



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Stuart A. Sherman artist files

1959-2000 [bulk 1970s-1990s]

*T-Mss 1996-012

Compiled by Joyce Joseph, 2015.

Summary

Creator: Sherman, Stuart, 1945-2001

Title: Stuart A. Sherman artist files

Date: 1959-2000 [bulk 1970s-1990s]

Size: 13.8 linear feet (30 boxes, 7 oversized folders); 147.456 kb (5 computer files)

Source: Donated by Stuart Sherman, 1996, 1997, and 2000.

Abstract: Stuart A. Sherman (1945-2001) was a New York-based visual, film, and performance artist. The Stuart A. Sherman artist files date from 1959 to 2000 and contain articles and essays, production files, and publications that document his work across various artistic mediums.

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<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

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Processing note: Compiled by Joyce Joseph, 2015. The floppy disks that comprise the Electronic Records were forensically imaged for preservation. Compiled by Joyce Joseph, 2015.

Related Materials:

Stuart Sherman papers. Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University Libraries.

Creator History

Stuart A. Sherman was a New York-based artist. He was born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1945, and attended Riverdale Country School in New York City. He created an extensive amount of work across various mediums such as performance art, theater, film and video, poetry, and sculpture.

Sherman was well-known for his Spectacle series of performance art pieces. The series explored object manipulation, often using a small folding table as the stage area. Some of his large-scale visual theater works include *Second Trilogy: Chekhov, Strindberg, Brecht* (1985); *Slant (concerning Emily Dickinson)* (1987); and *Solaris* (1992). He performed at various places throughout the world such as the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Festival d'Automne à Paris.

Sherman created a large amount of short films and videos that were screened at the New York Film Festival, the Anthology Film Archives, and the Berlin Film Festival. Exhibitions of his performance sets and sculptural objects were shown at the List Visual Arts Center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He received numerous awards for his work, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Village Voice Obie, and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. Sherman died of an AIDS-related illness in 2001 in San Francisco, California.

Scope and Content Note

The Stuart A. Sherman artist files date from 1959 to 2000 (bulk dates 1970s-1990s) and contain articles and essays, production files, and publications that document his work across various artistic mediums.

The bulk of the collection consists of production files for many of Sherman's performances. The notes, writings, and instructions convey his development process, while the contact-sheets, photographs, and slides document his work. The printed material such as flyers, programs, and brochures detail the many places where he performed such as The Kitchen in New York City and the Festival d'Automne à Paris. Production files are mainly labeled by the title of the work, but sometimes by the event or location.

Performances covered include the Spectacle series, *The Classical Trilogy: Hamlet, Oedipus, Faust* (1981); and *The Play of Tea, or Pinkies Up!* (1989). The photographs from *Hamlet* in *The Classical Trilogy* showcase Sherman's set designs, and there are also his prop materials used during the production. The images of *The Third Spectacle* (1970s) in front of the The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum records one of Sherman's street shows and its spectators; while the photographs from the 1980s production of *Portrait of Rainer Werner Fassbinder* display his collaborative stage work. *The Stations of the Cross, or, the Passion of Stuart* (2000) materials document one of his last pieces.

Most of the audiovisual materials relate to Sherman's live performances such as the *Second Trilogy: Chekhov, Strindberg, Brecht* (1985); and *Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock and Others* (1989). Many of his original short film and video projects are represented through notes, script drafts, and programs, such as *Scotty and Stuart* (1977), *Baseball/TV* (1979), *Fish Story* (1983), and *Black-Eyed Susan (Portrait of an Actress)* (1989).

The collection holds publications, many of which are exhibition catalogs including the 1983 Whitney Biennial, while others examine the reception of his work. There are also copies of his Riverdale Country School yearbooks from 1959 through 1963. Some of the international publications are in different languages.

Additionally, there are loose articles and essays written by or about Sherman that offer a critical perspective of his work; biographies, bibliographies, and resumes that provide dates and contextual information, and a few personal photographs of his family.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged by subject or format.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Audiovisual materials
Brochures
Contact sheets
Fliers (printed matter)
Notes
Photographs
Programs (documents)
Publications (document genre)
Writings (document genre)

Occupations

Independent filmmakers
Male actors
Male dramatists
Performance artists
Poets
Theatrical producers and directors

Subjects

Performance art
Theater -- New York (State) -- New York
Theater -- Production and direction
Video art

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-5 Articles and Essays 1970s-1990s
 - o. 1 Articles and Essays 1990
By Stuart Sherman.

