

Bernard Kester Collection (1962-2021)

Biographical Note

Bernard Kester was an American ceramics and fiber artist, professor, author, and exhibition designer. He graduated from UCLA in 1955 with his MA in ceramics. He stayed at UCLA to teach ceramics, weaving, and design until 1993, served as head of the art department from 1972 to 1975, and was acting dean of the College of Fine Arts for the last four years of his time at UCLA.

In addition to being an artist and teacher, Kester was a prolific exhibition designer. His exhibition “Deliberate Entanglements” at UCLA’s Wight Gallery is considered a groundbreaking show in the field of contemporary fiber art. Outside of his work at LACMA, Kester also served as a guest curator at the Craft and Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and the Minnesota Museum of Art in St. Paul.

Kester received a number of awards over the course of his career. He was a Fellow of the American Craft Council and Trustee Emeritus of the Museum of Arts and Design. In addition, he served on the Board of Trustees of the Craft and Folk Art Museum and the Board of Directors of the UCLA Arts Council, and was the recipient of the International Association of Designers award in textiles.

Scope and Content

The collection contains diplomas, awards, exhibition materials, catalogs, publicity materials, correspondence, photos, and slides. Alongside the artist file materials are photos of exhibitions that Kester designed during his time as LACMA’s principal exhibition designer, photos of his ceramic pieces, and a collection of publications for which

he was a contributing writer. The publications are bound with citations and the nature of the contributions on the front.

Summary Information

Title: Bernard Kester Collection

Dates: 1962-2021

Extent: 6 boxes (1.5 linear feet)

Arrangement

Series 1: Artist File

Box 1 Folder 1: Awards

Box 1 Folder 2: Biography

Box 1 Folder 3: Correspondence

Box 1 Folder 4: Photos

Box 1 Folder 5: Publications

Box 1 Folder 6: Slides

Box 1 Folder 7: Slides, Exhibition Design

Box 1 Folder 8: Slides, Student's Work

Series 2: Photos

Box 2: Exhibition Design

Box 3: Exhibition Design

Box 4: Exhibition Design

Box 5: Ceramic Work

Series 3: Collected Publications

Box 5: Publications

Box 6: Publications