Finding Aid for the Peter Plagens papers LSC.2255

Kelly Besser in consultation with curator Genie Guerard and with supervision from Megan Hahn Fraser, 2014; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

UCLA Library Special Collections
Online finding aid last updated 2019 November 15.
Room A1713, Charles E. Young Research Library
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URL: https://www.library.ucla.edu/special-collections
**Finding Aid for the Peter Plagens papers LSC.2255**

**Contributing Institution:** UCLA Library Special Collections

**Title:** Peter Plagens papers

**Creator:** Plagens, Peter

**Identifier/Call Number:** LSC.2255

**Physical Description:** 13.4 Linear Feet (26 document boxes, 10 half document boxes, and 1 oversize flat box)

**Date (inclusive):** 1938-2014

**Abstract:** Peter Plagens is an abstract painter, art critic, professor and novelist based in New York City. The collection consists of art work, exhibition materials, art criticism, published and unpublished novels, correspondence, lectures, course materials, photographs, slides, notebooks, datebooks, journals, and memorabilia. Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

**Language of Material:** Materials are in English.

**Restrictions on Access**

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

**Restrictions on Use and Reproduction**

Property rights to the physical object belong to the UCLA Library Special Collections. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or his or her heir for permission to publish where The UC Regents do not hold the copyright.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**

COLLECTION CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Peter Plagens papers (Collection 2255). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

**UCLA Catalog Record ID**

UCLA Catalog Record ID: 7536560

**Provenance/Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Peter Plagens and Laurie Fendrich, 2014.

**Processing Information**

Processed by Kelly Besser in consultation with Genie Guerard and with supervision from Megan Hahn Fraser, 2014. Additional details and descriptions of certain items were provided by Peter Plagens via email correspondence with Kelly Besser in November and December 2014.

**Biography/History**

Peter Plagens was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1941 but grew up in Los Angeles after his family moved when he was two years old. His parents, George and Jayne Plagens, who both worked, saved their cash to buy a small house in the city. Peter graduated from John Marshall High School, then paid his way through the University of Southern California (USC) with a partial scholarship from the university and a job at a supermarket.

He received a Bachelor's degree from the USC School of Fine Arts in 1962 and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Syracuse University in 1964. He was a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in Painting and two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships in Painting.

Plagens, an abstract painter, met fellow painter Walter Gabrielson in 1963 at USC when he returned to campus in an attempt to reclaim his undergraduate job in the Psychology Department on a research project called "BC: Analysis of Behavioral Cognition." According to Plagens, he returned to find that Gabrielson had taken his job drawing stimuli for social intelligence tests to be used by the Navy to assess the kind of crew members who could withstand confinement in submarines. The project now required two cartoonists, so Plagens began work on the project again but this time in a cubicle adjacent to Gabrielson. There they began their lifelong friendship.

In 1969 Plagens returned to Los Angeles when Gabrielson found him a teaching job in the Art Department of San Fernando Valley State College, now known as California State University, Northridge. They shared an office on campus and became known informally among art students as the "Pete 'n' Wally Show," and from 1970 they shared a 3,000 square foot studio in Pasadena until Plagens left Northridge in 1978.
Plagens has exhibited his work at the Nancy Hoffman Gallery in New York City for over 40 years, and his paintings are part of the permanent collections of many museums and corporations, including the Baltimore Museum of Art, Chase Manhattan Bank, the Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington D.C., and the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego, California. Plagens' art has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions in galleries and museums such as the USC Fisher Gallery, the Akron Art Museum, the Las Vegas Art Museum and Texas Gallery, Houston.

According to Plagens' wife, painter Laurie Fendrich, Peter fell into writing art criticism but he also enjoys it. His first review appeared in Artforum in 1966. His writing has appeared in a multitude of publications including Art in America, Art News, The Chronicle of Higher Education, American Art and The Wall Street Journal. However, Plagens may be best known as the art critic and senior writer for Newsweek magazine between 1989 and 2003.

Plagens has taught at Middlebury College in Vermont, Hofstra University in New York, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he also chaired the art department, California State University at Northridge, USC, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of Texas at Austin. Notably, in 1998 Plagens was one of four senior fellows in the National Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University.


Scope and Content
The Peter Plagens papers consist of art work, exhibition materials, art criticism, published and unpublished novels, correspondence, lectures, course materials, photographs, slides, notebooks, datebooks, journals and memorabilia, ranging in date from 1938 to 2014.

Organization and Arrangement
This collection has been arranged in the following series:

- Series 1: Art Work
- Series 2: Exhibition Materials
- Series 3: Writing
- Series 4: Correspondence
- Series 5: Lectures
- Series 6: Course Materials
- Series 7: Photos and Slides
- Series 8: Notebooks and Datebooks
- Series 9: DRIPS
- Series 10: Memorabilia

Related Material
- Walter Gabrielson papers (Collection 1830). Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Interview of Peter Plagens [oral history transcript] / Kavior Moon, interviewer. UCLA Library Special Collections, Center for Oral History Research interview, 2017. Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Art critics -- United States -- Archives.
Painters -- United States -- Archives.
Novelists, American -- 20th century -- Archives.
Art Work 1958-2011

Scope and Content
This series includes drawings, a poster created with artist Walter Gabrielson, art work ledgers, a hard drive with digital images of art work and slides of his paintings and collages. Plagens' slide numbering system involves sequential numbers for each work before the hyphen and the year the work was made follows the hyphen. For example, 32-99 refers to the 32nd work produced in 1999.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
SERIES CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 1, folder 1  DT cartoons 1958-1962
Scope and Contents
Photocopies of cartoons Plagens created while working as an editorial cartoonist for the University of Southern California (USC) Daily Trojan student newspaper cover a range from campus issues (e.g. criticism of the Doheny Library) to national issues (e.g. academic freedom and army recruitment) to international politics (e.g. communism and U.S. relations with Cuba).

box 1, folder 2  Richard de Mille drawing circa 1963
Scope and Content
Drawing of de Mille wearing a Trojan helmet and GOP necklace, created by Plagens while he and Walter Gabrielson worked as staff artists for a USC Psychology Department research project called "BC: Analysis of Behavioral Cognition." Gabrielson and Plagens were each assigned to work for a particular researcher. Plagens was assigned to work for Richard de Mille, adopted son of Cecil B. de Mille. The sword and sandals movie motif and Grand Old Party necklace are references to Richard's father, Cecil. During this project, Gabrielson and Plagens would create humorous drawings, fold them as paper airplanes and fly them over the partition into each other's cubicles.

