

The Woman's Building: Animating the Archives - A Discussion Panel at the LA Art Book Fair on February 26, 2017

From its founding in 1973 to its closing in 1991, the Woman's Building was a potent symbol of women's creative community. Its exhibitions, performances, readings, lectures, public projects, and educational programs inspired and fostered generations of women artists, writers, performers, and scholars. On 02/26/2017, The Woman's Building Board of Directors came together at Printed Matter's 2017 LA Art Book Fair to discuss their ongoing preservation of this feminist legacy and their archiving and fellowship initiatives at Metabolic Studio's Spring Street location, next door to the site of the Woman's Building. The panelists were Woman's Building Board of Directors Cheri Gaulke, Terry Wolverton, and Sue Maberry; and Metabolic Studio curator-in-residence Charlotte Cotton, who moderated the discussion.



The Woman's Building on North Spring Street, 1975.

Charlotte Cotton

It is with immense pleasure that I'm here with the board of the Woman's Building: Cheri Gaulke, Terry Wolverton, and Sue Maberry. First, we're going to revisit the spirit and accomplishments of the Woman's Building. Then we will discuss the efforts of these and other women in the historicizing and contextualizing of this true center of feminist creativity. The most recent endeavor, and the prompt for this discussion today, has been a Metabolic Studio Special Project in Archiving. This archiving project began when Lauren Bon brought about fifty women together during summer 2016 to think through how she could support the legacy of the Woman's Building. The Woman's Building, from 1975 until it closed, was located on North Spring Street – coincidentally next door to Metabolic Studio. Last fall, the Woman's Building board agreed to be "in residence" at Metabolic Studio while working on its archives and executing a fellowship project. We are also joined today by amazing women in the audience: Linda Preuss, Linda Vallejo, Susan Stilton, EK Waller, Anne Gauldin, Cheryl Swannack, May Sun, and Gloria Alvarez. I hope that these women will join the conversation, as will some of the fellowship artists responding to the Woman's Building archive, including Felicia Montes, Anna Mayer, Cindy Rehm, Lisa Diane Wedgeworth, Johanna Breiding, and Diana Wyenn.

Let me sail through the panelists' bios. I'll start with Cheri Gaulke, who earned her MA in Feminist Art Education at Goddard College, then moved to LA to attend the Feminist Studio Workshop at the Woman's Building in 1975. She co-founded two collaborative, socially conscious performance groups: Feminist Art Workers (1976-81) and Sisters of Survival (1981-85). Dressed in rainbow-colored nun's habits, the Sisters of Survival staged anti-nuclear weapons performances in America and in Europe. It was a real pleasure to see Sisters of Survival come out of retirement last fall at USC's LA as Subject Archives Bazaar. Cheri has created numerous public art projects, from posters to bronze sculptures to interactive video works, and she's head of the visual arts department at Harvard Westlake School.

I would also like to introduce you to Terry Wolverton. She's a poet, creative writer, editor, creative consultant, and a Kundalini yoga student, healer, and educator. From 1977 to 1984, Terry taught classes and workshops at the Woman's Building that focused on lesbian art, feminist issues, theater, and creative writing. She was also the executive director and development director at the Woman's Building. Terry has published fourteen books – novels, poetry, and prose – including her brilliant 2012 memoir *Insurgent Muse: Life and Art at the Woman's Building*.

Next, I'd like to introduce Sue Maberry. Sue joined the Feminist Studio Workshop at the Woman's Building in 1977, when she was still an art student at Pitzer College. She was program director and executive director of the Women's Graphic Center at the Woman's Building. She also co-founded the Sisters of Survival anti-nuclear weapons performance group with Cheri Gaulke. Since 1992 she has been director of library and instructional technology at Otis College of Art and Design. She was co-curator of "Doing It in Public," a 2011 Pacific

Standard Time exhibition at Otis, which mapped the story and creative endeavors of the Woman's Building. Sue has been the centrifugal force in the archiving of the Woman's Building.

