

Collection title: Christy Amschler Collection

Collection ID: AMSC

Size: 6.17 linear feet

Date: 1988-2017

Abstract:

Christy Amschler (1970-2017) was a lesbian, a feminist, dedicated artist, astrologer, and photographer. She received formal training in painting and drawing, before going on to continue her education in women's spirituality, religion, and philosophy. These materials include many of her drawings, photography, 35mm photo slides of her finished paintings, and papers from her academic pursuits of painting and spirituality; as well as personal photographs of her family and friends, journals, and notes.

Accession information:

This collection was donated to the Mazer Archives in 2018 by Giovanna S. Capone who Christy knew from the Bay Area Sicilian Italian Lesbian (BASIL) organization.

Provenance:

Materials in the collection were accumulated by Christy Amschler through her academic and artistic work.

Restrictions:

The collection is open to researchers. There are no restrictions on the collection.

Copyright:

Property rights to the physical objects belong to the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives. All other rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or heir for permission to publish where the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives do not hold the copyright.

Biographical sketch:

Christy Amschler was born on March 20, 1970 the only child of Jim and Judy Amschler. She began drawing at age 14. Christy continued to pursue drawing, as well as painting and photography professionally. Her education in this field began at the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI in 1987; then Syracuse University's six-week art history course in France and the Netherlands in 1990; the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University, Boston, MA in 1992; the Graduate School of Figurative Art at the New York Academy of Art, New York, NY from 1992 to 1993; the Bougie Studio, Minneapolis, MN from 1993 to 1996; and Frank Covino Workshop in 1999. Amschler's work was shown in galleries across Boston, New

York, and Connecticut, and resides in private collections in Connecticut, London, Bermuda, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C. She was a member of the Women's Caucus for Art, the American Society of Classical Realism, and the Hudson Valley Art Association.¹ Her studios were in Belmont, MA, St. Louis Park, MN, and eventually Los Angeles, CA.

Amschler described the art she created as about a, "wholeness and sacredness," inspired by, "a concern for the environment, animals, the speed and direction of technological growth, women's spirituality, feminism, and nature."² Amschler was deeply invested in alternative forms of healing, women's spirituality, and astrology. In 2000 she attended the California Institute of Integral Studies, a college in San Francisco dedicated to multiple ways of knowing, spirituality, and service to communities that expands traditional degree programs. It was there that Christy received her Master's in Women's Spirituality, Religion, and Philosophy.

She then opened her own business in Los Angeles, GoddessStar Astrology and GoddessStar Studios, where she designed jewelry, worked as a Vedic astrologer, and created paintings based on her client's horoscope charts.³

Christy was a feminist lesbian who turned to alternative medicine and homeopathic methods of healing after facing challenges in the healthcare system. In the later years of her life she was diagnosed with uterine cancer. This cancer spread, and eventually led to her death on August 21, 2017.

Christy had a partner named Laura Strong who appears in many photos in this collection. They lived together in St. Louis Park, MN, though it is uncertain how long they were together.

Scope and content:

Christy Amschler's personal papers include her journals, notes on her health, affirmations, gratitudes, as well as clippings of art and articles that stemmed from her life devoted to art, astrology, spirituality, and feminism. This also includes a large amount of personal photographs from time spent with family, friends, and her partner.

Christy's academic papers consist of extensive class notes from her college coursework, as well as notes from professional development meetings geared towards artists and creative business owners. This series also covers academic correspondence from programs and grants she applied to, her academic writing ranging from high school to higher education, and her CV and work samples.

Reference books and media are materials that influenced Christy's life and art, such as books, clippings, and photos of other art.

Christy's artwork consists of photography prints, drawings, sketchbooks, photos, and 35mm

¹ "Christy Amschler's curriculum vitae," [2000]. The Christy Amschler Collection. June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives.

² "Christy Amschler's curriculum vitae," [2000].

³ Capone, Giovanna. "Christy Amschler, 1970-2017 [Obituary]," 2017. The Christy Amschler Collection. June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives.

slides of Christy's paintings and reference artwork.

Content Warning: Among the reference materials there is a VHS tape depicting cultural appropriation of indigenous beliefs that may be harmful and racist in nature. The processing archivists chose to include this content as it marks the social context of appropriation in fields of wellness and holistic medicine, which impacted Christy Amschler's life and work as a white woman. There is a second content warning in the box contents list next to the item. The Mazer welcomes an ongoing dialog with our community about generative ways to process and describe materials that contain or reflect systemic violence. We encourage you to contact the Mazer if other harmful content is found in this collection and/or to further this dialog. You can reach us at contact@mazerlesbianarchives.org.

