

Mary Ellen Croteau Papers
1963-2011, n.d.

Creator: Mary Ellen Croteau (1950 – 2019)

Extent: 1.25 linear ft.

Processor: J. Curtis Main, April, 2011

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None.

Usage Restrictions: Mary Ellen Croteau retains all copyright for the works created by her.

Preferred Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Women and Leadership Archives. Mary Ellen Croteau Collection. Box #, Folder #.

Provenance: The materials were donated to the Women and Leadership Archives on March 11, 2011 by Mary Ellen Croteau. WLA2011.25

Separations: Less than .25 linear feet of duplicate and extraneous material was removed and discarded.

See Also: Other artists related to Artemisia at the Women and Leadership Archives and the Artemisia Records at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Biographical History

Mary Ellen Croteau described herself as “a radical feminist and artist” who “sees [her] work as social criticism—a visual challenge to all those racist, sexist, and arrogant cultural assumptions that are the bedrock of the American Way.” Through her various forms of artistic expression, which ranged from her early teens through her adulthood, she exposed and critiqued patriarchy and sexism.

Croteau was a Chicago-native born on June 22, 1950. She graduated from Elizabeth Seton High School in 1968. She attended the Art Institute of Chicago from 1987 to 1988 and received her BFA in sculpture from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1990. Croteau later went on to receive her MFA from Rutgers University/Mason Gross School of the Arts in 1998. Much of Croteau’s work was based in exposure of the taboo and reversal of social hierarchies. Croteau was also a member, supporter, and leader of several women’s art collectives and activist groups that challenge injustice through artistic expression, including Artemisia and SisterSerpents.

Some of Croteau’s major works include: “War memorial,” (1994) a display of over 2000 women and girl’s names murdered by men; “Musee de Nouvelle Renaissance,” (1995-2001) an installation of oil canvas paintings that subvert traditional and religious Western patriarchal beliefs; and “Bag World,” (2004-2009) a series demonstrating US society’s reliance of plastic bags through various artistic forms. Some of Croteau’s major shows include: “Good Girls and Bad,” (1994, Artemisia Gallery, Chicago) a collection of pieces illustrating men’s violence against women; “Mercy,” (1999, Woman Made Gallery, Chicago) a solo exhibition dedication to feminist Andrea Dworkin; and “Manmade,” (2008, StartArt, Reykjavik, Iceland) a series exploring human waste and trash. Croteau has been featured in *Village Voice*, *New York Times*, and *Ms.* magazine. Later, she worked with non-recycled plastic waste, including bottle caps and plastic bags, to demonstrate the huge amounts of trash humans create and its damaging effects on the environment.

From September 2003 to June 2017, Croteau owned and operated Art on Armitage, a “window gallery in Chicago dedicated to art exhibitions, installations, and other creations”. The raised window box in a building at 4125 W Armitage Ave featured exhibits and installations by artists, local to international, with the goal of making art accessible to the public.

Mary Ellen Croteau passed away on February 16, 2019 at the age of 68.

Scope and Content

The Mary Ellen Croteau Papers consist of 3 boxes, spanning the years 1963-2011. This collection is divided into three series: professional, audio/visual, and oversized. The professional records include various catalogues and gallery programs, gallery announcements and publicity materials, and magazines and newspapers that Croteau work appeared. Also in the professional records are a portfolio of Croteau’s career made by herself, photocopies by Croteau of her work with the feminist art collective Sister Serpents, and various photocopies made by Croteau of her appearances in media. The audio/visual series includes a data CD of the exhibit “Are We There Yet? 40 Years of Feminism” and over 500 slides of her artwork from the 1970s through the 2000s. The oversized series includes a Chicago newspaper, “New City,” featuring Croteau’s work on the front cover in 2004, a Minnesota-based “Artpaper” magazine featuring Croteau’s work on the front cover in 1991, and a set of three “Slop super market” satirical clearinghouse magazines.

Series 1: Professional, 1989-2011, n.d., Box 1

Contains materials relating to Croteau’s professional art career such as exhibit materials, gallery publicity materials, and newspaper and magazine articles, and advertisements. Other materials include a portfolio of Croteau’s work she compiled for her “Man Made” exhibit, plus some gallery materials of other artists. Many photocopies of Croteau’s work with feminist art collective Sister Serpents are also in these records.

Series 2: Audio/visual, 1963-2007, n.d., Box 2

Contains a data CD of a digital presentation to coincide with the art exhibit: “Are We There Yet? 40 Years of Feminism.” Also contains over 500 slides of Croteau’s artwork spanning 4 decades, including detail photographs, collection images, and slides of her “books.” The provenance of the slide order has been maintained.