CC

I'm going to start with an easy question, which might lead to long answers from all of you – how did you discover and then come on to join the Woman's Building?

Cheri Gaulke

I came to the Woman's Building in 1975. First, I want to paint a little picture of the mid-1970s art world. There was hardly any women's art in galleries and in museums. There were probably equal numbers of women and men in art school, like today, and yet what we didn't know was that opportunities really weren't there for us. Furthermore, there was an environment of objectification and sexualizing of women. I remember male professors sleeping with their female students, and that was not considered shocking or weird. In fact, it was maybe a way you could get a little edge on things. I remember sculpture teachers in college openly ranking women's asses. And I remember being proud because I got a pretty good score.

At the same time, I was a feminist. I'd been a feminist since I was four. That's when I remember having my first feminist thought, when I first became aware of inequities in life and that there were things I couldn't be at that time. I wanted to be a minister like my dad, but I couldn't be one because I was a girl.

Also, no women were talked about in our history classes, so the history of art was a history of male artists, not to mention the racism of it as well. It was a xenophobic history with a European bias. Luckily, I was exposed to a kind of feminist performance art very early. In the summer of 1974 I participated in a program in Scotland where I studied with Sally Potter, whom you will probably know as a filmmaker.

At the time, she and Jacky Lansley were doing performance art and I had been doing video. It was hard to get our hands on the equipment – the male artists were hogging it – and I met these two women there who were doing this new art form – performance art. And I just fell in love with it. Many years ago I wrote an essay called "Performance Art at the Woman's Building," which posited the idea that performance art was the medium that felt so comfortable to us as women because it had costume, and character, and persona, and all of these things that we as women had learned.

By the time I came to the Woman's Building I was already doing feminist performance art and trying to organize women at my school, Minneapolis College of Art and Design. It was hard because it was risky to identify as a woman artist then. You just wanted to blend in – don't draw attention to the fact that you're female because that's not going to help you in the art world.

In college, I heard Judy Chicago was coming to St Catherine's College in St. Paul. She was staging an exhibition and two art historians – Ruth Iskin and Arlene Raven – were coming from LA to give a lecture about women artists in history. I thought to myself, "That's going to be a really short lecture," because I only knew of only a few women artists at the time: Käthe Kollwitz, Georgia O'Keeffe.... I went to that talk and I was blown away.

They gave a lecture about women artists throughout history. I went up and talked to them afterwards, and I said, "I do performance art." And they were like, "Oh, yeah, we teach performance art." And I was like, "What?" Because, you know, I was at a school where it wasn't even in the curriculum. After that I wrote to Suzanne Lacy to say I was interested in coming to the Feminist Studio Workshop. And – I love this story – she wrote me back: "I am too busy to write. [LAUGHS] Because I am organizing a feminist performance art conference." I thought, she's so busy doing feminist performances she can't even write to me? That's where I've got to be. So I convinced my parents to pay for me to go and join this program that cost around \$1,000 at the time. And that's how I came to the Woman's Building.

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W

Feminist Studio Workshop
the Woman's Building
743 South Grandview
Los Angeles
California 90057

April 15, 1975

Dear Sisters,

Anonymo
Mariana bforado
Alice Constance Austin
Harriet & Catherine Beecher
Aphra Behn
Emily & Charlotte Bronte
Elizabeth Barrett Browning
Mary Cassatt
Colette
Kate Chopin
Inez de la Cruz
Emheduanna
Artemisa Gentileschi
Charlotte Perkins Gilman
Eileen Gray
Sor Juana
Frieda Kahlo
Angelica Kauffmann
Marjery Kempe
Gabriela Mistral
Charlotte Perriand
Sappho
Sojourner Truth
Virginia Woolfe

If you could speak with these women
if there had not been years of silence and isolation,
if women had not been confined within the patriarchal house,
if women had had public voices,
if women had been educated
if we had had access to each other
...how would our lives be different?