box 1, folder 3  "Who Wrote The Note?" Contest flyer 1964
Scope and Content
Plagens made this flyer while a graduate student at Syracuse University. Syracuse assigned semi-private studios to its studio grad students on the second floor of an old Continental Can Company. An art history graduate student named Patricia Amlin received a large studio space and posted a log of all her studio hours. When Plagens and his pals began to fill in impossible hours on Amlin's log, she became furious and demanded to know who was responsible. Plagens created this flyer as a response. The caricatures of the artists depicted on the flyer are as follows: 1) Bob Conge 2) Richard Jordan 3) Michael Ashcraft 4) Peter Plagens, and 5) Gerry DiGiusto.

box 1, folder 4  Plagens slides 1958-1979
Scope and Contents
Slides include images of oil paintings Plagens created as an undergraduate at USC and as a graduate student at Syracuse University, the Pasadena studio he shared with Walter Gabrielson, his solo exhibition at the University of Oklahoma Art Museum, his "Confessions of a Fellatrix" installation, and his Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art (LAICA) downtown installation. Materials also include images of art in Brussels, Amsterdam and London as well as natural scenes in Austin, Texas and Oregon.
box 1, folder 5  **Plagens art slides 1980-2002**  
**Scope and Contents** 
Slides include images from his solo exhibition, "Intimate Dramas: Peter Plagens' Black Paintings" at the Akron Art Museum and works such as *Brotherhood of Artists, Basketball in Hollywood, Noam Sain (Time for Robo), Jehovah's Waitress, The Last Modernist,* and *The Red & The Black: Said Satan.*

box 1, folder 6-7  **Plagens small collages slides 2000**  
**Scope and Contents** 
Materials include more than 500 slides of Plagens' small collages.

box 2, folder 1-2  **Peter Plagens art slides 1961-2002**  
**Scope and Contents** 
Materials include mixed media collages such as *Brotherhood of Artists, Dark Matisse Flame, Queen of the Blues* and *Richter as a Painter, However.*

box 2, folder 3  **School and Jan Baum Gallery slides 1960-1963, 1979-1991**  
**Scope and Contents** 
Slides include images of Plagens' work from the *Abstract Artists' Exhibition* at the Jan Baum Gallery located at 170 South La Brea Avenue in Los Angeles.

**Scope and Contents** 
Materials include more than a thousand slides and the following transparencies: *Cleveland Defaults On Its Debts, An Obvious Heterosexual and Have You Ever Seriously Considered A Monarchy?*

**Scope and Contents** 
More than four hundred slides of student work from Beginning Drawing, Beginning Painting, Advanced Painting and Independent Study courses taught by Plagens.

box 4, folder 3-5  **Collages I-III slides 1972-1976, 1984-1989**  
**Scope and Contents** 
Approximately nine hundred slides of Plagens' collages.

**Scope and Contents** 
Five handwritten ledgers of Plagens' art work are numbered 1-5, arranged in chronological order and signed by the artist. Although started in 1972, the first book includes his work from the 1960s and in addition to photographs and sketches of his work, all books record dates, serial numbers, storage locations, materials, dimensions, titles, sales, gifts, damage and destruction.

box 6, folder 1  **Studio circa 1996-1999**  
**Scope and Contents** 
Materials include painting title ideas and photographs used for Plagens's art work. One photo was taken at the 1934 Air Show at the Cleveland Municipal Airport. The image is of Plagens's father, George Plagens, single at age 26 in a suit and tie and his brother, Harold at age 18 wearing his East High football sweater. Peter made three drawings from this photograph. He sold the best one, gave his daughter Sybil Wisdom the second one, and he kept the third.
box 6, folder 2  **Art inventory and exhibition floppy disks 1965-1998**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Materials include 4 art inventory floppy disks.  
**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**  
Four 3.5-inch floppy disks  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 6, folder 3  **Art work CDs 1974-2009, 2011**  
**Scope and Contents**  
**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**  
9 CDs  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 6, folder 4  **Hard drive 2011**  
**Scope and Contents**  
One iomega Helium portable hard drive contains images of Plagens' art work.  
**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**  
1 hard drive  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 6, folder 5  **Floppy disks**  
**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**  
Seven 3.5" floppy disks  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 36, folder 4  **BIG LIE Smash It! poster circa 1970s**  
**Scope and Content**  
Anti-war protest poster created by Plagens and Walter Gabrielson.

box 36, folder 7  **Life Map 2006 March 22**  
**Scope and Contents**  
This flowchart style map was drawn by Plagens with black and red pencil.

box 36, folder 7  **Untitled circa 2010**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Plagens created this colored abstract drawing and tore it off from a Walker's NYC restaurant tablecloth. Walker's is Plagens' and Fendrich's neighborhood restaurant in Tribeca that places glasses filled with crayons on their dining tables. Plagens estimates that they have eaten there over 600 times in 30 years.
Exhibition Materials 1967-2013

Scope and Content
This series includes posters, catalogues, brochures, invitations, postcards and a floppy disk concerning Plagens' solo and group exhibitions in addition to catalogues with essays by Plagens and brochures for exhibitions curated by Plagens. This series also includes Plagens' Funny Guys proposal for a Walter Gabrielson and Merwin Belin exhibition and curatorial texts annotated by Plagens.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
SERIES CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 36, folder 2  Smagula and Plagens posters 1967
Scope and Contents
Four posters publicize Plagens' exhibition with Howard Smagula at the New Arts Gallery in Houston, Texas.

box 36, folder 3  Confessions of a Fellatrix (paintings) posters 1971
Scope and Contents
Three posters promote Plagens' solo show at 16 West Union Street in Pasadena, California.

box 7, folder 1  24 Young Los Angeles Artists LACMA handout 1971
Scope and Contents
This Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) photographic handout for an exhibition of young, local artists features Plagens on the cover.

