Ross Russell:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Russell, Ross, 1909-2000

Title: Ross Russell Papers

Dates: circa 1920s-1980 (bulk 1940s-1970s)

Extent: 58 boxes, 2 oversize folders (24.36 linear feet)

Abstract: The papers contain correspondence, research materials, lecture notes,

and manuscripts and drafts of books, screenplays and articles. Also

included are unfinished works of fiction and non-fiction,

photographs, legal papers, transcribed interviews, and promotional

literature for Dial recordings.

Call Number: Manuscript Collection MS-03662

Language: English

Access: Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Purchase, 1980 (R8972)

Processed by: Chip Cheek and Deborah Guidry, 1998

Repository: Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Sources:

Lawn, Richard. "From Bird to Schoenberg: The Ross Russell Collection," *Perspectives on Music*, ed. Dave Oliphant and Thomas Zigal (Austin: Humanities Research Center, 1985), pp. 137-147.

"Introduction," *The Bebop Revolution in Words and Music*, ed. Dave Oliphant (Austin: Humanities Research Center, 1994), pp. 7-9.

Scope and Contents

The papers of Ross Russell, best known as a jazz journalist, jazz historian, and the founder of Dial Records, contain correspondence; research materials; lecture notes; manuscripts and drafts of his published books (*The Sound, Jazz Style in Kansas City and the Southwest*, and *Bird Lives!*), as well as of screenplays, articles, and numerous unfinished works of fiction and non-fiction (most prominently an in-depth biography of Raymond Chandler); photographs; legal papers; royalties; reviews; transcribed interviews; and promotional literature for Dial recordings. The papers remain in the same order as received, and loosely reflect the following divisions: I. Correspondence, II. Jazz Writings, III. Business Records, IV. Academic Papers and Other Writings, V. Photographs, VI. Addenda.

Of special interest are letters in the correspondence files from Russell's fellow jazz historians throughout the United States and Europe. These correspondents include nearly every major figure concerned with jazz criticism and history, such as Martin Williams, Whitney Balliett, Max Harrison, Charles Delaunay, Rudi Blesh, Leonard Feather, Ralph Gleason, André Hodeir, Gunther Schuller, Nat Hentoff, Marshall Sterns, and Ira Gitler. There is additional correspondence from and interviews with such jazz luminaries as John Lewis, Cootie Williams, Sonny Criss, Bud Freeman, Don Lanphere, Hampton Hawes, Fats Navarro, Jessie Price, Jay McShann, Gene Ramey, Kenny Clarke, Chan Richardson, Red Rodney, and most importantly, Charlie Parker, interviewed in a backstage dressing room between sets.

Between 1949 and 1951, Dial Records expanded its scope to include contemporary classical music. Because of these business dealings, the collection also includes letters and manuscripts from Ernst Krenek and Rudolph Kolisch, as well as seventeen letters from Arnold Schoenberg.

The archive also includes a number of photographs which were reprinted in Russell's published jazz studies. Also present are other prints, proof sheets, and contact sheets produced from photographs by Russell, along with photographic essays of the 1968, 1970, 1971, and 1974 Monterey Jazz Festivals, as well as the 1968 Newport Jazz Festival, the 1967 Dixieland Festival at Disneyland, and the 1969 Jazz by the Bay Festival. The Russell files also include candid photographs of the Modern Jazz Quartet, Louis Bellson, Sonny Criss, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, John Handy, Hampton

Hawes, Harold Land, Don Lanphere, Tony Ortega, Jessie Price, Archie Shepp, and Randy Weston.

The sale of the Russell Collection was handled by Laurence McGilvery, who provided a box-by-box inventory of the original 15 cartons of papers. The collection has since been rehoused into archival containers, and the following folder list compiled. Since the papers have been accessed using the McGilvery list for several years, this new folder list includes references to the box and folder numbers given in the McGilvery list.

Held separately in the Ransom Center are 3500 LP recordings and 78 RPM discs (1,500 of which are jazz related), and reel-to-reel and cassette tapes. Included are many Dial test pressings of jazz recordings by such masters as Charlie Parker, Kenny Dorham, Dexter Gordon, and Red Rodney, as well as recordings of works by Schoenberg and other mid twentieth century classical composers. The Library holds 265 books, which deal primarily with jazz and jazz-related topics. Some 400 periodicals, including complete or nearly complete runs of *Jazz Review*, *Clef*, *Record Changer*, and *Jazz Record*, as well as booklets, pamphlets, programs, and record catalogs are also present.