We are writing to you because we have created an
educational program for women appropriate to our contemporary
experience and which breaks the traditional and continuing
isolation and silence imposed on women. The
Feminist Studio Workshop, housed in the Woman's Building,
provides a community in which women artists, designers,
writers, performers and educators can discover their
own voices, images and directions through the perspective
of woman's history and culture.

We ask you to look at these materials carefully and to
respond immediately. The Feminist Studio Workshop
has expanded its programs to focus on feminist education
and incorporate verbal communication - woman's words.
In order to strengthen our public voice we have enlarged
our printing and graphics facility. The Feminist Studio
Workshop begins October 15, 1975. Tuition is \$1,200.
If you register by July 15, sending us your \$100 deposit,
your tuition will be \$1,000.

Join us in the creation of the community of learned women
Virginia Woolfe believed was possible. Not the daughters
of educated men but the educated women themselves
controlling their private and professional lives according
to their values, sensibility and womanity.

In Sisterhood,

Helen Alm
Sheila Levrant de Bretteville
Ruth Iskin
Suzanne Lacey
Deena Metzger
Arlene Raven

Letter inviting participation in the Feminist Studio Workshop, 1975.

Terry Wolverton

I came in 1976. I became interested in feminism when I was in high school and the first issue of *Ms.* magazine came out, in 1972.

I first attended a theater program at the University of Detroit, a Jesuit university – a place where I tried to organize for abortion rights and got spat on. And then I studied theater at the University of Toronto, where they had a women's studies program and a pretty organized feminist community.

Then, in the summer of 1975, I went to Sagaris, an independent institute for the study of feminist political theory in Vermont. Women from all over the country attended and the teachers included people like Mary Daly, Charlotte Bunch, and Rita Mae Brown. It was mind-blowing.

One of the women I met there was from a traveling feminist theater company, and that seemed right in line with my interests. After that I transferred to Thomas Jefferson College in western Michigan, an experimental college where you create your own degree. It doesn't exist any longer, but I started a feminist theater company there.

But what I found was that in all of these places the arts community was pretty unsupportive of my feminism, and certainly my lesbianism. And the women's community treated the arts as fluff. A woman actually said to me: "when the revolution comes, you will only be fit to entertain the troops."

As someone for whom feminism, lesbianism, and creative life were really important, I thought, what am I going to do? Where am I going go where I can really be all of myself? And in that amazing way that the universe gives you the answer when you ask the question, I picked up a copy of *The New Woman's Survival Sourcebook*, which was put together by Susan Rennie and Kirsten Grimstad, and there I read about the Woman's Building. That led me to Judy Chicago's book, *Through the Flower*, and I just thought, "I'm going there."

I had never imagined I would end up in California. I'd never been there. I was waitressing and saved my tip money to buy a plane ticket, and landed on the doorstep of the Woman's Building. I was twenty-two years old, I was very stupid [LAUGHS], and people were incredibly kind to me in taking me in. Cheryl Swannack introduced me to the lesbian community in Los Angeles, and to many, many people. That's how I got here.



The New Woman's Survival Catalog for sale at Sisterhood Bookstore in the Woman's Building, the precursor to *The New Woman's Survival Sourcebook*.

Sue Maberry

I came to the Woman's Building in 1977. My journey was that I was in college coming to terms with the fact that I was a lesbian, and that was a really hard thing. My parents thought that was the worst thing in the world – and I was living at home.

I wasn't happy in school. I'd dropped out for a few years, moved out, got a job, and worked. And then I decided I wasn't going to get anywhere without a degree, so I went back to school. I attended Pitzer, and because I didn't need to take a lot of general education classes, I decided I would just take art and women's studies. And, you know, with everything in the news at that particular time, I was so pissed off.