Scope and Contents
Catalogue for Plagens' exhibition at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

box 36, folder 5  Peter Plagens: Visiting Artist Program posters 1978
Scope and Contents
Three posters for the Wake Forest University/Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) Visiting Artist Program feature an exhibition of Plagens' paintings and the following two artist lectures: "The State of Painting on the West Coast" and "My Work."
The back of one poster includes a family portrait in crayon by Plagens and Joyce Wisdom's daughter Sybil Wisdom.

box 7, folder 3  Peter Plagens: Selected Small Works postcards 2001
Scope and Contents
Three opening reception postcards for Plagens' exhibition at the Los Angeles Harbor College Fine Arts Gallery.

box 7, folder 4  Eaton Fine Art 10th Anniversary catalogue 2002
Scope and Contents
This catalogue includes a "Best Wishes for the New Year" note from Timothy A. Eaton and features Peter Plagens and Laurie Fendrich's "Artists & Writers/Husbands & Wives" group exhibition as a highlight.
box 7, folder 5  **Peter Plagens: An Introspective opening invitation 2004**  
Scope and Contents  
Invitation to the opening reception for Plagens' solo exhibition at USC Fisher Gallery, addressed to Director and Curator Selma Holo.

box 7, folder 6  **Peter Plagens: An Introspective brochures 2004-2005**  
Scope and Contents  
Three brochures for his solo exhibition at USC Fisher Gallery feature a color reproduction of Plagens' *Benton Way and Sunset, LA, 6/28/55, 1:40p.m.* work on the cover and include a biography of the artist and descriptions of his early and late work.

box 7, folder 7  **Peter Plagens: An Introspective catalogues 2004-2005**  
Scope and Contents  
These two catalogues feature acknowledgements from USC Fisher Gallery Director and Curator Selma Holo, a transcription of a conversation between Holo and Plagens, "The Jabberwocky and the Gorilla in the Corner" essay by MacArthur Prize Winner Dave Hickey, Afterword by The Butler Institute of American Art Executive Director Louis A. Zona and full color plates of Plagens' work.

box 7, folder 8  **Peter Plagens: An Introspective mailers 2005**  
Scope and Contents  
Three publicity mailer cards announce the dates of the exhibition, its opening reception and artist lecture at the A + D 11th Street Gallery in Chicago, Illinois. Plagens' *Wheels of Wonder* is featured in full color as the cover image.

box 7, folder 9  **"Paint & Tell" article 2005**  
Scope and Contents  
This article was published in the summer issue of the *USC Trojan Family* magazine. Plagens, who was interviewed for this feature, discusses his work with a focus on his exhibition at USC Fisher Gallery, which showcased 44 pieces spanning 30 years of his artistic career. According to the author of the article, this was the first time the museum held a solo show dedicated to the art work of an alumnus.

box 7, folder 10  **Peter Plagens Reception for Artist cards 2005**  
Scope and Contents  
Two Reception for Artist cards for Plagens' solo exhibition at the Nancy Hoffman Gallery feature a full color view of his studio.

box 7, folder 11  **Peter Plagens: An Introspective reception cards 2005**  
Scope and Contents  
Three cards for his reception at The Butler Institute of American Art include statements from the Director and Chief Curator Louis A. Zona on the importance of Plagens' work.

box 7, folder 12  **Driven to Abstraction . . . catalogue 2006**  
Scope and Contents  
The *Driven to Abstraction: Southern California and the Non-Objective World, 1950-1980* catalogue was produced for the Riverside Art Museum's historical survey exhibition curated by Peter Frank. This exhibition featured Plagens' work, *The People's Republic of Antarctica*, an image of which is found on page 77 of the catalogue.
**Exhibition Materials 1967-2013**

**Finding Aid for the Peter Plagens papers LSC.2255**

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**box 7, folder 13**  
*Ron Linden catalogues 2007*  
**Scope and Contents**  
Two catalogues for painter Ron Linden's exhibition at Cue Art Foundation in New York include an artist's statement, curator's statement, and full color images of Linden's work. The exhibition, curated by Plagens, was Linden's first solo show in New York. This folder also includes letters from Linden to Plagens concerning the choice of work for the catalogue cover and correspondence from Cue Art Foundation Programs Assistant Ryan White regarding the exhibition and its opening reception.

**box 7, folder 14**  
*Truckscapes: Drawings from a Mobile Studio book 2007*  
**Scope and Contents**  
This book of Nick Miller's landscape drawings includes an essay by Plagens entitled, "Nick Miller: Drawing Life from Landscape." This publication serves as documentation of Miller's solo exhibition of the same name at the Irish Cultural Center in Paris.

**box 7, folder 15**  
*Funny Guys proposal 2007*  
**Scope and Contents**  

**box 7, folder 16**  
*Mississippi Invitational catalogue 2009*  
**Scope and Content**  
Plagens served as Guest Curator for this exhibition at the Mississippi Museum of Art and his catalogue essay, "The Deep (as in Profound) South" discusses studio visits and the work of the ten artists he chose to participate in this show.

**box 7, folder 17**  
*Painting with Paint brochures 2010*  
**Scope and Contents**  
Two brochures for the *Painting with Paint: Selections from the Nancy Hoffman Gallery* exhibition that featured works by Plagens, Howard Buchwald, Hung Liu and Joseph Raffael, include an image of Plagens' *Serge Protector* piece alongside text he wrote concerning the appeal of abstraction in connection with the existential truth of painting.

**box 7, folder 18**  
*School of Belin catalogue 2010*  
**Scope and Contents**  
This catalogue for the Merwin Belin exhibition, *School of Belin: A Mid-Career Survey* at the Warschaw Gallery in San Pedro includes an essay by Plagens on Belin's life and work.

**box 7, folder 19**  
*Peter Plagens: I Don't Give a Damn / Every Moment Counts cards 2011*  
**Scope and Contents**  
Two reception invitation cards for Plagens' solo exhibition at the Nancy Hoffman Gallery feature an image of Plagens' 2010 work by the same name.

**box 7, folder 20**  
*Thinking Contemporary Curating publication 2012*  
**Scope and Contents**  
Publication by Terry Smith, first in a series developed by Independent Curators International (ICI) entitled, *Perspectives in Curating*. This copy is heavily annotated by Plagens.

