

WOMEN at the CENTER

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture
Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library

Issue 12, Fall 2007

A Woman Artist, Not a Model or Muse

The Bingham Center will host its third biennial symposium this fall. *Neither Model Nor Muse: Women and Artistic Expression* will open with a performance by Common Woman Chorus based on Bingham Center collections to take place at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, October 26, 2007. The following day's events will be convened by Sallie Bingham and Vice Provost for the Arts Scott Lindroth. The event will conclude with a performance by Choreo Collective dancers and the poets of Carolina Wren Press at 4:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon, to be followed by a closing reception.

The Bingham Center is interested in exploring the ways in which women have expressed themselves through three centuries and many art forms. By means of exhibits, performances, artist demonstrations, workshops, and other sessions, and from the perspective of students, faculty, staff, scholars, and, of course, artists, we will consider the contributions of women to the visual, literary, and performing arts. Attendees will be able to participate in discussions with filmmakers, photographers, hip hop and other artists, activists, historians and other scholars; learn basic book making techniques; explore gender performance practices; watch student singing and dance ensembles; and observe and learn

from women artists doing their work in public spaces in Perkins Library. In addition, there will be four exhibits, as well as a "symposium bookstore" at which attendees can purchase books connected to these exhibits, many of which were written by women whose papers are held by the Bingham Center.

The main goal of Bingham Center symposia is to demonstrate the relevance of our collections to a topic of broad interest to our constituency. All of the symposium activities, some academic, others interactive, and a few that are totally hands on, will connect our materials to a dialogue about women and artistic expression. We aim to increase awareness about the history of women's involvement in and their unique approach to a wide range of art forms. The Bingham Center has chosen this theme not only because it reflects a strength of its collections, but also because it coincides with Duke University President Richard H. Brodhead's Visual Studies Initiative and the call for innovative interdisciplinary work in the university's strategic plan.

http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections/bingham/art_symposium

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Bingham Center Featured in ARL Publication

To celebrate its 75th anniversary, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) recently published a commemorative volume featuring notable collections from each of its 123 member institutions. The Bingham Center was honored to be selected as the representative of Duke University Libraries. Summing up the Bingham Center in only 500 words was a challenge, but identifying only thirty images to represent our rich and varied

collections was perhaps an even greater task, especially considering that only a few would ultimately be chosen for our section.

The Pink Corset Book, an artists' book by Tamar Stone; *The Girl Wanted*, a prescriptive literature volume; and a love letter from a slave, Fannie Perry, to her husband, were selected to accompany the text in the published volume, as well as featured on a companion website. <http://www.arl.org>

<http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections/bingham>

SALLIE BINGHAM CENTER
FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY AND CULTURE

New Acquisitions and Additions

Ann Atwater Interviews

Atwater was a central figure in the 1970 efforts to integrate Durham, NC public schools. Her collaboration with C.P. Ellis, former Exalted Cyclops of the Ku Klux Klan, and how their relationship transformed from antagonistic to cooperative is documented in the interviews, as well as in the book *The Best of Enemies: Race and Redemption in the New South* by Osha Gray Davidson.

Elizabeth Hargrave Papers

The papers document the work this Episcopal lay woman and multi-issue activist did as the chair of the Davidson County Commissioners and as a member the NC Council of Churches Committee for Equal Rights, the Episcopal Diocese of NC and other organizations.

Wonderful Women Records

The Wonderful Women were a Charlotte, NC, outdoor social club for women. The collection includes organizational files, images of the group's outings, and T-shirts.

30 Years in the Garden (and 15 at the Bingham Center)

The Bingham Center was thrilled to host a recent celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South in Durham, NC. The RCWMS provides mentorship, produces numerous publications, and sponsors programming on a variety of topics such as spirituality, art and economic development. We were delighted to host this gathering because of our long and fruitful working relationship, the intersection of our organizational missions, and our appreciation for the ongoing support of our work by RCWMS founder and executive director, Jeanette Stokes.

In the fifteen years that the records of the RCWMS have been at Duke, the collection has supported classes, research papers, theses and dissertations, activist projects, exhibits and public programs on topics as wide-ranging as



RCWMS Board members Rachael Wooten, Jeanette Stokes, and Anita McLoed

us on the courageous, transformative work of feminists in the Church.

To paraphrase a line in a review of "25 Years in the Garden," Jeanette's book of essays published on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Resource Center:

An ordained Presbyterian minister, Jeanette Stokes has been taking risks for over twenty-five years. Her power comes from her awareness that life is splashes of color, sometimes joyous, sometimes heart-breaking.

We thank you, Jeanette, and congratulate you on thirty years of amazing service!

Preserving Your History, One Box at a Time

Louisville, KY, is home to the Kentucky Derby, the Louisville Slugger, and the Kentucky Foundation for Women (KFW). This organization was established in 1985 by Sallie Bingham, author and native of Louisville, and seeks to "promote positive social change by supporting varied feminist expression in the arts." Bingham Center staffers Jodi Berkowitz and Kelly Wooten recently traveled to Louisville to discuss records management strategies with the staff of the KFW, as well as to pack up the latest batch of papers for shipment to Duke.

Our staff often assist organizations with transferring their records to the Bingham Center. There's a little more to it than just removing files from their drawers and placing them



Jodi packs boxes at KFW

in record storage cartons. Consider that someone unfamiliar with your organization is going to learn about your group solely from these records—what will be of most use for this researcher? Six copies of an inter-office memo, cancelled checks, or plaques? Not too likely. Personnel and other sensitive documents need special consideration. Non-current records of enduring value, including mission statements and by-laws, correspondence, publications of

the organization, and records of programs are the most important. Significant, unique records generated or received by an organization will be most useful for researchers and will document the organization most effectively. When in doubt about certain records, don't throw them out—contact the Bingham Center!

