

# **Giorno Poetry Systems**

## **222 BOWERY, NYC 10012**

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### **JOHN GIORNO COLLECTION FINDING AID (ABRIDGED)**

**John Giorno Collection**, c. late 1800s–2016 (bulk 1963–2015)  
Processed by Marcia Bassett and Anastasia Clarke, March 2013–May 2015  
Additional Materials Accessioned by Anastasia Clarke 2015–2016

**Creator:** John Giorno

**Title:** John Giorno Collection

**Dates:** c. late 1800s–2016

**Bulk Dates:** 1963–2016

**Extent:** **The core collection** (processing completed in May 2015) consists of 288.24 linear feet in 51 record storage boxes, 21 portfolios, 24 newsprint boxes, 21 manuscript boxes, 16 odd-sized boxes, 11 oversized print boxes, 5 print boxes, and 4 document storage boxes.

**Addenda** consist of 23.68 linear feet, added June 2015–August 2016.

**Duplicate materials** (separated) constitute an additional 68.47 linear feet.

**All materials** fit tightly into a single 12' x 15' storage space.

**Languages:** English, French, Italian, German, Spanish

**Abstract:** John Giorno collected the materials from his adolescence through 2015. The collection contains materials documenting John Giorno's performances and public appearances, written work and visual art, and personal activities. Material types include books, periodicals, photographic materials, promotional materials, audiovisual materials, artwork, mechanicals, T-shirts, and other ephemera. Books come in the forms of poetry monographs, poetry anthologies, and exhibition catalogs. Periodicals appear as small press magazines and catalogs,

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regional newspapers, and popular magazines. Photographic materials include black and white and color prints, contact sheets, slides, transparencies, negatives, and digital images depicting Giorno's performances, artwork, travels, and personal life with friends and family. Promotional materials include posters, flyers, press releases, and press kits related to Giorno's performances, exhibitions, and other public appearances (including work with the John Giorno Band in 1984–1987). Audiovisual materials include LPs, CDs, CD-Rs, audiocassettes, videocassettes, DVDs, and DVD-Rs. Artwork includes John Giorno's earliest silkscreen and lithograph prints from 1968–1974; and digital prints, and etchings produced with editions in 2004 and 2005. Mechanicals include the original mock-ups and layouts for a wide range of items, including artwork for all of the Giorno Poetry Systems releases and catalogs; the 1968–1974 silkscreen prints; and the Robert Rauschenberg and Les Levine pieces used on the cover and frontispiece of *Poems* (Giorno's 1967 monograph published by Mother Press). T-shirts include three unique T-shirts designed and printed by Giorno Poetry Systems between 1970–1972; and shirts of John Giorno's iconic "poem prints" produced in tandem with exhibitions from the 1990s–present day. Ephemera include handbills, invitations, itineraries, travel papers, postcards, handwritten notes, logistical correspondence, printed e-mails, and more. The collection was digitized 2013–2015. The bulk of the collection has been scanned or photographed, and totals over 15,500 images.

### Acquisition:

The collection was brought from a storage facility in New Hyde Park, NY to 39 Great Jones Street, New York, NY (Studio Rondinone) in 2013–2015 to be processed for the purpose of Ugo Rondinone's *I ♥ JOHN GIORNO* exhibition of the archives at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.

An additional 10.17 linear feet of John's family photographs and childhood artwork was added to the collection in 2015 (Addenda A + B).

New materials in existing series are sometimes accessioned to the collection, with processing taking place at 222 Bowery.

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**Access and use:** Research in the archive is by appointment. High-resolution digital surrogates for most items are available from Giorno Poetry Systems. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. Requests for access to the archive should be directed to GPS at [archivist@giornopoetrysystems.org](mailto:archivist@giornopoetrysystems.org).

if access is granted, it is the responsibility of the researcher to identify and satisfy the holders of all copyrights.