**box 7, folder 21**  
*The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s) proof 2012*  
**Scope and Contents**  
Uncorrected page proof of publication by Paul O'Neil, annotated throughout by Plagens.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7, 22</td>
<td><strong>Abstract, adj.: Expressing a quality apart from an object. brochure 2013</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;This brochure for the group exhibition at the Ringling College of Art and Design Selby Gallery features Plagens' <em>Get In There Fast</em> work on the cover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 23</td>
<td><strong>Peter Plagens Texas Gallery opening brochures 2013</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Three brochures for Plagens' solo exhibition at the Texas Gallery in Houston feature full color images of the following works: <em>The Italian Job 3, Death of an Artist 1, Impure Abstraction Notes from the Underground 3, The Crust of Life 2</em> and <em>The Case for Abstraction 3.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 24</td>
<td><strong>Peter Plagens Exhibition floppy disk undated</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;This floppy disk includes &quot;lo-fi&quot; digital photos of Plagens' work for the purpose of documentation. &lt;br&gt;<strong>Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements</strong>&lt;br&gt;One 3.5-inch floppy disk&lt;br&gt;Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8, 1</td>
<td><strong>Art Writing Old 1970</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Materials include an article for <em>Artforum</em> in which Plagens discusses Richard Serra's <em>Sawing</em> as a &quot;bona fide sensation.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8, 2</td>
<td><strong>Art Writing Muy Viejo 1970-1971, circa 1984</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Materials include an essay for <em>Art Journal</em> entitled &quot;Some Problems in Recent Painting&quot; and two photocopies of the following typescripts: &quot;Me 'N The Scene&quot; and &quot;True Garb.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8, 3</td>
<td><strong>&quot;The Odd Couple&quot; review 1977</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Plagens discusses the work of Jim Turrell and Walter Gabrielson in this <em>New West</em> article.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Art Writing - Misc. 1993-1997
Scope and Contents
Materials include an essay on Doug Hilson for his exhibition at the Laura Knott Art Gallery, a profile on Ron Linden, a review of The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism show organized by the Laguna Art Museum, an interview of artist and former Artforum editor, John Coplans, and a typescript on the work of painter Sam Francis.

Art Writing - Misc. 1998-1999, 2005
Scope and Contents
Materials include an article on the L.A. art scene for the Los Angeles Times, an annotated list of the “ten best art things of the ‘90s” for Artforum, selections from “Art Stripped Bare,” Plagens’ collaboration with Walter Gabrielson and a “Bring Back ‘Amos ’n’ Andy,” but With Care” article for The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Art Writing - Misc. 2000-2003
Scope and Contents
Materials include an Art in America memorial for John Coplans, a juror’s statement for the Huntington Museum of Art’s “Exhibition 280,” a “Cents and Sensibility: Collecting the ‘80s” Artforum article and a “How Art Has Changed a Lot” essay for American Art.

Art Writing 2004-2006
Scope and Contents

Art Writing 2007-2009
Scope and Contents

Kuntz 2007
Scope and Contents
Materials include clippings, timelines, correspondence, a CD and annotated drafts of his essay on Roger Kuntz for the Laguna Art Museum's Kuntz retrospective catalogue.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
1 CD
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Art Writing 2010
Scope and Contents
Writing 1970-2012

box 9, folder 2  
**Eye Level: A in A 2010-2012**  
Scope and Contents  
Materials include annotated typescripts and published clippings from Plagens' *Eye Level* articles for *Art in America*.

box 9, folder 3  
**Art Writing Notes undated**  
Scope and Contents  
Materials include notes on John Coplans, *Artforum*, and the pleasure of reading.

box 9, folder 4  
**Art Writing: In the Hopper circa 2010**  
Scope and Contents  
Materials include an annotated typescript concerning Eli Broad's installation of Jeffrey Deitch as director of Los Angeles' Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA) and the museum's future.

box 9, folder 5  
**Art Writing Unpublished undated**  
Scope and Contents  
Materials include typescripts on San Francisco's Ant Farm, comedian Eddie Izzard, David Hockney's *Secret Knowledge* book and an interview with art critic Hilton Kramer.

box 9, folder 6  
**A.W. Press & Publicity circa 2000**  
Scope and Contents  
This "News From Hudson Hills Press" release announces its monograph on minimalist Tony DeLap, written by Bruce Guenther and Peter Plagens.

box 9, folder 7  
**Art Writing: Reviews (of) 1974-1975, 1986**  
Scope and Contents  
Materials include reviews of *Moonlight Blues: An Artist's Art Criticism* and *Sunshine Muse: Contemporary Art on the West Coast*.

box 9, folder 8  
**Art Writing undated**  
Scope and Contents  

box 9, folder 9-12  
**Anthology Book 1995**  
Scope and Contents  
Materials include Plagens' clippings and annotated typescripts of his unpublished art criticism. This unpublished Anthology Book was to include Plagens' art criticism from various publications. Folder 10 also contains the following six slides: 1) Durham, N.C. 2) The VW bus on I-85 north 3) Traffic stall, I-85 north 4) The Black Truck near Amarillo, TX 5) Dunes, California desert, and 6) Truck terminal opposite Linden's loft, LA.

box 9, folder 13  
**Art Writing floppies 1988-2001**  
Scope and Content  
Six floppy disks include published criticism, notes and research.  
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements  
Six 3.5-inch floppy disks  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Scope and Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9, 14</td>
<td>Painting audio cassette and floppy disk undated</td>
<td>The audio cassette tape includes audio notes for what Plagens describes as &quot;... a thinky memoir about being an abstract painter.&quot; Plagens was in the habit of carrying around a cassette recorder and recording thoughts as they occurred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11, 1-3, 10, 1-11</td>
<td>Art Writing: Newsweek 1989-2003</td>
<td>Materials include photocopies of clippings from Plagens' work as <em>Newsweek</em>'s art critic. Box 11, Folder 1 contains two floppy disks of <em>Newsweek</em> drafts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12, 1-5</td>
<td>Merciful Brief novel and screenplay 1972, 2002</td>
<td>These folders contain three photocopies of Plagens' unpublished novel set in Los Angeles and two copies of the screenplay. Folder 4 includes correspondence between Plagens and the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art reference services interlibrary loan coordinator concerning searching his papers for a copy of the manuscript and screenplay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13, 1</td>
<td>West Coast Art circa 1972</td>
<td>Plagens' <em>West Coast Art</em> manuscript was revised and published in 1974 as <em>Sunshine Muse: Contemporary Art on the West Coast</em>, his first book of art criticism and history which set the stage for the Getty's <em>Pacific Standard Time</em> initiative. This book was published again as <em>Sunshine Muse: Art on the West Coast, 1945-1970</em> by University of California Press in 1999 with a new introduction by Plagens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13, 2</td>
<td>Sunshine Muse 1999-2000</td>
<td>Materials include royalty statements, correspondence from University of California Press Paperback Editor Charlene Woodcock, images of cover painting <em>Figure on a Porch</em> by Richard Diebenkorn, a photocopy of the Memorandum of Agreement between Peter Plagens and The Regents of the University of California, text for the book's spine and back cover, correspondence to Judy Throm of Reference Services at the Smithsonian Archives of American Art concerning photographs and transparencies for the book's new edition and reviews of the first edition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing 1970-2012

**Box 13, Folder 3**

*Sunshine Muse floppy disk 2002*

- **Scope and Contents**
- This floppy disk includes one *Sunshine Muse* folder.
- **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**
  - One 3.5-inch floppy disk
  - Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

**Box 14, Folder 1-16**

*Sunshine Muse photos*

- **Scope and Contents**
- These black and white photographs were published in the book.

