Descriptive Summary

Languages: English

Contributing Institution: Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive
La Jolla 92093-0175

Title: Martha Ronk Papers

Identifier/Call Number: MSS 0697

Physical Description: 4.6 Linear feet (9 archives boxes and 11 oversize folders)

Date (inclusive): 1983-2008


Scope and Content of Collection

The Martha Ronk Papers contain materials documenting her activities as a poet, publisher, editor, and fiction writer, and features manuscripts of poetry and prose which date from 1983 through 2008. The papers also include editorial materials related to both Littoral Books and the journal The New Review of Literature, poetry workshops, poetry reading materials, articles, and art reviews. The majority of the collection is made up of typescript drafts from Ronk's collected poetry, which contain handwritten notes and revisions from Ronk and her publishers. The collection also contains general correspondence between Ronk and other poets, book publishers, and literary editors. Arranged into six series: 1) CORRESPONDENCE, 2) WRITINGS BY RONK, 3) EDITORIAL PROJECTS, 4) CRITICISMS AND REVIEWS, 5) READINGS AND WORKSHOPS, and 6) MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS.

SERIES 1: CORRESPONDENCE

The CORRESPONDENCE series contains letters from Paul Vangelisti, George Albon, Lee Hickman, Dave Smith, Bin Ramke, and other writers and poetry editors. The majority of the correspondence deals with Ronk's writing, including acceptance and rejection letters from publishers regarding collected and uncollected poetry and prose. This series also contains a small amount of personal correspondence between Ronk and other writers whom she befriended as an editor of Littoral Book and The New Review of Literature. This series is arranged in alphabetical order by correspondent.

SERIES 2: WRITINGS BY RONK

The WRITINGS BY RONK series is the largest series in the collection and is arranged in four subseries: A) Articles and Reviews, B) Unpublished Work, C) Uncollected Published Poetry, and D) Collected Published Poetry.

A) The Articles and Reviews subseries contains articles and drafts, both published and unpublished, written by Ronk. This subseries also contains art reviews written by Ronk for the journal Artweek in 1989 and 1990. Materials in this subseries are arranged in alphabetical order.

B) The Unpublished Work subseries includes typescript drafts of collected and uncollected poems written by Ronk. These unpublished manuscripts include work entitled: "Lost", "Letters from Hong Kong", and "Elegies, Alibis, and Spring."

C) The Uncollected Published Poetry subseries contains individual poems written by Ronk that were published in various poetry and literary magazines, including Hambone, The American Poetry Review, HOW(ever), and Talisman. Materials in this subseries are arranged in alphabetical order by the name of the journal or publication.

D) The fourth subseries, Collected Published Poetry, contains correspondence, typescript drafts, galley proofs and final drafts of fourteen of Ronk's published poetry books. These books include typescripts by Ronk, as well as collaborative projects Ronk worked on with other authors or artists. One of these collaborations is the book Life in L.A., written by Ronk and other poets in 1983. This publication was printed on oversize paper and published by Paradise Press. The typescript drafts in this series contain handwritten notes by Ronk that show the evolution of the poems and document the publication process of each poetry manuscript. This subseries also contains criticism and reviews of some of Ronk's published poetry that appeared in literary magazines and other publications, such as the LA Times Book Review. Items in this final subseries are arranged in chronological order.

SERIES 3: EDITORIAL PROJECTS

The third series in this collection, EDITORIAL PROJECTS, contains material from both Littoral Books and The New Review of Literature journal. Both editorial projects contain correspondence, manuscript submissions, and contact information for contributors from both publications. The papers pertaining to Littoral Books contains a galley proof for the cover of Empire Life by George Albon. These materials also include reading announcements and flyers from local poets that were sponsored by Littoral Books; these flyers include an announcement for "A Futurist Dinner," which was the first fundraiser dinner put together for Littoral Books by Ronk, Phillips, and Vangelisti.
SERIES 4: CRITICISMS AND REVIEWS
The CRITICISMS AND REVIEWS series contains published and unpublished reviews of Ronk’s work on collaborative projects, as well as her work as a whole. This series also contains commentary regarding Ronk’s influence on the Southern California poetry scene over the past twenty years.

