DEAR FRIENDS,

In early October 1918, art critic James Britton wrote in his diary, “When the health law rings the gong—even art must stand attentive to Influenza.” More than a century later, the Archives of American Art stands attentive to COVID-19. On March 16, 2020, we moved our entire staff to telework status, closing our DC and New York research centers. Now, as we begin 2021, many staff are still working from home, continuously finding new ways to connect our mission to collect, preserve, and share the legacy of American art with the increasingly virtual world. Others are in the office on a staggered schedule, preserving the collections we continue to acquire during the pandemic and digitizing material for curious individuals everywhere to consult on our website. In the report ahead, you will find highlights from a year like no other, one that generated innovative projects, exciting partnerships, and new examples of our expertise applied amid the challenges of a global pandemic. These accomplishments were made possible only by the generosity of our donors and the hard work of our staff.

The turbulence of 2020 and beyond has made us keenly aware of how fortunate we are to have so many of our collections digitized and freely available online. We are reminded, once again, of our gratitude to the Terra Foundation for American Art for setting us on this path in 2005, and more recently for establishing an endowment that will ensure that large-scale digitization is at the heart of our mission. During COVID-19, the ability to find, request, and study archival material remotely has been imperative for researchers working from home in the United States and abroad. As one told us, “I simply couldn’t do my job without the Archives.”

Since its establishment 65 years ago, the Archives has been committed to diversifying and broadening its collections and making them publicly available. To support this vision, this year, the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation made a transformational $5 million gift to create an endowment to process and digitize collections on art and artists from historically underrepresented groups. Digitization requires time and meticulous attention to detail. Having recently completed a three-year challenge grant from the Walton Family Foundation, we improved our efficiency, doubling our rate of digitization.

With schools across the US now turning to distance learning, we are well positioned to help and to scale up our efforts to promote the value of teaching with primary sources. This year, continuing our partnership with the Lunder Institute for American Art at Colby College and the Cleveland Museum of Art, we held the second in a series of three workshops focused on creating innovative, adaptable models for using archival materials to teach the history of American art.

While the Archives’ oral histories have traditionally been recorded in person, the pandemic inspired staff to reimagine the program with the Pandemic Oral History Project, 85 interviews with American artists and art world figures conducted remotely on Zoom. This remarkable collection gives voice to the arts community during one of the most turbulent periods in modern history, a time in which many cultural institutions have been forced to temporarily or permanently close, radically reshaping relationships between artists and the public. Project participants include Ed Bereal, Mark Bradford, Lenore Chinn, Allana Clarke, DEMI, Deana Haggag, Sheila Hicks, Alfredo Jaar, Alessandra Moctezuma, Wendy Red Star, and Krzysztof Wodiczko, among others. Engaging and cathartic, these firsthand accounts serve as a powerful primary source for anyone investigating
In late June, we acquired four World War II diaries kept by art conservator and Monuments Man Lieutenant Commander George Leslie Stout, dating from 1944 to 1946. In these volumes, Stout recorded, with clarity and precision, his movements through France, Germany, and Japan, at first surveying the damage to historic monuments and then discovering and recovering looted treasures stolen and stockpiled by the Nazis. The diaries tell an extraordinary story of heroism, persistence, problem solving, and cultural recovery. This acquisition was made possible through the efforts of Dr. Richard Kurin, the Smithsonian Distinguished Scholar and Ambassador-at-Large, who raised the necessary funds for the purchase in a matter of days. The diaries are now reunited with the papers that Stout donated in 1978, as well as the papers and interviews of other Monuments Men in our collection, including Thomas Carr Howe, James J. Rorimer, and Otto Wittmann. These documents and recordings have been preserved and are available to scholars and historians looking to the Archives for the personal perspectives of these courageous individuals as they risked their lives to protect historic sites, icons, artifacts, and masterpieces during World War II. We are honored to hold them in trust for the nation.