**Cite As:** Courtesy of the Giorno Poetry Systems Archive, New York, NY

**Repository:** 222 Bowery, New York, NY, 10012  
ATTN: Director of Archives, Giorno Poetry Systems

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### SCOPE AND CONTENT

#### Series List

- I. Published Works (1952–2016)
  - I.A. Poems (1952–2015)
  - I.B. Publicity and Reviews (1957–2016)
  - I.C. Scrapbooks (1963–1971)
- II. Photographs (c. 1947–2013, bulk 1963–2013)
- III. Posters and Flyers (1965–2013)
  - III.A. Posters and Flyers (1969–2013)
  - III.B. Mechanicals and Art Work (1967–1991)
- IV. Giorno Poetry Systems (1967–2001)
  - IV.A. LPs, CDs, cassettes and videopaks (1967–2001)
  - IV.B. Mechanicals and Art Work (1973–1999)
- V. Dial-A-Poem (1968–1984)
- VI. Performances, Tours, Benefits, and Events (1992–2015)
- VII. T-Shirts and Textiles (1970–2016)
- VIII. Digital Media (1999–2005)
- IX. Consumer Product Poems (1968–2016)
- X. Poem Paintings and Poem Prints (1969–2000)
  - X.A. Poem Prints and Poem Paintings (1968–2005)
  - X.B. Exhibition Documentation (photographic materials) (1991–2000)
  - X.C. Exhibition Documentation (digital) (2005–2015)
- XI. Addendum A. Pratt Art Work (1947–1951)
- XII. Addendum B. Family and Ancestry (c. late 1800s–c. 1985)
- XIII. Addendum G. Correspondence (1963–1996)

#### Scope and Content Notes by Series

##### **Series I. Published Works (1952–2014)**

[75.55 linear feet in 30 record storage boxes, 24 oversized newsprint boxes, 6 odd-sized boxes, 5 manuscript boxes, 3 print boxes, 2 document boxes, and 1 portfolio.

Addenda: 2 record storage boxes constitute an additional 2.2 linear feet.]

**Series I. Published Works (1952–2016)** is made up of published materials and unpublished ephemera related to John Giorno's publications, performances, and activities.

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It is the largest, most comprehensive series in the archive. Giorno categorized and dated this body of work, grouping publications and materials into boxes by type (poem or publicity), and by year and/or decade. In keeping with this original arrangement schema, materials are divided into three sub-series: *Sub-series A. Poems (1956-2014)*, *Sub-series B. Publicity and Reviews (1956-2014)*, and *Sub-series C. Scrapbooks (1964-1971)*. The scrapbooks hold flyers, show announcements, programs, and published reviews that are often duplicated in both *Sub-series I.B* and *Sub-series III.A*.

*Sub-series B. Publicity and Reviews* constitutes the bulk of *Series I*, exclusively filling eighteen record storage boxes. *Sub-series A. Poems* exclusively fills ten boxes. Three print boxes and one manuscript box hold materials from *Sub-series C. Scrapbooks (1964-1971)*. The remainder of containers in the series mixes materials from the first two sub-series.

***Series I. Subseries A. Poems (1952–2015)*** is a collection of John Giorno's poems published in a myriad of publications ranging from notable underground and radical journals; literary and small press newspapers and magazines; monographs, anthologies and exhibition catalogs spanning from 1957 to present. Originally written in English, his works have been translated into several languages including French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Albanian, Serbian, Estonian, Polish, and Tibetan.

Giorno's earliest published poems were published in his high school's literary magazine, *Madisonian*, beginning in 1952; and his college's literary magazine, *The Columbia Review*, beginning in 1956. Befriending William Burroughs and Brion Gysin in the early 1960s marked a creative turning point for Giorno, encouraging him to take new approaches toward poetry that incorporated sound, performance, and cut-up appropriated text. He collaborated with Brion Gysin on *Subway Sound* in 1965, sparking Giorno's introduction to Bernard Heidsieck and the world of French *poesie sonore*. Publication in several notable poetry periodicals followed: in *C: A Review of Poetry* in 1965; *The World* beginning in 1967; *0 to 9*, *Adventures In Poetry*, *The Paris Review*, and *Angel Hair* in 1968. From 1969–1974, Giorno's visual poems using texts appropriated from gay erotica appear in *Gay Power* (1969), *Ronald Reagan* (1970), *Gay Sunshine* and *Fag Rag* (1974); *The Paris Review* (1968) and numerous other notable underground, small press, and literary magazines. Mother Press published his first monograph, simply titled *Poems*, in 1967, with cover artwork by Robert Rauschenberg and a frontispiece by Les Levine. Later poetry monographs followed: *Johnny Guitar* (1969, edition of 100 by The Poetry Project); *Cunt* (1969, März Verlag); *Balling Buddha* (Kulchur, 1970); *Cum* (1970, *Adventures in Poetry*); and *Cancer In My Left Ball* (1973, Something Else Press). This period also includes Giorno's Tibetan poems (in *Adventures in Poetry*, 1972); and *Shit, Piss, Blood, Pus & Brains* (Painted Bride Quarterly Press, 1977).