Series 3: Oversized, 1991-2004, Box 3

Contains five magazines that Croteau kept in which she was featured as cover artist or she collected.

Subjects:

Artemisia Gallery
Feminism and Art
Chicago Art Galleries

*Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago*

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Series 1: Professional, 1989-2011, n.d.			
1	1	Galleries/Exhibits: Catalogs	1992-1999
	2	Galleries/Exhibits: Catalogs	2000-2009, n.d.
	3	Galleries/Exhibits: "Mercy"	1999
	4	Galleries/Exhibits: Postcards/Publicity	1989-2011
	5	Galleries/Exhibits: Other Artists	2009-2010
	6	Media: As Cover Artist	1991-2003
	7	Media: Mentions in Media	1991-2004, n.d.
	8	Media: Work with SisterSerpents	1990-1997
	9	Portfolio	n.d.
	10	Publications: Articles/Featured	1994-2003
Series 2: Audio-Visual, 1963-2011, n.d.			
CD			
2	1	Are We There Yet? 40 Years of Feminism	2008
SLIDES			
2A		Bag/Braids	2007
		Monoprints	[1905], 1989, 1991, n.d.
		Good Book (Bible)	1990, n.d.
		Statve	1990, n.d.
		Candlestand	1990, n.d.
		Masc. Complex	1990
		St. Mike	1990, n.d.
		Wailing Wall	1990, n.d.
		Tract	1990, n.d.
		Slight Alterations	1992, n.d.
		Jock Straps	1992
		Cigars	1992
		Pee-Wee	1992
		Jar	1991-1992
		Keychain	1992-1993, 2001
		Trophy	1992
		Dickheads	1992
		Auto Mirror Ornament	1992, n.d.

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	Lights	1992
	Fat Man	1992
	Corpse	1991, 1994-1995, n.d.
	Bellies	1993-1995
	Fetus Magnets	1992-1993, n.d.
	Bat & Balls	2003
	Doll- Not a Choice	1991, 1996
	Snake	1992, n.d.
	Collage/Xerox	1990
	Artist Boxes	1992, n.d.
	Jokes	1992
	Men to Avoid	1992, n.d.
	High/Low (Skin)	1992-1993, n.d.
	Stone Book	1993, 1998
	Hair Book	1992-1993, n.d.
2B	250 Words	1994, n.d.
	Belly Book	1993
	Same Story	1992-1993
	Good Girls, Bad	1994
	Anna Mendieta	1992, n.d.
	Objects	1994, n.d.
	War Memorial	1994-1995
	Veils	1994
	Panties	1994
	Briefs	1994
	Chador	1994
	Bride Gown	1994-1995
	Booths	1992, n.d.
	Flag Art	1992-1994
	Unrepentent Magdalene	1995-1996, n.d.
2C	Annunciation	1996-1997, n.d.
	Madonna	1997-1998, 2003, n.d.
	Lilith & Eve	1997, n.d.
	God	1995, 1997, n.d.
	God #1	1996-1997
	Judgement/Paris	1997-1998, n.d.
	St. Lorena	1996, n.d.
	Sisters	1997, n.d.
	Medusa	2002
	Musee- Installation	1997-1998, n.d.
2D	Musee- Installation Cont.	1997-1998, n.d.
	Hall of Shame	1996, 2007, n.d.
	Then/Now	1998

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	Mercy	1999
	Doll- Pins	1997-1999
	Mirror	1997, 2000, 2004
	Blood on Cement	1998-2000
	Apron	1999-2000
	Girls Panties	1999-2000
	The Club	1999-2000
	Desk	1999-2000
	De Soto, IL	1999-2001
	Waste Management	2000
	Beach State Park	2000-2001
	Smiley	2000-2001
	TV Nation	2000-2001
	Tire- Detroit	2000-2001
	Indiana	2000-2001
	Suburb Utopia	2000-2001
	Penis Hotel	2000-2001
	Homo Erectus	1992
	Clearcut	2001-2002
	Here, There, Everywhere	2001
	Velvet Frame	1997, n.d.
	USMC Blanket	1998, 2002
	Wargames	2005
	Bombast	2004
	Rifle Dick	2003
2E	Grenade Dick	2003
	Ball Grenade	2003-2004
	Camoflag	2004
	Toybox	2003-2005
	Bucket O' Brains	2003
	G.I. Joe	2004
	Which Toy	2004
	Baby Bottle	2004-2005
	Hats	2004-2005
	Family Portraits	2004
	Fallout Project	2004
	SistersSerpents Posters	1989, 1990-1993, 1995, n.d.
	Demolishing Domesticity	1994, n.d.
	School Paintings	1963-1964, 1973, 1975, 1984-1989, .n.d.