While the Archives receives federal funding as part of the Smithsonian Institution, more than half of its annual operating budget is derived from gifts, grants, and income from our endowments. To support important initiatives like the Pandemic Oral History Project and to remain a leader in the archival field, we rely on unrestricted funding from individual donors. This year, we are deeply thankful to Joyce Menschel and the Richard and Jane Manoogian Foundation for their support of our mission through leadership gifts. The Trustees and staff likewise join me in expressing gratitude to Amy Berrinburgam, Martha Fleischman, and George Merck and the Merck family for sustaining our mission with significant gifts.

In closing, I share a quote from the Pandemic Oral History Project interview with fiber artist Sheila Hicks, from her home in Paris. When asked about life after COVID-19, she responded, “I don’t think of the pandemic ending. Over here in my neighborhood, we don’t think of it as ending…. It’s a ship that’s been pushed out to sea.” Her advice? “Learn to swim!” With my deepest appreciation to our committed staff, dedicated Board of Trustees, generous donors, and supportive Smithsonian colleagues, I am proud to say that, in 2020 the Archives has done more than tread water—we have found new ways to swim.

With gratitude,

Liza Kirwin
Interim Director
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Ephemeral and Eternal: The Archive of Lenore Tawney

September 15, 2019 to March 1, 2020

John Michael Kohler Arts Center
Sheboygan, WI

Guest curated by the Archives’ curator of manuscripts Mary Savig, this exhibition explored correspondence, journals, artist books, photographs, and ephemera drawn from collections at the Archives and the Lenore G. Tawney Foundation. Savig’s selection highlighted key moments in Tawney’s career, as well as her everyday life and close friendships.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
1 Installation view of Ephemeral and Eternal: The Archive of Lenore Tawney, John Michael Kohler Arts Center.
2 Mary Savig and Kathleen Mangan, Executive Director of the Lenore G. Tawney Foundation, at the opening of the exhibition Ephemeral and Eternal: The Archives of Lenore Tawney, October 5, 2019.
What Is Feminist Art?

Opened November 26, 2019; closed indefinitely due to COVID-19 on March 14, 2020

Lawrence A. Fleischman Gallery in the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture, Washington, DC

As a public health precaution due to COVID-19, all Smithsonian museums, including the Lawrence A. Fleischman Gallery, are closed. We are not announcing a reopening date for What Is Feminist Art? but will provide updates on our website and social media as they become available.

Photographs of the exhibition What is Feminist Art? in the Lawrence A. Fleischman Gallery, Washington, DC, and intern Lauren Kershenbaum assisting with the installation.
Events

October 22, 2019
At the annual Archives of American Art gala, held at the Essex House in New York, artist Howardena Pindell and the American Academy of Art and Letters were awarded the Archives of American Art Medals. Alexander Nemerov received the Lawrence A. Fleischman Award for Scholarly Excellence in the Field of American Art History.

Premiering at the 2019 gala, the short film *Dig Deep* articulates the Archives’ mission and highlights its contributions to the field of American art. The film features conversations with Archives staff and significant art world professionals.

November 7–8, 2019
Interim director Liza Kirwin participated in the Institut national d’histoire d’art (INHA) symposium on collecting the papers of art historians, in Paris, France.

November 19, 2019
In recognition of the publication of the Fall 2019 issue of the Archives of American Art Journal, Swann Auction Galleries and the Archives co-hosted an event entitled “Collecting the Papers of Women Artists, Dealers, and Critics,” featuring a conversation with curator of manuscripts Mary Savig and curator of African American manuscripts Erin Jenoa Gilbert and moderated by Swann’s American art specialist Lisa Crescenzo.
Events

February 13, 2020
Head of collections processing Erin Kinhart and archivist Rihoko Ueno gave a tour and presentation to archivists and curators visiting the Archives from the Academia Sinica Center for Digital Cultures, Taiwan.

Left to right: Yun-Hsuan Chou, Dr. Woan-Jen Hsu, Rihoko Ueno, Erin Kinhart, Dr. Hsi-Yuan Chen, Dr. Sophy S.J. Chen, Ju-Chi Chen.