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From the 1980s through the 2010s, Giorno's work was continually published in a wide range of small press publications, poetry anthologies, and monographs. Works were translated into several languages—French, German, and Italian primarily; and Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Albanian, Serbian, Polish, and Estonian languages secondarily. Poetry monographs from 1980 on include *Suicide Sûtra* (Christian Bourgois Éditeur, 1980, and Al Dante, 2004); *Grasping at Emptiness* (Kulchur, 1985); *Haut Risque* (1992, Edition de la C.R.E.M.); *You Got To Burn To Shine* in various translations/editions, including *Du Musst Brennen Um Zu Strahlen* (Stop-Over Press, 1992); *You Got To Burn To Shine* (1994, High Risk Books), *Per risplendere devi bruciare* (1997, City Lights Italia), *Il faut brûler pour briller* (Al Dante, 2003), and *Per Risplendere Devi Bruciare* (2005, Giunti); *Just Say NO To Family Values* (Porto dei Santi, 2000); *La saggesse des sorcières* (Al Dante, 2005); and *Thanx 4 Nothing* (2009). Several of these works, as well as other works that did not appear as monographs, make appearances in excerpted forms in other publications, as well as in poem prints and poem paintings by Giorno. Soft Skull Press published an anthologized selection of Giorno's written works in 2008, edited by Marcus Boon.

**Subseries B. Publicity and Reviews (1957–2016)** is by far the largest portion of the archive, with the bulk of its materials filling fifteen record storage boxes. It covers a wide body of published and unpublished material, including but not limited to event programs and flyers; small press catalogs; record distribution catalogs; underground and commercial periodicals (including hundreds of newspaper and magazine clippings); drafts of prose written by Giorno; several books in which Giorno is mentioned, pictured, or has contributed prose; exhibition catalogs; and various other printed ephemera and correspondence.

Prominent publications that endure through the midsection of this sub-series (1970s–1990s) include the small press catalogs *Small Press Distribution*, *New York State Small Press Association*, *Pociao's Bookshop*, *Directory of Literary Magazines/CCLM Catalog of Literary Magazines*, *Writers & Books*, *Serendipity Books*, and more; the Columbia College alumni magazine *Columbia College Today*, to which John submitted class notes from 1969–2002; New York-based newspapers *The Village Voice* and *The New York Times*; and various publications and materials pertaining to the Saint Mark's Poetry Project, including several evolutions of *The Poetry Project Newsletter* (sometimes simply called *The Poetry Project*).

From 1963–1969, Giorno is most commonly mentioned in press as sleeper in Andy Warhol's *Sleep* (1963). From 1969–1970, he is also commonly acknowledged as the figure behind "Dial-A-Poem" at MoMA and The Architectural League, appearing in major publications including *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Glamour*

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*College*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Vogue*. He also writes a gossip column called "Vitamin G," which appears in Les Levine's underground periodical *Culture Hero*. Programs for events produced by Giorno, such as "Central Park Poetry Events", "Release 1", and "Release 2" (1968–1970) also appear. Countless other events surrounding Giorno and his group of contemporaries are documented, including events with The Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery—an Episcopal Church rich with avant-garde history located in New York's East Village—and Vito Acconci's *Street Works* and *Street Works II*.

The 1970s contain several complete issues of *The Poetry Project Newsletter*, a newsletter published by the The Poetry Project at Saint Mark's Church in-the-Bowery to announce and review local readings, events, and publications featuring Giorno and other poets active in New York at the time. Calls to action produced by Giorno in 1970 under the pseudonym Giorno Poetry Systems include one-sheets/handouts entitled *The Bread Strike*, *Ecology Day*, and *Throw Away Your Glasses*—which make often-humorous mockery of political figures in order to probe at serious injustices. Giorno's *Radio Free Poetry* project is documented in John Wilcock's *Other Scenes* (1970) in an article entitled "How to Start Your Own Guerilla Radio." Winston Leyland interviewed Giorno about his life, activities, involvement with other artists at length for his Spring 1975 issue of *Gay Sunshine*, and Giorno's work was published on the cover of the *Gay Power* newsprint magazine. Beginning in 1972, Giorno Poetry Systems became a vehicle for the release of recorded work by the Dial-A-Poem Poets, including *The Dial-A-Poem Poets 2xLP* (GPS 001–002, 1972) and *Disconnected: The Dial-A-Poem Poets* (GPS 003–004, 1974). The LPs are listed in several distribution catalogues found in this sub-series throughout the 1970s, including *Directory of Small Magazine/Press Editors and Publishers* (Dustbooks, 1974), *Wittenborn & Company* (1974), *Harbinger*, and *Pociao's Books* (1977).

