Finding aid for the Feminist Art Workers records, 1976-2013, undated

Rachel Poutasse
Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Feminist Art Workers records

**Date (inclusive):** 1976-2013, undated

**Number:** 2017.M.48

**Creator/Collector:** Feminist Art Workers

**Physical Description:** 22.23 Linear Feet (26 boxes, 2 boxed-rolls, 5 flatfile folders. Computer media: 17.67 GB [617 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 archive consists of papers, photographs, audiovisual and born digital material documenting the performances, exhibitions, and administrative activities of the Feminist Art Workers.

**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.

**Historical Note**

The Feminist Art Workers were a collaborative feminist performance group created in 1976 by Candace Compton, Laurel Klick, Nancy Angelo, and Cheri Gaulke. The group formed after teaching together for the Summer Art Program at the Woman's Building in Los Angeles. Compton left the group shortly after its inception and Vanalyne Green joined in 1978. The Feminist Art Workers were recognized for their combination of performance art and feminist pedagogy and their emphasis on making art in a non-hierarchical collaborative way. The group's main period of activity was from 1977 to 1981, although they also had multiple retrospective projects from 2008 to 2012.

Notable performances include *Heaven or Hell?* (1977), first performed at the Chicago lesbian restaurant Mama Peaches, in which forks were attached to four-foot-long poles and used as banquet props for guests to try to feed themselves (Hell) or work together to feed each other (Heaven); *This Ain't No Heavy Breathing* (1978), in which the artists chose random numbers from the phone book and called women to wish them a good day; and *Bills of Rights* (1980), in which the artists distributed "dollar bills" printed with information about the salary gap between men and women and urged recipients to support the Equal Rights Amendment. In later years, the Feminist Art Workers produced a documentary video for the *Making It Together* exhibition at the Bronx Museum of the Arts (2008), created retrospective installations for the Trajector Art Fair in Brussels (2011) and for the *Doin' It in Public* exhibition at the Otis College of Art and Design (2011-2012), and also performed *Heaven or Hell?* as part of the latter exhibition.

**Sources consulted:**

**Access**
Open for use by qualified researchers, except for Box 17 and Boxed-roll 2**, which are restricted due to fragility. Box 15, Box 16, and Box 23 are restricted pending conservation. Born digital content will be made available on-site only, through the digital preservation repository. Born digital content and audiovisual materials are unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting.

**Publication Rights**
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**Preferred Citation**
http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa2017m48

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

**Processing Information**

Rachel Poutasse processed the collection and wrote the finding aid under the supervision of Sarah Mackenzie Wade and Kit Messick. Digital materials were processed by Laura Schroffel in 2019. Digital files require further processing before access copies can be made available. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, ST-03-17-0007-17.

**Related Archival Materials**


One publication has been transferred to the Getty Research Library's general collections. This can be searched in the online catalog by using the search phrase "Feminist Art Workers Collection."

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The archive consists primarily of project files for performances and exhibitions by the Feminist Art Workers during their main period of activity from 1977 to 1981 and their retrospective projects from 2008 to 2012, including papers, press clippings, photographic documentation, ephemera, and audiovisual and born digital materials. The collection also contains administrative files, promotional brochures, and pictures of social activities and gatherings from the late 1970s to the early 1980s. The materials were compiled by Laurel Klick and Cheri Gaulke.

**Arrangement**


**Subjects - Corporate Bodies**

- Woman's Building (Los Angeles, Calif.)