**Box 14, Folder 17-18**

*Sunshine Muse illustration releases 1973-1974*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Folder 17 contains one set of signed illustration releases and folder 18 contains one set of unsigned illustration releases.

**Box 15, Folder 1-2**

*Robo: Clips*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Plagens used these research clippings while writing his first novel, *Time for Robo*. Clippings are numbered and arranged by the following headings: Physics (Macro/Micro), Espionage (Crime), Religion (Prophets/Gurus), Art (Authorship) (See Writing), Writing (Emptying Mind), Time, Theory, Air Craft and Sport (Body). Materials also include notecards on voice, language and the novel's structure.

**Box 15, Folder 3**

*Robo: Notes*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Materials include Excel spreadsheet print outs of the novel's chronology, notes on characters, style and plot themes and a four page "Whom I hate:" typescript.

**Box 15, Folder 4**

*Time for Robo: Press 1998-2000*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Press clippings and lists of publications with contacts for book reviews.

**Box 15, Folder 5**

*Time for Robo 1996*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Plagens' copy of his book publishing agreement and an Excel spreadsheet print out of notes for the novel.

**Box 15, Folder 6-7**

*Time for Robo undated*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Typescript of novel annotated by Plagens.

**Box 15, Folder 8**

*Time for Robo: Book Itself 1996-1998*

- **Scope and Contents**
- Correspondence between Plagens and Black Heron Press publisher Jerry Gold and an advance copy of the book jacket. In his introductory letter to Gold, Plagens describes *Time for Robo* as follows: "... a small part of it is about art. But the book is really about time, perception, and a few questions concerning reality...."

**Box 15, Folder 9**

*Time for Robo 1999*

- **Scope and Contents**
- One hardcover copy of the novel signed by the author.
Writing 1970-2012

box 16, folder 1-2  
**Robo Notes**

**Scope and Content**
Photocopies of clippings, used by Plagens while conducting research for this novel.

box 16, folder 3  
**Robo: Adds**

**Scope and Content**
Materials include Plagens' handwritten notes, clippings, photocopies of articles and two slides of Dieric Bouts' paintings: *The Altarpiece of the Last Supper* and *The Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus*.

box 17, folder 1-2  
**Robo 2**

**Scope and Contents**
Typescript entitled *Robo 2, The Synquel: Noam Sain and the Altadena Bungalow*.

box 17, folder 3  
**For Book 2**

**Scope and Contents**
Materials include a photocopy of "Intrusions?" by J. W. Dunne.

box 17, folder 4-5  
**Robo 2 stuff**

**Scope and Contents**
Clippings concerning villains and cults.

box 17, folder 6-7  
**Robo 2 Notes**

**Scope and Contents**
Materials include clippings, photocopies of articles, chronologies, title ideas, to do lists, lists of words, character descriptions, main points and themes such as Words vs. Reality and Science vs. Religion.

box 17, folder 8  
**ATKDRWNNAOH**

**Scope and Contents**
Initials stand for *Among Those Killed in the Dawn Raid Was Noam, Aged One Hundred*. This folder contains one Post-It with a note about Noam confronted, surrounded and stabbed by pachucos in the 1950s.

box 17, folder 9  
**Robo 2 floppies**

**Scope and Contents**
Thirteen floppy disks include notes and multiple drafts.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**
Thirteen 3.5-inch floppy disks
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 17, folder 10  
**Robo 2 CD**

**Scope and Contents**
One CD includes draft 6 for printing.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements**
1 CD
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box Folder</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Scope and Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 18, 1-2    | Noam Sain and the Altadena Bungalow | Scope and Contents  
One Robo 2 typescript. |
| 18, 3      | Robo 3 Notes           | Scope and Contents  
Materials for Plagens' third Robo novel include handwritten research titles and corresponding page numbers, clippings and photocopies from Brad and Sherry Steiger's dossier, Conspiracies and Secret Societies. |
| 18, 4-7    | Robo 3                 | Scope and Contents  
Four copies of Plagens' third Robo novel are titled, Robo 3: Among Those Killed in the Dawn Raid Was the Reverend Noam Sain, Aged One Hundred. |
| 18, 8      | Robo 3 floppies        | Scope and Contents  
Two floppy disks include chapters in outline format and a first draft of the novel. |
|            |                        | Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements  
Two 3.5-inch floppy disks  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit. |
| 19, 1-4    | Lieutenant Kao         | Scope and Contents  
Two copies of Plagens' unpublished novel that tells the story of a kamikaze pilot who survives and ends up as a houseboy in a sorority house. |
| 19, 5-6    | Lt. Kao Japan          | Scope and Contents  
Research materials for the novel include photocopies of articles and print-outs from the internet concerning Japanese history. |
| 19, 7      | Lt. Kao U.S.           | Scope and Contents  
Research materials for the novel include clippings, email correspondence with sorority sisters, print outs of internet articles on Japanese American history in Los Angeles, the story's chronology, stream of consciousness notes by a sorority sister on Greek letter organizations and a "50th Anniversary of the Founding of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity" booklet, Plagens' USC fraternity. |
| 19, 8      | Lt. Kao floppies circa 2000-2002 | Scope and Contents  
Three floppy disks include drafts, notes and business materials. |
|            |                        | Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements  
Three 3.5-inch floppy disks  
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit. |
| 20, 1      | Confessions of a Fellatrix undated | Scope and Content  
One copy of Plagens' unpublished novel/memoir hybrid. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20, Folder 2</td>
<td><strong>N3 floppies 2005-2006</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Content&lt;br&gt;Versions of Plagens' unpublished Novel 3, a novel/memoir hybrid entitled <em>Confessions of a Fellatrix</em>.&lt;br&gt;Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements&lt;br&gt;Eight 3.5-inch floppy disks&lt;br&gt;Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20, Folder 3-9</td>
<td><strong>The Art Critic circa 2008</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Folders 3-6 contain three photocopied manuscripts of Plagens' online novel, which was first published as a serial in 24 weekly installments by Artnet, and then again in 2012 by Hol Art Books. Folders 7 and 8 contain a draft with Laurie Fendrich's edits and annotations and folder 9 contains nine floppy disks of various drafts.&lt;br&gt;Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements&lt;br&gt;Nine 3.5-inch floppy disks&lt;br&gt;Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21, Folder 1-3</td>
<td><strong>TAC - Rewrite circa 2008</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Folders 1 and 2 include the original copy of the manuscript with Laurie Fendrich's edits and annotations as well as some notes by Plagens. Folder 3 includes two floppy disks with rewrites of Plagens' second novel and raw material.&lt;br&gt;Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements&lt;br&gt;Two 3.5-inch floppy disks&lt;br&gt;Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36, Folder 7</td>
<td><strong>TAC e-book shelf surrogate 2012</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;This shelf surrogate consists of a color copy of the novel's cover, back and spine, a bookmark and tassel. These materials were created by Hol Art Books and include instructions for assembly. The text on the bookmark reads: &quot;The critic's job is to prevent the next Jeff Koons or Mark Kostabi from gaining a fucking foothold.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22, Folder 1</td>
<td><strong>Nauman research/notes 2008-2009</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Materials concerning Plagens' book, <em>Bruce Nauman: The True Artist</em>, include questions for interviews with Connie Lewallen, John Baldessari, Frank Owen, Brenda Richardson and Jane Livingston, Plagens' handwritten notes on Nauman's life and William T. Wiley's handwritten responses to Plagens concerning his work with Nauman at UC Davis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22, Folder 2</td>
<td><strong>Nauman - Chronologies</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Plagens' typed chronology covers Nauman's life and work from 1941-2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22, Folder 3</td>
<td><strong>Nauman draft</strong>&lt;br&gt;Scope and Contents&lt;br&gt;Early draft of the Nauman manuscript with annotations and a photocopy of the Leo Castelli Gallery catalog for Nauman's first one-man exhibition in New York.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nauman manuscript circa 2009
Scope and Contents
Multiple versions of the Nauman manuscript. Folders 5 and 6 include corrections by Bruce Nauman and Angela Westwater. Folder 7 includes a copy of the manuscript on a CD for Phaidon Press.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
1 CD
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Bruce Nauman in Venice 2009
Scope and Contents
Press releases, image sheets, Nauman biography/bibliography and exhibition venue maps comprise Plagens’ folder for Bruce Nauman: Topological Gardens, the official United States representation at the 53rd International Art Exhibition -- La Biennale di Venezia.