Materials from the 1980s cover John Giorno's spoken word readings, poetry as well as John Giorno Band performances and tours, and recordings released on Giorno Poetry Systems. (Duplicate and related tour ephemera is also found within *Series III. Posters and Flyers*.) Documenting the tours are the items "West Coast Tour '81," a package of compiled press clippings following the tour of William Burroughs, John Giorno, and Laurie Anderson; "The Final Academy," an exhibition catalog-style book by Roger Ely documenting the 1982 UK tour by the same; various flyers, clippings and ephemera related to a 1985 John Giorno Band USA tour; and a 1986 John Giorno Band press/promotional package including press photos, flyers, reviews, and ephemera. The John Giorno Band emerges in 1984; documentation of their work and performances ends in 1987. In 1987, invitations and newspaper clippings highlight the event "Where the Rubber Meets the Road," a benefit concert for Giorno Poetry System's AIDS Treatment Project featuring several prominent names. Throughout the 1980s, record reviews of Giorno Poetry Systems LPs commonly

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appear in *Op, Option, Rockpool, Boston Rock/US Rock, NME*, among other music review journals and fanzines. This decade features an overwhelming amount of newsprint periodicals.

The 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s continue to document John Giorno's work as a performer and poet of international renown. In addition to performances and readings, press coverage begins to include European newspaper clippings and other publications related to John Giorno's gallery exhibitions of poem prints and poem paintings.

By 1992, Giorno began creating packages of press and publicity materials and categorizing them what is now called *Series VI. Performances, Tours, Benefits, and Events*. Thus, many events that took place in the 1990s and beyond are not covered at all in *Series I.B. Publicity and Reviews*. Materials that are found in *Series I.B* after 1992 include continued press coverage of John Giorno's work as a performer and poet of international renown. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, we also begin to see newspaper clippings and other publications related to John Giorno's gallery exhibitions of poem prints and poem paintings.

***Series I. Sub-series C. Scrapbooks (1963–1971)*** contains four unique scrapbooks pieced together by John Giorno in the late 1960s/early 1970s; and one box of newspaper clippings 1963–1971 that came to the archive labeled “scrapbook clippings,” though these clippings never became a part of any scrapbook.

***Publicity 1963–1968 Book 1*** documents John Giorno as sleeper in Andy Warhol's *Sleep* (1963); readings including Giorno's multi-sensory poetry event *Raspberry*; and presents clippings from several publications covering the text-sound work of John Giorno and contemporaries during this time period. *The Village Voice* is a commonly featured publication, with clippings from “movie journal,” “dance journal,” “art” and “books” sections.

***Publicity 1968-1969 Book 2*** primarily documents readings and events at which John Giorno performed during these years. It contains flyers, programs, press releases and/or reviews for important performances, including readings at “Central Park Poetry Events”, “Four Events” at the Architectural League of New York, F.I.T., Saint Mark's Church in-the-Bowery, and “Tiny Events” by Poets at Longview Country Club.

***Publicity 1969–1970 Book 3 & Publicity 1969-1970 Book 4*** both contain press releases,

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promotional materials, and reviews that focus almost exclusively on Dial-A-Poem events at The Architectural League of New York and Museum of Modern Art, respectively.

All scrapbooks tend to duplicate materials found across other series, but their arrangement and presentation are unique to *Sub-series I.C. Scrapbooks*.

### **Series II. Photographs (1962–2013)**

[17.15 linear feet in 13 manuscript boxes, 3 photograph boxes, 2 oversized print boxes, 1 slide box, 1 negative box, a 1 record storage box.

Addenda: One manuscript box, and one small portfolio constitute an additional 2.7 linear feet.]

This series contains about 2,500 photographic prints, slides, transparencies and negatives collected by John Giorno between the years 1962–2013. John Giorno kept photographs in boxes and sleeves organized by year and/or decade. Photographs were processed in the order they were encountered, so boxes and photo sleeves do not follow a chronological arrangement—it is necessary to reference the container lists or data sheet for this series in order to locate specific items.

Photographs appear in the categories of personal photographs of or taken by John Giorno and friends in travels, home life, and at social events; and publicity/press photographs, including portraits and performance documentation.

Early portraits of note are by William Burroughs in 1965, Robert Rauschenberg in 1966, Jasper Johns in 1969, and Gianfranco Mantegna and Les Levine from c. 1969–1970s. In the later portion of Giorno's career, Stephanie Chernikowski and Kate Simon both photograph the John Giorno Band (1984–1987); and Françoise Janicot photographs John Giorno in performance from 1983–2001.

Projects documented from late 1960s include *Dial-A-Poem* at The Architectural League and MoMA (1969 and 1970); *Chromosome* in New York City (1967); *Johnny Guitar* in Skowhegan, ME (1967) and at Saint Mark's Church in-the-Bowery (1969). Other photographs of note include interior photographs of 222 Bowery used as evidence in a court case surrounding a set-up of John Giorno; snapshots taken in upstate New York at the home of Wynn and Sally Chamberlain which feature Frank O'Hara, Bill Berkson, and Nina and Robert Thurman; and documentation of travels in Tangier, Morocco with Brion Gysin, with photographs taken by both Gysin and Giorno.

