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GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE AWARDED A "SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES" GRANT TO PROCESS AND DIGITIZE ARCHIVES OF THE WOMAN'S BUILDING

The grant, administered by the National Park Service and the Institute of Museums and Library Services, supports a two-year project for work on 11 collections related to the Woman's Building, which operated in Los Angeles for nearly two decades
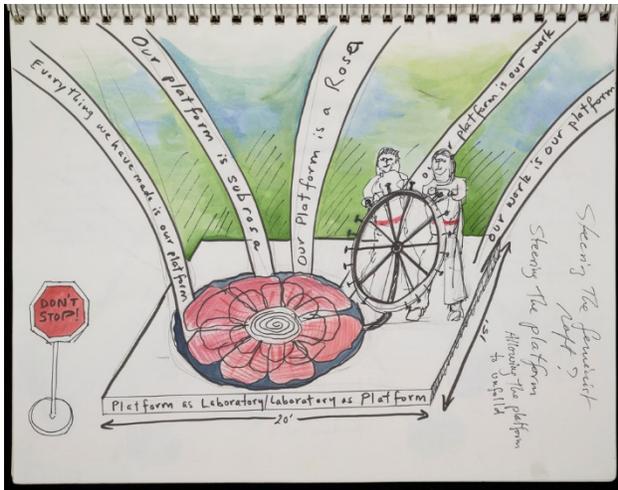
LOS ANGELES – The Getty Research Institute (GRI) has been awarded a grant through the Save America's Treasures program to process and preserve 11 archives in the GRI's collections related to the Woman's Building, a feminist art institution that operated in downtown Los Angeles from 1973 to 1991.

Outside the Woman's Building, 1975. Photo: Maria Karras. The Getty Research Institute, 2018.M.16. Gift of Maria Karras. © Maria Karras, BFA, RBP, MA.

The Save America's Treasures program is an interagency federal initiative led by the National Park Service and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The $284,400 grant supports the processing, preservation, and digitization of GRI holdings related to the Woman's Building, including several artists' archives. The grant makes up approximately half of the budget for the project.

"Partnerships like this allow us to accelerate the important work of providing broad access to these crucial materials. The Getty Research Institute is a rich repository for the study of art and feminism, and a cornerstone of our holdings are the archives

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Drawing of Rosa/Subrosa platform, Faith Wilding, 2008. The Getty Research Institute, 2017.M.8.

related to the Woman's Building and the artists who activated that space," said Andrew Perchuk, acting director of the Getty Research Institute. "Many of the archives in our collection related to the Woman's Building were donated by the artists themselves and we want to honor that generosity by making this work as accessible as possible, allowing both scholars and the general public to see the tremendous impact the Woman's Building and the artists associated with it had on Feminism and contemporary art over the last forty-five years."

Founded in 1973 by artist Judy Chicago, designer Sheila de Bretteville, and art historian Arlene Raven, the Woman's Building organized, sponsored and fostered public programs, art activities, and artists' groups. Education was a central part of the Woman's Building and educational programming included classes in visual arts, graphic design, printmaking, performance art, video and literary arts. Until its closing in 1991, many significant artists and writers were associated with the Woman's Building, including Margaret Atwood, Mary Daly, Judy Fiskin, Simone Forti, Diane Gamboa, Luchita Hurtado, Barbara Kruger, Yayoi Kusama, Suzanne Lacy, Adrian Piper, Adrienne Rich, Faith Ringgold, Rachel Rosenthal, Betye Saar, Barbara T. Smith, Linda Vallejo, Faith Wilding, and many more.

The Woman's Building was originally located in downtown LA at the former Chouinard Art Institute. In 1975 it moved to a warehouse formerly owned by the Standard Oil Company at 1727 N. Spring St. In June of 2018 the Los Angeles City Council voted to declare the Historic-Cultural Monument designation for the Woman's Building, ensuring protection for the site and a design review process if changes to the building are ever proposed.

The GRI has compiled a range of holdings related to the Woman's Building that includes correspondence, manuscripts, photographs and slides, oral history tapes, video and film, journals, personal papers, illustrated sketchbooks and notebooks, research materials, ephemera and more. It will take about two years for the GRI to process the collections and digitize the materials most at risk of deterioration, including thousands of photographic images, video and audio recordings, and film reels. When the project is done, the archives will be accessible both on site and online to any researchers who are interested at no charge.

The 11 archives that will be processed and digitized for this project are:

- The Woman's Building records
- The Woman's Building videos, from the Long Beach Museum of Art Video Archive
- The Feminist Art Workers records
- The LA Artists for Survival records regarding Target LA
- The Sisters for Survival records
- The Mother Art records
- The Waitresses records
- The Barbara T. Smith archive
- The Faith Wilding Archive
- The Nancy Buchanan papers
- The Nancy Buchanan video masters

Records of the Woman's Building make up the core of the collection and offer a panoramic view of activities over the course of the Woman's Building's existence. They include more than 250 videos that were part of the Los Angeles Women's Video Center and Feminist Studio Workshop. The project also includes the archives of individual artists and collaborative artist groups like the anti-nuclear performance group the Sisters of Survival, the Feminist Art Workers and the Waitresses.

"While each collection is valuable on its own terms, considered together they illuminate, in strikingly meaningful ways, major initiatives, struggles, and dynamics of the women's movement from the 1960s to the twenty-first century," said Andra Darlington, head of Special Collections Management at the GRI. "We are accelerating

work on this material at a particularly significant time, when current events make it appropriate to try to better understand the roots of contemporary American feminism, some of which grew out of the Woman's Building."

The GRI's project for the Woman's Building will focus on four goals: processing, conservation, creating greater accessibility, and digitization. As the work is completed, the GRI will make each collection accessible online at www.getty.edu/research. More information is also available on GRI's guide to Archives and Resources for Feminist Research.

For more information on the Woman's Building you may also visit www.womansbuilding.com.

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

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