Nauman: Readings
Scope and Contents
Photocopies of articles and bibliographies.

Nauman 2 Do
Scope and Contents
To do lists, correspondence concerning edits, and a CD with a Word file of the book.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
1 CD
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Nauman: Visuals
Scope and Contents
Materials include postcards, Mapping the Studio II booklet, Flayed Earth/Flayed Self (Skin/Sink) publication for exhibition at the Nicholas Wilder Gallery, four CDs and a flash drive of images.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
4 CDs and 1 flash drive
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Nauman: Misc. documents 2008
Scope and Contents
Proposal for the Nauman book and a Sperone Westwater press release for Bruce Nauman: Drawings for Installations, his ninth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Nauman MSS: To Print CD-R
Scope and Contents
This CD-R stores an electronic copy of Plagens’ Nauman manuscript.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
1 CD-R
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.
Correspondence 1972-2013

Scope and Content
This series includes personal and professional correspondence.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
SERIES CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 24, folder 1-6  Correspondence 1972-2006
Scope and Contents
Folder 1 includes letters from Ron Linden and actor Jack MacGowran.
Folder 2 includes letters from Walter Gabrielson, Doug Hilson, Merwin Belin, George Plagens, Ron Linden, Jayne Plagens, M. Louise Stanley, John Coplans, Brenda Richardson, Isabel McIlvain, Cynthia Maughan and Peter Schjeldahl.
Folder 3 includes letters from Laurie Fendrich, Phoebe Plagens, Adrian Biddell, George Plagens, Walter Gabrielson, Dave Hickey, Jayne Plagens, M. Kenneth Suddleson, Joseph D. Masheck, Bert Irvin, Felicitas Wetter, Marilyn Baxter, Doug Hilson and Merwin Belin.
Folder 4 includes art writing correspondence.
Folder 5 includes letters from Ron Linden, Walter Gabrielson, John Coplans, Jim Lee, Clarence Morgan, Marina Faust, Bill Pigman, Merwin Belin, Brenda Richardson and Johannes Lacher.
Folder 6 includes letters from Ron Linden, Richard de Mille, John L. Garrett, Walter Gabrielson and George Plagens. Correspondence from George Plagens includes clippings and family photos.

box 25, folder 1  Art/Writing Biz 1996-2013
Scope and Contents
Correspondence and attached agreements concerning publishing rights.

box 25, folder 2  A Drama In Your Mailbox Production postcards 1997-2004
Scope and Contents
These humorous postcards are from Doug Hilson, founder and director of Doug's Museum of which Plagens said, "Most real museums worry about fake art. Doug's Museum is a fake museum that worries about real art."

box 25, folder 3-4  About Painting 2002-2003
Scope and Contents
About Painting was Plagens' idea for a painting focused art magazine that could branch out into history, chemistry, iconography and market. Plagens was working with a graphic designer, publications person and reaching out to writers, including John Updike who were interested in contributing to this publication. Adding "About" to the title was Laurie Fendrich's idea in order to move it to the top of alphabetical journal listings. They tried to raise two million dollars to start it up but struggled to sell the idea of an art magazine confined to painting.
Folder 3 contains email correspondence and Plagens' About Painting press card.
Folder 4 contains a trademark search report.

box 25, folder 5  T-shirt 2007
Scope and Contents
Email correspondence from Plagens discusses a t-shirt gift list for the holidays and black widow spider images from the jacket of Eric Ambler's 1940 spy novel which were used for the t-shirt design. One leg of the spider splayed out too much, so Plagens eliminated it and created a seven-legged spider for his t-shirt design.
Correspondence 1972-2013

box 25, folder 6  Auburn cards
Scope and Contents
Two Auburn University thank you cards are signed by students who appreciated Plagens' visit to their class.

box 25, folder 7  Warhol/Creative Capital Grant floppies
Scope and Contents
Correspondence, proposals and images.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Two 3.5-inch floppy disks
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Lectures circa 1980-2009
Scope and Content
This series includes annotated typescripts of lectures, slides, a program and posters.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
SERIES CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 26, folder 1  This is About Formalist Painting in L.A. slides circa 1980
Scope and Contents
Slides used for a lecture Plagens gave at UCLA Extension in which he never spoke, but experimented with a purely visual talk. Plagens describes abstract painting in the context of Los Angeles through this series of 19 slides which capture his humorous descriptions written in black ink on white posters.

box 26, folder 2  GIGS floppies 1994-2001
Scope and Contents
Documentation of Plagens’ lectures.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Two 3.5-inch floppy disks
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

box 26, folder 3-4  Lecture notes
Scope and Contents
Materials include typed lectures and panel discussion notes with Plagens’ annotations for presentations at USC, Columbia Columbia College, the Jewish Museum, the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference and the Southeastern College Art Conference (SECAC) Annual Meeting. His USC Roski School of Art and Design lecture, “A Simple Country Painter” is in folder 3.

box 26, folder 5  CAEA conference program 2002
Scope and Content
Shifting Perspectives, the Colorado Art Education Association (CAEA) Fall conference program features keynote speakers Peter Plagens and Laurie Fendrich.
The Absolute Truth CD-R 2008 February 6

Scope and Contents
Recording of Plagens' "The Absolute Truth about Contemporary Art" lecture at the New York Studio School.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
One CD-R
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Peter Plagens posters 2009

Scope and Contents
Three full color posters announce Plagens' lectures at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) for its School of Art and Design's Painter/Art Critic Lecture Series.