SERIES 5: READINGS AND WORKSHOPS
The READINGS AND WORKSHOPS series contains materials from various poetry workshops and conferences in which Ronk participated, including the Page Mother’s Conference at UCSD, the Place as Purpose Conference, and the Poetics of Memory Conference. The materials from these conferences include correspondence, conference notes and outlines, and panelist writings and submissions. This series also contains flyers and pamphlets for various poetry readings in which Ronk performed. These readings sometimes included other poets from the Los Angeles area. Materials in this series are arranged in alphabetical order.

SERIES 6: MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS
The final series in the collection, MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS, includes a small amount of teaching material from Occidental College and two articles about Ronk; one mentioning her involvement at a poetry conference, and a second highlighting her achievement in being awarded the Graham L. Sterling Award for Excellence at Occidental College.

Biography
Martha Clare Ronk was born on February 19, 1940, in Cleveland, Ohio. She received her B.A. in English from Wellesley College in 1962, and her PhD from Yale University in 1968. Her dissertation entitled “The Theme of Creation in Paradise Lost” was completed under the direction of Louis L. Martz. From 1967 through 1971 Ronk taught at Tufts University as an assistant professor. In 1971 she moved to Los Angeles, where she did her post-doctoral studies at the School of Criticism and Theory at the University of California, Irvine, in the summer of 1976. In 1980 Ronk took a position at Occidental College as a professor of English and Comparative Studies; she received the Graham L. Sterling Faculty Award for Excellence from Occidental College in 1990.

In 1990, along with Los Angeles writers Paul Vangelisti and Dennis Phillips, created Littoral Books, a co-operative publishing venture in Los Angeles. Littoral Books published both poetry and prose mainly for authors in Southern California, including numerous well-known poets such as George Albon, Norma Cole, and Stephen Ratcliffe. Early publications from Littoral Books were printed with help from Sun & Moon Press. Ronk became co-editor of the journal The New Review of Literature with Paul Vangelisti and Dennis Phillips in 2002. This journal was a product of the Graduate Writing Program of Otis College of Art and Design. Each issue included poetry, essays, reviews and criticism of modern literature. The New Review of Literature ceased publication in 2008 after its tenth issue, and was replaced in February 2009 by OR: A Literary Tabloid.

Ronk has published over ten books of poetry. Her first book, Desire in LA, was published in 1990 by the University of Georgia Press. Since then, Ronk has written numerous other books of collected poems, including Desert Geometries: Poems (1992), State of Mind (1995), and Eyetrouble (1998). Her most current publication, Glass Grapes: Stories, is a series of short stories published by BOA Editions Ltd. in 2008.

In 2005 Ronk was awarded the PEN USA award for poetry for her book In a Landscape of Having to Repeat. In 2006 her book Vertigo: Poems won the National Poetry Series award and a 2007 National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship. Ronk is currently the Irma and Jay Price Professor of English and Comparative Studies at Occidental College. Her instruction focuses on Renaissance studies, as well as poetry and fiction writing.

Publication Rights
Publication rights are held by the creator of the collection.

Preferred Citation
Martha Ronk Papers, MSS 697. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Publishers and publishing -- United States -- Archives
American poetry -- 20th century
Women poets -- United States
Ronk, Martha Clare -- Archives
Vangelisti, Paul -- Correspondence
Guest, Barbara -- Correspondence
Eshleman, Clayton -- Correspondence
DiPalma, Ray -- Correspondence
Corbett, William, 1942- -- Correspondence
Albon, George -- Correspondence
Littoral Books

**CORRESPONDENCE**

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Box 1, Folder 64  Y - Miscellaneous

WRITINGS BY RONK

Articles and Reviews

"Coping with change: Sign language at the Southwest Museum," Artweek - Typescript draft and copy of published review
"Fooling with mother nature: John Divola at Jan Kesner Gallery," Artweek - Typescript, notes and final draft February 1, 1990
"Images etched in stone," Artweek - Typescript draft and notes November 4, 1989
"More than urban" - Photocopy of article written for Occidental College by Martha Ronk, Mark McCloskey and David James
"Review of On a Stair by Ann Lauterbach" - Typescript draft of poetry review
"The sky as landscape," Artweek - Typescript drafts, notes, and final draft July 15, 1989
"Susan Rankkaitis: Meyers/Bloom Gallery," Artweek - Typescript drafts and notes November 1990