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Photographs from the 1970s include documentation of John Giorno's travels in India and Nepal, which include pictures of and by Allen Ginsberg, Peter Orlovsky, and their travel guides; slides featuring images of cancerous cells in John Giorno's left testicle, used on the cover of his 1973 book of poems, *Cancer In My Left Ball*; photographs of John Giorno and friends taken in New York and Vermont; and various performance photographs including events in New York and abroad.

Photographs from the 1980s cover a wide range of performance, personal, and press images taken in New York, in the United States, and abroad. Of particular note are images of the John Giorno Band in performance and backstage; a Tibetan Buddhist event at The Bunker led by H. H. Dudrop Chen Rinpoche; a vacation in Hack's Point, MD with Paul Alberts and Lama Rinchen Phuntsok; performers onstage at the Giorno Poetry Systems / AIDS Treatment Project benefit concert event "Where The Rubber Meets the Road" (including Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, William S. Burroughs, Debbie Harry, etc.); and William S. Burroughs, Jim Carroll, Jayne Cortez, Diamanda Galas, and John Giorno having dinner and animated conversation together in Bremen, Germany. Some persons of note seen in other photographs of this decade are Genesis P-Orridge, Lita Hornick, James Grauerholz, William S. Burroughs, Francesco Conz, and Françoise Janicot, Bernard Heidsieck.

Photographs from the 1990s include over 100 rolls of 4 x 6 photographs, including John Giorno and James Grauerholz with William S. Burroughs in Lawrence, KS from 1991-1997; Burroughs' death and funeral in 1997; trips with Paul Alberts and Bernard and Françoise Heidsieck (Janicot); and events at The Bunker and in New York with key figures in the Nyingma Buddhist community such as H. H. Dudropchen Rinpoche, Khenpo Tsewang, Khenpo Palden Sherab, Khenpo Namdrol, H. H. Penor Rinpoche, Tulku Jigme Khyentse, and Trogawa Rinpoche. There is also an abundance of performance photographs of Giorno taken all over Europe and the Americas in this decade, both performing and relaxing; as well as portraits taken by Nancy Parkinson (1992), Chris Felver (1994), Christian Lantry (1996), Peter Ross (1998), and others.

Photographs from the 2000s through 2015 are primarily snapshots of John Giorno with friends such as Paul Alberts, Julien Blaine, Francesco Conz, Marie-Laure Dagoit, Bernard Heidsieck, Joelle Leandre, Mirka Lugosi, Ugo Rondinone, Mimmo Sammartino, Valentine Verhaeghe, and others. Prominent events pictured include *Polyphonix 40*, John Giorno at his mother's gravesite on the day of her funeral in 2004, performance at the Proto Theater in Tokyo/NIPAF Asia Performance Art Series, and the continuation of Tibetan Buddhist events at 222 Bowery. (In general, fewer events are documented in analog photographic

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media due to the prevalence of digital photography during this time period. See *Series VIII. Digital Media.*) Prominent portraits are by Peter Ross, Michel Collet, and Rolline Laporte.

### **Series III. Posters and Flyers (1965–2016)**

[55.22 linear feet in 1 document box, 4 oversized print boxes, and 14 portfolios]

***Sub-series III.A Posters and Flyers (1965–2016)*** contains posters and flyers collected by John Giorno, as well as occasional event programs that were kept with the flyers. Flyers are arranged chronologically within a document storage box. Oversized posters are arranged chronologically within print boxes and portfolios.

Posters and flyers from the 1965–1969 shed light on John Giorno’s involvement in multi-media events, both of his own design and those organized by others. Multi-media events documented on flyers include a 1968 performance of *Purple Heart* on a shared evening with Marcel Duchamp at John Cage at the Ryerson Institute (Toronto, ON); a 1968 performance of *Purple Heart* at St. Mark’s Church in-the-Bowery; and 1969’s *Street Works* and *Street Works II*, where Giorno handed out copies of his poems on roller skates. Posters for multi-media events include a 1966 E.A.T. event at Leo Castelli Gallery; 1967’s *Three Events* by John Giorno, Les Levine and Robert Rauschenberg at NYU Loeb Student Center; 1968’s *Central Park Poetry Events*; 1968’s *I Want To Turn You On* at FIT; and 1969’s *Johnny Guitar* at St. Mark’s Church. This time period also contains posters for the “Release” benefit series, organized by John Giorno and friends.