**Subjects - Topics**

- Art, American -- California -- 20th century
- Feminism in art -- United States -- 20th century
- Performance art -- United States -- 20th century
- Women artists -- Archives
- Women artists -- United States -- 20th century

**Genres and Forms of Material**

- Audiocassettes
- Black-and-white negatives -- 20th century
- Black-and-white prints (photographs) -- 20th century
- Born digital
- Color negatives -- 20th century
- Color slides -- 20th century
- Diazotypes (copies)
- DVDs
- Open reel audiotapes
- Photographs, Original
- Posters
- Printed ephemera
- Sound recordings
- Video recordings

**Contributors**

- Feminist Art Workers
- Gaulke, Cheri
- Klick, Laurel, 1950-
Series I. Performances and exhibitions, 1977-2013, undated

Physical Description: 19.73 Linear Feet (25 boxes, 2 boxed-rolls, 5 flatfile folders. Computer media: 17.67 GB [617 files])

Scope and Content Note

Series I documents performances and exhibitions by the Feminist Art Workers during their main period of activity from 1977 to 1981, and also contains materials from later projects such as the documentary produced for the Bronx Museum of the Arts in 2008 and their installation at the Otis College of Art and Design in 2011. Dates in parentheses indicate performance or exhibition dates, if these differ from the dates on the items. Most projects include photographic materials (slides, black-and-white and color photographs and negatives, and contact sheets), planning documents such as scripts and schedules, and press clippings and articles. Some projects contain objects used in performances, materials for installations, audiovisual materials, or ephemera such as postcards. The series also includes born digital material on six DVDs containing image files used for the book Feminist Art Workers: A History (2012); the 2008 Feminist Art Workers: Heaven or Hell? documentary video; and The Icon, an unknown work for an event at the Otis College of Art and Design in 2011. Software formats were identified using a DROID (Digital Record Object IDentification) report from information recorded in the PRONOM technical registry. All dates refer to last modified dates of files. Scope notes for individual projects were provided by Cheri Gaulke.

Arrangement

The series is arranged in chronological order by project date. Born digital materials are integrated into the series based on content. The original order of the born digital files is retained.

Midwest tour, 1977, undated

Box 11, Folder 9
Documents, 1977
Group journal, 1977

Access Information
Access restricted pending conservation.

Images of performances, 1977 June, undated

Box 4, Folder 2
Nothing to Say, Chicago, Illinois, 1977 June
Black-and-white negative and photograph

Box 9, folder 4
Color negatives

Box 1, Folder 1
Color slides

Box 9, folder 5-6
Heaven or Hell?, Mama Peaches, Chicago, Illinois, 1977 June
Color negatives

Box 1, Folder 2
Color slides

Box 9, folder 8-10
On the Road, 1977 June, undated
Saugatuck, Michigan, 1977 June, undated
Color negatives, 1977 June

Box 1, folder 3
Color slides, 1977 June

Box 4, folder 3
Photocopies of color slides, undated

Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1977 June

Box 9, folder 15
Color negatives

Box 1, folder 4
Color slides

Box 11, Folder 10
Press, 1977

Box 11, Folder 11

San Francisco tours, 1977

Box 11, Folder 12
Documents

Box 11, Folder 13
Press

This Ain't No Heavy Breathing, 1978, undated

Box 4, Folder 4
Black-and-white negatives and photographs, 1978

Scope and Content Note
Photograph by E. K. Waller.
| Box 22, Item C1 | "Feminist Art Workers, Documentation 1978," 1978, undated |
| Box 22, Item C2 | "Phone calls 3-16-1978, original source tape," 1978, undated |
| Box 22, Item C3 | "Women's stories, Feminist Art Workers 1978," 1978, undated |
| Box 22, Item R1 | Reel-to-reel tape, 1978 |
| Box 11, Folder 14 | Postcard text and program, 1978 |
| Box 11, Folder 16 | Postcards, 1978 |
| Box 11, Folder 15 | Press, 1978 |
| Box 4, Folder 5 | Pietà, Afloat, 1978, undated |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Black-and-white negatives and photograph, 1978 April |
| Box 11, Folder 17 | Color slides, 1978 April |
| Box 4, Folder 5 | Press, 1978 |
| Box 4, Folder 6 | Photocopies of color slides, undated |
| Box 7, Folder 2 | Black-and-white photographs, 1978 April |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Scope and Content Note |
| Box 11, Folder 17 | Photographs by Vanalyne Green. |
| Box 22, Item C1 | Scope and Content Note |
| CD, undated | 1 audiocassette: analog, 1 7/8 ips; 3 7/8 x 2 1/2 in., 1/8 in. tape. Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting. |
| Reel-to-reel tape, 1978 | 1 audiotape reel: analog; 7 in., 1/2 in. tape. Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting. Includes list of names with contact information and notes. |
| Postcard text and program, 1978 | 1 audiocassette: analog, 1 7/8 ips; 3 7/8 x 2 1/2 in., 1/8 in. tape. Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting. |
Box 1, Folder 6  Color slides, 1978 April
Box 16, Folder 2  Performance objects: envelope with herbs and tags for other objects, 1978