Processing notes:

This collection was processed in 2023 by Laura Dintzis under a California State Grant.

Dates recorded by Christy on her materials occasionally appear in month, year, day format written like this: 5o86o25o. Meaning May 25, 1986.

Arrangement:

Series I: Personal Papers

Series II: Academic Papers

Series III: Reference Books and Media

Series IV: Artwork

Box level contents list:

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Box 1

Series I: Personal Papers

Scope and content: Personal letters, clippings, personal notebooks on astrology, gratitudes, the status of her health. Also includes Christy's obituary.

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Box 1, Folder 1 Personal correspondence

Box 1, Folder 2 Obituaries

Box 1, Folder 3 Personal notes [3 folders]

Box 1, Folder 4	Health notes
Box 1, Folder 5	Clippings and stickers
Box 1, Folder 6	Photo ID and address tag
Box 1, Folder 7	Notebooks [3 folders]
Box 1, Folder 8	Personal photos

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Box 2

Series I: Personal Papers

Scope and content: Personal photos from vacations and time with family and friends.

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Box 3

Series II: Academic Papers

Scope and content: Academic materials from high school through Christy's Master's program in Women's spirituality, as well as professional development materials, grant applications, and her CV.

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Box 3, Folder 1	Certificates of Merit
Box 3, Folder 2	Letters of Recommendation
Box 3, Folder 3	Academic Correspondence
Box 3, Folder 4	Personal Essays - AP English and Middle School
Box 3, Folder 5	Artist Business Skills Notes
Box 3, Folder 6	Artist Business Focus Group Notes
Box 3, Folder 7	Academic Transcripts
Box 3, Folder 8	Women's Spirituality Syllabi
Box 3, Folder 9	Women's Spirituality Essays

Box 3, Folder 10	Course Certificates [2 folders]
Box 3, Folder 11	Writings [3 folders]
Box 3, Folder 12	Applications
Box 3, Folder 13	CV and Work Samples
Box 3, Folder 14	Class Notes - Gender and Painting
Box 3, Folder 15	Class Notes - History of Composition
Box 3, Folder 16	Class Notes - Perspective [2 folders]
Box 3, Folder 17	Class Notes - Cast Drawing
Box 3, Folder 18	Class Notes - Painting
Box 3, Folder 19	Class Notes - Elinor Gadon Lecture
Box 3, Folder 20	Class Notes - Miscellaneous [3 folders]

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Box 4

Series III: Reference Books and Media

Scope and content: Books on anatomy, color theory, and italian torture instruments from the Museum of Criminology, San Gimignano. One VHS featuring a new age author.

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Box 4, Folder 1	Book - Interaction of Color by Josef Albers
Box 4, Folder 2	Book - Tortura Inquisizione Pena di Morte by Aldo Migliorini
Box 4, Folder 3	Book - Artistic Anatomy by Richer and Hale
Box 4, Folder 4	VHS - Wisdom Woman of the 90's, Brooke "Medicine Eagle" Edwards

Content Warning: This item depicts cultural appropriation of indigenous beliefs that may be harmful and racist in nature. Refer to the Content Warning at the beginning of this finding aid for more information.

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Box 5

Series IV: Artwork

Scope and content: Bound sketchbooks, a hue chart for color reference.

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Box 5, Folder 1 Sketchbooks [5 folders]

Box 5, Folder 2 Hue Chart

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Box 6

Series I: Personal Papers

Series IV: Artwork

Scope and content: Objects from Christy's personal life and sketchbooks.

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Box 6, Folder 1 Al-anon token

Box 6, Folder 2 Button

Box 6, Folder 3 Framed photo of Christy and Laura Strong

Box 6, Folder 4 Art show ribbon

Box 6, Folder 5 Framed photo of Judy, Jim, and Christy

Box 6, Folder 6 Sketchbooks [4 folders]

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Box 7

Series IV: Artwork

Scope and content: A bound sketchbook, loose drawings in pencil and charcoal, preliminary paintings in watercolor and acrylic paint, matted photography.

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Box 7, Folder 1 Matted photography

Box 7, Folder 2 Pencil drawings

Box 7, Folder 3	Paintings
Box 7, Folder 4	Sketchbook
Box 7, Folder 5	Photography

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Box 8

Series IV: Artwork

Scope and content: Prints of Christy's artistic photography, photos of Christy's paintings.

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Box 9

Series IV: Artwork

Scope and content: 35mm slides, film negatives, and contact sheets of Christy's artwork.

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Box 10

Series IV: Artwork

Scope and content: 35mm slides of Christy's artwork.