



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.

Conditions Governing Access:

Audiovisual materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

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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.
- origsr.221815 Radio France 1970s-1990s
- origsr.221811 Radio France Poems and Interview 1970s-1990s
- origsr.221812 WBAI Interview 1979
- 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
- origvid.221857 *3=1 (A Careful Mis-Reading)* 1980s
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
- origsr.221809 1980s
- origsr.221810 1980s
- 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

Production Files (cont.)
Stage Works (cont.)
The Classical Trilogy: Hamlet, Oedipus, Faust (cont.)

o. 6	1980s
origvid.221858	1980s
origvid.221859	1980s
	<i>Faust</i>
b. 30 f. 3	1980s
origsr.221710	1980s
origsr.221711	1980s
origf.221868	1980s
origf.221869	1980s (2 films) 221893
origf.221870	1984 (2 films) 221894
	<i>Hamlet</i>
b. 27	1980s
b. 29 f. 3	1980s
b. 30 f. 4-6	1980s
o. 7	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	1980s
origsr.221722	1980s
origsr.221723	1980s
origsr.221724	1980s
origsr.221725	1980s
	<i>Oedipus</i>
origsr.221729	1980s
origsr.221730	Female Heels and Male Oxfords Sounds 1980s
origsr.221728	Footsteps and Bird Sounds 1980s
b. 5 f. 14	<i>Crime and Punishment or The Book and the Window</i> 1987
b. 5 f. 15	<i>Divine Comedy</i> 1980s
er. 1	<i>Divine Comedy</i> 1992 (23.30 Kilobytes (2 computer files)) <i>The Paradiso</i> and <i>The Purgatorio</i> text documents.
b. 5 f. 16	<i>Endless Meadow and So Forth</i> 1986
origvid.221860	<i>An Evening of One-Act Plays</i> 1987 Video unavailable pending digitization.

Production Files (cont.)

Stage Works (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 1 *An Evening of One-Act Plays* 1995
- origsr.221726 *If I Could Stand, If I Could Sit, or, Oh, Bill, Oh, Susan* 1995
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.
- origf.221872 1980s
- b. 6 f. 9 1989
Serious Fun Festival
- b. 28 1980s
- origf.221871 1982
- origf.221873 1982 (5 films)
221895, 221896, 221897, 221898.
- origsr.221727 *Voices* 1980s
- b. 6 f. 6 *The Man in Room 2538* 1986
 - 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
- origvid.221861 1989
- origsr.221731 *Tea Rattle Progression Sound* 1980s
- b. 27 *Portrait of Maya Deren* 1980s
 - b. 6 f. 14 *Portrait of Rainer Werner Fassbinder* 1980s
- origsr.221814 *Portrait of Santa Fe* 1980s
Sound recording unavailable pending digitization.
- origsr.221813 *Portrait of San Fran* 1980s
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
- origvid.221863 1980s
- origf.221867 1980s

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

Chekhov

origsr.221705 1980s
origsr.221709 Discussion After Performance 1980s
origsr.221704 Furniture 1980s
origsr.221706 Furniture Smashing 1980s
origsr.221707 Mixed Texts 1980s
origsr.221708 Mixed Texts 1980s
origsr.221703 Six Fragments 1980s
origvid.221862 *Chekhov and Strindberg* 1980s
origsr.221702 Discussion at The Kitchen 1980s

Strindberg

origf.221883 1980s
origf.221884 1980s
origf.221885 1980s
origf.221886 1980s

Slant (Concerning Emily Dickinson)

Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 7 f. 8-11 1987
o. 6 1987
b. 27 1987
origsr.221819 1987
origsr.221820 1987
origsr.221821 1987
origf.221876 1987
origf.221878 1987
origf.221879 1987
origf.221880 1987
origf.221877 Hampshire College Performance 1987
origvid.221864 Hampshire College Performance 1987
origsr.221741 Voice Degeneration 1980

Slight

Audiovisual materials unavailable pending digitization.