Other materials of note include a series of 1974 posters and flyers designed by Les Levine for William Burroughs and John Giorno poetry readings; posters for the sixth and eleventh annual avant garde festivals (1968 and 1974); 1979’s *Nova Convention*, organized by Giorno Poetry Systems; and more than 100 posters documenting John Giorno’s participation in international festivals and performances of sound poetry. This series also contains posters for the Poetry Project’s New Year’s Day Marathon readings that Giorno contributed to between 1981–2006.

***Sub-series III.B Mechanicals and Art Work (1967–1991)*** contains layout drafts, mechanicals and artwork for items appearing in Series I, Series III, and Series X. Materials are arranged chronologically within print boxes and portfolios.

Items of note are the original artwork by Robert Rauschenberg for Giorno’s first monograph, *Poems* (Mother Press, 1967); Les Levine’s layout for *Raspberry* tape reel box; silkscreens used to make anti-war T-shirts in 1973; and a page layout on vellum for “Give It

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"To Me, Baby" by John Giorno for Angel Hair Books, 1970, which does not exist in any final form within the collection.

### **Series IV. Giorno Poetry Systems LPs, CDs, cassettes and videopaks (1966–1997)**

[34.19 linear feet in 2 oversized print boxes, 2 oversized flat file boxes, 6 portfolios, 1 record storage box, 1 manuscript box, and 2 odd-sized boxes]

*Series IV. Giorno Poetry Systems* is primarily contains media released on the Giorno Poetry Systems label between 1972 and 1993. It includes LPs, CDs, cassettes, videopaks, and label catalogs, as well as material that reflects involvements outside of the record label: newspaper clippings covering the *Nova Convention*; one-sheets and other items that were created under the Giorno Poetry Systems moniker; stationery, address labels, envelopes, mailers, catalogs, receipts, programs, and other ephemera. It is important to note that, in addition to being the name of a record label, the name "Giorno Poetry Systems" was incorporated in 1970 as a channel for organizing events and creating works of art that extended poetry into the everyday experience.

The wide-ranging materials are arranged in variously-sized boxes and portfolios, with *Sub-series IV.A* preceding materials in *Sub-series IV.B*. Note that some materials belonging to *Sub-series IV.A* are housed with *Series I* or *Series III* (due to format and order of processing—i.e., the sole LP box in the archive was first numbered with Series I).

*Sub-series IV.B. Mechanicals and Art Work* contains mechanicals and artwork for Giorno Poetry Systems LPs, CDs, cassettes and videopaks, and Giorno Poetry Systems catalogs. These were originally processed with sub-series *III.B. Mechanicals and Art Work*. *Sub-series IV.B* was created because the items closely correspond to items in *Series IV.A*, and can be browsed together to shed light on the process behind laying out graphics and choosing photographs for media design. In particular, photographs used for album artwork can be viewed as individual prints; and in some cases, one can see which photographs did not "make the cut" to be featured on the album artwork.

### **Series V. Dial-A-Poem (1968–1984)**

[3.08 linear feet in 2 print boxes and 1 manuscript box]

Contents of this series include two scrapbooks (1968–1970) with press releases, promotional materials, and reviews focused exclusively on *Dial-A-Poem* events at The Architectural League of New York and Museum of Modern Art, respectively. There are also

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three log books chronicling reader schedules for *Dial-A-Poem* at The Architectural League, MoMA, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; and a collection of release forms and contracts from poets and performers whose work was featured either on *Dial-A-Poem* LPs or Giorno Poetry Systems records releases up to 1984.

Names on the schedule of *Dial-A-Poem* readers at the Architectural League, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and MoMA include: Ted Berrigan, Joe Brainard, Michael Brownstein, William S. Burroughs, John Cage, Eldridge Cleaver, Kathleen Cleaver, Diane Di Prima, Bernadine Dorn, Kenward Elmslie, Allen Ginsberg, Barbara Guest, Brion Gysin, Abbie Hoffman, Lenore Kandel, Lewis MacAdams, Bernadette Mayer, Renfreu Neff, Frank O'Hara, Lennox Raphael, Jerome Rothenberg, Aram Saroyan, Bobby Seale, John Sinclair, Diane Wakeski, Anne Waldman, Emmett Williams, Heathcote Williams, Vito Hannibal Acconci, John Ashbery, Bill Berkson, Michael Brownstein, Steve Carey, Jim Carroll, Clark Coolidge, Jim Dine, Larry Fagin, Madeline Gins, John Giorno, Brion Gysin, Peter Lane, Jackson MacLow, Taylor Mead, Ron Padgett, John Perreault, Tony Towle, Lewis Warsh, Hannah Weiner, John Wieners.