- b. 1 f. 6-7 Biographies 1970s-1990s
Also contains bibliographies and resumes.

- b. 1 f. 8 Correspondence 1975-1997
- b. 1 f. 9 Diploma 1963
Riverdale Country School

- b. 30 f. 1 Drawings 1970s-1990s
- b. 2 f. 1 Headshots 1970s-1990s
 - o. 3 Headshots 1970s-1990s

- Interviews
Sound recordings unavailable pending digitization.

- Radio France 1970s-1990s
origsr.221815
- Radio France Poems and Interview 1970s-1990s
origsr.221811
- WBAI Interview 1979
origsr.221812

- b. 2 f. 2 Personal Photographs 1950s-1970s

- Production Files

- Stage Works

- b. 2 f. 3-8 1970s-1990s
- b. 3 f. 1-9 1970s-1990s
- b. 4 f. 1-3 1970s-1990s
- b. 29 f. 1-2 1970s-1990s
- b. 30 f. 2 1970s-1990s

- b. 4 f. 4 *3=1 (A Careful Mis-Reading)* 1980s
3=1 (A Careful Mis-Reading) 1980s
origvid.221857
Video unavailable pending digitization.

- b. 4 f. 5 *"A" is for Actor* 1987
- b. 4 f. 6-7 Acting 1980s-1990s
- b. 4 f. 8 *But What is the Word for "Bicycle"?* 1988
- b. 4 f. 9 *Charles Ludlam* 1990s
Chattanooga Choo-Choo (Für Elise)
Sound recordings unavailable pending digitization.

- b. 4 f. 10 1980s
1980s
origsr.221809

Production Files (cont.)

Stage Works (cont.)

Chattanooga Choo-Choo (Für Elise) (cont.)

1980s
origsr.221810

- b. 4 f. 11 *Christmas in December* 1993
The Classical Trilogy: Hamlet, Oedipus, Faust
Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 4 f. 12 1980s

b. 5 f. 1-13 1980s

o. 6 1980s

1980s
origvid.221858

1980s
origvid.221859

Faust

b. 30 f. 3 1980s

1980s
origsr.221710

1980s
origsr.221711

1980s
origf.221868

1980s
origf.221869 (2 films)
221893

1984
origf.221870 (2 films)
221894

Hamlet

b. 27 1980s

b. 29 f. 3 1980s

b. 30 f. 4-6 1980s

o. 7 1980s

1980s
origsr.221712

1980s
origsr.221713

1980s
origsr.221714

1980s
origsr.221715

1980s
origsr.221716

1980s
origsr.221718

1980s
origsr.221719

1980s
origsr.221720

1980s
origsr.221721

Production Files (cont.)

Stage Works (cont.)

The Classical Trilogy: Hamlet, Oedipus, Faust (cont.)

Hamlet (cont.)

1980s

origsr.221722

1980s

origsr.221723

1980s

origsr.221724

1980s

origsr.221725

Oedipus

1980s

origsr.221729

Female Heels and Male Oxfords Sounds 1980s

origsr.221730

Footsteps and Bird Sounds 1980s

origsr.221728

- b. 5 f. 14 *Crime and Punishment or The Book and the Window* 1987
- b. 5 f. 15 *Divine Comedy* 1980s
Divine Comedy 1992
er.1 (23.30 Kilobytes (2 computer files))
The Paradiso and *The Purgatorio* text documents.
- b. 5 f. 16 *Endless Meadow and So Forth* 1986
An Evening of One-Act Plays 1987
origvid.221860
Video unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 6 f. 1 *An Evening of One-Act Plays* 1995
If I Could Stand, If I Could Sit, or, Oh, Bill, Oh, Susan 1995
origsr.221726
Sound recording unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 6 f. 2 *In the Playroom* 1980s
- b. 6 f. 3 *It is Against the Law to Shout "Fire" in a Crowded Theater* 1986
- b. 6 f. 4 *The Kitchen* 1986
Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock and Others
Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.
- 1980s
origf.221872
- b. 6 f. 9 1989
Serious Fun Festival
- b. 28 1980s
1982
origf.221871
1982
origf.221873 (5 films)
221895, 221896, 221897, 221898.
- Voices 1980s
origsr.221727
- b. 6 f. 6 *The Man in Room 2538* 1986

Production Files (cont.)
Stage Works (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 7 *Mime-Play in Black, White, Gray, and YELLOW* 1980s
- b. 6 f. 8 Tom Murrin Collaboration 1980s-1990s
- b. 6 f. 9 One-Acts at Home 1980s
- b. 6 f. 10 *Out of the Theater and Into the Streets* 1980s
The Play of Tea, or Pinkies Up!
Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

- b. 6 f. 11-13 1989
1989
origvid.221861
Tea Rattle Progression Sound 1980s
origsr.221731

- b. 27 *Portrait of Maya Deren* 1980s
- b. 6 f. 14 *Portrait of Rainer Werner Fassbinder* 1980s
Portrait of Santa Fe 1980s
origsr.221814
Sound recording unavailable pending digitization.

