah. Part of letter from F. McIntyre.

Also known as Cheryl Bowers.
box 1, folder 7  
**Letters, 1995-2002**  
Scope and Content Note  
Contains black-and-white photographs.

box 17, folder 3  
box 1, folder 8  
**Color photographs, 1995-1996**  
Bijvoet, Marga, 1982, 1984  
Byars, James Lee, 1975, 1977  
Scope and Content Note  
Contains mail art. For more works of art, see also Byars's file in "Works by other artists" (Series III).

box 1, folder 9  
box 22*, folder 3  
**Various, 1975**  
Oversize, 1977  
Contreras, Susan, 1995-1996  
Letters, 1995-1996  
Coodley, Lauren, 2005, 2010  
De Voss, Judy, 1978-1999  
Ekstrom, Linda, 1988-1995  
Erenberg family, 1979-1996  
Erenberg, Adele, 1965, 1988  
Erenberg, Arthur, 1978  
Erenberg, Noah, 1987-2008  
Erenberg, Revelle, 1999-2009, undated  
Lentz, Daniel, 1979, 2004-2006  
Mark, Dara, 2003-2006  
Nathan, Miriam Morsel, 2001-2003  
Letters, 2001-2003  
Color photographs, 2001  
Letters, 1977-1996  
Color Polaroid, 1990  
Siff, Aida, 1979-1988  
Siff, Elena Mary, 1981-2003  
Scope and Content Note  
Also known as Elena Erenberg.

box 3, folder 10  
**Slawson, Dunnieghe, 2003, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
See Bruce Wallin's file.

box 3, folder 9  
box 3, folder 10  
**Tanner, Joan, 1990-1996**  
Wallin, Bruce, 2003, undated  
**Westfall, Stephen, 1980**  
Zimmerman, Jerome and Salli, 1979-1999  
**Business, 1967-2006**  
Applications, 1978-2003  
Fellowships, grants, and residency programs, 1990-2003  
Scope and Content Note  
SEALED until 2066.

box 4, folder 6  
**Teaching positions, 1978-1999**
Series I. Correspondence, 1965-2010

Submissions and proposals, 1977-1999

Scope and Content Note
Contains letters from museums and galleries in response to Erenberg's submissions for review of his artwork. Includes proposals for exhibition and consignment requests. Also includes copies of Erenberg's letters.

box 5, folder 1-4
Domestic, 1977-1998
Europe, 1988-1999
box 5, folder 5
Papers, 1988-1999
box 17, folder 7
Color photographs, 1996

Gallery consignments, 1975-2006
Scope and Content Note
Includes invoices.

box 6, folder 1
Various, 1975-1988, 2002
box 6, folder 2
Carol Craven Gallery, 2005-2006
box 6, folder 3
Richard Heller Gallery, Bergamot Station, 1995
box 6, folder 4
Slayter-Ralph, Anthony, 1993

Artists' books, 1984-2001
Scope and Content Note
Includes sales invoices, ephemera, catalogs, and correspondence related to consignments and book fairs.

box 6, folder 5-7
box 6, folder 8
box 6, folder 9
box 6, folder 10

Miscellaneous, 1977-2006
Scope and Content Note
Includes ephemera.

box 6, folder 13
Invoices, 1967-1984
Scope and Content Note
Papers related to purchases and exhibitions.

Series II. Project files, 1967-2009

Physical Description: 9.3 Linear Feet (10 boxes, 2 flatfile folders)

Scope and Content Note
The project files in this series form the bulk of the archive and document Erenberg's artistic career. This includes papers and photographs related to exhibitions, installations, artists' books, performances, lectures, and fellowships. The papers comprise correspondence, clippings, project notes, drafts, invoices, and ephemera. Photographs include both black-and-white and color prints (including Polaroid prints), contact sheets, and negatives. Some files also contain audiovisual materials such as audiotape reels, audiocassettes, and videocassettes. Additionally, this series contains original work by Erenberg, particularly raw footage of his experimental films between 1967 and 1977. Photographic documentation of artworks and notebooks are filed at the end of the series.

Arrangement
Arranged by subject.

Exhibitions and installations, 1979-2009

Santa Barbara Artists Invitational: Part I, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1979
The Actual Symposium, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 1981

Scope and Content Note

box 20, folder 1

Papers
Scope and Content Note
Papers related to audiovisual materials.