Prominent names whose signatures are included in the collection of release forms include: Abbie Hoffman, Tony Towle, John Wieners, Lewis Warsh, Peter Schjeldahl, Larry Fagin, Ron Padgett, Lennox Raphael, Kenward Elmslie, Robert Creeley, Philip Whalen, John Sinclair, Emmett Williams, Brion Gysin, Diane Di Prima, Allen Ginsberg, Jim Carroll, Margaret Mead, John Cage, William S. Burroughs, Ed Dorn, Ed Sanders, John Ashbery, Charles Bukowski, Jerome Rothenberg, Laurie Anderson, Robert Ashley, Anne Waldman, Patti Smith, Terry Southern, Nick Cave, Michael Gira, Arto Lindsay.

### **Series VI. Performances. Tours, Benefits & Events (1992–2015)**

[8.15 linear feet in 7 record storage boxes and 1 document box.

Addenda: additional 1.1 linear feet]

Beginning in 1992, John began to compile tour and event packages as a type of time capsule. Tours frequently span over multiple countries and John frequently included the list of cities on the outer packaging. Folders retain the main title assigned by John. Tour itineraries found within the series are helpful in documenting the sequence of events. Materials found within the "tour packages" include tour itineraries, event performance schedules and set lists; printed email correspondence, primarily in regard to tour arrangements; travel tickets; receipts; venue and festival publicity including event invitations, programs, announcements and calendars; press packages; personal messages and contact information from organizers and friends; posters; flyers, as well as publicity,

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schedules and programs related to the Giorno Poetry Systems' AIDS Treatment Project benefits. Extraneous ephemera, such as tourist brochures, local interest packets, duplicate material, and oversize city maps were not included with the series.

### **Series VII. T-Shirts & Textiles (1970-2016)**

[7.73 linear feet in 7 record storage boxes.

Addenda: 1.1 linear feet in record storage boxes added.]

This series contains t-shirts with John Giorno's original material printed on them.

Early t-shirts, created between 1970–1972, were hand-printed and distributed by Giorno Poetry Systems, and include the t-shirt with “white cum . . .” poem printed on it; as well as two different shirts expressing leftist, anti-war, anti-Nixon political sentiments (“Under Nixon . . .” and “Indochina War Statistics”).

T-shirts from 1993–2013 (and a group of undated T-shirts) primarily feature John Giorno's poems printed on them in various color combinations, in English and Italian. Some unique shirts are also included in the collection, including a T-Shirt from the 1982 tour “The Final Academy,” and a t-shirt featuring an image of William S. Burroughs and a reproduction of Giorno's poem print of “Life Is A Killer” with “From Hermes to John” printed on the back (presumably one-of-a-kind).

This title of this series was changed from “T-Shirts” to “T-Shirts & Textiles” in summer 2016, to include related textiles. T-shirts, sweatshirts, and tote bags were added from the 2015 Palais de Tokyo show “I Love John Giorno.”

### **Series VIII. Digital Media (1990-2012)**

[3 linear feet in 2 record storage boxes and one photograph box holding CDs.]

During processing, John Giorno brought over a number audio CDs/CD-Rs and DVDs/DVD-Rs to be kept in the archive, and an external hard drive and a flash drive that were copied to the archive's master hard drive and returned to Giorno. Image files were also e-mailed to the archivists periodically, to be downloaded to the archive's hard drive. The audio, moving image, and image files from these various sources depict John Giorno's performances, personal life, travels, exhibitions, and historical context. The text files contain draft material, personal notes, and other files of John Giorno.

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All digital images have been inventoried and the files integrated into the archive's organizational schema—finding a place in either *Series VIII. Digital Media* or *Series X.C. Exhibition Documentation (digital)*. All moving image files that could be transferred were transferred using the Handbrake software (with de-interlacting and de-combing when necessary; at actual size); if a disk encountered errors, a note was been made in that item's data. Audio files (many of John Giorno performances) on CD-Rs were not transferred. Storage formats that pre-date CDs/DVDs were not transferred.

Physical disks (CDs/CD-Rs, DVDs/DVD-Rs) containing image content were arranged chronologically in year folders within their box. Disks containing audio and moving image content were inventoried individually, and are not organized within their box.

### **Series IX. Consumer Product Poems (1968-2013)**

[4.96 linear feet in 1 record storage box, 1 manuscript box, 1 oversized print box and 1 document box]

This series includes poems printed on the surface of consumer objects, or that are consumer objects: Chocolate Bar Poem molds (1970); Matchbook Poems (1970); Ken Dewey flag (1972); *Toothpaste* scrolls (1972); “Just Say No To Family Values” mug (c. 2008); Poem Masks (1993); and “We Gave A Party For the Gods...” tote bag (2013).