Scope and Content Note
These items were originally housed with Winging Victoriously performance objects, but appear to be actually part of Traffic in Women.

Box 17  Performance object: vial of blood, 1978

Access Information
Access restricted due to fragility.

Box 11, Folder 19  Press, 1978-1979
Box 11, Folder 18  Summary and schedules, 1978
Box 9, folder 30  Bastet, Nekhbet, Wadjet, 1978
Box 1, Folder 7  Color negatives
Box 1, Folder 7  Color slides

Draw Your Own Conclusions: Know on 13 , 1978

Box 4, Folder 7  Black-and-white negative and photographs, 1978 May
Box 1, Folder 8  Color slides, 1978 May
Box 4, Folder 7  Contact sheet, 1978 May
Box 11, Folder 20  Press, 1978

First Annual Report, 1978

Scope and Content Note
A celebration for the funders of the Midwest tour.

box 24, folder 1-2  Color negatives, 1978 July
Box 2, Folder 1  Color slides, 1978 July

Scope and Content Note
The sheet accompanying the slides incorrectly identifies the date as 1977.

Box 11, Folder 21  Postcard, 1978

Winging Victoriously, 1978

box 24, folder 3-5  Color negatives, 1978 November

Scope and Content Note
One set of negatives is labeled "FAW Summer Art Program," but images match the slides identified as Winging Victoriously. Includes Sunday Brunch performance by Cheri Gaulke and Laurel Klick.

Box 2, Folder 2  Color slides, 1978 November
Box 11, Folder 22  Documents, 1978
Box 16, Folder 1  Performance objects, 1978

Scope and Content Note
Objects include "The Witch" and "The Waitress" paper dolls, photocopied advertisements, and matboard with blush, nail polish, and lipstick.

Access Information
Access restricted pending conservation.

Box 11, Folder 23  Press, 1978

To Love, Honor, Cherish... (1978), 1978-1979, undated

Scope and Content Note
Photoshoot and performance for the 5th anniversary of the Woman's Building. Includes images of Woman's Building founders Arlene Raven, Sheila de Bretteville, and Judy Chicago. Photographs by Sheila Ruth.

Box 4, Folder 8  Black-and-white negatives and photographs, 1978
Box 7, Folder 3  Color photograph, 1978
Scope and Content Note
Includes black-and-white negative and black-and-white photographs.

Access Information
Requires curatorial approval for access.

Scope and Content Note
Feminist Art Workers’ characters performed in public spaces in Los Angeles to challenge and reclaim stereotypes. Cinderella (Cheri Gaulke) tried on lucite heels in a shoe store, Cleavage Woman (Vanalyne Green) bought automobile supplies at Pep Boys, Cat Woman (Laurel Klick) roamed downtown alleys, and Sister Angelica Furiosa (Nancy Angelo) read Phyllis Chesler’s book Women and Madness (1972) in public settings.