Audiocassettes
box 20, item C1

Michael Moerman
Scope and Content Note
1 audiocassette: analog, 1 5/16 ips; 3 7/8 x 2 1/2 in., 1/8 in. tape.

box 20, item C2

Gene Youngblood
Scope and Content Note
1 audiocassette: analog, 1 5/16 ips; 3 7/8 x 2 1/2 in., 1/8 in. tape.

Audiotape reel
box 20, item R1

#1
Scope and Content Note
1 audiotape reel: analog, 7 1/2 ips, mono.; 7 in., 1/2 in. tape.

box 20, item R2

#2
Scope and Content Note
1 audiotape reel: analog, 7 1/2 ips, mono.; 7 in., 1/2 in. tape.


box 6, folder

15-16
Papers
Scope and Content Note
Contains material related to the death of Fred Hendricks.

box 6, folder 17
box 7, folder 1
box 7, folder 2
box 7, folder 3
box 7, folder 4
box 7, folder 5

Black-and-white photographs and contact sheet
Black-and-white negatives and color transparencies
Of This Time, Of That Place, Open Space Gallery, 1983
California Bookworks: The Last Five Years, The Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design, 1983-1984
Masks, Masquerades, Megillot, Hebrew Union College Skirball Museum, 1983-1984
Solo exhibition, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, 1984

Papers, 1985, 1996
Working drawings, circa 1985

box 7, folder 6
box 7, folder 7
box 17, folder 9
box 23*, folder 1

Papers 1988-1990
Black-and-white photographs 1988-1990
Black-and-white negatives 1988-1990
Proposal drawings, 1990

Currents, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1989
box 7, folder 8

Papers
Videocassette

Scope and Content Note

1 videocassette (VHS) : sd., col. ; 1/2 in. Group exhibition at Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

*Competition Diomede, Institute of Contemporary Art (Long Island, New York), 1989*

Papers

Black-and-white photographs

Solo exhibition, Toni Gerber Galerie, 1989

Window on AIDS, outdoor installation, Santa Barbara, circa 1988-1989

Scope and Content Note

Posters and artist’s proofs.

Solo exhibition, Roy Boyd Gallery, 1989-1990


Papers

Color photographs

Southwest ’90, Museum of New Mexico, 1990-1991

Papers

Color photographs

Cross-Currents: Bookworks from the Edge of the Pacific, Pacific Rim Bookworks Show, 1990-1993

Papers

Boundless Vision: Contemporary Bookworks, The San Antonio Art Institute, 1991

Santa Barbara Artists I, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1991


Papers, 1991-1992

Clippings, 1995

Color photographs, 1992


Breaking Barriers, Santa Monica Museum of Art, 1992

Just a White Show, 1529 Wellesley, Los Angeles, 1993

Shaped Structures: Bookworks in Form, Palos Verdes Art Center, 1993

Sawtelle, Domestic Setting, Los Angeles, 1993-1994

The Book Unbound, Ormond Memorial Art Museum, 1993-1995

Scope and Content Note

Co-curated by Mary Ellen Long.


Papers 1993-1995

Color photograph 1994

California/2, Jerrold Burchman Contemporary Art, 1994

Jewish Artists of Southern California III, Wilshire Boulevard Temple, 1994

Eco Nation: Patriots of the Earth, Bedford Gallery, 1994-1995

A Vital Matrix, Domestic Setting, Los Angeles, 1995

A, Working Title, E-Space, 1995

1st Wexford Artists’ Book Exhibition, Wexford Arts Centre, 1995

Books in the Living Room, The Living Room, 1996

Detours ’96, Side Street Projects, 1996
Scope and Content Note
Includes personal letters to Erenberg from Toni Gerber.

2nd Wexford Artists' Book Exhibition, Wexford Arts Centre, 1996

Open Book, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 1996

Drawings, Gallery LASCA (Los Angeles Seoul Contemporary Arts), 1996-1997


118W/34N, Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten, Graz, Austria, 1997-1998

Journeys to Freedom: Exodus and Israel, Bellevue Art Museum, 1998


Susret Art Workshop, 1998-2000

The Complete Works of Roland Barthes, 1999

Projections: Intermission Images, Side Street Projects, 1999

See also Karen Atkinson file in Series III.