Portrait of San Fran 1980s
origsr.221813
Sound recording unavailable pending digitization.

- b. 27 The Quotidian Foundation, Inc. Event 1980s-1990s
Second Trilogy: Chekhov, Strindberg, Brecht
Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

- b. 6 f. 15-16 1980s-1991
- b. 7 f. 1-7 1985
Brecht
 - o. 2 1980s
 - o. 3 1980s
 - b. 28 1980s
1980s
origvid.221863
1980s
origf.221867
Chekhov
 - 1980s
origsr.221705
 - Discussion After Performance 1980s
origsr.221709
 - Furniture 1980s
origsr.221704
 - Furniture Smashing 1980s
origsr.221706
 - Mixed Texts 1980s
origsr.221707
 - Mixed Texts 1980s
origsr.221708

Production Files (cont.)
Stage Works (cont.)
Second Trilogy: Chekhov, Strindberg, Brecht (cont.)
Chekhov (cont.)

Six Fragments 1980s
origsr.221703

Chekhov and Strindberg 1980s
origvid.221862

Discussion at The Kitchen 1980s
origsr.221702

Strindberg

1980s
origf.221883

1980s
origf.221884

1980s
origf.221885

1980s
origf.221886

Slant (Concerning Emily Dickinson)

Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 7 f. 8-11 1987

o. 6 1987

b. 27 1987

1987
origsr.221819

1987
origsr.221820

1987
origsr.221821

1987
origf.221876

1987
origf.221878

1987
origf.221879

1987
origf.221880

Hampshire College Performance 1987
origf.221877

Hampshire College Performance 1987
origvid.221864

Voice Degeneration 1980
origsr.221741

Slight

Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 7 f. 12-13 1980s

1980s
origsr.221742

Unavailable pending digitization.

Production Files (cont.)

Stage Works (cont.)

Slight (cont.)

1980s

origsr.221743

Unavailable pending digitization.

1980s

origf.221881

Unavailable pending digitization.

1980s

origf.221882

Unavailable pending digitization.

b. 8 f. 1-2

Solaris 1992

Solaris 1992

er.2 (35.00 Kilobytes (1 computer file))

Sherman's text document derived from a novel of the same name by Stanislaw Lem.

Spectacle Series

b. 8 f. 3

The First Spectacle 1975

b. 8 f. 4-5

The Second Spectacle 1976

b. 8 f. 6-7

The Third Spectacle 1970s

b. 8 f. 8-10

The Fourth Spectacle 1970s

b. 8 f. 11

The Fifth Spectacle 1970s

The Sixth Spectacle

Films unavailable pending digitization.

b. 8 f. 12

1970s

1970s

origf.221874

1970s

origf.221875 (2 films)

221899

b. 8 f. 13-14

The Seventh Spectacle 1976

The Eighth Spectacle (Portraits of People)

Sound recordings unavailable pending digitization.

b. 9 f. 1-3

1970s

o. 3

1970s

George Ashley 1980s

origsr.221760

George Ashley 1980s

origsr.221763

Jaime Davidovich

1980s

origsr.221764

1980s

origsr.221765

1980s

origsr.221766

Production Files (cont.)
Stage Works (cont.)
Spectacle Series (cont.)
The Eighth Spectacle (Portraits of People) (cont.)
Jaime Davidovich (cont.)

1980s
origsr.221767

Bob Fleischner 1980s
origsr.221768

Bob Fleischner 1980s
origsr.221769

Eugene Florentz 1980s
origsr.221770

Bill Ives 1980s
origsr.221771

David Johansen 1980s
origsr.221772

David Johansen 1980s
origsr.221773

Helen Sherman 1980s
origsr.221774

Helen Sherman 1980s
origsr.221775

Stuart Sherman

1980s
origsr.221776

1980s
origsr.221777

1980s
origsr.221778

b. 9 f. 4 *The Ninth Spectacle* 1970s
The Tenth Spectacle (Portraits of Places)
Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 9 f. 5-6 1978
1978
origvid.221865
Away From Here, or, There 1980
er.3 (89.14 Kilobytes (2 computer files))
Two different versions of this "Portraits of Places" text document.

