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## Guide to the Gaza Bowen papers

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2013

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**Contributing Institution:** University of California, Santa Cruz

**Title:** Gaza Bowen papers

**Identifier/Call Number:** MS.293

**Physical Description:** 25 Linear Feet 16 boxes, 39 oversize objects

**Date (inclusive):** 1980-2008

**Abstract:** This collection includes files, notebooks and slides as well as artist's books and installation pieces from "Biblioteca Memoria".

Stored in Special Collections & Archives: Advance notice is required for access to the papers.

**Language of Material:** English

**Access**

Collection open for research. Some of the oversize objects are not available for research because of their size, weight and condition.

**Use Restrictions**

Property rights for this collection reside with the University of California. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. The publication or use of any work protected by copyright beyond that allowed by fair use for research or educational purposes requires written permission from the copyright owner. Responsibility for obtaining permissions, and for any use rests exclusively with the user.

**Preferred Citation**

Gaza Bowen papers. MS 293. Special Collections and Archives, University Library, University of California, Santa Cruz.

**Acquisition Information**

Gift of Dennis Wheeler in 2002, 2006, 2009.

**Biography**

Gaza Bowen (1944-2005) was an internationally known sculptor who exhibited extensively since 1978. In the broadest sense her work was an inquiry into the non-verbal communication between people and objects.

For nearly twenty years she focused her attention on shoes: their construction, history, cultural meaning, and social significance. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, she made functional shoes that sported vibrant colors and unusual patterns. Then she explored shoes as sculptures. Her work has been featured in museums from Berkeley to Los Angeles to Germany. Perhaps her best-known series, "Shoes for the Little Woman," was a group of shoe sculptures created mostly from cleaning supplies: elaborate high heels constructed from kitchen sponges or wooden clothespins, sometimes decorated with pot scrubbers.

In 1995, supported by fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council, Gaza stepped away from the shoe idiom and began exploring the relationship between the personal and the political, building mixed media sculptures based on childhood memories.

From 1997 to 1999 she continued her investigation into how the history of use becomes indelibly etched into the fiber of matter and how those traces of memory evoke meaning in the viewer. This work culminated in "Bibliotheca Memoria", a library/reading room installation of books and furniture built from salvaged materials.

Her use of detritus as art material led her to an artist-in-residency at the San Francisco dump in 2000. Her final project from this four month residency was the "Waste Not/What Not Catalog". She also produced many artist's books including "Red Shoe Reader" and "The Secret Game".

Gaza Bowen's work is included in many private and public collections including Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Oakland Museum, and The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; The Getty Center for Art and the Humanities and The Norton Family Foundation, Santa Monica, California; Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, Australia and Duetsches Schuhmuseum, Offenbach am Main, Germany.

Excerpted from Gaza Bowen, Artist, Biography at gazabowen.com & SF Gate obituary, 6/11/2005, by Kelly Hill, Chronicle Staff Writer.

A resume of Gaza Bowen's work can be found under "Additional Guides" to this finding aid.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

This collection includes files, notebooks and slides as well as artist's books and installation pieces from "Biblioteca Memoria". Many of the objects were fabricated from material from the San Francisco Land Fill and are rusty and sharp edged. Please handle with care.

**Separated Material**

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Red shoe reader [Gaza Bowen, compiler], and Waste not/what not catalog : new paradigm products, [designed, photographed, written by Gaza Bowen] have been cataloged separately.

Processed by:

M. Carey

Date Completed:

February 2014

Encoded by:

M. Carey

1. [Gaza Bowen Resume](#)

2. [Slide Bin Divisions](#)

### Subjects and Indexing Terms

Artists--California--Santa Cruz County

Installations (Art)

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### **Business & Research materials, Series 1 ca. 1996-2005**

**Physical Description:** 6 document boxes

#### **Scope and Content Summary**

This series contains some biographical material, drawings, notebooks, diaries, sales list, loans, teaching materials, printed appearances, and slides.