I. Correspondence

Chronological files

Pre World War II (to mother, Marguerite Russell; fiction writing, jazz, travels	Box 1 Folder 1
World War II (to Marguerite Russell; war experiences, Tempo Music Shop, E Records, etc.); 1-2	Dial Folder 2
(to Marguerite Russell; golf courses, etc.); 1-3 1955-	Folder 3
(also earlier letters from various correspondents); 1-4 1959-1965	Folder 4
(to and from variety of friends); 1-5 Late 1960s	Folder 5-6
Jazz correspondence	
1-6, Prior 1940	Box 1 Folder 7
1-7, 1940-19?	Folder 8
1-8, Prior 1950	Folder 9
1-9, To 1967	Folder 10
General, 1-10 (late 1960s and on)	Box 2 Folder 1-2
Jazz collectors; 1a-1	Folder 3
Special (from James Brooks, David Douglas Duncan, Philip Guston, etc.); 1a-2	Folder 4
Incomplete (partial letters; one from Martin Williams); 1a-3	Folder 5
Miscellaneous (politics, products, etc.); 1a-4	Folder 6
Individual correspondents	

B-K

Baldrige, Dale; 1a-5

Box 2 Folder 7

Cash, Walter; 1a-6

Freeman (Freedman?), Marvin; 1a-7

Gutekunst, George; 1a-9

Holmes, Campbell; 1a-10

Jaeggi, Solveigh; 1a-11

Kendall, Lydia Marcus; 1a-12

Kirby, Marshall; 1a-13

Kline, Hoyte; 1a-14

Goldman, Albert; 1a-8 Folder 8

Kuehl, Linda; 1a-15 Folder 9

M-W

Mitchell, Bruce and Mitchell, Olivia Dehn; 1a-16

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Folder 1

Morrison, Allan (incomplete; needs to be gathered together or cross-referenced); 1a-17