Amsterdam 1978
origsr.221784

Eugene Florentz

1978
origsr.221779

1978
origsr.221780

1978
origsr.221781

Istanbul 1978
origsr.221785

Istanbul 1978
origsr.221786

London 1978
origsr.221787

London 1978
origsr.221788

Production Files (cont.)
Stage Works (cont.)
Spectacle Series (cont.)
The Tenth Spectacle (Portraits of Places) (cont.)

New York 1978
origsr.221789

Paris 1970s-1980s
origsr.221790

Paris 1970s-1980s
origsr.221791

San Francisco 1970s-1980s
origsr.221792

San Francisco 1970s-1980s
origsr.221793

Stuart Sherman 1978
origsr.221782

Stuart Sherman 1978
origsr.221783

b. 9 f. 7-8 *The Eleventh Spectacle (The Erotic)* 1979

The Eleventh Spectacle (The Erotic) 1979
origvid.221824

Video unavailable pending digitization.

The Twelfth Spectacle (Language)

Sound recordings unavailable pending digitization.

b. 9 f. 9-10 1980

Fearful Synopsis 1980s
origsr.221795

Fearful Synopsis 1980s
origsr.221796

Fisyn 1980s
origsr.221797

Bill Ives 1980s
origsr.221794

Mirrors 1980s
origsr.221799

Mirrors 1980s
origsr.221800

MT/FS 1980s
origsr.221801

Records 1980s
origsr.221802

Records 1980s
origsr.221803

Wind/Breath 1980s
origsr.221798

World/Wing 1980s
origsr.221804

World/Wing 1980s
origsr.221805

The Thirteenth Spectacle (Time)

Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 9 f. 11-12 1980

b. 28 1980

Production Files (cont.)
Stage Works (cont.)
Spectacle Series (cont.)
The Thirteenth Spectacle (Time) (cont.)

- 1980
origsr.221732
- 1980
origsr.221733
- 1980
origsr.221734
- 1980
origsr.221735
- Hammer/Bell 1980
origsr.221806
- House/Storm 1980
origsr.221807
- Records 1980
origsr.221808
- b. 9 f. 13 *The Fourteenth Spectacle* 1988
- b. 9 f. 14 *The Fifteenth Spectacle (Misconduct of a Conductor)* 1980s
- b. 10 f. 1 *The Sixteenth Spectacle (It's a Musical!)* 1991
The Seventeenth Spectacle (Yes and Noh)
- b. 10 f. 2-3 1993
 b. 27 1993
 1993
 origvid.221825
 Unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 10 f. 4-5 *The Eighteenth Spectacle (The Spaghetti Works)* 1993
- b. 10 f. 6 *The Nineteenth Spectacle (But Second Musical)* 1994
- b. 10 f. 7 *The Christmas Spectacle* 1980s
The Christmas Spectacle 1980s
origvid.221826
Video unavailable pending digitization.
- Spectacle at LaMama 1995
origvid.221823
Video unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 10 f. 8 *The Queer Spectacle* 1994
- b. 10 f. 9 *The Stations of the Cross, or, the Passion of Stuart* 2000
- b. 10 f. 10-11 *Taal Eulenspiegel* 1989-1991
Taal Eulenspiegel 1989-1991
origvid.221827
Unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 11 f. 1 *Taxi Dance* 1980s
- b. 11 f. 2 *This House is Mine Because I Live in It* 1986
- b. 11 f. 3 *The Yellow Chair* 1987
- Film and Video
- b. 11 f. 4-9 1970s-1990s
- b. 29 f. 4-5 1970s-1990s

Production Files (cont.)

Film and Video (cont.)

26 Films and 1 Video 1970s-1990s

origvid.221822

Video unavailable pending digitization.