February 13, 2020
National collector Josh Franco moderated the US Latinx Art Forum business meeting at the College Art Association annual conference in Chicago.

March 11, 2020
Archivist Rayna Andrews gave a presentation and tour of the Archives to the Atlanta Curatorial Studies Collective, comprised of students from Morehouse and Spelman Colleges.

March 2020

April 13, 2020
Oral history archivist Jennifer Snyder was a guest speaker for Benji de la Piedra’s oral history class for the public history MA program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

May 6, 2020
National collector Josh Franco presented over Zoom about the Archives’ resources to the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures Advocacy Leadership Institute. The Archives is part of a circuit that also includes the Library of Congress, The White House, and the United States Capitol. The cohort met with Congressman Joaquin Castro directly before Dr. Franco’s presentation.

Texas Representative Joaquin Castro speaks with the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures Advocacy Leadership Institute, preceding a presentation from Archives’ national collector Josh Franco, May 6, 2020.
### Events

**June 16, 2020**

Archivist Rayna Andrews helped facilitate a discussion on safe and ethical archival collecting organized by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference.

**June 19, 2020**

For Juneteenth, the Archives’ social media team developed a day-long campaign to honor Black legacy and storytelling. On June 19 we flooded Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with quotes from our oral history interviews with African American artists ranging from Gordon Parks (1964) to David Driskell (2009), releasing a new post every half hour between 9am and 4:30pm. We are proud of the depth of our primary sources for the study of African American art and proud of our oral history program, which preserves the voices of Black artists telling their life stories in their own words.

*Posts from the Archives’ Juneteenth social media campaign, June 19, 2020.*

**August 31 – September 4, 2020**

The Association of Historians of American Art (AHAA) invited interim director Liza Kirwin to take over their social media accounts for Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Dr. Kirwin provided 22 posts over five days, focusing exclusively on collections online, oral history transcripts online, and materials transcribed in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

*Screenshot of the Association of Historians of American Art’s Instagram with one of 22 posts from the Archives, August 31 – September 4.*

**September 16, 2020**

Interim director Liza Kirwin presented to more than 600 participants on the World War II diaries of George Leslie Stout as part of the “Reinventing the Monuments Men and Women for the 21st-Century Force” Zoom event sponsored by the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative. Panelists included Richard Kurin, Smithsonian distinguished scholar and ambassador-at-large; Colonel Andrew Scott DeJesse, Monument Man and 38G Program Director, Strategic Initiatives Group, U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne); Brian I. Daniels, director of research and programs at the Penn Cultural Heritage Center; and Corine Wegener, director, Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative.

*LEFT: George Leslie Stout, Diary #2, October 11, 1944–June 14, 1945, including temporary duty orders granting access into restricted areas under the command of General Omar Bradley. George Leslie Stout papers, 1897–1978.*
**Selection of Outside Publications that Relied on the Archives’ Collections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher/Date</th>
</tr>
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In May, the journal was honored for its innovative design with placement in the Association of University Presses’ 2020 Book, Jacket, and Journal Show. In November, the journal received its second design award of the year: first prize in the 29th annual American Alliance of Museum’s Museum Publications Design Competition (magazines/scholarly journals category).

In January, the Archives completed a comprehensive Guide to the Papers of African American Artists and Related Resources. The guide provides details on collections, lists relevant oral histories, and cites other important resources for the study of African American art in the context of our institutional history and mission. A PDF of the guide is available on the Archives’ website.
Loan Highlights

October 18, 2019–February 9, 2020

**Edith Halpert and the Rise of American Art**

**ITEMS LENT:** Photograph of Edith Halpert wearing a dress created using one of Charles Sheeler’s textile designs, and a sample of that fabric found in Sheeler’s papers.

**VENUE:** Jewish Museum, New York, NY.

November 2, 2019–September 13, 2020

**Edward Hopper and the American Hotel**

**ITEMS LENT:** Letters and postcards written by Edward and Josephine Hopper to dealer Frank Rehn from various hotels during their travels.