box 1	<b>Biographical material, artist statements, etc., 1996-2005</b>
box 1	<b>Sales, Museums, Grants, Exhibit Loans, 1990-2003</b>
box 1	<b>Exhibits, appearances in magazines, programs, announcements</b>
box 1	<b>undated</b>
box 1	<b>1980-1989</b>
box 1	<b>1990-1995</b>
box 2	<b>1996-1999</b>
box 2	<b>1990-1999</b>
box 2	<b>2000-2006</b>
box 2	<b>Announcements &amp; programs, 1997-2001</b>
box 2	<b>Reference material, n.d.</b>
box 2	<b>3 notebooks, 1990-2001</b>
box 5	<b>Photos of art work, Shoes; Drawings, 1983-1997</b>
box 3	<b>2 diaries, 7 notebooks, ca. 1990s</b>
box 4	<b>4 notebooks, ca. 1980-1990s</b>
box 4	<b>Notebook: "Pro Deo et Ecclesia . . .", n.d.</b>
box 4	<b>Teaching, 2000</b>
box 4	<b>Group Show - Cabrillo Gallery, 2006</b>
box 5	<b>Biblioteca Memoria, 1999</b>
box 5	<b>Red Shoe Reader, 1992-2000</b>
Box 6-8	<b>Slides 1978-1999</b>

### **Biblioteca Memoria, Series 2 ca. 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:** 64 objects

#### **Scope and Content Summary**

This series contains some of the objects from the installation "Biblioteca Memoria".

In 1997 Gaza began work on "Biblioteca Memoria", a life size library built from salvaged metals and assorted detritus. First viewed in September 1999 at Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles, the work has been installed at four other venues: Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery, University of California Santa Cruz; Special Collections, McHenry Library, University of California Santa Cruz; Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose, California; and JFK University Arts Annex, Berkeley in connection with Women's Environmental Artist Symposium 2001.