Every day, I would think, "How come these younger women are not pissed off? Look at what we're learning!" Finally, same as Terry Wolverton, I found *The New Woman's Survival Sourcebook*. I read about the Woman's Building, and I

thought, "Wow. I have to go visit." I called up and Cheri Gaulke was the first person I talked to.

She was in charge of recruitment, and she - [LAUGHS] - she said, "Come any Thursday night," so of course the very next Thursday night I went, and nobody was there.

The building was all locked up. I called up and said, "What happened?" And she said, "Oh. We went somewhere else, but come again." And you know, I did. I went to a few openings and the whole thing was so exciting to me I left school again and went to the Woman's Building. I was willing to do anything. I didn't really have an identity as an artist. I just wanted to be a part of this kind of community. So, I came and did the Feminist Studio Workshop. Later I finished school at Pitzer, but, at that point, I just wanted to be at the Woman's Building.

CC

Amazing, thank you. Tell me more about the earlier encounters you were having. How long did it take to find a place within the Woman's Building?

CG

The heart of the Woman's Building was the Feminist Studio Workshop, so we all came as students and we kind of ran the building. There were other feminist organizations in the building. In the early days, 1973 to 1975, the Woman's Building was in a different location, near MacArthur Park. There were many organizations operating within it, and it was successful that way, but we had to move in 1975.



First location on South Grandview Avenue.

By the time we all came to the Woman's Building it was in its second location, the red brick building on North Spring Street. That was a part of this city called No Man's Land by the gangs because it was no one's gang territory. It was dead around there and we were one of the very first arts organizations downtown. Because of the neighborhood, many organizations that rented out space in the first Woman's Building location were not able to sustain themselves, like Sisterhood Bookstore and some of the independent galleries and businesses. That left the performance space, gallery space, and the Feminist Studio Workshop.

TW

And the graphics center.

CG

And the Women's Graphic Center. But the graphics center wasn't a commercial business yet. It began as part of the Woman's Building educational programs because Sheila de Bretteville was very passionate about the idea of giving

women access to this democratizing art form, ensuring art wasn't just precious objects. It could be made in multiples and you could put it in public places. There are many philosophical reasons why we had a printing press.

We had a community of fifty women who had come from all over the United States and from other countries. We had amazing teachers: Arlene Raven, Ruth Iskin, Sheila de Bretteville, Deena Metzger, Suzanne Lacy. It was a powerful community and our teachers were connected in the art world. There I was, at age twenty-one, going to art openings and seeing all of the artists of the day, like Chris Burden and Paul McCarthy. Because of our community, LA never felt like a big scary place to me.



Women's Graphic Center in the 1980s.

TW

I'm not going to romanticize. [LAUGHS] One of the things I learned over time is oppression doesn't breed healthy people —and I'm speaking primarily about

myself. I came to the Woman's Building with a lot of wounds. Some I knew about, some I didn't. I had built up a lot of defenses around those things, and I had a really hard time connecting with community for a long time. I liked people here and there, but I had brought my sense of alienation with me. A couple things helped to shift that. One had to do with the fact that Arlene Raven started the Lesbian Art Project, and that became an umbrella I felt I could stand under, happily. And she was more than willing to share responsibility for carrying out that project.

The second thing, and one of the great things about the building, was if ever you had an idea to do something, it was like, "Great, go do it!" Nobody was going to do it for you. That sense of involvement and responsibility helped, slowly, to get me over some of my shit about the community.

SM

I'll say a couple of things. I remember Terry Wolverton was very welcoming to me. She would have me come over for tea once a week, and we would just chat about things - do you remember that?

TW

Yeah, I do.

SM

I became involved, not so much out of a drive to make art, but a readiness to participate. If there was a project, like the Oral Herstory of Lesbianism, or if the Waitresses or the Feminist Art Workers were doing performances, I would volunteer to be part of it. You could always volunteer to be part of something. It was a long time before I took on any projects of my own, but that was fun and an easy way to be a part of things.



All City Waitress Marching Band in the Pasadena Doo Dah Parade by the Waitresses performance group, 1979.