The Changing Face of Portraiture, Chapman University, 2000

American Outpost, The Living Room, 2000-2005

Black-and-white contact sheet, circa 2000-2001

Scope and Content Note
Also contains images of another Erenberg work.

Black-and-white negatives, circa 2000-2001

Scope and Content Note
Also contains images of another Erenberg work.

Color photographs and one negative, 2000-2001

Six Degrees: Art in the Libraries, Side Street Projects, 2001

The Chai Show, University of Judaism, 2002-2003

Religion, Spirituality and the Object, Indianapolis Art Center, 2002-2003

Oceans, Craig Krull Gallery, 2003
Box 10, folder 6  
**Small Works and Short Films,** Space Gallery, 2008  
**The Book as Sculpture,** Brandstater Gallery, 2008-2009  
Papers, 2008-2009  
CD of images, 2009  

**Lectures and symposia, 1993, 1999, undated**  
Box 10, folder 9  
**Collège de France footage, 1999 February 8**  
Scope and Content Note  
1 videocassette (VHS) (60 min.) : sd., col. ; 1/2 in. (From ADD4)

Box 21, item V2-V3  
**Collège de France lecture, 1999 February 8**  
Scope and Content Note  
1 videocassette (VHS) (60 min.) : sd., col. ; 1/2 in. (2 copies)

Box 10, folder 10  
**Evening Forums, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
Papers for Erenberg's presentation "Revelation in Santa Barbara: A Discourse."

**Fellowships and residencies, 1991-1999**  
Box 10, folder 11  
**Partners of the Americas (Buenos Aires), 1991**  
Scope and Content Note  
Artist-in-residency program.

Box 10, folder 12  
**Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, 1992-1995**  

**Other projects, 1990-1993, undated**  
Box 10, folder 14  
**Papers and contact sheet**  
Box 17, folder 24  
**Black-and-white negatives**  
Box 10, folder 15  
**Interactive Computer Kiosk project, 1992-1993**  
Box 23*, folder 2-3  
**Art park, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
Proposal drawings for garden and sculpture. Drawings are possibly for different projects.

Box 10, folder 16  
**Performances, circa 1975-1985**  
Scope and Content Note  
Includes papers related to performances: *Inner-World Arrangement, Four Questions,* and *WOLF IS DEAD: Performances and Videotapes of Wolfgang Stoerchle."

**Artists' books, 1977-1997**  
Scope and Content Note  
Papers related to book projects including notes, invoices, and correspondence.

Box 11, folder 1  
**Art History, 1977**  
Box 11, folder 2  
**The Killing of Nettie Love, circa 1983**  
Box 11, folder 3-4  
**The Spirit Tower, 1988-1989**  
Box 11, folder 5  
**Seven Abstract Paintings: 1986-1996, 1996-1997**  
Artworks, 1990-2008, undated  
Box 11, folder 6  
**Freedom of Expression, 1990**  
Scope and Content Note  
Two copies. An American Civil Liberties Union postcard project sponsored by the Santa Barbara Chapter of ACLU. Contains a series of postcards created by various artists including Erenberg.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Scope and Content Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11, 8</td>
<td>Artist's proofs, undated</td>
<td>Scope and Content Note Also includes proofs that are possibly for other projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, F2</td>
<td>Elysian Park II, 1967 1 film reel : si.,; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, F3</td>
<td>Marker, 1967 1 film reel : si.,; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, F4</td>
<td>Score, 1967 1 film reel : si.,; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, F5</td>
<td>Time, 1968 Raw footage 1 film reel : si., col.; standard 8 mm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, F6</td>
<td>Edited 1 film reel : si., col.; standard 8 mm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, F7</td>
<td>Willys, 1968 1 film reel : si.,; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
box 21, item F9  
**The Last Statement of Painting II, 1970**

Scope and Content Note
1 film reel : si., col. ; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.

box 21, item F10  
**The Silence, 1970**

Scope and Content Note
1 film reel : si., ; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.

box 21, item F11  
**The Silence II, 1970**

Scope and Content Note
1 film reel : si., ; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.

box 21, item F12  
**Nivea Milk, 1972**

Raw footage
Scope and Content Note
1 film reel : si., col. ; standard 8 mm.

box 21, item F13  
**Outtakes**

Scope and Content Note
1 film reel : si., col. ; standard 8 mm.

box 21, item F14  
**Trajectory, 1977**

Scope and Content Note
1 film reel : si., ; standard 8 mm. Raw footage.