Series 3: Oversized, 1991-2004

3	Artpaper magazine September Issue	1991
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Loyola University Chicago

Newcity newspaper, October 28 Issue	2004
slopart's "Super Market Fine Art Products" circular (3 copies)	1997

Mary Ellen Croteau Papers
Addendum 1
1992-2011, n.d.

Creator: Mary Ellen Croteau (1950 – 2019)

Extent: .5 l. ft.

Processor: Beth Loch, May 2012

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None

Usage Restrictions: Mary Ellen Croteau retains copyright to her materials.

Preferred Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Women and Leadership Archives. Mary Ellen Croteau Papers Addendum 1. Box #, Folder #.

Provenance: Mary Ellen Croteau donated her materials to the Women and Leadership Archives March 11, 2011 (WLA2011.25).

Separations: None

See Also: The original Mary Ellen Croteau Papers at the Women and Leadership Archives. Other artists related to Artemisia at the Women and Leadership Archives and the Artemisia Records at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Biographical/Administrative History

Mary Ellen Croteau describes herself as “a radical feminist and artist” who “sees [her] work as social criticism—a visual challenge to all those racist, sexist, and arrogant cultural assumptions that are the bedrock of the American Way.” Through her various forms of artistic expression, which range from her early teens to the present, she exposes and critiques patriarchy and sexism.

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Scope and Content

The Mary Ellen Croteau Papers, Addendum 1, consists of .5 linear feet of materials spanning the years 1997 to 2011, including undated materials. The collection includes three series; Professional Materials, Audiovisual Materials, and Digital Materials. The digital materials are available upon researcher request. These series contain correspondence, biographical information, audio and video cassettes, photographs, and digital media. The materials are organized alphabetically within each series.

Series 1: Professional Materials, 1992-2005, n.d., Box 1

Contains materials relating to Mary Ellen Croteau's professional career as an artist. It includes correspondence, her artist statements, biographical information, curriculum vitae, exhibit postcards, and an untitled newspaper article featuring Croteau.

Series2: Audiovisual Materials, 1997, 2005, n.d., Box 1

This series includes an audio cassette of a radio interview with Croteau, transparencies of her artwork, and two video cassettes of programs mentioning her artistic work.

Series 3: Digital Materials, 2007-2011

Consists of fifteen digital files of Croteau's artistic works. Thirteen of the files feature photographs of her artwork and exhibits. Another file has a PowerPoint for a presentation Croteau made for an environmental art lecture. The final file contains materials related to art fairs she contributed to, which includes photographs, price lists, receipts, show cards, and correspondence. The digital files are available to researchers at the Women and Leadership Archives.

Subjects:

Artemisia Gallery
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Series 1: Professional Materials, 1992-2005, n.d.			
1	1	Artist Statements	n.d.
	2	Biographical Information	n.d.
	3	Correspondence	2005
	4	Croteau's Curriculum Vitae	n.d.
	5	Exhibit Postcards	1992, 1994, n.d.
	6	Newspaper Article	n.d.
Series 2: Audiovisual Materials, 1997, 2005, n.d.			
	7	Audio Cassette: Radio Interview	2005
	8	Transparencies of Artwork	n.d.
	9	Video Cassette: "Chicago Women Artists"	1997
	10	Video Cassette: "Mary, Mary"	n.d.
Series 3: Digital Materials, 2007-2011			
		Art Fair Materials	2007-2011
		Photographs: "Bag World" Exhibit	2008-2010
		Photographs: "Clearcut" Exhibit	2008-2010
		Photographs: "Icons, Idols, & Blasphemies" Exhibit	2011
		Photographs: Landscapes	2008-2009
		Photographs: "Man Made" Exhibit	2008-2010
		Photographs: "Mercy" Exhibit	2008-2011
		Photographs: Monoprint Series	2009
		Photographs: "Musee de Nouvelle Renaissance" Exhibit	2007-2010
		Photographs: School and Early Art	2011
		Photographs: Sisterserpent and Other Art	2007-2009
		Photographs: "Slight Alterations" Exhibit	2007-2009
		Photographs: Landscapes "Textures Edited"	2010
		Photographs: "War Games" Exhibit	2011
		PowerPoint: Environmental Art Lecture	2011