- b. 11 f. 10 *Baby/Time* 1980s
- b. 11 f. 11 *Baseball/TV* 1979
- b. 11 f. 12 *Berlin Tour* 1988
 - o. 3 *Berlin Tour* 1988
- b. 11 f. 13 *Berlin (West) / Andere Richtungen* 1986
- b. 11 f. 14 *Black-Eyed Susan (Portrait of an Actress)* 1989
- b. 11 f. 15 *Blackboard/Circle* 1980s
- b. 11 f. 16 *Boxing* 1980s
- b. 11 f. 17 *Chess* 1982
- b. 11 f. 18 *Colors* 1980s
- b. 11 f. 19 *Elevator/Music* 1980
- b. 11 f. 20-21 *Flight 123* 1988
 - b. 12 f. 1 *Flying* 1979
 - b. 12 f. 2 *Hand/Water* 1979
 - b. 12 f. 3 *Piano-Music* 1979
 - b. 12 f. 4 *Portrait of Benedicte Pesle* 1984
 - b. 12 f. 5 *Racing* 1980s
 - b. 12 f. 6 *Rock-Kite* 1980s
 - b. 12 f. 7 *Rock/String* 1980s
 - b. 12 f. 8 *Roller Coaster/Reading* 1980s
 - b. 12 f. 9 *Scotty and Stuart* 1977
 - o. 3 *Scotty and Stuart* 1977
 - b. 12 f. 10 *Scotty Snyder (All Around the Table)* 1987
 - b. 12 f. 11 *Son of Scotty and Stuart* 1994
- Stuart at Home 1970s-1990s
 - origf.221887
 - Film unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 12 f. 12 *Theater Piece* 1980
- b. 12 f. 13 *Tree Film* 1978
- Videos by Stuart Sherman 1970s-1990s
 - origvid.221866
 - Video unavailable pending digitization.

Sound Pieces

Unable to identify if some of these pieces are related to a stage production.

Sound recordings unavailable pending digitization.

A.C.R 1995

origsr.221700

Production Files (cont.)

Sound Pieces (cont.)

A.C.R 1995
origsr.221701

Beerbohm 1970s-1980s
origsr.221747

Blanket/Pillows 1970s-1980s
origsr.221748

Blanket/Pillows 1970s-1980s
origsr.221749

Cars/Shirt 1970s-1980s
origsr.221736

Fist/Pause/Stop 1970s-1980s
origsr.221750

Fist/Pause/Stop 1970s-1980s
origsr.221751

b. 12 f. 14 Five Sound Pieces 1980s

Food 1970s-1980s
origsr.221738

Food 1970s-1980s
origsr.221739

Four Sound Pieces 1980s
origsr.221744

Four Sound Pieces 1980s
origsr.221818

Friends, Relatives, Etc 1970s-1980s
origsr.221752

Hourglass/Time-Bomb 1970s-1980s
origsr.221737

Net-Tie 1970s-1980s
origsr.221753

Perfo2 1984
origsr.221856

Shock Sound 1970s-1980s
origsr.221754

Shoes/Glasses 1970s-1980s
origsr.221755

Shoes/Glasses 1970s-1980s
origsr.221756

Surface Tension 1986
origsr.221757

T-shirt 1970s-1980s
origsr.221758

T-shirt 1970s-1980s
origsr.221759

Telephone 1970s-1980s
origsr.221745

Telephone and Stop! 1970s-1980s
origsr.221746

Thumbprint 1970s-1980s
origsr.221740

Writing Projects

b. 12 f. 15 Portraits of Students 1995

b. 12 f. 16 Quotidian Review 1992

Production Files (cont.)

Writing Projects (cont.)

b. 12 f. 17 *Word* 1980s

Exhibitions

b. 12 f. 18 Exhibition of Objects 1983

b. 12 f. 19 Sets and Sculpture 1992

Unlabeled

Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

Films

1970s-1990s

origf.221889

1970s-1990s

origf.221888

1970s-1990s

origf.221890

b. 12 f. 20 Sketches 1960s-1980s

o. 2 Sketches 1970s-1990s

b. 26 Slides 1970s-1990s

b. 28 Slides 1970s-1990s

Sound Recordings

1970s-1990s

origsr.221816

1970s-1990s

origsr.221817

1970s-1990s

origsr.221853

1970s-1990s

origsr.221854

1970s-1990s

origsr.221855

Printed Material

b. 12 f. 21-23 1970s-1990s

b. 13 f. 1-7 1970s-1990s

b. 14 f. 1-9 1970s-1990s

o. 4 1970s-1990s

o. 5 1970s-1990s

Publications

b. 15 f. 1-3 By Stuart Sherman 1963-1990s

By Others

b. 23 1959-1962

b. 15 f. 4-8 1975-1992

b. 25 1977-1992

b. 16 f. 1-6 1978-1994

b. 17 f. 1-7 1979-1997

b. 24 1980-1989

b. 18 f. 1-7 1980-1994

b. 19 f. 1-6 1982-1995

Publications (cont.)

By Others (cont.)

- b. 20 f. 1-7 1988-1997
- b. 21 f. 1-6 *19 Projects - Internationale FilmFest Berlin* 1979-1996
- b. 22 f. 1-7 *New German Critique - Theater der Welt* 1979-1994