Wade Donation Builds Artists' Books Collection

Local artist and activist Mary Margaret Wade recently passed away, and her friends and family placed her papers at the Bingham Center. Her papers document her life as an artist through original drawings, published works, and her involvement in environmental activism and social justice groups like the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South. In addition, Wade's collection of Nexus Press titles will enhance our existing holdings of almost 40 titles from this important artists' books publisher in Atlanta. She worked at Nexus Press as director of the Olympics Project that brought together artists from each continent in 1996. The collection also includes some of her own works, including stab-bound books made from richly textured hand-painted papers.

In her most recent work at Duke University Hospital where she was Program Director with Arts for Life, she served children with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses by inspiring them to create art during long periods of treatment. We are grateful to add Mary

Margaret Wade to the Center's strong collection of local women leaders and artists who have given so much to our community.

The Bingham Center's collection of artists' books has long been a favorite for public exhibits and student instruction sessions. Recent purchases for the artists' book collection include Bessie Smith Moulton's *Tunisia*, a beautifully designed travel diary, rich with pictures from the author's trip to Northern Africa, and Jackie Batey's *Anxious Homes, Cursory-Cleaning for the imminent arrival of visitors*, a modern, tongue-in-cheek approach to prescriptive literature. This recent expansion of the collection and growing interest led to a thematically-organized bibliography, which will soon be available on the Center's webpage. Created to support the upcoming symposium, "Neither Model nor Muse: Women and Artistic Expression," the bibliography will make it easier for researchers to study what is quickly becoming one of the country's leading collections of artists' books by women.

<http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections/bingham/guides/artistsbooks>

Making Zines at the NC Girls Rock Camp

North Carolina's Girls Rock Camp, founded by local musician Amelia V.B. Shull, promises that the next generation of rock stars will have more than its fair share of talented women. Since the first Rock 'n' Roll Camp for Girls was held in Portland, OR, in 2001, similar camps have been organized across the country, including Shull's, which has been held annually since 2004 with the goal of encouraging confidence, creativity and community through rock and roll.

This year, Bingham Center staff members Kelly Wooten and Amy McDonald visited the camp for a morning-long workshop on zines and zine-making, as the independently-produced publications have long gone hand-in-hand with punk and rock music. The girls, who range from 12 to 16 years old, document the week's activities—which include workshops on costume-making and songwriting and visits from local bands—in the pages of their own group zine. The two weeks of camp culminate in performances at the Cat's Cradle in Carrboro, NC.



Cutting up magazines for collage

New Online Finding Aids

Paula Kamen papers, 1970-2006

The Paula Kamen Papers span the years 1970-2006, with the bulk of the material dating from 1991 to 2002. The collection documents Kamen's career as a writer and journalist. Specific topics covered by Kamen and addressed in the collection are Generation X women, feminism and sexuality, abortion, popular culture, and chronic pain.

<http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rbmscl/kamenpaula/inv/>

Feminist Women's Health Center records, 1973-2003

This collection is composed of files documenting the development and daily operations of the Feminist Women's Health Center (FWHC), a feminist non-profit women's healthcare center, from the years 1974-2003. Major components of the collection include files from research studies, policies and procedures for maintaining the center, and incidents of anti-abortion protests at the center, specifically involving the group Operation Rescue.

<http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rbmscl/fwbc/inv/>

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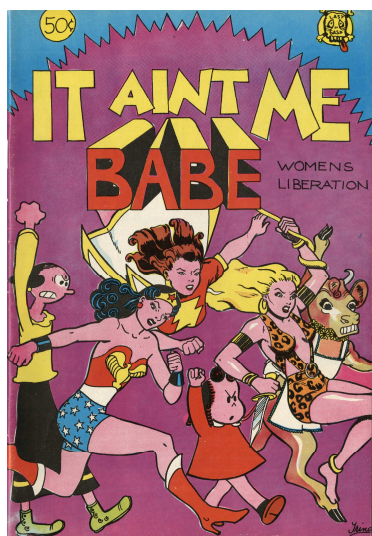
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Picturing Women in the Arts: Four Exhibits on Display



Women's Liberation Comics
from the Feminist Art Movement

In conjunction with the symposium *Neither Model Nor Muse*, four exhibits will be on view in Perkins Library this fall.

Highlights of “**The Feminist Art Movement, 1960s-1980s**” exhibit include artwork by Kate Millett and Irene Peslikis; LPs, songbooks and concert flyers from the women's music movement, including material from the Common Woman Chorus; women's comics and feminist art publications. (Old Perk Annex, 2nd floor)

“**Hidden and Forbidden: Literary Secrets and Transgressions**” highlights the Bingham Center's collection of secret, private, unknown, and transgressive writings by women. From love letters, diaries, and narratives of rape and abortion, to pirated editions of Robin Morgan's *Monster*, which was barred from publication in the British Commonwealth due to the inclusion of a poem accusing British poet Ted Hughes of driving Sylvia Plath to suicide, the exhibit challenges and complicates the romanticized image of the female writer. (Biddle Rare Book Room display cases)

“**Stretching the Canvas: Women Explore the Arts**” is a non-traditional art exhibit that brings a “behind the scenes” perspective to the process of making art. Using documentary pieces as well as artwork—from Duke women undergraduates and women artists represented in the Bingham Center collections—this exhibit considers different facets of women's artistic practice. (Old Perk, 2nd floor)

“**Picturing Home: Family Albums as Historical Memoir**” documents the history of four generations of women in the Davis family of Hampton, VA, and provides a rich record of African American life from Reconstruction to the civil rights era. (Special Collections hallway gallery)

Exhibits on display in Perkins Library
Fall Semester 2007
Duke University West Campus