Access Information
Access restricted pending conservation.
Series I. Performances and exhibitions, 1977-2013, undated

Final posters
- Green paper
- White paper

"Old version, incorrect dimensions"

Boxed-roll 1**
- Green paper
- White paper

Documents, 1979-1980

Flatfile 4**
- Halftone oversize dollar bill for installation, 1980
- Oversize dollar bills for installation, 1980

Performance, 1980

Box 6, Folder 1
- Black-and-white negatives and photographs

Box 8, Folder 1
- Black-and-white photograph of Laurel Klick
- Color negatives

Box 24, folder 9-10

Box 6, Folder 1
- Contact sheet

Box 12, Folder 2
- Press, 1980-1982
- Prop dollar bills, 1980

Box 12, Folder 6
- Bills used for Illinois action

Box 12, Folder 7
- Hand-colored bills

Box 12, Folder 3
- Version 1 of 3

Box 12, Folder 4
- Version 2 of 3

Box 12, Folder 5
- Version 3 of 3

The Art of the Woman's Building, 1980, undated

Scope and Content Note
Exhibited at the Woman's Building, Los Angeles, California and Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, Illinois.

Box 6, Folder 2
- Black-and-white photograph of installation, 1980

Flatfile 3**
- Pietà, Afloat color photograph mounted on matboard, 1980

Box 12, Folder 8
- Printout with picture of installation, undated

box 25*
- To Love, Honor, Cherish... black-and-white photograph mounted on matboard, 1980

Box 12, Folder 9

A Decade of Women's Performance Art (1980-1982) correspondence and announcement, 1982

Heartbeats, 1981, undated

Performance at Franklin Furnace, New York City, 1981

Box 6, Folder 3
- Black-and-white photographs, 1981 March

Box 2, Folder 5
- Color slides, 1981 March

Scope and Content Note
Slides 1-12 were used in the first scene. Others were used later.

Box 6, Folder 3

Box 12, Folder 10

Box 8, Folder 4
- Contact sheets, 1981 March
- Documents, 1981
- Page art elements, 1981

Scope and Content Note
Pieces of photographs and other graphics used to create announcement for the performance.

Box 12, Folder 11
- Press, 1981

Installation, 1981, undated

Box 6, Folder 4
- Black-and-white negatives and photographs, 1981

Box 6, Folder 4
- Contact sheets, 1981
Flatfile 2**  Oversize black-and-white photographs used for installation, 1981

Scope and Content Note
Includes prints from Nothing to Say (1977); To Love, Honor, Cherish... (1978); Heaven or Hell? (1979); and Heartbeats (1981).

Box 10  Photostats used for installation, 1981
Box 12, Folder 12  Planning documents, 1981
Box 12, Folder 13  Press, 1981, undated

Box 12, Folder 14  Heaven or Hell? for Thanks But No Thanks, Ocean Park, California, 1981, undated
Documents, 1981
Box 12, Folder 16  Original paste-up for postcard information letter, 1981
Box 12, Folder 17  Postcard information letters, 1981
Postcard materials, 1981

Box 6, Folder 5  Black-and-white photographs
Box 7, Folder 4  Color photographs
Box 6, Folder 5  Contact sheet
Box 12, Folder 15  Original paste-up for postcard
Box 12, Folder 18  Postcards, 1981

Flatfile 1**  Round printout of Heaven or Hell? mounted on cardboard, undated

Box 12, Folder 19  Post-Romance: Artist’s Valentines exhibition catalog, 1982

Box 12, Folder 20  Correspondence and packing slips, 2008
Box 12, Folder 21  Exhibition catalogs, 2008
Box 20, Item CM1 "FAW video images,” 2007-2008
Physical Description: 2.81 GB(193 files)
Scope and Content Note

Box 21, Item DVD1 copies 1-5 Feminist Art Workers: Heaven or Hell? documentary video, 2008
Scope and Content Note

Box 12, Folder 22-23 Video production notes, undated

Box 13, Folder 10 "Doin’ It in Public: Feminism and Art at the Woman’s Building,” Otis College of Art and Design Magazine, 2011
Exhibition materials, 2010-2012, undated

Box 13, Folder 6-9 Color printouts used for installation, 2011
Box 13, Folder 1 Planning documents, 2010-2012
box 26*, folder 3 Sketches for exhibition, undated