**VENUES (Pre-COVID-19):** Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA, November 2, 2019–February 23, 2020; and Newfields: A Place for Nature & the Arts, Indianapolis, IN, June 1–September 13, 2020.


March 8, 2020–July 31, 2020

**Linda Nochlin: The Maverick She**

**ITEMS LENT:** Letters, writings, and notes by Linda Nochlin, photographs of Nochlin throughout her life, and other documents from the Linda Nochlin papers.

**VENUE (Pre-COVID-19):** National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC.


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Loan Highlights

February 17, 2020–January 3, 2021

Vida Americana: Mexican Muralists Remake American Art, 1925–1945


February 14, 2020–September 6, 2020

Forrest Bess

ITEMS LENT: Sixty documents, including illustrated letters, photographs, exhibition catalogues and announcements, and Forrest Bess’ thesis on the concept of immortality.
VENUES (Pre-COVID-19): Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany.

March 12, 2020–November 7, 2021

Andy Warhol


March 28, 2020–July 31, 2020

Wayfindings

ITEMS LENT: A rattlesnake head in a jar from the papers of Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt.

May 1, 2020–March 31, 2021

Edge of Intersections: The Work and Life of Polly Thayer

ITEMS LENT: Poems, correspondence, sketches, and printed material from Polly Thayer (Start) papers.

September 15, 2020–January 15, 2021

The Conference of Animals

ITEMS LENT: Childhood drawings by artists including Philip Evergood, Reginald Marsh, and Louise Nevelson.

June 2, 2019–January 18, 2021

David Park Retrospective

ITEMS LENT: Sketchbook of figurative drawings by Elmer Bischoff, one of David Park’s peers.
Acquisition Highlights

Allan Stone Gallery records, 1962–2019
Emma Amos papers, circa 1800–2019.
Jack Brogan papers, 1973–2012 (addition)
Floyd Coleman papers, circa 1960–2018
Jerry Dreva papers, circa 1970–1997
Allan Randall Freelon papers, 1880–2005
Hananiah Harari papers, circa 1940–2000
Hayden Herrera papers, circa 1984–1995
Josine Ianco-Starrels papers, 1960–2017 (addition)
Marva Marrow photographs and papers relating to Inside the L.A. Artist, 1986–1988
James Melchert papers, 1948–2019 (addition)
Duane Michals papers, circa 1940–2019 (addition)
Judith Schaechter papers, 1961–2019
George Leslie Stout papers, 1944–1946 (addition)
Fred Truck papers, 1970–2019
Mierle Ukeles papers, circa 1960–2016
Consuelo Jimenez Underwood papers, 1970–2019
Chuck Welch papers related to mail art, 1974–2019
Woman’s Building records, 1986 (addition)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Oral History Highlights

Interviews Conducted

Luis Camnitzer
Jim Dine
Yolanda M. López
Amalia Mesa-Bains
Martha Rosler
Robert Whitman
Tom Wudl

“I really feel that this is a transformational year, and that the way we’re getting there is not the way we would have expected.”

LITA ALBUQUERQUE
PANDEMIC ORAL HISTORY PROJECT, 2020

Pandemic Oral History Project, Summer 2020

Lita Albuquerque
Cory Arcangel
LaTanya Autry
Billy Al Bengston
Jessie Benton
Ed Bereal
Judith Bernstein
The Bobs
Mark Bradford
Sonel Breslav
Cinthya Santos-Briones
Nao Bustamante
Gabo Camnitzer
Juan Capistran
Terry Carbone
Mary Ceruti
Lenore Chinn
Allana Clarke
John Corbett
Lauren Cornell
Pepe Coronado
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ABOVE: Photograph of Allan Freelon (left) and fellow students with teacher Hugh Henry Breckenridge (second from left) circa, 1927. Allan Freelon papers, 1898–2008.

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Chuck Welch papers relating to mail art, 1974–2019.

MIDDLE ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:

BOTTOM ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:
4 Chiura Obata, sketch from Topaz, California, 1942 (detail). Chiura Obata papers, 1891–2000.

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