Romero, Don; 1a-19

Ruder, Barney; 1a-20

Russell, Mary (stepmother); 1a-21

Russell, Sanders (brother); 1a-22

Templin, Yvonne; 1a-23

Wallace, Royce; 1a-24

?, Scott (Ponderosa Products); 1a-26

Phillips, Lee; 1a-18 Folder 2

Woods, Chan Richardson Parker (Charlie Parker's last wife); 1a-25

Folder 3

Jazz correspondents

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Abercrombie, Gertrude; 1b-1

Box 3 Folder 4

Balliett, Whitney; 1b-2

Blesh, Rudi; 1b-3

Chamberlain, Safford; 1b-4

Evans, Chris; 1b-7

Evans, Philip R.; 1b-8

Evensmo, Jan; 1b-9

Feather, Leonard; 1b-10

Freeman, Bud (Fay); 1b-11

Gardner, Mark; 1b-12

Geisler, George; 1b-13

Gleason, Ralph; 1b-14

Gottlieb, Lou; 1b-15

Davies, Gordon; 1b-5 Folder 5

Delaunay, Charles; 1b-6 Folder 6

H-M

Harrison, Max; 1b-16

Box 3 Folder 7

Hentoff, Nat; 1b-17

Hodeir, André; 1b-18

Johnson, Cone; 1b-19

Keo, Willy; 1b-20

Larson, Paul; 1b-21

Marco, Marco di; 1b-22

Michaelis, Kurt; 1b-23

Mialy, Louis-Victor; 1b-24

Mitz, Victor; 1b-25

O-W

Owens, Tom; 1b-26 **Box** 4 **Folder** 1

Reines, Lewis; 1b-28

Russell, William; 1b-29

Schuller, Gunther; 1b-30

Stearns, Marshall and Stearns, Jean; 1b-31

Turetzky, Bertram; 1b-32

Westerberg, Hans; 1b-33

Wilder, Lee; 1b-34

Räftegård, Börje; 1b-27 Folder 2

Williams, Martin; 1b-35 Folder 3

II. Jazz Writings

Writing and research Downbeat; 2-1 Box 4 Folder 4 Hawes, Hampton; 2-2 Folder 5 Navarro, Fats; 2-3 Folder 6 Price, Jesse; 2-4 Folder 7 Rando, Doc; 2-5 Folder 8 Stabile, Dick; 2-6 Folder 9 West Coast Bop; 2-7 Folder 10 Jazz & Blues; 2-8 Folder 11 Jazz Hot; 2-9 Folder 12 Simmons, Sonny; 2-10 Folder 13 Jazz Quarterly; 2-11 Folder 14 Jazz Review; 2-12 Folder 15 **Folder** Jazz Review (articles, 1960); 2-13 16 Orkester Journalen; 2-14 Folder 17 Record Changer series; 2-15 Folder 18 Box 5 Folder 1 Jazz articles (index); 2-16

New York Times Book Review; 2-17

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BBC (two interviews); 2-18 Folder 3

Reminiscing in Tempo; 2-19

1 (Reminiscing on Tempo); 2-20 **Box** 5 **Folder** 4

REM - hold; 2-21

Jazz articles, unpublished and incomplete; 2a-17

Folder 11

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Jazz short fiction; 2a-18	Folder 12
Dear Old Southland (from The Sound); 2a-19	Folder 13
Mama don't allow no dancin' (from The Sound?); 2a-20	Folder 14
Play red, up comes black; 2b-1	Folder 15
New York places; 2b-2	Folder 16
Los Angeles places; 2b-3	Folder 17
Jazz humor; 2b-4	Folder 18
Jazz programs, leaflets; 2b-5	Box 7 Folder 1-2
Jazz book lists; 2b-6	Folder 3
Discography (record lists); 2b-7	Folder 4
Jazz clippings (1930s); 2b-8	Folder 5
Jazz clippings; 2b-9	Folder 6
Blues (reference); 2b-10	Folder 7
Blues (Joe Turner); 2b-11	Folder 8
The Sound	
Master plot; 2b-12	Box 7 Folder 9
Revision of opening (Chapter One); 2b-13	Folder 10
Revision (J. Ellison); 2b-14	Folder 11
Repair and corrections; 2b-15	Folder 12
Discarded openings; 2b-16	Box 8 Folder 1
Salvage from <i>The Sound</i> (unpublished sequences); 2c-1	Folder 2
Big Ball (possible salvage); 2c-2	Folder 3

ed sequences; 2c-3	Folder 4
ipsters (old correspondence prior Dutton); 2c-4	Folder 5
spondence (Dutton); 3-1	Folder 6
spondence (other than Dutton); 3-2; 1960-1961	Folder 7
ow, Noel; 3-3	Folder 8
nents and criticism; 3-4	Folder 9
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nplay (trial continuity); 3-8	Folder 4
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nal manuscript; 3-11	Folder 7-9
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s fictive; 3a-2	Folder 2
rch materials, chapter outlines; 3a-3	Folder 3
rch photostats; 3a-4	Folder 4
rt, Richard; 3a-5	Folder 5
ann, Jay (interviews); 3a-6; 1969	Folder 6
Jesse (interview); 3a-7; 1970	Folder 7

Parker magazine article (Bird and Sartre); 4-4

Folder 3

Dictionary of American Biography; 4-5

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Grove Dictionary of Music; 4-6 Folder 5

Yardbird in Lotus Land; 4-7	Folder 6
Yardbird (mechanics); 4-8	Folder 7
Bird Lives! (versions A, B, C, D, E); 4-9	Folder 8
Unlabelled folder containing VIII A: The Forties (extracted from "Bebop instrumental stylists"?) plus part of <i>Bird</i> manuscript; 4-10	Folder 9
Parker's mood; 4a-1	Folder 10
bop era musicians; 4a-2; 1940s	Folder 11
Parker magazine references; 4a-3	Folder 12
Downbeat; 4a-4	Folder 13
Newspaper clippings (envelope from Martin Williams); 4a-5	Box 14 Folder 1
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Kansas City places; 4a-7	Folder 3
TOBA (Theatre Owners' Booking Association); 4a-8	Folder 4
Savoy recording dates; 4a-9	Folder 5
Parker liner notes reference; 4a-10	Folder 6
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Mail interviews out; 4a-12	Box 14 Folder 8
Bellson, Louis; Lanphere, Don; 4a-13	Folder 9
Clarke, Kenny; 4a-14	Folder 10
Criss, Sonny; Gitler, Ira; Schlitten, Don; 4a-15	Folder 11
Daniels, Ernest; 4a-16	Folder 12