Digital files, 1988-2012
Box 20, Item CM4
"Source files, misc.144 FAW-1," 2011-2012

Physical Description: 4.62 GB(222 files)
Scope and Content Note
1 computer disc (DVD-R) : digital ; 4 3/4 in. CM4 includes: 144 Tagged Image File Format files (.tif), 57 Tagged Image File Format files (.tiff), 8 Adobe InDesign Document CS5 files (.indd), 5 Exchangeable Image File Format (Uncompressed) 2.2 files (.tif), 3 Adobe Photoshop files (.psd), 2 Exchangeable Image File Format (Compressed) 2.2.1 files (.jpg), 1 Adobe InDesign Book file (.indb), 1 Acrobat PDF 1.6 - Portable Document Format file (.pdf), 1 Plain Text File (.txt).
Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting.

Box 20, Item CM5

Physical Description: 4.60 GB(79 files)
Scope and Content Note
1 computer disc (DVD-R) : digital ; 4 3/4 in. CM5 includes: 57 Tagged Image File Format files (.tif), 15 Tagged Image File Format files (.tiff), 5 Raw JPEG Stream files (.jpg), 2 Exchangeable Image File Format (Uncompressed) 2.2 files (.tif).
Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting.

Box 20, Item CM6
"Source files, misc.146 FAW-3," 1988-2012

Physical Description: 2.39 GB(95 files)
Scope and Content Note
1 computer disc (DVD-R) : digital ; 4 3/4 in. CM6 includes: 63 Tagged Image File Format files (.tif), 10 Tagged Image File Format files (.tiff), 4 Acrobat PDF 1.3 - Portable Document Format files (.pdf), 3 TrueType Font files (.ttf), 2 Adobe Font List files (.lst), 1 Acrobat PDF 1.7 - Portable Document Format file (.pdf), 1 Adobe InDesign Document CS5 file (.indd), 1 Plain Text File (.txt), and 0 byte font files. Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformatting.

Documents, 2011, undated


"'Hell' music for Otis performance"

Performance credits

Laurel Klick’s notes for exhibition and book, 2010-2011, undated

Program schedules, 2011

"Scans from The Icon for Otis PST show 1 of 2," 2011
Series I. Performances and exhibitions, 1977-2013, undated

"Scans from The Icon for Otis PST show 2 of 2," 2011
Physical Description: 1.59 GB (14 files)
Scope and Content Note
1 computer disc (DVD-R) : digital ; 4 3/4 in. CM3 includes: 5 Tagged Image File Format files (.tif), 4 JPEG File Interchange Format 1.02 files (.jpg), 2 Exchangeable Image File Format (Uncompressed) 2.2 files (.tif), 2 Adobe Photoshop files (.psd), 1 JPEG File Interchange Format 1.02 file (.tif). Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformattting.

Series II. Social gatherings and other activities, 1976-1981, undated
Physical Description: 1.48 Linear Feet (4 boxes)
Scope and Content Note
Series II consists primarily of color slides and negatives of non-performance activities such as social gatherings, travel, retreats, and workshops, especially from the Feminist Art Workers' 1977 Midwest and San Francisco tours. Most photographs were taken by Laurel Klick, who also provided the titles. Also included in this series are posters from the 1976 Summer Art Program at the Woman's Building, which was facilitated by members of the Feminist Art Workers and where the group was officially formed.
Arrangement
The series is arranged in chronological order by event date.

Box 20, Item CM3
"Scans from The Icon for Otis PST show 2 of 2," 2011
Physical Description: 1.59 GB (14 files)
Scope and Content Note
1 computer disc (DVD-R) : digital ; 4 3/4 in. CM3 includes: 5 Tagged Image File Format files (.tif), 4 JPEG File Interchange Format 1.02 files (.jpg), 2 Exchangeable Image File Format (Uncompressed) 2.2 files (.tif), 2 Adobe Photoshop files (.psd), 1 JPEG File Interchange Format 1.02 file (.tif). Unavailable until reformatted. Contact reference for reformattting.

