Descriptive Summary

Languages: English

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

Title: Stan Phillips Western Poetry Project Collection

Creator: Phillips, Stan

Identifier/Call Number: MSS 0819

Physical Description: 1.25 Linear feet (1 archives box and 1 record carton)

Date (inclusive): 1962-1970

Abstract: The Stan Phillips Western Poetry Project Collection consists of spoken word poetry recordings and related correspondence between Stan Phillips and poets James Broughton, Jess Collins, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Stan Phillips Western Poetry Project Collection consists of spoken word poetry recordings and related correspondence between Stan Phillips and poets James Broughton, Jess Collins, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky. The recordings were made in 1962, with the intention of being produced into a record of Black Mountain poets reading their own work.

Arranged in two series: Series 1) SOUND RECORDINGS, and 2) PAPERS.

Historical Background

In 1953 Stan Phillips was a motion picture and audio-visual consultant at Western Cine, a film laboratory and sound recording and editing studio in Denver, Colorado. He was also the cinematographer for *Interim*, an experimental short film directed by his childhood friend, poet and filmmaker Stan Brakhage, who had become friends with Robert Creeley and James Broughton. After Black Mountain College closed its doors in 1957, Phillips and Brakhage proposed the idea of recording poets reading their own work and then making these recordings available to the public in the form of long-playing records. This concept was influenced by Black Mountain poet Charles Olson, who believed poetry should be read aloud in order for listeners to hear its rhythm, breath and nuances.

1962 Phillips and Western Cine were able to record, using studio reel-to-reel audio equipment, six poets reading poetry of their choice: James Broughton, Jess Collins, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky. Phillips also sought to collect photographs of the poets and their background materials for the album cover and liner notes of the LP record.

After a decade at Western Cine, Phillips became an adjunct professor at the University of Denver in filmmaking and television in 1962-1963, and subsequently started a business teaching screenwriting. When Phillips left Western Cine, the Poet Record Project was without a manager to move the project forward, and eventually the tapes were sent to Phillips in the hopes that he would complete the project on his own. A logo and the name Quest Records was draw up, but Charles Olson and Robert Duncan never sent the final materials needed for the album cover, and although Phillips worked out an advertising plan, edited tapes to length, and prepared them to be pressed, he was not able to raise enough funds to complete the project and LPs were never produced.

Source material for this note is primarily from Judith Phillips's (spouse of Stan Phillips) account entitled "How Quest Records Never Came to Be," which is in Box 2 of the collection.

Preferred Citation

Stan Phillips Western Poetry Project Collection. MSS 0819. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego.

Acquisition Information

Acquired 2019

Publication Rights

Publication rights are held by the creator of the collection.

Restrictions

Original sound recording reels are restricted. Researchers may inquire regarding listening copies in advance of their visit.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Phillips, Stan -- Archives
Broughton, James, 1913-1999
SOUND RECORDINGS

Scope and Content of Series

Series 1) SOUND RECORDINGS: Reel-to-reel recordings arranged alphabetically by the last name of the poet. Includes recordings of readings by James Broughton, Jess Collins, Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky. The recordings include both master recordings, master duplicates and some outtakes.

Box 1, Folder 1-3
Broughton, James - Master reels #1-3 1962 January 19

Box 1, Folder 4-6
Broughton, James - Back-up copies 1962 January 19

Box 1, Folder 7-8
Collins, Jess - Master reels #3-4 1962 March 26

Box 1, Folder 9
Collins, Jess - Back-up copy 1962 March 26

Box 1, Folder 10-11
Creeley, Robert - Master reels #1-2 1962 April 25

Box 1, Folder 12-13
Creeley, Robert - Back-up copies 1962 April 25

Box 1, Folder 14-16
Creeley, Robert - Additional recordings and outtakes 1962 April 25

Box 1, Folder 17-18
Duncan, Robert - Master reels #1-2 1962 March 26

Box 1, Folder 19
Duncan, Robert - Back-up copy 1962 March 26

Box 1, Folder 20
Duncan, Robert - Master outtakes 1962 March 26

Box 1, Folder 21-22
Duncan, Robert - Backup copy 1962

Box 1, Folder 23-24
Duncan, Robert - Master outtakes 1962

Box 1, Folder 25
Duncan, Robert - Backup copy 1962 August 28

Box 1, Folder 26-29
Zukofsky, Louis - Master reels #1-4 1962 August 28

Box 1, Folder 30-31
Zukofsky, Louis - Backup copies 1962 August 28

Box 1, Folder 32
Zukofsky, Louis - Additional recording (unidentified) 1962

Oversize OM-1, Folder 11-13
Western Cine Poet Series - Master edited recordings (?) reels #1-3 undated

PAPERS

Scope and Content of Series

Series 2) PAPERS: Includes correspondence arranged alphabetically by the last name of the poet; primarily between Stan Phillips and James Broughton, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, and Louis Zukofsky and others associated with the photographic and/or recording rights of these poets. The correspondence focuses primarily on details about the recordings and proposed record, and the earliest correspondence with Robert Creeley suggests that he was the first poet contacted and subsequently recommended and contacted Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky to be a part of the project. This series also includes "How Quest Records Never Came to Be" by Judith Phillips, Stan Phillips's wife; some photographic material and background material intended for the album cover and liner notes of the records; and original drawings for the proposed Quest Records logo.

Box 2, Folder 1
Broughton, James 1962-1965

Box 2, Folder 2
Collins, Jess and Robert Duncan 1962
| Box 2, Folder 3 | Creeley, Robert 1962-1969 |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | Olson, Charles 1962-1970 |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | Zukofsky, Louis 1962-1963 |
| Box 2, Folder 6 | "How Quest Records Never Came to Be" - Account of the Black Mountain Poet Record Project by Judith A. Phillips |
| Box 2, Folder 7 | Phillips's business correspondence and handwritten notes regarding Quest Records and the Black Mountain Poet Record Project 1962-1964 |
| Box 2, Folder 8 | Photographs for album cover and liner notes |
| | General note |
| | Portraits and background material for James Broughton, Robert Creeley, Charles Olson, and Louis Zukofsky. |
| Box 2, Folder 9 | Quest Records original drawings of logo design |