Hawes, Hampton; 4a-17	Folder 13
Leonard, Harlan; 4a-18	Folder 14
Lewis, John; 4a-19	Folder 15
Ortega, Anthony (interview, record date); 4a-20	Folder 16
Williams, Cootie; 4a-21; (Dec. 27, 1968)	Folder 17
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Misc. interviews, Kansas City; 4a-23	Folder 19
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Bibliography; 4b-4	Folder 4
Parker (art); 4b-5	Folder 5
Bird Lives! critiques, letters in; 4b-6	Folder 6
Parker Discography (solos)	Folder 7
Auditions (Parker); 4b-8	Folder 8
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Ricker-Bock-Russell old filmscript; 5a-2	Folder 3
Screenplay; 5a-3	Folder 4
Screenplay 2 (copy); 5a-4	Folder 5
Copy screenplay (another copy?); 5a-5	Folder 6
Be-Bop (Lofaro-Levine screen play); 5a-6	Folder 7

III. Business Records: Publishing and Recording Activities

Contracts, film and record Box 17 Folder 8 Option agreement (film); 5a-7 **Folder** Models, clippings, actors, directors; 5a-8 Dial Mechanical Rights (contains contracts signed by Parker and others, an early letter by Chan Richardson (Woods), two holograph documents by Parker, further **Box** 18 correspondence with Emry Byrd, correspondence concerning Parker's release from **Folder** Camarillo State Hospital, Calif., into Russell's custody, etc. This and similar material in the Parker unpublished reference folder have been left as last arranged by Russell and should probably be reorganized and interfiled); 6a-1 Recording agreement; 5a-9 Folder 2 Warner Bros. Parker box set brochure notes; 5b-1 Folder 3 Producers; 5b-2 Folder 4 Agents Goldfarb, Bob; 5b-3, 5b-4 Box 18 Folder 5-7 Burger, Knox; 5b-5 Folder 8 Seligmann and Collier; 5b-6 Folder 9 **Box** 19 John Farquharson Ltd. (plus dead file, Johnson, John); 5b-7 Folder 1

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Defects; 6b-12	Folder 10
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Copyright law, cases, decisions; 6b-16	Folder 14
Correspondence; 6b-17	Folder 15
Vs. Reisner (new material from English jazz periodicals); 6b-18	Folder 16
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Libel, privacy, etc.; 6-1	Folder 19
Legal problems (clippings); 6-2	Folder 20
McKay (publishing firm); 6-4	Box 21 Folder 1
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Quartet Books Ltd.; 6-7	Folder 4
Oak Lawn Books; 6-8	Folder 5
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Magazine reviews (clippings of Dial releases); 6a-2	Box 22 Folder 1
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Steuermann, Edward (recording date); 6a-8	Folder 7
Webern (recording date); 6a-9	Folder 8
Schuller, Gunther (recording date; Schoenberg quintet); 6a-10	Folder 9
Ajemian, Majo (recording date; Hovhaness masters); 6a-11	Folder 10
Mavra (recording date; Craft); 6a-12	Folder 11
Renard session; 6a-13	Folder 12
Goodman, Saul (recording date; Bartok, two pianos); 6a-14	Folder 13
Dial parts; 6a-16	Folder 14
Comet masters: 6a-17	Folder 15

Dial (logos, catalogs, labels); 6a-18	Folder 16
Labels (10" 78 rpm jazz; 1000 series, 750 series); 6a-19	Folder 17
Dial leasing; 6a-20	Folder 18
Williams, Tony (world's leading authority on Parker discography and proprietor of Spotlite Records, UK); 6a-21	Folder 1
Educational Media Associates of America Inc. (Kolisch memorial); 6a-22	Folder 2
Dial masters (catalog); 6a-23	Folder 3
Spotlite correspondence; 7-1	Folder 4
Spotlite (current); 7-2	Folder 5
L & W Printery, Inc.; 7-3	Folder 6
Spotlite flyers; 7-4	Folder 7
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Packaging; 7-6	Folder 10
Spotlite invoices, inventory, journal; 7-7	Folder 11
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201 Solal, Martial (Ornithology); 7-12	Folder 8

