Finding Aid to the Judy Chicago Visual Archive
Archives of Women Artists

Finding Aid Prepared by: Emily Moore (April, 2020)
Visual Archive Collection Processed by: Kaitlyn Snover (November 2018)

Betty Boyd Dettre Library & Research Center
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Overview

Repository Information:

National Museum of Women in the Arts,
Betty Boyd Dettre Library & Research Center
1250 New York Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
Email: lrc@nmwa.org
Phone: 202-783-5000

Title:

Judy Chicago Visual Archive

Provenance:

Gift of Judy Chicago, May 8, 2017

Collection Dates:

Inclusive Dates: circa 1940s-1978, 2015, undated

Physical Description:

Visual Archive: 6.17 linear feet (13 binders, 4 document boxes, 1 photo storage box)

Summary:

This collection, which grows by accretion, consists of photographic negatives, contact sheets, and copy prints documenting and related to the career of artist, author, feminist and educator Judy Chicago. As of November, 2018, the collection includes slides of Chicago’s early artwork, physical and digital copies of her lectures, and items related to The Dinner Party (1974-1979).

Finding Aid URL:

Administrative Information

Access Information:

Unrestricted

Preferred Citation:

[Item],[ Date], [Series], [Subseries], Judy Chicago Visual Archive, Archives of Women Artists, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Betty Boyd Dettre Library & Research Center.

Publication and Photocopies Note:

Permission from the National Museum of Women in the Arts required for publication and reproduction of original materials. Photocopies of original materials can be made for a fee and at the discretion of the library director.

Related Materials Note:

Betty Boyd Dettre Library and Research Center (LRC) Collection
*The LRC holds more than 100 resources related to Judy Chicago, including rare books, vertical files, monographs and exhibition catalogs. Users are encouraged to consult the LRC catalog at www.nmwa.kohalibrary.com*

Books about Judy’s Work

Books by Judy


**Digital Resources and External Collections**

1. [The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection, Pennsylvania State University](https://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/)
3. [The Judy Chicago Research Portal](https://judychicagoportal.org/)

**Processed by:**

Kimberly Colbert, August 2017, Kaitlyn Snover, November 2018, Emily Shaw, 2020

**Processing Note:**

All materials have maintained their original arrangement and titles. More processing will be necessary as additional materials are acquired.

**Biographical Note**

Born Judy Cohen in Chicago, Illinois, in 1939, Chicago attended the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of California, Los Angeles. Chicago's early work was Minimalist, and she was part of the landmark *Primary Structures* exhibition in 1966 at The Jewish Museum in New York. She turned to feminist content in the late 1960s. At this time she changed her last name to Chicago, the location of her birth.

Believing in the need for a feminist pedagogy for female art students, Chicago began the first Feminist Art Program at California State University, Fresno, in 1970. The following year, with artist Miriam Schapiro, she co-founded the Feminist Art Program at California Institute of the Arts, Valencia. *Womanhouse* (1972), a collaborative installation the two artists created with their students, transformed an abandoned building into a house representative of women’s experiences.

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1. [https://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/](https://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/)
3. [https://judychicagoportal.org/](https://judychicagoportal.org/)
Chicago is perhaps best known for her iconic *The Dinner Party* (1974–1979), which celebrates women’s history through place settings designed for 39 important women. The monumental, collaborative project incorporates traditional women’s crafts such as embroidery, needlepoint, and ceramics.

Chicago’s work has continued to address themes from women’s lives with *The Birth Project* (1980–1985) and *The Holocaust Project* (1985–1993). She is a prolific lecturer and writer, and she has taught at Duke and Indiana Universities and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her numerous awards include grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Getty Foundation and four honorary doctorates. She currently resides with her husband, photographer Donald Woodman, with whom she collaborates on artistic and teaching opportunities.

**Scope and Content Note**

The Judy Chicago Visual Archive will grow by accretion to represent the span of Chicago’s artistic career. As of this writing (April, 2020) the collection includes materials related to the installation artwork, *The Dinner Party*, slides of artwork from Chicago’s childhood to early career, and lectures on topics such as feminism, Judaism, and art. All series in the collection have been completed except for Subseries 3, Artwork, as this series will continue as more boxes of slides are acquired in the future.

**Series 1: Contact Sheets and Negatives, 1–446; Art Contact Sheets and Negatives; Personnel Contact Sheets**

This subseries consists of contact sheets and negatives spanning from 1976-1978. The contact sheets and negatives include images of resources collected to create the installation and photos of the people and labor involved in the creation of this work.

**Series 2: Embroidering Our Heritage Copy Prints (226 prints)**

Included in subseries 2 is a set of 5 x 7 black and white copy prints used in prepress for the 1980 book, *Embroidering Our Heritage: The Dinner Party Needlework,* by Chicago and Susan Hill. These photos document the needlework and workers in the studio as well as reproduce reference images related to needlework and textiles gathered during the research phase of the project.

**Series 3: Artwork (319 Slides)**

Subseries 3 is currently a growing collection; as of right now it contains one binder box of artwork slides from dates ranging between the 1940s to 1972, though focusing mainly on Chicago’s work from the 1960s. This binder box includes artworks from Chicago’s childhood to her early career, such as her series *Pasadena Lifesavers.*
Series 4: Lectures
This subseries consists of 44 lectures about Chicago’s artistic career and projects such as The Dinner Party and The Holocaust Project. The majority of these lectures include images and/or slide show presentations along with the lecture notes, some of which are handwritten or annotated most likely by Chicago’s own hand. Each lecture also has corresponding CDs of the lecture.