**Photographs 1977-2000, undated**

**Works, 1977-2000**

Scope and Content Note
Contains images of Erenberg's artworks.

box 22*, folder 2  
**Painter's Dream, 1977**

Scope and Content Note
Photograph of glass box for Painter's Dream installation.

**Paintings, 1971-1983**

box 11, folder 9
box 17, folder
27-29

**Alder, 1984**

Black-and-white prints
Black-and-white negatives

**Untitled (Les Plaisirs et Les Jours), 1993**

Black-and-white prints and contact sheet
Black-and-white negatives

**Jewish images, 1996, 2000**

Scope and Content Note
Color prints. Includes images of Untitled, Stars and Big Kippah for LA.

**Miscellaneous, undated**

Scope and Content Note
Contains images of various works or projects by Erenberg.

box 11, folder
12-13

**Black-and-white prints and contact sheets**
Series II. Project files, 1967-2009

Black-and-white and color negatives

Notebooks, undated

Box 17, folder 33-34

Series III. Works by other artists, 1977-2012, undated

Physical Description: 4.2 Linear Feet (5 boxes)

Scope and Content Note

This series contains Erenberg's collection of works and ephemera by other artists. Works include prints, drawings, and photographs by artists such as Byars and Karen Atkinson.

Arrangement

Organized alphabetically by artist.

Box 19

Atkinson, Karen, 1996

Scope and Content Note

View-Master and reels for Projections: Intermission Images exhibition. See also exhibition file in box 9, folder 12.

Box 13, folder 4-8

Byars, James Lee,

Various, circa 1978-1990, undated

Scope and Content Note

Also includes exhibition ephemera. See Series I for mail art correspondence.

Box 15

"Holy Ghost," undated

Scope and Content Note

Possibly a work by Erenberg.

Box 13, folder 9

Holzer, Jenny, undated

Scope and Content Note

West of Rome Project.

Box 22*, folder 4

Lattu, Brandon, 2001

Box 13, folder 10-12

Mayerle, Manfred, 2001-2009

Box 13, folder 13

McEntire, Frank, undated

Scope and Content Note

9/11 Project.

Box 13, folder 14

Mudfoot, Judyl, 1984, undated

Box 22*, folder 5

Orr, Eric, 2012

Scope and Content Note


Box 23*, folder 6

Perna, Luciano, 2007

Scope and Content Note

Signed exhibition poster for National Geographic, Norma Desmond Productions.

Box 13, folder 15

Radawec, Bill, undated

Box 18

Raphael, Victor, undated

Scope and Content Note

Altered Polaroid.

Box 13, folder 16

Small, Rena, 1998

Box 13, folder 17

Strode, Thaddeus, undated

Box 13, folder 18

Unidentified, undated
Series IV. **Miscellaneous, circa 1961, 1979-2011, undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 Linear Feet (2.5 boxes)

**Scope and Content Note**

The last series is comprises miscellaneous or unidentified papers, personal photographs, and audiovisual material. It includes ephemera, clippings, color portraits of Erenberg, and travel photographs in the form of black-and-white prints and negatives. Of particular note is an audio recording of Marcel Duchamp speaking at *The Art of Assemblage* at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1961.

**Arrangement**

Arranged by subject.

**box 14, folder 1-2**

**Papers, 1979-2007**

Scope and Content Note

Contains ephemera, clippings, and other miscellaneous papers.

**box 16, item CD2**

**Ann Edge interview, undated**

Scope and Content Note


**box 20, item R3**

**Marcel Duchamp Speaks, circa 1961**

Scope and Content Note

1 audiotape reel (37 min.) : analog ; 7 in., 1/2 in. tape. Audio recording of Duchamp speaking at *The Art of Assemblage* at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1961.

**box 17, folder 35**

**Photographs, undated**

Portraits

Travel

Scope and Content Note

Some photographs are possibly exhibition-related.

**box 14, folder 3-5**

**Black-and-white contact sheets**

**box 17, folder 36-37**

**Black-and-white negatives**

**box ADD3, item DR1**

**Hard drive, 2010-2011**

Scope and Content Note

Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting. Click here for the [access policy](#).

Dates taken from last modified dates. Contains .jpg, .mov, and .dv. files. See attached [directory](#).