Claire Copley Gallery records

Finding aid prepared by Annette Leddy
Descriptive Summary

Title: Claire Copley Gallery records
Date (inclusive): 1968-2011, bulk 1973-1977
Number: 2014.M.2
Creator/Collector: Claire Copley Gallery
Physical Description: 9.0 linear feet (13 boxes, 1 flatfile folder)
Repository: The Getty Research Institute
Special Collections
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100
Los Angeles, California, 90049-1688
(310) 440-7390

Abstract: The records of one of the first Los Angeles galleries to show the work of conceptual artists such as Terry Allen, Michael Asher, Daniel Buren, Joseph Kosuth, and William Leavitt. The collection includes artist files containing correspondence, ephemera, and comprehensive photographic documentation of each exhibition.

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

Claire Copley Gallery was one of the first Los Angeles art galleries to show some twenty artists now considered pioneers of Conceptual Art, whose works now form parts of major museum collections around the world.

The daughter of artist, dealer, and collector William Copley, Claire Copley founded her own gallery to showcase the work of emergent international artists of her generation, including Americans Michael Asher, Terry Allen, Joseph Kosuth, Allen Ruppersberg, and William Leavitt; Europeans Jan Dibbets, Bas Jan Ader, Ger Van Elk, and Daniel Buren; the Japanese artist On Kawara; and Argentine David Lamelas. The installations, done in collaboration with the artists, were innovative and elegant, as was the related ephemera. Though in operation for a relatively short duration, the gallery was a key venue in the formation of the Los Angeles art scene in the 1960s and 1970s, along with the galleries of Eugenia Butler, Rolf Nelson, Nick Wilder, and Riko Mizuno. It was one of three galleries profiled in the Pacific Standard Time exhibition at the Sam Francis Gallery of the Crossroads School in 2011 titled She Accepts the Proposition: Women Gallerists and the Redefinition of Art in Los Angeles, 1967-1978.

Access
Open for use by qualified researchers.

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Preferred Citation

Acquisition Information
Acquired from Claire Copley in 2014.

Processing History
Processed and cataloged by Annette Leddy in 2014.

Related Archival Materials
This collection relates to the William and Noma Copley Foundation records (accession no. 880403), in that Claire Copley is the daughter of William Copley, and there is some overlap between the artists documented in the two archives.

Scope and Content of Collection
The collection, comprised of artist files, with a small amount of material relating to gallery management and accounting, offers a comprehensive view of the work of important conceptual artists in the first stage of their careers. The artist files often contain professional yet friendly correspondence with Claire Copley regarding details of exhibition installation and planning, theoretical discussions of the artwork, and personal news. Project proposals, sketches, clippings of reviews, and announcements are often present. There is comprehensive and expert photographic coverage of each exhibition, and of each artwork in a given installation, generally in three formats: black and white photographs, negatives, and slides, with
the occasional color print. Clippings reveal the lack of understanding that the exhibitions met with, a highlight of which was a police action against a Daniel Buren exhibition that extended to the gallery exterior, an event for which there is also photo-documentation in the archive.

The work of artists who were not represented by the gallery but whose work comprised part of the gallery's inventory or simply part of the gallery's broader art context, such as Ed Ruscha, John Baldessari, and Bruce Nauman, appears generally in slides in alphabetical sequence within the binders of slides and negatives; however, Louise Lawler, Gilbert & George, Schley and Adler, and Duane Zaloudek have mixed materials folders as well. Ken Feingold is the only artist who showed in the gallery who has no material in the archive.

**Arrangement**


**Subjects - Names**

Allen, Terry
Asher, Michael
Buren, Daniel
Kosuth, Joseph
Leavitt, William

**Subjects - Topics**

Art galleries, Commercial--California--Los Angeles
Art, American--California--Los Angeles--20th century
Conceptual art--United States--20th century

**Genres and Forms of Material**

Black-and-white negatives
Black-and-white photographs
Compact discs
Photographs, Original
Slides (photographs)

**Contributors**

Allen, Terry
Asher, Michael
Buren, Daniel
Copley, Claire
Kosuth, Joseph
Leavitt, William

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**Series I. Gallery artists, 1969-2010, undated**

**Physical Description:** 7.41 linear feet (11 boxes, 1 flatfile folder)

**Scope and Content Note**

Files contain correspondence, primarily between the artists and Claire Copley, announcements, project plans, installation sketches, black and white photographs, slides, and occasional color photographs of exhibitions and individual works.

**Arrangement note**

Arranged in alphabetical order by the artists' last names.