Course Materials 1985-2011

Scope and Contents
This series includes course evaluations, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, assessments, readings, discussion questions and student papers from courses taught at Princeton University, Hofstra University, Middlebury College and New York University.

Princeton evaluations 1985-1986

Scope and Contents
Cumulative course evaluations by Princeton University students for Plagens' Visual Arts 304 course.

Hofstra class final project 1986

Scope and Contents
A photocopy of Plagens' final project assignment for Hofstra classes FA 5 and FA 14 includes size, materials, description, purpose, method and criteria for evaluation.

HARC 0307 Archives 2005

Scope and Contents
Contemporary Art and Criticism course materials include a syllabus, timelines, lecture notes, photocopies of readings and lists of questions.

Colloquium 2005

Scope and Contents
Readings, timelines and a syllabus for Plagens' Middlebury College Faculty Colloquium entitled, "The Anxious Object of Modern Art: Questioning the work of art from Cubism through Performance Art."

Hofstra Seminar Reading 2008

Scope and Content
Course materials for Plagens' Hofstra University seminar, "The Artist's Practice" include photocopies of readings, handwritten lecture notes and a syllabus.

NYU 2009

Scope and Contents
Plagens' Seminar in Art Criticism course materials include correspondence from NYU, handwritten and typed notes, discussion questions, quizzes, student course evaluations and a syllabus.
Scope and Contents

Plagens' Seminar in Art Criticism course materials include photocopies of readings, typed lecture notes, student papers and a syllabus.

Photos and Slides 1958-2014

Scope and Content

This series is comprised of personal photos and slides.

box 29, folder 1

JMHS prom after party photocopy 1958 June

Scope and Contents

One photocopy of a high school photograph captures Plagens and friends at Moulin Rouge, a nightclub in Hollywood that hosted the John Marshall High School after-prom dinner. Plagens is seated at the front of the table dressed in a white suit with a plaid bow tie and cummerbund.

box 29, folder 2-3

Personal slides 1964-1999

Scope and Contents

Folder 2: Slides include images of his studios in Los Angeles on Union Street, 239 South Los Angeles Street and in Pasadena as well as his studios in Austin, Texas, Durham, North Carolina, Johnson, Vermont and New York. There are also images of Peter and children: Paul Wisdom Plagens, Sybil Wisdom, and Phoebe Plagens. Other slides capture images of Peter and his wife Laurie Fendrich, best friend Walter Gabrielson, gallerist Nancy Hoffman, George Green, Robert Pincus-Witten, Jim DeFrance, Sydney Littenberg, Johannes Lacher, Mitchell Kahan, David Gates and Merwin Belin.

Folder 3: Slides include images of Peter and his wife Laurie Fendrich, their daughter Phoebe, and Plagens's studios in Los Angeles, Texas and New York.

box 29, folder 4

Personal photos 1979-1996

Scope and Contents

Color photographs include images of the exterior and interior of Plagens' 239 S. Los Angeles Street studio, Peter and Ed Ruscha, Laurie Fendrich, Jayne Plagens, Johannes Lacher, George Plagens, son Paul Wisdom Plagens, daughters Sybil Wisdom and Phoebe Plagens, George Garcia and Peter's sister Pamela Garcia, Merwin Belin, Doug Hilson, David Gates, Ron Linden and a Polaroid portrait of Plagens signed by Suzanne Paul.

box 29, folder 5

Peter and Phoebe photos 1984

Scope and Contents

Two black and white photos of Plagens and his daughter.

box 29, folder 6

"Sep Bye to LA" photos circa 1985

Scope and Contents

Three photo album pages feature images of Peter's daughter Phoebe in Little Tokyo, at his studio in downtown Los Angeles and at the Hollywood Bowl.

box 29, folder 7

Paul Wisdom Plagens head shots undated

Scope and Contents

Black and white head shots of Peter's son Paul Wisdom Plagens.

box 29, folder 8

Dora Maar House residency photos 2009 April 30-May 31

Scope and Contents

Color photos of Plagens and Laurie Fendrich, in front of the Dora Maar House in Southern France.
Scope and Contents
One black and white image from a Hofstra University publication of Plagens teaching.

Ruth Bachofner Gallery opening photo 2014
Scope and Contents
One color photograph of Ron Linden, Elizabeth Medina and Plagens in the Ruth Bachofner Gallery at the Bergamot Station Art Center.

Notebooks and Datebooks 1995-2013
Scope and Content
This series is comprised of notebooks, datebooks, to-do lists, a mailing list and address book.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
SERIES CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Notebooks and to do lists circa 2007-2013
Scope and Contents
Two notebooks filled with ideas and to do lists written on notecards and Post-Its.

Scope and Contents
These 15 annual datebooks are heavily annotated by Plagens.

Mailing list and address book floppies 2006, 2008
Scope and Contents
Electronic copies of Plagens' mailing list and address book.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Two 3.5-inch floppy disks
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

DRIPS 1984-2006
Scope and Content
This series contains copies of Plagens' journal entries. These are also referred to as DRPS or DRP, abbreviations for the painter's DRIPS.

These materials are restricted until three years after the death of Peter Plagens.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
SERIES CONTAINS DIGITAL MATERIALS: Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

White Paintings 1985-1990
Scope and Content
This folder title refers to a notice in The New Yorker that said, "White paintings, with drips, by the art critic." According to Plagens, "Somehow my drips into a journal seemed to echo the drips (traces of my passing through) on a canvas."