Items from the 2015 Palais de Tokyo show, excepting t-shirts & textiles, were added into existing boxes as a part of Addendum G in Summer 2016.

### **Series X. Poem Paintings and Poem Prints (1968–2015)**

[69.58 linear feet in 5 roll boxes, 4 portfolios, 1 print box, 1 manuscript box, 1 oversized crate, and 2 odd-sized packages. Addenda: 2 portfolios, 6 linear feet]

**Series X.A. Poem Prints and Poem Paintings** contains 11 early screenprints (1969–1974) by John Giorno; 1 poem print from 1996 collaboration with Oscar Mariné; 2004 cneai= editions prints exhibited at agnès b.; and 2005 etchings also exhibited at agnès b. In 2016, 8 signed, framed prints were returned from Palais de Tokyo show; and left in bubble wrap and frames.

Collaborations with Oscar Mariné and Yves Le Duc; Montreal poem prints; and poem drawings made in Aliano, Italy were added in Summer 2016.

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**Series X.B. Exhibition Documentation (physical)** includes photographic prints, color transparencies and slides documenting works featured in or installation views of John Giorno's solo exhibitions of Poem Prints and Poem Paintings between 1991–2005.

**Series X.C. Exhibition Documentation (digital)** includes digital images of John Giorno's Poem Prints and Poem Paintings, both individually and in exhibition context, between 2005–2015. These digital images depict works that are not included in the John Giorno collection, and thus could not be documented on-site. The image files were either pulled from CD-Rs given to John Giorno, or e-mailed to the archivists in 2014–2015, and arranged digitally. See Administrative Notes for this series for more information.

### **Addendum A. Series XI. Pratt Art Works (1947-1951)**

[3.88 linear feet in 2 oversized print boxes]

The materials in *Addendum A. Pratt Art Works (1947-1951)* arrived after processing the bulk of the collection. This series contains about 150 drawings and paintings made by John Giorno while in attendance at Pratt's extra curricular art programs between 1947–1951. Media used include pencil, charcoal, colored pencil, watercolor paint, acrylic paint, oil pastel, and collage. Most of the artwork depicts people, and was likely made in the context of figure drawing assignments.

### **Addendum B. Series XII. Family and Ancestry (c. late 1800s–c. 1985)**

[6.29 linear feet in 2 record storage boxes, 1 print box, and 2 odd-sized packages]

*Addendum B. Family and Ancestry* contains five photo albums compiled by Nancy Giorno between the 1930s and 1980s, two of which prominently feature John Giorno (John Giorno's Childhood photo album and John Giorno's Adolescence album); negatives which correspond to photos in those albums prominently featuring John Giorno; 1 photo album compiled by John Giorno from 1947-1948; a collection of photographs of John Giorno's maternal and paternal ancestors and extended family, c. late 1800s–1933; John Giorno's parents' wedding photographs (some framed); John Giorno's 1950 class picture at PS 222 (framed); and various loose photographs of John Giorno with parents and family friends throughout childhood and adolescence. These items fill two record storage boxes, two manuscript boxes, and two large flat document boxes.

### **Addendum C.**

[no new boxes created—all items integrated into existing boxes]

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Addendum C includes 6 additions to Series III. Posters and Flyers, numbered AddC.1–AddC.6 at end of series and placed in existing box. These items arrived in Spring 2015, after processing the bulk of the collection.

### **Addendum D.**

[no new boxes created—all items integrated into existing boxes]

Addendum D includes 7 additions to Series I.A Poems, numbered AddD.1–AddD.7 at end of series and placed in existing box. These items arrived in Spring 2015, after processing the bulk of the collection.

### **Addendum E.**

[no new boxes created—all items integrated into existing boxes]

Addendum E includes 3 additions to Series I.B Publicity, numbered AddE.1–AddE.3 at end of series and placed in existing box. These items arrived in Spring 2015, after processing the bulk of the collection.

### **Addendum F.**

[1.1 linear feet in 1 record storage box]

Addendum F contains Publicity materials filling one record storage box, which were not integrated into the existing series for Published Work. These were the final items to be digitized and added to the collection as it was displayed at Palais de Tokyo in 2015.

### **Addendum G.**

Addendum G contains the addition of 400 archival items across 7 archival series, including one new series, Addendum G. Series XIII. Correspondence (1963–1996). Major correspondences included are between John Giorno and Bernard Heidsieck Brion Gysin, Joe Brainard and William Burroughs.

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*This abridged version of the John Giorno Collection Finding Aid is intended as a starting point for research into the collection. For access to the remainder of the Finding Aid and other archival reference materials, contact [archivist@giornopoetrysystems.org](mailto:archivist@giornopoetrysystems.org) and*