Box 26*, Folder 1
"Summer Art Program at the Woman's Building" posters, 1976
Scope and Content Note
Includes pictures of Feminist Art Workers members inside and outside of the van used for the Midwest and San Francisco tours, and Cheri Gaulke with the van at the automobile repair shop.

Box 7, Folder 1
Feminist Art Workers with Cheri Gaulke's van before Midwest trip
Scope and Content Note
Color negatives.

Box 9, folder 1
Color negatives

Box 9, folder 2, 7, 11
Color slides

Box 9, folder 12, 14
Color slides

Box 9, folder 16
Color negatives

Box 3, folder 4
Color slides

Box 9, folder 17
Color negatives
Scope and Content Note
Location identified as "Bryce," likely referring to Bryce Canyon, Utah.

Box 3, Folder 5
Color slides
Omen in Midwest and San Francisco, 1977
Scope and Content Note
Includes pictures of Feminist Art Workers members inside and outside of the van used for the Midwest and San Francisco tours, and Cheri Gaulke with the van at the automobile repair shop.

Box 9, folder 3, 13, 25
Color negatives
### Series II. Social gatherings and other activities, 1976-1981, undated

| Box 3, Folder 6 | **Color slides**  
San Francisco tours, 1977  
Ferry trip and Candace Compton on train  
| Box 9, folder 18, 22 | **Color negatives**  
| Box 3, Folder 7 | **Color slides**  
Social and going out  
Scope and Content Note  
Includes pictures of Feminist Art Workers at a café and Cheri Gaulke with cheerleaders at an unidentified school.  
| Box 9, folder 20-21, 24 | **Color negatives**  
| Box 3, Folder 8 | **Color slides**  
Workshops and business meeting at FAW temporary home  
**Color negatives**  
| Box 9, folder 19, 23 | **Color slides**  
Nevada retreat and one meeting on Valerio, 1977  
Scope and Content Note  
Color slides.  
| Box 3, Folder 9 |  
| Box 3, Folder 10 |  
| Box 24, folder 6 | **Color negatives**  
| Box 3, Folder 11 | **Color slides**  
Women cooking in New Orleans, Louisiana, circa 1980  
Scope and Content Note  
Color negatives.  
| Box 24, folder 11 |  
| Box 3, Folder 12 | **New York social pictures, 1981**  
Scope and Content Note  
Color slides.  
| Box 24, folder 12-14 | **Personal, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
Color negatives. "Desert, my mom, Sam, Emma, Punk, and Sandy at home."  

### Series III. Administrative files and promotional materials, 1977-1983, undated

| Box 11, Folder 4 | **Bank statements, 1982-1983**  
| Box 3, Folder 13 | **Color slides used for lectures, 1977-1981, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
Original slides of performances and other events that were used in lectures and duplicated to give to scholars and teachers.  
| Box 11, Folder 7 | **Finances and receipts, 1977-1981**  
| Box 11, Folder 8 | **Notes for a never-produced Heaven or Hell? dinner, undated**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 11, Folder 3</th>
<th>Resumes and articles about members of FAW, 1980-1982</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 11, Folder 6</td>
<td>Stationery, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 11, Folder 1</td>
<td>Unsorted ephemera, 1977, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Scope and Content Note</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes information sheets from the Women's Graphics Center and Women's Caucus for Art, Women's Caucus for Art newsletters, and an invitation to <em>A Smashing Time!</em> performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**We Are the Feminist Art Workers, 1977**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4, Folder 1</th>
<th>Black-and-white photograph of Candace Compton for brochure, circa 1977</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 11, Folder 5</td>
<td>Promotional brochures (folded), 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 26*, folder 2</td>
<td>Promotional brochures (flattened), 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 11, Folder 2</td>
<td>Writings by Feminist Art Workers, photocopied slide packet, and history, 1981-1982, undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>