Unpublished Work

"Elegies, Alibis, and Spring" typescript drafts
"Letters from Hong Kong" typescript draft with notes and revisions 1993-1994
"Lost" typescript draft with notes and revisions
"Not just a pronoun" typescript draft with notes and revisions 1994
Typescript draft of early poems
Typescript draft of miscellaneous poems and prose

Uncollected Published Poetry

Publications List - Twenty-one poems published by journals and newspapers
American Poetry Review - "From Vertigo," published poems November - December 2004
Arshile Magazine - Photocopy of published poems 1997
Counter Clockwise - Final published poem 1996
Denver Quarterly - "Hunger, a cookbook," photocopy of published poem 1993
Box 3, Folder 8  *Hambone* - Photocopies of published poems 1988-1998
Box 3, Folder 9  *HOW(ever)* - "From the sofa series," published poems 1990
Box 3, Folder 10  *LA Weekly* - "Memory: A Santa Fe moon," photocopy of published poem
Box 3, Folder 11  *Magazine* - Published poems 1984
Box 3, Folder 12  *Milkweed Chronicle* - "Still life," photocopy of published poem 1984
Oversize FB-482-07
Box 3, Folder 13  *Quotidian* - Typescript drafts of poems July - August 1999
Box 3, Folder 14  *Talisman* - Photocopy of published poems 1993

Collected Published Poetry

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*Desire in L.A.* (1990)
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Box 3, Folder 17-19  Poem drafts and notes
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Box 3, Folder 21  Typescript drafts of early poems, includes unpublished poem drafts

*Desert Geometries* (1992)
Box 3, Folder 22  Old version of typescript drafts
Box 4, Folder 1  Typescript drafts, with notes and revisions

Box 4, Folder 2  "Mind of another," typescript draft
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*Emblems* (1998)
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Box 4, Folder 14  Published reviews and press release
Box 4, Folder 15  *Snapshots of the San Fernando Valley* (2000) - Correspondence with Frank Romero, typescripts and final drafts 1999-2000

*Displeasures of the Table: Memoir as Caricature* (2001)
Box 4, Folder 16  Typescript draft with notes and revisions August 1993
Box 5, Folder 1-2  Typescript drafts with notes and revisions
Box 5, Folder 3  Updated typescript draft with notes and revisions
Box 5, Folder 4  Final typescript draft with notes and revisions
Box 5, Folder 5  Published reviews 2001-2006

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Box 5, Folder 9  Typescript draft, with notes and revisions August 1996
Box 5, Folder 10  Typescript draft with revisions December 1996
Box 5, Folder 11  Typescript draft with notes and revisions 2002
Box 6, Folder 1  Part of typescript draft with notes and revisions February 18, 2002
Box 6, Folder 2, Oversize FB-482-09  Galley proofs and book cover sample 2002

*In a Landscape of Having to Repeat* (2004)
Correspondence 2003-2004
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**EDITORIAL PROJECTS**

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  - Empire Life by George Albon, galley proof of book cover 1998
- **Oversize FB-482-10**
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**New Review of Literature**

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- February 2005 - March 2006
- July 2006 - April 2007
- List of contributors for various issues 2006-2007
- Miscellaneous manuscript submissions
- Submission guidelines and production schedule 2005 - 2007

**CRITICISM AND REVIEWS**

- **Box 9, Folder 2**
  - Frank, Peter - "Muses, self-help graphics, master drawings from Stanford University," photocopy of published review December 28, 1995
- **Box 9, Folder 3**
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  - Zachary, R.Y. - "Signs of new poetry in California," typescript draft

**READINGS AND WORKSHOPS**

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  - Associated Writing Programs Conference - Correspondence and proposal 1997
- **Box 9, Folder 7**
  - First Annual Conference of the College of Neglected Science - Outline, notes and correspondence 1992-1997
- **Box 9, Folder 8**
  - LA Poetry Festival - Essay and draft written by Ronk 1992
- **Box 9, Folder 9**
  - La Terra Nova Festival - Correspondence, press releases and notes 1990
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  - Los Angeles Writers on Site Program - Application and CV 1998
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**MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS**

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<td>QuadAngle: The newsletter for employees of Occidental College - &quot;Thorne packed for opening convocation&quot; September 26, 1990</td>
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