b. 7 f. 12-13 1980s
origsr.221742 1980s
Unavailable pending digitization.
origsr.221743 1980s
Unavailable pending digitization.
origf.221881 1980s
Unavailable pending digitization.
origf.221882 1980s
Unavailable pending digitization.

b. 8 f. 1-2 *Solaris* 1992

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

- er. 2 *Solaris* 1992
(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
- origf.221874 1970s
- origf.221875 1970s (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
- origsr.221760 George Ashley 1980s
- origsr.221763 George Ashley 1980s
Jaime Davidovich
- origsr.221764 1980s
- origsr.221765 1980s
- origsr.221766 1980s
- origsr.221767 1980s
- origsr.221768 Bob Fleischner 1980s
- origsr.221769 Bob Fleischner 1980s
- origsr.221770 Eugene Florentz 1980s
- origsr.221771 Bill Ives 1980s
- origsr.221772 David Johansen 1980s
- origsr.221773 David Johansen 1980s
- origsr.221774 Helen Sherman 1980s
- origsr.221775 Helen Sherman 1980s
Stuart Sherman
- origsr.221776 1980s
- origsr.221777 1980s
- origsr.221778 1980s
- 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

	Production Files (cont.)
	Stage Works (cont.)
	Spectacle Series (cont.)
	The Tenth Spectacle (Portraits of Places) (cont.)
origvid.221865	1978
er. 3	<i>Away From Here, or, There</i> 1980 (89.14 Kilobytes (2 computer files)) Two different versions of this "Portraits of Places" text document.
origsr.221784	Amsterdam 1978 Eugene Florentz
origsr.221779	1978
origsr.221780	1978
origsr.221781	1978
origsr.221785	Istanbul 1978
origsr.221786	Istanbul 1978
origsr.221787	London 1978
origsr.221788	London 1978
origsr.221789	New York 1978
origsr.221790	Paris 1970s-1980s
origsr.221791	Paris 1970s-1980s
origsr.221792	San Francisco 1970s-1980s
origsr.221793	San Francisco 1970s-1980s
origsr.221782	Stuart Sherman 1978
origsr.221783	Stuart Sherman 1978
b. 9 f. 7-8	<i>The Eleventh Spectacle (The Erotic)</i> 1979
origvid.221824	<i>The Eleventh Spectacle (The Erotic)</i> 1979 Video unavailable pending digitization. <i>The Twelfth Spectacle (Language)</i> Sound recordings unavailable pending digitization.
b. 9 f. 9-10	1980
origsr.221795	Fearful Synopsis 1980s
origsr.221796	Fearful Synopsis 1980s
origsr.221797	Fisyn 1980s
origsr.221794	Bill Ives 1980s
origsr.221799	Mirrors 1980s
origsr.221800	Mirrors 1980s
origsr.221801	MT/FS 1980s
origsr.221802	Records 1980s
origsr.221803	Records 1980s
origsr.221798	Wind/Breath 1980s
origsr.221804	World/Wing 1980s
origsr.221805	World/Wing 1980s <i>The Thirteenth Spectacle (Time)</i> 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.)