CC

What were some other avenues for involvement in the Woman's Building when it was on Spring Street?

CG

There was the Feminist Studio Workshop, where we chose which classes to take. I worked with Sheila de Bretteville and learned graphic design from her. Suzanne Lacy was also teaching there and doing some big performance projects, like *In Mourning and In Rage*, so I volunteered to be in that. There were many opportunities to participate. I also started working at the building, and that gave me another community to be a part of.

TW

I've already mentioned the Lesbian Art Project, and that was a multifaceted three-year project with education, work sharing, exhibitions, and

performances. This is also connected to Suzanne Lacy's *Incest Awareness Project*, another three-year, multifaceted project that involved both personal art work and public engagement. I would credit the *Incest Awareness Project* with being part of the effort to change the terminology from "incest victim" to "incest survivor," which is now the term used in psychology.

The Women Writers series was also hugely important at the Woman's Building, and included writers like Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Rita Mae Brown, Jill Johnston, Margaret Atwood, June Jordan, and Ntozake Shange, while at the same time promoting and featuring local writers.

There was also an extension program, so women could come and take a class in grant writing, for example, taught by Michele Kort.

SM

Remember the car repair class? [LAUGHS] Yeah.

CG

And there were performance art events. There was the occasional dance, like the *Dyke of Your Dreams Dance* or the *All Girl Prom*.

SM

There was a great interaction with the feminist political community as well.

TW

The concept of the Woman's Building was always that those things would be integrated, that the art wouldn't be in some tower but would go hand-in-hand with activism.

CC

Looking back at the materials in the Woman's Building archive – posters, billboards, public TV broadcasts – it's astoundingly animated. You used media in such interesting ways, and I wonder if you could say more about that and about being very public in the communication of the issues that were at stake?

SM

It was always part of Sheila de Bretteville's vision. She criticized the idea that media was about people with power broadcasting to everybody else, and felt like it was important, particularly for women, to learn the tools of public communication. In her case this began with graphics, but the idea expanded to video. We could speak back. We could put our own messages into the

broader culture. We did public service announcements through the LA Women's Video Center.

CG

Sheila de Bretteville did a poster series called *Private Conversations, Public Announcements*, which put the intimate tone of what you want to say to people into a public setting.

The reverse of that is the whole concept of the Woman's Building itself as a public center for women's culture, which was sort of our tagline. People would say, "Well, where are the *men's* buildings?" All of the other buildings are men's buildings. And this was a space run by women, for women, to really look at – what do women have to say? What do women have to make? How can we have a conversation about that?

I also love another idea we were introduced to, that art can be a context and a space in which the voices of others can be heard. I think that's a very important contribution of the Woman's Building. It's personified in Sheila's work with her "Pink" poster. As a famous graphic designer, Sheila was invited, along with other famous designers, to create a poster for a show about color. She chose the color pink, and instead of saying "here's what pink means to me," she created a grid and invited women artists to make squares about what pink meant to them. Then she pinned them up, photographed that, and that became her poster. It also references the history of quilts, in that women have historically taken the castoff bits of things and put them together to make something beautiful and functional.

Suzanne Lacy did that with time, in a way. I think of Suzanne's *Three Weeks in May*, which looked at rape statistics over the span of three weeks. She put a large map of Los Angeles on display in a shopping mall near City Hall. Every day people would look up rape statistics and stamp "rape" on the map, then around add nine other ghostly, lighter stamps to represent the nine out of ten rapes going unreported. During *Three Weeks in May*, all these other women and groups were invited to come create pieces, performances, workshops, self-defense workshops, and guerilla actions on the nearby sidewalks. And that was called a performance, you know. Performance art became something multi-faceted, something through which many things could happen. I think those are really important pieces that personify something that the Woman's Building put forth into the art world, and the world.



Three Weeks in May, 1977.