Organization and Arrangement Information

The materials were organized in the order as received and applied to the materials in the upper right corner of the contact sheet. Series 1 materials were pre-arranged in a numerical order, so that was followed for the processing of the materials. The Personnel Contact Sheets did not have a set numerical order, but was broken up into sections based upon departments, so that arrangement was continued. Series 2 consists of 226 5 x 7” (chiefly) black and white photo copy prints prepared for the production of Embroidering Our Heritage, a book devoted to the needle work of The Dinner Party. These are arranged according to numbers on the prints which correspond to their appearance in the final publication. Series 3 is currently made up of one binder box holding 321 slides, categorized thematically and generally or specifically by date as they were originally arranged upon arrival to NMWA. The lectures of Series 4 were undated, save for two dated in April of 2015, so they were arranged alphabetically by lecture title.

The Personnel Contact Sheets (Binder Box 6) are assemblages cut from contact sheets which arrange individual frames by category, as opposed to the full contact sheets which replicate the original order of the film strips. They are arranged into the following sections and in the quantities noted:

Personnel: 19 pages
Needlework: 31 pages
Documentation: 5 pages
Fastening: 1 page
Floor: 3 pages
Moarovia Ceramic Tiles: 1 page
Research: 3 pages
Publications: 1 page
Graphics: 1 page
Meetings: 16 pages
Resources:
Technical: 3 pages
Mock-Up: 5 pages
Ceramics: 10
Building/Woodwork: 3 pages
Names and Subject Terms

Chicago, Judy, 1939–
Feminism
Feminist movement
Feminist educational thinking
Feminist Art Workers

Container Inventory

Series 1: Contact Sheets and Negatives, 1-446; Art Contact Sheets and Negatives; Personnel Contact Sheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box #</th>
<th>Box Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 1</td>
<td>Contact Sheets and Negatives 1-99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Binder Box 2</td>
<td>Contact Sheets and Negatives 100-199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 3</td>
<td>Contact Sheets and Negatives 200-299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 4</td>
<td>Contact Sheets and Negatives 300-399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 5</td>
<td>Contact Sheets and Negatives 400-446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 6</td>
<td>Contact Sheets and Negatives 2 ¼ size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 6</td>
<td>2 ¼ Size Art Contact Sheets and Negatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 6</td>
<td>Personnel Contact Sheets</td>
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Series 2: Embroidering Our Heritage copy prints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box #</th>
<th>Box Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Embroidering Our Heritage copy prints</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Series #3: Artwork

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box #</th>
<th>Box Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Binder Box 1</td>
<td>Early Work, circa 1940s-1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childhood Work: 12 Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Work 1963: 20 Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Work 1964: 13 Slides</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Work 1965: 30 Slides</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Early Work 1966: 9 Slides
Early Work 1967: 33 Slides
1968 Dome Drawings: 16 Slides
1968 Donut Drawings: 12 Slides
1968 Dome Paintings: 16 Slides
1968 Small Dome Sculptures: 18 Slides
1968 Large Dome Sculptures: 21 Slides
Star Cunts: 25 Slides
Optical Shapes: 12 Slides
Pasadena Lifesavers: 34 Slides
Fresno Fans: 26 Slides
Flesh Gardens: 18 Slides
Untitled Section: 4 Slides

Series 4: Lectures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box #</th>
<th>Folder Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Art as Power&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Awakening Through Art&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Creating Art from a Feminist Perspective&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Dinner Party: A Journey Into History, The&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Dinner Party as Vision, The&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Dry Ice&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Erotica&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Face to Face with Frida Kahlo&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Feminist Art in the 21st Century&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;From China Painting to Glass Painting: A Brief Review of a Long Career&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;From the Seventies to the Nineties: An Artist’s Revolution&quot;</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Georgia Tech Lecture&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Getty Lectures&quot;</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Giving Birth to a New Vision&quot;</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Holocaust Project&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Holocaust Project: From Darkness into Light, The&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;HOT STUFF: Dealing with Hot Subject Matter&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Is it Politics or is it Art?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Judy Chicago Overview I&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Judy Chicago Overview II&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Judy Chicago’s Style&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Louisville Presentation: Five Decades&quot; - April 14, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Louisville Presentation: Visioning Charette, International Honor Quilt&quot; - April 15, 2015</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
"New Zealand Lectures"
"Pomona Talk with Younger Self"
"Power of Art: Why the Dinner Party Should Be Preserved, The"
"Red Binder"
"Representation and the Holocaust I"
"Representation and the Holocaust II"
"Rethinking Curriculum in Art"
"Short Holocaust Project Overview"
"Still Here After All These Years"
"Surveying Judy Chicago: A Career Overview"
"Susan B. Anthony: Queen of the Dinner Party"
"This Isn't Politics You Jerk, It's Art"
"Thread as Brushstroke" - Short Version
"Thread as Brushstroke" - Long Version
"Through the Flower and Breaking the Cycle of Women's Art"
"What Does Feminism have to do with the Holocaust?"
"Why the Holocaust? The Holocaust Project Exhibition Overview"
"Wing It Overview with Glass Work"
"Woman, Artist, Jew"
"Women and Art: Contested Territory"
"Women Moving Millions"