

GILBERT, JACK, 1925-2012.

Jack Gilbert papers, 1947-2013

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

- Creator:** Gilbert, Jack, 1925-2012.
- Title:** Jack Gilbert papers, 1947-2013
- Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 1375
- Extent:** 71 linear feet (71 boxes) 1 oversized bound volume (OBV), and AV Masters: 3 linear feet (3 boxes).
- Abstract:** The papers of poet and novelist, Jack Gilbert, consisting of bound volumes, correspondence, research on erotica, personal and professional papers, printed material, negatives, photographs, slides, subject files, writings by Gilbert, writings by others, and audiovisual materials, from 1947-2013.
- Language:** Materials entirely in English.
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Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

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Related Materials in This Repository

[Laura Ulewicz papers.](#)

Source

Purchase, 2016

Custodial History

Upon his death, Gilbert left his papers to his ex-partner, executrix, and longtime friend, Linda Gregg. The Rose Library purchased the papers from Gregg in 2016 via book dealer, James Jaffe

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Jack Gilbert papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Arranged and described at the box level by Meaghan O'Riordan, April 2017.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Jack Gilbert, American poet, was born on February 17, 1925, in the East Liberty neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After failing out of Peabody High School, Gilbert sold Fuller brushes door-to-door, worked in steel mills, and accompanied his uncle to fumigate houses. Due to a clerical error, Gilbert was admitted to the University of Pittsburgh, where he met Gerald Stern, who helped to foster Gilbert's interest in poetry and writing. Gilbert earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the university in 1947. After college, Gilbert went to Paris, France, and worked briefly for the *International Herald Tribune* before moving to Italy. He spent several years there and met Gianna Gelmetti, a romantic partner, who appears frequently in his work.

Gilbert then moved to San Francisco, California, where the Beat and Haight-Ashbury countercultures were emerging. He lived in the Bay Area for seven years from 1956 to 1963, during which time he attended San Francisco State University, worked with Ansel Adams, and participated in Jack Spicer's *Poetry is Magic* workshop. Gilbert also knew Laura Ulewicz at this time and dedicated his first book to her: "To Laura Ulewicz, a kind of dragon."

Gilbert's work is distinguished by simple lyricism and straightforward clarity of tone, with much of the content centered on his relationships with women. His first book of poetry, *Views of Jeopardy*, published in 1962, won the Yale Younger Poets Prize and was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. After its publication, he lived an isolated life and published books of poetry intermittently, though he continued to contribute to periodicals, such as *The American Poetry Review*, *Genesis West*, *The Quarterly*, *Poetry*, *Ironwood*, *The Kenyon Review*, and *The New Yorker*. He won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1964 and left for Greece with the poet, Linda Gregg. He met her when she was nineteen and his student in San Francisco. They were in a romantic relationship for six years and remained close friends afterward.

During his time abroad, he also toured 15 countries as a lecturer on American Literature for the United States State Department. In the 1970s, he met and lived with the sculptor, Michiko Nogami, in Japan.

Gilbert wrote poems in Greece, Denmark and England that became *Monolithos*, his second book, published in 1982. It was nominated for the National Book Critics Circle Award, the American Book Award, and the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, and it won the Stanley Kunitz Prize and the American Poetry Review Prize. Nogami died of cancer that same year. Gilbert next published a limited-edition volume called *Kochan*, a collection of elegiac poems written for Nogami.

He spent the next several years living intermittently in Northhampton, Massachusetts, San Francisco, California, and Florida. Gilbert's third book, *The Great Fires*, is constituted largely of love poems inspired by Nogami. It was published in 1994, the same year he won the Lannan Literary Award for Poetry. He was also the 1999-2000 Grace Hazard Conkling writer-in-residence at Smith College (Northhampton, Massachusetts).

Gilbert was a visiting professor and writer-in-residence at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville, Tennessee) and won the National Book Critics Circle Award for *Refusing Heaven* (2005). Gilbert was also interested in erotica and published two erotic novels, *My Mother Taught Me* (2004) and *Forever Ecstasy* (2008), both coauthored with Jean MacLean and published under the pseudonym, Tor Kung.

Gilbert died on November 13, 2012, in Berkeley, California. He was posthumously nominated and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize again in 2013 for *Collected Poems*.

Biographical Source: Fay, Sarah. "Jack Gilbert, The Art of Poetry No. 91." *The Paris Review*, no. 175 (Fall/Winter 2005). Accessed April 19, 2017

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of the papers of Jack Gilbert from 1947-2013 and include bound volumes, correspondence, erotica research, personal and professional papers, printed material, negatives, photographs, slides, subject files, writings by Gilbert, writings by others, and audiovisual materials, from 1947-2013.

Many of the bound volumes are what Gilbert called "life albums," which are comprised of clippings, correspondence, printed material and other ephemera pasted together into albums, like a scrapbook. Most of the printed material and the subject files included in his papers contain more of this material that Gilbert collected but never transformed into albums. Life albums are often centered on the country in which Gilbert was living and/or the woman with whom he had a romantic relationship at the time. The bound volumes also include journals, notebooks and drafts.