CC

It sounds like an astounding act of collaboration and organization. It also seems that a large part of the skill set you were all developing was how to organize things – not just for yourselves, but for a perceived audience much broader than that, who might be coming to the Woman's Building for myriad reasons or encountering it in different spaces.

CG

I want to talk about the use of media, too. The other thing that Suzanne did, in collaboration with Leslie Labowitz-Starus and Bia Lowe – there were many women involved in these pieces – was begin to use the media as a vehicle to send out a message. Suzanne organized a piece called *In Mourning and In Rage*, which many of us volunteered to work on. Inherent to *In Mourning and In Rage* was a media critique. The Hillside Strangler was murdering women, but media presentation of this was so objectifying of the women, and sensationalizing. It was so scary and creepy, and we wanted to create a piece that would send a different message – one about women being empowered and fighting back.

The performance was staged at City Hall. We drove up in a hearse and stepped out of the car wearing long, black robes, then marched up the steps of City Hall, where reporters were waiting.

TW

There was a big banner on display, so that no matter from what angle the media shot it, the message would be "in memory of our sisters, women fight back." It received huge media coverage. It was everywhere. It resulted in getting crisis phone numbers put in phone books and things like that.



In Mourning and In Rage, 1977.

SM

We did a lot of consciousness-raising too. Nobody has really mentioned that.

CC

Let's talk about that.

SM

Consciousness-raising creates a space for a group of people to talk about a certain subject – love, money, power. You go person by person, around a circle, and everyone has equal time and must speak.

At the Woman's Building it was a way in which many issues would come up and be brought to the forefront.

CG

And it was agonizing. We hated it, it was horrible, but our teachers at the Feminist Studio Workshop made us do it. These sessions were initially organized around four topics – money, power, sex, work.

It was agonizing to have to talk for five minutes. We couldn't say, "Ah, skip me, I've got nothing to say." We were not allowed. Everybody had to sit there and, one by one, talk about our experiences, share things we'd never told anybody. And then listen to the other women in the group. It really was a discipline. That's where the personal became political, though, because in sharing our experiences as women, we were like, "You were raped? I was raped." We started to connect dots that we as women had never really been able to connect before.

CC

Tell me about the major challenges you faced in keeping the Woman's Building going for decades?

CG

There were different challenges. There were challenges of community, which Terry talked about a little bit. Things about lesbian and straight women, white women and women of color, and other baseline issues. Finances were also challenging. The 1970s were awesome because you didn't need a lot of money, and there was government funding, like National Endowment for the Arts grants. Then in the '80s, the Reagan era, it got really hard. All that money dried up and we had to create commercial businesses to support the Woman's Building. Toward the end, I always felt like we were selling pieces of our body. It was like, "Have my arm, have my neck." We went from having this beautiful, three-story building, full of our own programming, to dividing it up and renting it out as studios. We couldn't say to the artists who were renting our studios, "We like your work, we don't like your work." And artists that rented from us didn't care about the building. There was no solidarity with what we were doing, and it felt icky. We did the best we could with it, but we had to consolidate all of our programs on the first floor. It was a harder time.

TW

I want to mention, too, we had many issues with racism, and accusations about racism and who was included and who wasn't. We had a bunch of issues about women with children not feeling welcome. The gay-straight issue was a big deal.

CC

How did these things manifest themselves?

TW

I have to take things one at a time. There was a pretty good dialogue between heterosexual women and lesbians within the Woman's Building. Which is not to say that people didn't get their feelings hurt, but there seemed to be a context in which it was up for discussion. The issue with racism was more difficult. We had a more troubling time with it, partly because the Woman's Building was initially the vision of three white women and whatever we did after that was kind of remedial.

We did make efforts. Women of color were involved in the Woman's Building. Other Women of color chose not to be involved with the Woman's Building and to criticize us instead. I worked with some other women on an anti-racism initiative at the Woman's Building that started with consciousness-raising, then audited all of our programs and operations and developed strategies for improvement. But it's still the area in which – when I think about the Women's Building today, and there's so much to be proud of – we could have done more. We could have known more. We could have been more. And that's part of the legacy that we deal with.