**Ader, Bas Jan, 1975-2010**

Box 1, Folder 1  **Mixed materials**
Box 5  **Slides and negatives**
Box 9, Item D1  **Compact disc of photographs**

**Allen, Terry, 1974-1977, undated**

Box 1, Folder 2-4  **Mixed materials**
Box 5: Slides and color photographs
Box 9, Item D2: Compact disc of photographs
Flatfile 1**: Posters (2)
Box 5: Mixed materials
Box 6: Slides and negatives
Asher, Michael, 1974-1977
Box 1, Folder 5: Mixed materials
Buren, Daniel, 1974-1977
Box 5: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Calloway, Loren, 1975-1977
Box 2, Folder 1: Mixed materials
Copley, Billy, 1975-1977, undated
Box 2, Folder 2-3: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Dibbets, Jan, 1975-1977
Box 5: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Fulton, Hamish, 1973-1977
Box 2, Folder 5: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Horton, Lyn, 1974-1975
Box 6: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Korman, Harriet, 1973-1977
Box 2, Folder 8: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Joseph Kosuth, 1974-1977
Box 2, Folder 9-10: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Lamelas, David, 1973-2006
Box 3, Folder 1: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Leavitt, William, 1969-1976
Box 3, Folder 3: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Le Va, Barry, 1974-1977
Box 3, Folder 4-5: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Le Witt, Sol, 1975-1977, undated
Box 3, Folder 6-7: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Lodato, Peter, 1975-1977, undated
Box 3, Folder 8: Mixed materials
Le Witt, Sol, 1975-1977, undated
Box 7: Slides
McCollum, Allan, 1973-1977, undated
Box 7: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
On Kawara, 1977
Ruppersberg, Allen, 1974-1976
Box 8: Mixed materials, Color photograph
Salle, David, 1977, undated
Box 8: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Sorenson, Don, 1974-1976
Box 4, Folder 1: Mixed materials, Slides and negatives
Series I. Gallery artists, 1969-2010, undated

| Box 4, Folder 2 | Train, Michael, 1973
| Box 4, Folder 3 | Van Elke, Ger, 1973-1977
| Box 8 | Mixed materials
| Box 4, Folder 5 | Wegman, William, undated
| Board 4, Folder 6 | Weiner, Lawrence, 1974-1977
| Box 8 | Mixed materials
| Wells, Lynton, 1975-1976
| Box 4, Folder 7 | Mixed materials
| Box 8 | Slides and negatives
| Box 11-13 | Duplicate ephemera, 1974-1977
| Box 8 | Unidentified negatives, undated

Series II. Other artists, 1968-1981, undated

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet (4 folders; circa 75 slides)

Scope and Content Note
Material relating to the work of artists who were not part of the gallery’s roster of artists but whose work comprised part of the gallery’s inventory or simply part of the gallery’s broader art context

Arrangement note
Arranged within the alphabetical sequence of manuscripts or slides.

Flatfile 1**

Duchamp, Marcel, 1968

Scope and Content Note

Gilbert & George, 1973-1974

Mixed materials

Lawler, Louise, 1978

Schley, Van and Billy Adler, 1974, undated

Mixed materials

Zaloudek, Duane 1981

Scope and Content Note
An artist Copley wrote about after the gallery closed.

Box 5-8

Assorted slides, 1968-1977, undated

Scope and Content Note
From one to twenty-seven slides of work by the following artists: John Baldessari, Robert Barry, Frederick Barthelme, Hilda Becher, Larry Bell, Mel Bochner, Alighiero Boetti, George Brecht, Chris Burden, Victor Burgin, Ian Burn, Christo, Hanne Darboven, Walter DeMaria, Jim Dine, Marcel Duchamp, Dan Flavin, Gilbert & George, Dan Graham, Han Haacke, Michael Heizer, Eva Hesse, __Hines, Douglas Huebler, Robert Irwin, Janis Kounellis, Christine Kozlov, Bruce Nauman, Dennis Oppenheim, Robert Rauschenberg, Ed Ruscha, Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, Keith Sonnier, Bernar Venet, Michael Walls, Doug Wheeler.

Arrangement note
In alphabetical order by artist’s last name within the slide binders.
Series III. **Assorted business files, 1974-2011, undated**

- **Physical Description:** 1.17 linear feet (2 boxes)
- **Scope and Content Note:**
  Material pertaining to the operation of the gallery and its closing.
- **Arrangement note:**
  Arranged in rough chronological order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4, Folder 9-15</td>
<td><strong>Mixed materials, 1974-2011, undated</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Including inventories, sales records, stationary, and press releases from <em>She Accepts the Proposition</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>Negatives of unidentified gallery event, undated</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9, Item D3</td>
<td><strong>Compact disc of gallery photographs, undated</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Wooden box used for filing negatives, undated</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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