

L2002.04
Muriel Fisher
Collection, 1935-2001

FINDING AID AUTHOR

Gabrielle Garcia

ACQUISITION INFORMATION

Muriel Fisher donated these materials to Lambda Archives of San Diego in 2002.

PROCESSING INFORMATION

This collection was processed by Gabrielle Garcia as part of the 2020 CSL Project. This project was guided by an overarching anti-racist framework that informs archival practice in all aspects at Lambda Archives. Therefore, along with processing the collections specified in the original narrative, we intentionally prioritize the collections of BIPOC and Transgender members of the community to preserve and disseminate their narratives, which have been historically ignored and suppressed in archives across the U.S.

This framework promotes transparency and accountability in our responsibility to those in the LGBTQ+ community that have been historically underrepresented, misrepresented and/or trivialized in archives. Our goals are to (a) gain or rebuild trust with BIPOC members of the community; (b) more fully reflect the community's diversity; (c) outwardly recognize the contributions that BIPOC have made which have enabled the community, as a whole, to flourish; and (d) improve the discoverability of these under-acknowledged histories to increase their engagement for varying purposes within the community and for research and public knowledge.

EXTENT

Number of containers: 2

Linear feet of shelf space: 1.25

ABSTRACT

BIOGRAPHY OR HISTORY

Muriel Fisher - 85 years young, born April 11, 1919, most recently living in Oceanside, California passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 26, 2005. She was a talented crafts person, fiber artist, poet and Renaissance Woman who participated in many, different organizations over the years. Muriel Fisher's life was a lot like her artwork -

eclectic and full of spunk - says her friend Kithie Gateley. Her special artistic medium was collecting 'found junk' recycling it and creating beautifully crafted art pieces out of bits of fabric, beads, yarn, feathers, buttons, and objects from nature. A few years ago, Muriel created a series of dolls to honor notable women in our herstory. Many of these dolls now reside at the Women's History Museum in San Diego. People would ask Muriel if she made a living with her artwork, and she would always answer them by saying, "I don't make a living, I make a life." She was part of founding the 'Many Hands' artist cooperative still operating today in San Diego over 25 years later.

She helped found and volunteer for a number of Lesbian groups over the past 25 years including San Diego Lesbian Organization (SDLO), San Diego Jewish Lesbian Chavarah, Slightly Older Lesbians (SOL), Shirrtails Collective Coffee Houses - a monthly open-mic night (later to become Shirrtails Dances) as well as performed and created stage sets for the (BLT) Beautiful Lesbian Thespians theatre group. She played the King in all women production of 'Cinderella' when she was in her sixties and even into her eighties was artistically and politically active in community events, participating in an art show a week before her passing.

A few years ago, Muriel honored the San Diego LGBTQI community by participating as the Grand Marshal of the San Diego Pride Parade. She leaves behind a large army of friends and lovers - people she met at Jewish get-togethers, environmental group activities, through her lesbian artist and theater groups, at grief counseling meetings which she began attending after her son Gerald Fisher died in the terrorist attack at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, and at artisan craft fairs where she would sell her work. Her daughter, Elsa Fisher, a Long Beach resident, said she was very proud of her mother. "She was one of the most inspirational characters ever," she said. "Everybody used to say to her, 'I want to grow up and be you.'"

She was born in N.Y. and lived in many places during her lifetime including different areas of California and Mexico. She is survived by her daughter, Elsa Sue Fisher, her brother, Jay Schwartz, 3 grandchildren and one great granddaughter. She was preceded in death by her son, Gerald Paul Fisher who perished at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

Services with burial were held March 1, 2005, at Mount Sinai Mortuary in Los Angeles. A Celebration of Life Ceremony was created in honor of Muriel complete with Music, Art, refreshments, ritual, dancing and drumming on Sunday, March 6, 2005, at the Rolling Thunder Studios in the Clairemont Mesa area of San Diego. Her work may be viewed at Muriel Fisher.com along with a Tributes webpage where those who love her may share their memories of Muriel.