origsr.221732	1980
origsr.221733	1980
origsr.221734	1980
origsr.221735	1980
origsr.221806	Hammer/Bell 1980
origsr.221807	House/Storm 1980
origsr.221808	Records 1980
b. 9 f. 13	<i>The Fourteenth Spectacle</i> 1988
b. 9 f. 14	<i>The Fifteenth Spectacle (Misconduct of a Conductor)</i> 1980s
b. 10 f. 1	<i>The Sixteenth Spectacle (It's a Musical!)</i> 1991
	<i>The Seventeenth Spectacle (Yes and Noh)</i>
b. 10 f. 2-3	1993
b. 27	1993
origvid.221825	1993
	Unavailable pending digitization.
b. 10 f. 4-5	<i>The Eighteenth Spectacle (The Spaghetti Works)</i> 1993
b. 10 f. 6	<i>The Nineteenth Spectacle (But Second Musical)</i> 1994
b. 10 f. 7	<i>The Christmas Spectacle</i> 1980s
origvid.221826	<i>The Christmas Spectacle</i> 1980s
	Video unavailable pending digitization.
origvid.221823	Spectacle at LaMama 1995
	Video unavailable pending digitization.
b. 10 f. 8	<i>The Queer Spectacle</i> 1994
b. 10 f. 9	<i>The Stations of the Cross, or, the Passion of Stuart</i> 2000
b. 10 f. 10-11	<i>Taal Eulenspiegel</i> 1989-1991
origvid.221827	<i>Taal Eulenspiegel</i> 1989-1991
	Unavailable pending digitization.
b. 11 f. 1	<i>Taxi Dance</i> 1980s
b. 11 f. 2	<i>This House is Mine Because I Live in It</i> 1986
b. 11 f. 3	<i>The Yellow Chair</i> 1987
	Film and Video
b. 11 f. 4-9	1970s-1990s
b. 29 f. 4-5	1970s-1990s
origvid.221822	<i>26 Films and 1 Video</i> 1970s-1990s
	Video unavailable pending digitization.
b. 11 f. 10	<i>Baby/Time</i> 1980s
b. 11 f. 11	<i>Baseball/TV</i> 1979
b. 11 f. 12	<i>Berlin Tour</i> 1988
o. 3	<i>Berlin Tour</i> 1988
b. 11 f. 13	<i>Berlin (West) / Andere Richtungen</i> 1986
b. 11 f. 14	<i>Black-Eyed Susan (Portrait of an Actress)</i> 1989
b. 11 f. 15	<i>Blackboard/Circle</i> 1980s

Production Files (cont.)

Film and Video (cont.)

- 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
- origf.221887 *Stuart at Home* 1970s-1990s
Film unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 12 f. 12 *Theater Piece* 1980
- b. 12 f. 13 *Tree Film* 1978
- origvid.221866 *Videos by Stuart Sherman* 1970s-1990s
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.

- origsr.221700 *A.C.R* 1995
- origsr.221701 *A.C.R* 1995
- origsr.221747 *Beerbohm* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221748 *Blanket/Pillows* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221749 *Blanket/Pillows* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221736 *Cars/Shirt* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221750 *Fist/Pause/Stop* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221751 *Fist/Pause/Stop* 1970s-1980s
- b. 12 f. 14 *Five Sound Pieces* 1980s
- origsr.221738 *Food* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221739 *Food* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221744 *Four Sound Pieces* 1980s
- origsr.221818 *Four Sound Pieces* 1980s
- origsr.221752 *Friends, Relatives, Etc* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221737 *Hourglass/Time-Bomb* 1970s-1980s
- origsr.221753 *Net-Tie* 1970s-1980s

Production Files (cont.)
Sound Pieces (cont.)

origsr.221856 Perfo2 1984
origsr.221754 Shock Sound 1970s-1980s
origsr.221755 Shoes/Glasses 1970s-1980s
origsr.221756 Shoes/Glasses 1970s-1980s
origsr.221757 Surface Tension 1986
origsr.221758 T-shirt 1970s-1980s
origsr.221759 T-shirt 1970s-1980s
origsr.221745 Telephone 1970s-1980s
origsr.221746 Telephone and Stop! 1970s-1980s
origsr.221740 Thumbprint 1970s-1980s

Writing Projects

b. 12 f. 15 Portraits of Students 1995
b. 12 f. 16 Quotidian Review 1992
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

origf.221889 1970s-1990s
origf.221888 1970s-1990s
origf.221890 1970s-1990s
b. 12 f. 20 Sketches 1960s-1980s
o. 2 Sketches 1970s-1990s
b. 26 Slides 1970s-1990s
b. 28 Slides 1970s-1990s

Sound Recordings

origsr.221816 1970s-1990s
origsr.221817 1970s-1990s
origsr.221853 1970s-1990s
origsr.221854 1970s-1990s
origsr.221855 1970s-1990s

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

Publications (cont.)

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