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- box 9                   **Metal slide box - empty - "O-P" #7, ms0293\_obj\_0045 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 9                   **Metal slide box - empty - "Q-S" #8, ms0293\_obj\_0046 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 9                   **Metal slide box w/magnifying glass inset in cover, inside cover inset w/knobs, keys - rope, slides. corked bottle of water - "K-L" #5, ms0293\_obj\_0047 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 10                  **Metal slide box - empty - "A-B" #1, ms0293\_obj\_0048 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 9                   **Metal slide box w/metal magnifying glass, metal engraving block of "bowling pins" and wood/metal engraving of people" - "M-N" #6, ms0293\_obj\_0044 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 10                  **Metal slide box w/vertebrate, telephone rotary dial, round cardboard box - "T-V" #9, ms0293\_obj\_0049 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 10                  **Metal slide box - empty - "W-Z" #10, ms0293\_obj\_0050 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 10                  **Metal slide box w/ double glass display areas. Inside: contains lace, beads, buttons, ribbons, grommets, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0051 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 10                  **Blue metal box w/2 working gears. Inside: red metal notebook w/ wire mesh pages, gears, ms0293\_obj\_0057 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 11                  **Metal slide box w/wire mesh book on cover & chain attached. Inside: w/lighter, c-clamp, chain links, spring, bolt, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0052 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 11                  **Metal book on cover w/chain attached. Inside: w/ spring, nut & bolt, ball bearings, metal bits, ms0293\_obj\_0053 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 11                  **Black leather covered wood box w/ mirror shard inbedded. Inside: w/ 'pages' of lace, wire mesh, plastic, netting, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0054 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 11                  **Black metal box w/ imbedded cheese grater on cover & plastic insulator, chain attached to cover. Inside: w/sheet metal & wire mesh pages, ms0293\_obj\_0058 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 11                  **Black metal chain, 1/2" link, ms0293\_obj\_0059 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
- box 11                  **Galvanized metal chain, 1 1/2" link w/metal hook at end, ms0293\_obj\_0060 1997-1999**  
                          **Physical Description:**
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- box 12                   **Metal box w/ chrome handle & chain attached. Inside: w/mirror, wire coil, bolt, ear plug, mirror clip, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0055 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- box 12                   **Metal box w/ bike chain & mirror on cover w/chain attached. Inside: w/ mirror, coiled saw blade, wire mesh, ms0293\_obj\_0056 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- box 12                   **Blue metal box w/ working gears on front cover, chain attached; Inside: chain driven gears, orange metal notebook w/die, gears, wire mesh pages, ms0293\_obj\_0064 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- box 13                   **Wood box w/ chain saw blade & wire mesh imbedded on cover: Inside: metal tool box w/wooden balls & metal hooks (floats), metal pages w/ smashed bottle caps, aluminum rounds, mesh, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0061 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- box 14                   **Metal 'book' w/ pipe binding, wire mesh page, saw blade page, tail light page, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0062 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Box 15                   **Metal 'book' w/ pipe binding, Wire mesh page w/purple bits, saw blade & copper page, stove difuser page, etc., ms0293\_obj\_0063 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Box 16                   **Multi-colored metal tray book, 8 pages, ms0293\_obj\_0040 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Box 16                   **Metal slide box w/ nutmeg grater - otherwise empty - "E-G", ms0293\_obj\_0041 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Box 16                   **Metal slide box w/hinged & unhinged playing cards, empty frame & metal page - "H-J" #4, ms0293\_obj\_0042 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Box 16                   **Metal slide box w/cloth doll, burnt candles, 4 2x2" slides, filled vials, men's 15 1/2" paper collar, lighter, bits & pieces - "C-D" #2, ms0293\_obj\_0043 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Floor Lamp, ms0293\_obj\_0001 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- #1 Desk Lamp, ms0293\_obj\_0002 1997-1999**  
                                  **#2 Desk lamp, ms0293\_obj\_0003 1997-1999**  
                                  **#1 Bookcase (wall), ms0293\_obj\_0004 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- #2 Bookcase (wall), ms0293\_obj\_0005 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
- Small desktop book shelf, ms0293\_obj\_0006 1997-1999**  
                                  **Physical Description:**
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**Small bookcase, ms0293\_obj\_0007 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**Book cart w/attached book cradle, yellow, ms0293\_obj\_0008 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**Book cart w/attached book cradle and chained book, green, ms0293\_obj\_0009 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**Book cart w/attached book cradle and book attached, rusted metal, ms0293\_obj\_0010 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 decorative tin panel, fan motif, ms0293\_obj\_0011 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#1 Wood/metal bookshelf, ms0293\_obj\_0012 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#2 Wood/metal bookshelf, ms0293\_obj\_0013 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#3 Wood/metal bookshelf, ms0293\_obj\_0014 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**Red pedestal table w/attached book cradle, ms0293\_obj\_0015 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#1 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0016 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#2 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0017 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#3 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0018 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#4 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0019 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#5 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0020 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#6 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0021 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#7 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0022 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#8 metal fold up chair, folded, ms0293\_obj\_0023 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 metal mesh side chair, ms0293\_obj\_0024 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 metal mesh garden arm chair, ms0293\_obj\_0025 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 metal/wood chair, ms0293\_obj\_0026 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 table, ms0293\_obj\_0027 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 metal sign "Biblioteca Memoria", ms0293\_obj\_0028 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 metal table frame w/o top, ms0293\_obj\_0029 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 metal school desk, ms0293\_obj\_0030 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 round metal mesh patio table w/attached book cradle, approx. 24" diameter, ms0293\_obj\_0031 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#1 roll of sheet metal, blue outside, ms0293\_obj\_0032 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#2 roll of sheet metal, blue outside, ms0293\_obj\_0033 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#3 roll of sheet metal, blue outside w/wood grain paper lining, ms0293\_obj\_0034 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#4 roll of sheet metal, blue outside w/wood grain paper lining, ms0293\_obj\_0035 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#1 Metal grate, ms0293\_obj\_0036 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**#2 Metal grate, ms0293\_obj\_0037 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**1 Metal square pedestal table, ms0293\_obj\_0038 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**

**Metal table/desk w/metal scroll work [ms0293\_obj\_0006 is the bookshelf made for this table/desk], ms0293\_obj\_0039 1997-1999**

**Physical Description:**