Correspondence includes letters, mostly personal with some relating to his publications. Many of the envelopes, particularly from Sue Lawrence and Jean MacLean, include artwork created by them.

The erotica research is comprised primarily of printed material cut out from works that Gilbert read and collected. Gilbert would compile these clippings into envelopes, seal them, and then provide context on the outside of the envelope: title, author, publication year, notes about the plot and then his own review, often with a letter grade assigned. There are also paperbacks of erotica included in this material, most of which have been altered in some way by Gilbert.

Personal and professional papers include material relating to Gilbert's time as a student and a teacher, such as notes for classes both taught and taken and papers he wrote for class assignments. There are also financial records.

Negatives, photographs, and slides are almost exclusively made up of amateur pornography created by Gilbert and his friends, with the few exceptions including shots of everyday life and of trips that Gilbert took around the world. Audiovisual materials are more diverse, including audio of poetry readings by Gilbert and others, but still include some film of amateur pornography.

Writings include drafts, notes and typescripts of poems and poem collections, both published and unpublished, by Gilbert. Writings by others includes work by students and friends of Gilbert, including Jean MacLean.

Arrangement Note

Arranged by record type in the order in which the material was received.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1	-	Bound volumes: Erotica research, journals, one life album, and theses on Gilbert, circa 1965-1990
2	-	Bound volumes: Journals and two life albums, circa 1984-1998
3	-	Bound volumes: Journals, circa 1960-1993
4	-	Bound volumes: Drafts, three life albums, circa 1960-1994
5	-	Bound volumes: Drafts, circa 1989-2000
6	-	Bound volumes: Journals, circa 1961-2003
7	-	Bound volumes: Drafts, erotica research, and journals, circa 1972-2000
8	-	Bound volumes: Dismantled life album(s), circa 1941-1964
9	-	Bound volumes: Ezra Pound research and three life albums, undated
10	-	Bound volumes: Four life albums, circa 1947-1982
11	-	Bound volumes: Four life albums, undated
12	-	Bound volumes: Correspondence, journals, Ezra Pound research, and six life books, circa 1992-1993
13	-	Bound volumes: Five life albums, circa 1978-1993
14	-	Bound volumes: Four life albums, journals and notebooks, circa 1990-1994
15	-	Bound volumes: Four life albums, undated
16	-	Bound volumes: Four life albums, circa 1986
17	-	Bound volumes: Journals and notebooks, circa 1947-1978
18	-	Chimena Kabasenche, letters and poems, circa 2006-2007
19	-	Correspondence, Sue Lawrence and others, circa 1959-1987
20	-	Correspondence, circa 1975-1987
21	-	Correspondence, circa 1950-2007
22	-	Correspondence, circa 1963-1982
23	-	Correspondence, circa 1961-1985
24	-	Correspondence, circa 1966-1984
25	-	Correspondence, circa 1956-1993
26	-	Correspondence, circa 1964-1973
27	-	Correspondence, Jean MacLean and others, circa 1962-1975
28	-	Correspondence, family, Jean MacLean, Yale prize notification and others, circa 1955-1979
29	-	Correspondence, circa 1961
30	-	Correspondence, Sue Lawrence and others, circa 1962-1966
31	-	Ephemera, primarily drawings and other artwork, undated
32	-	Erotica research, envelopes, circa 1962-1971
33	-	Erotica research, envelopes and books, circa 1961-1973
34	-	Erotica research, envelopes and books, circa 1972-1981

- 35 - Erotica research, index cards, undated
 - OBV1 - Journal, circa 1940s
 - 36 - Personal and professional papers, circa 1985-1988
 - 37 - Personal and professional papers, circa 2012-2013
 - 38 - Personal and professional papers, includes Ezra Pound research, circa 1974-1979
 - 39 - Printed material, circa 2009-2011
 - 40 - Printed material, undated
 - 41 - Printed material, circa 1996-2007
 - 42 - Printed material, circa 1977-1983
 - 43 - Photograph albums, undated
 - 44 - Negatives, photographs, and slides, undated [1]
 - 45 - Negatives, photographs, and slides, undated [2]
 - 46 - Negatives, photographs, and slides, undated [3]
 - 47 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1951-1979
 - 48 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1961-1975
 - 49 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1956-1987
 - 50 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1951-1969
 - 51 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1970-1979
 - 52 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1964-1979
 - 53 - Subject files, alphabetical, circa 1994-2007
 - 54 - Subject files, chronological, circa 1943-1988
 - 55 - Subject files, chronological, circa 1949-1979
 - 56 - Writings, undated [1]
 - 57 - Writings, undated [2]
 - 58 - Writings, undated [3]
 - 59 - Writings, undated [4]
 - 60 - Writings, undated [5]
 - 61 - Writings, undated [6]
 - 62 - Writings, undated [7]
 - 63 - Writings, undated [8]
 - 64 - Writings, undated [9]
 - 65 - Writings, undated [10]
 - 66 - Writings, undated [11]
 - 67 - Writings by others, undated [1]
 - 68 - Writings by others, undated [2]
 - AV1 - Unprocessed audiovisual materials [1]
 - AV2 - Unprocessed audiovisual materials [2]
 - AV3 - Unprocessed audiovisual materials [3]
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