These materials are restricted until three years after the death of Peter Plagens.
box 33, folder 1-6, box 32, folder 2-6

DRIPS 1984-2006

DRP 1991-1998
Scope and Content
Box 32: 1991-1995
Box 33: 1996-1998
These materials are restricted until three years after the death of Peter Plagens.

box 35, folder 1-8, box 34, folder 1-7

DRPS 1999-2008
Scope and Contents
Box 34: 1999-2003
Box 35: 2004-2008
These materials are restricted until three years after the death of Peter Plagens.

box 35, folder 9-10

DRPS floppies 1984-2006
Scope and Contents
These items are restricted until three years after the death of Peter Plagens.
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements
Thirteen 3.5-inch floppy disks
Special equipment or further processing may be required for viewing. To access digital materials you must notify the reference desk in advance of your visit.

Memorabilia 1938-2013
Scope and Content
This series consists of art work created by Peter’s father, George Plagens, publications, flyers, memorial programs, an illustrated trip diary by Walter Gabrielson and Nancy Goldberg, a *Newsweek* special issue cover which features Peter, a John Marshall High School 40th reunion program and badge, a file of humorous annotated clippings for painter Doug Hilson, a North Carolina personalized license plate, materials from Plagens’ studio walls, his Columbia University National Arts Journalism certificate and September 11, 2001 notes written on an empty cigarettes pack.

box 36, folder 1

George Plagens’ art work 1938, undated
Scope and Contents
These three pieces, created by Plagens’ father who worked as a freelance commercial artist, are futuristic imaginings of airplanes, a pilot and an automobile. According to Peter, the sum of George H. Plagens’ formal training was a few night classes at the Cleveland Art Institute.

box 37, folder 1

George Plagens’ cartoon 1938
Scope and Contents
Framed cartoon by Plagens’ father, published in Collier’s magazine, depicting window washers harnessed to a building while shooting at birds with water guns. The caption reads, “Tsk Tsk! Missed again!”

box 37, folder 2

Lucky Strike cigarettes pack circa 1940s
Scope and Contents
Cigarettes pack created by George H. Plagens, who created samples such as this to add to his portfolio while he searched for freelance work as a commercial artist.
The 1941 Cars clipping 1941

Scope and Contents
Painter and friend Doug Hilson gave this clipping to Plagens for his birthday. Hilson is also a Professor of Fine Art at Hofstra University. According to Plagens, Hilson holds a vast collection of vintage postcards and magazines. Examples of these postcards and vintage magazine clippings may be found in the "A Drama In Your Mailbox Production" postcards folder within the Correspondence series of this collection.

Clippings and publications 1973-2005

Scope and Contents
Publications include Two Qualms & a Quirk: Three Stories by Richard de Mille signed by the author, Walter Gabrielson's "The Openings Gambit or For One Night in L.A." text and drawings, The Daily Pigeon newspaper and "The Continuous Mark: 40 Years of the New York Studio School."
Clippings include "Decline and Resistance: The New Radicalness of the Subject" by Peter Oswald, "Diana, Surrogate Princess" by Barbara Ehrenreich, and "Death Explains Himself" by Roger Rosenblatt. This folder also includes an article on the life and death of basketball player Curtis Conrad and a "Murder on the Midway: Sordid Life and Death of Lobster Boy" article.

Untitled publication 1974

Scope and Contents
Los Angeles art publication with an interview with Plagens at his Pasadena studio.

ABSTRACT license plate 1981

Biography/History
Plagens was professor of the fine art and art history department at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill from 1980-1984 and chaired this department from 1980-1983. He and wife Laurie Fendrich sublet a place in Chapel Hill their first year and then moved to Durham where they lived in "Peter's Folly," a Jehovah's Witnesses church that Plagens describes as a "...loft on a cement slab." The couple bought a new Honda in 1981 and this was its vanity plate.

Hot Flashes quarterly 1993

Scope and Contents
This premiere issue by the Guerilla Girls, self-described "feminist masked avengers," is devoted to their examination of The New York Times' art critics. The publication's tagline is "All the sexism, racism and homophobia that fits, we complain about."

Memorial programs 1994, 2000, 2004

Scope and Contents
Memorial programs for Newsweek editor, critic and writer Jack Kroll, Robert Paul Tavetian, and artist John Coplans, founder and former editor of Artforum magazine.

Diary of a Small Journey 1995

Scope and Contents
One photocopy of Walter Gabrielson and Nancy Goldberg's illustrated diary of their trip to Paris and Italy, and photocopies of Gabrielson's cartoon work from the 1960s.

Hilson file 1995-2000

Scope and Contents
Plagens' humorous file for his friend, painter Doug Hilson contains Hall 'O' Fame materials that include witty annotations on clippings, invitations and photographs concerning art openings, lectures, Donald Judd's work at the Chinati Foundation, and going to the movies with Pee Wee Herman.
box 37, folder 11  **Nova International Enterprise flyer undated**  
**Scope and Contents**  
This flyer lists a Post Office Box in the Bronx to write to for "Financing to Start or Spand Your Business. Free Details." Plagens picked this up off the street because of the strange use of the word "spand."

box 36, folder 9  **Newsweek cover 2002 May 31**  
**Scope and Contents**  
One color photocopy of a *Newsweek* Special Issue cover with a photographic portrait of Plagens features the following headline and subhead: "Van Goghing, Van Goghn: Peter Gives Us a Brush With Greatness."

box 37, folder 12  **JMHS Reunion program 1998**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Plagens' 40 Year John Marshall High School Reunion program includes his laminated photo badge.

box 37, folder 13  **Columbia University certificate 1999**  
**Scope and Contents**  
This Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism certificate documents Plagens as one of four senior fellows in the National Arts Journalism Program from August, 1998 to May, 1999.

box 37, folder 14  **911 notes 2001 September 11**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Plagens found these September 11th notes on the street. An attack timeline is written on the inside of this Newport cigarettes pack.

box 37, folder 15  **Plagens portrait 2002**  
**Scope and Content**  
Portrait on ruled paper with black ballpoint pen and metallic blue pen. Plagens recalls that he is unsure of the artist but it may have been his wife, Laurie, making a fake Picasso portrait of him.

box 37, folder 16  **Wall material undated**  
**Scope and Contents**  
Materials include items that were previously posted on Plagens' studio walls such as a Polaroid photo of his daughter, Phoebe, a photograph of best friend Walter Gabrelson, art by Phoebe, an announcement for a National Gallery of Art press breakfast and restoration preview of the three panels of Gerard David's *The Saint Anne Altarpiece*, and a poster of the Fifteenth General Staff Course Army Air Forces Group.

box 37, folder 17  **Bad Boy 2013**  
**Scope and Contents**  
This hardcover copy of painter Eric Fischl's autobiography includes annotations by Plagens.