Submitted by Wendy Sue Biegeleisen, Kithie Gateley and Jayne Marx

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/106543451/muriel-fisher>

COLLECTION SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection contains materials pertaining to the creative pursuits of Muriel Fisher (theater, visual arts, creative writing), the organizations she participated in (Beautiful Lesbian Thespians, Labrys Productions, Slightly Older Lesbians, Old Lesbians Organizing for Change, the Califia Community, Yachad, Binot Vashti, Women Synergy, Shirtails, The Center, and Many Hands Creative Cooperative), conferences she attended (Southern Conference of California Handweavers, West Coast Celebration, NOW National Lesbian Rights Conference, National Lesbian Conference, Regional Lesbian Health Conference), and other materials pertaining to her personal life. These materials include event programs, flyers, articles, clippings, newsletters, conference documents, notes, personal writing, scripts, magazines, sheet music, postcards, applications, t-shirts, and contact lists.

ARRANGEMENT

This collection consists of 2 boxes divided into 6 series:

- Series I: Theater [Box 1]
- Series II: Organizations [Box 1-2]
- Series III: Conferences [Box 2]
- Series IV: Writings and Clippings [Box 2]
- Series V: Scripts and Publications [Box 2]
- Series VI: Miscellany

SEPARATED MATERIAL

In this field, list any materials that have been removed from the collection and transferred to another collection, department (e.g., the library), or institution.

1. T-shirts: [T371-T372, box 17-box 18]
 - a. Lesbian Solidarity San Diego '83 t-shirt
 - b. Labrys Productions: A Lesbian Repertory Company t-shirt

SUBJECTS

Muriel Fisher, Slightly Older Lesbians (SOL), San Diego Pride, San Diego Lesbian Organization, Labrys Productions, Beautiful Lesbian Thespians (BLT), Lesbian Solidarity, Women Synergy, National Organization for Women (NOW), West Coast Old Lesbian Conference, Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC), Gay Academic Union, Lesbians, Organizations - lesbian, Women's Movement, feminism, Organizations - political, organizations - social, theater, visual art, Jews, Judaism, Califia Community, Yachad (Jewish), Organizations - religious, Binoy Vashti (Jewish Lesbians)

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS

This collection is open and available for research use. Copyright restrictions apply.

PREFERRED CITATION

The suggested citation for the collection is:

[Item Description]
Muriel Fisher Collection, 1935-2001
Lambda Archives of San Diego
San Diego, California

RELATED MATERIAL

L1997.09, L2013.15

LOCATION NOTE

C.10.2.3

LANGUAGES

English

CONTAINER LIST

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)	
1	1	The Beautiful Lesbian Thespians (BLT) Productions 1988-1990	1988-1990	
1	2	Labrys Productions 1991-1993	1991-1993	
1	3	Slightly Older Lesbians (SOL) 1988-1997	1988-1997	
1	4	Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC) 1991-1998	1991-1998	
1	5	Califia Community		
1	6	Jewish LGBT Organizations 1982-1991	1982-1991	
2	1	Other Organizations 1988-1996	1988-1996	
2	2	13th Southern Conference of California Handweavers 1981	1981	
2	3	West Coast Celebration 1986-1987	1986-1987	
2	4	NOW National Lesbian Rights Conference 1988	1988	
2	5	National Lesbian Conference 1991	1991	

2	6	Regional Lesbian Health Conference 1994	1994	
2	7	OLOC Summer Gathering 1996-1999	1996-1999	
2	8	Correspondence 1981-1992	1981-1992	
2	9	Creative Writing and Handwritten Notes 1978-2001	1978-2001	
2	10	Newspapers/Clippings 1974-1996	1974-1996	
2	11	Scripts 1957-1991	1957-1991	
2	12	Scripts 1991-1993	1991-1993	
2	13	Scripts		
2	14	Scripts		
2	15	Scripts		
2	16	Scripts		
2	17	Scripts		
2	18	Publications 1973-1985	1973-1985	
2	19	Publications 1986-1994	1986-1994	
2	20	Publications 1994-1999	1994-1999	
2	21	Miscellany 1935-1998	1935-1998	
2	22	Miscellany 1999-2000	1999-2000	