SM

Well, it would be a totally different place if it existed or started today. It's a different time. We needed to learn those things.

CG

Can we call on Linda Vallejo to speak to this?

Linda Vallejo

When the Woman's Building was growing and finding itself, other programs throughout Los Angeles were growing, too. We need to remember that many parts of the world were growing at the same rate and at the same time, and a lot of people just didn't have energy to jump across the river all the time, you know. It was the '70s. All of a sudden, there were nonprofits everywhere. The Latino community was doing the same thing. It was trying to find its way in the art world as well, to find its culture. And the African-American community in Compton was doing the same thing. People were staying as close to the fires of their comfort zones as they could possibly get. Kind of like, "Let's stay close together because it's rough out there."

I don't want to be hard on the women's movement. I saw them working diligently to bring together groups of people who cared about social issues and about sharing ideas.

CC

Thank you so much. For the final part of our time together I wanted to talk about archiving, and why 1991 was the time to close the physical building and

move into the phase of this deeply admirable and intense and meticulous archiving of the Women's Building.

SM

I'll speak to the closing. Because I see that differently now, looking back. In 1991, I thought economics defeated us. I was in deep grief about the closing of the building. But, as I've gained perspective, I really think that the Woman's Building was conceived of with a model that was very appropriate to the arts community of the early 1970s, when there were not opportunities for women. It was desolate. I see now that the Woman's Building really succeeded, because by 1991 there were women in every gallery and teaching in all the art history and visual arts programs.

Now, I don't mean to say that there was or is equality. Or that we got everything we wanted. But we made things demonstrably better. So the model of, "Let's have a separate building just to show women artists," was something that women artists weren't as hungry for in the '90s. And if there had been money and support, maybe we could have evolved the vision, as it had already evolved with the times from the early '70s to the '80s.

I don't feel like, "Oh, it's a failure that the building closed!" We succeeded. We fulfilled our mission in so many ways. Now I feel like every one of us who was at the Woman's Building has carried on that work and those processes into everything we've done subsequently: in our art work, in our teaching, in our organizing. I have the image of a seed pod. The flower released its seeds and now they are everywhere.

Now this history is being looked at again – that's why the archiving projects are so important. When the Woman's Building closed we were eager to make sure things went to institutional archives. The Smithsonian Archives of American Art took all of the papers. They didn't want the Woman's Building Slide Library – seven thousand slides – and by that time I had my library degree and was working at Otis, so I agreed to take them there. Later on, the Getty Institute helped us digitize and create an online resource for 1,500 of the slides. People would bring me their posters and flyers, so the collection began to grow at Otis.

Then, in 2011, we curated a show as part of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time initiative, which allowed us to go back into the archives and led to many more people bringing me things for the Otis collection. And then, finally, as I started to think about retiring, I said, "You know, this can't stay at Otis. It's just not the right place." So, over the past few years, I've been working with the Getty to take these collections.

Last fall we received an offer from Metabolic Studio to help us with the archives, which is really great. Anne Gauldin and I have been spending a few hours every Saturday at the archiving space at Metabolic, working with Laurelin Kruse, the studio's research assistant, to label the slides. Between

all of these institutions, there is now a rich archive, and we've been able to put all these resources together on a new website, thanks to funding from Metabolic.

TW

When Metabolic Studio came to us and said, "We want to give you money for archiving," we were of course incredibly grateful. This was an opportunity not just to look backward, but also to look forward and to extend our legacy to new generations of women artists. So we developed a fellowship program and we have been able to give fellowships to fifteen emerging women artists. Their charge is to, in some way, intersect with the history of the Women's Building, the legacy of the Women's Building, or the archives of the Building, and create new works.



Woman's Building archive room at Metabolic Studio.

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