202 Albany, Joe (Old, Old Friends); 7-13	Folder 9
203 Solal, Martial (Monuments); 7a-1	Folder 10
204 Solal, Martial ('Round Midnight); 7a-2	Folder 11
Solal, Martial; 7a-3	Folder 12
Studio log (bound); 7a-4	Folder 13
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Correspondence (distributors and record companies); 7a-5	Box 24 Folder 14
Caplin, Arnold (Biograph Records, Historical Records); 7a-6	Box 25 Folder 1
Koester, Bob (Delmark Records); 7a-7	Folder 2
Onyx/Schlitten (Don Schlitten, Prestige Records, etc.); 7a-8	Folder 3
Porter, Bob (Prestige Records, Phoenix); 7a-9	Folder 4
Zimmerman, Art (Zim Records); 7a-10	Folder 5
Accounts paid, 7a-11; 1975	Folder 6-7
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Lanphere, Don (notes, studio log); 7a-15	Folder 11
XL 153 master file (this and following folders apparently relate to courses bearing the same names or numbers filed under "Jazz Classes"); 7a-16	Folder 12
X 472 master; 7a-17	Folder 13
Blues tapes; 7a-18	Folder 14
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IV. Academic Papers & Other Writings

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XL 132 (Jazz course); 7a-26	Folder 22
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X 472 (modern jazz); 7b-6	Folder 4
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Blues course; 7b-9	Folder 7
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Photo course notes (appear to cover several courses); 7b-11	Folder 9
Fictive techniques; 7b-12	Folder 10
UCSD Extension (detective story); 7b-13	Folder 11
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Writing techniques; 7c-1	Box 26 Folder 12
Literary notes; 7c-2	Folder 13
Sample paragraphs; 7c-3	Folder 14
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Books read; 7c-6	Box 27 Folder 1
Authors (biographies); 7c-7	Folder 2
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Leicester Country Club; 8-7	Folder 18
Russell family photos; 8-8	Folder 19
Miscellaneous photos of Russell and others; 8-9	Folder 20
Theta Delta Chi; 8-10	Folder 21
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Revelation sequence; 8-17	Folder 7
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Entertainments; 8a-4	Folder 19
Name bank; 8a-5	Folder 20
Mitton, Pat (federal prisoner, San Diego County Jail); 8a-6	Folder 21

Estate of Gordon, Jack (deceased composer; based partly on Rothko case?); 8a-7	Folder 22
Night After Night; 8a-8	Folder 23
Spivey (black skip tracer); 8a-9	Folder 24
Go Bust material (exclusion from father's estate, stock market, etc.); 8a-10	Box 29 Folder
Chapters, copy; 8a-11, 8a-12 (both folders empty)	Folder 2
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Ideas (new books and articles); 8a-13	x 29 Folder 3
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Condominiums (article); 8a-15	Folder 5
Copy of Inside Golf magazine; 8a-16	Folder 6
Jazz books; 8a-17	Folder 7
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Modern jazz style (with Bertram Turetzky); 8a-19	Folder 9
O'Keeffe, Georgia; 8a-20	Folder 10
Kanarek, Irving (defender of Charles Manson); 8a-21	Folder 11
Dysinger, Susan; 8a-22	Folder 12
Charlie Parker music 1 (this and following folder may be course material); 8a-23	Folder 13
Music, biography, 1 (Parker); 8a-24	Folder 14

tist); 8a-25 Folder 15	Who you are (musician, put-on artis
	Unpublished fiction
Box 29 Folder 16	Pulp Fiction (1930s); 8-23
Folder 17	Red Azalea (complete); 8a-26
rl); 8b-1 Folder 18	Maritime unions (research material)
Box 30 Folder 1	The God That Failed; 8b-2
in folder; the second contains character studies of); 8b-3 Folder 2	Goodbye to Bohemia (two novels in friends from college and early life);
tic novel); 8b-4 Folder 3	The Girl Who Liked Muscles (erotic
Folder 4	The Good Samaritans; 8b-5
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Folder 6	Call Girl; 8b-7
Folder 7	The Gold-Plated Melody; 8b-8
Folder 8-9	The Big Jackpot
Box 31 Folder 1-2	The Big Jackpot (cont.)
Payola) Folder 3-9	The Disc Jockey (earlier title: Big Pa
pp.); 8b-9? Folder 3	Manuscript (chapters 1-8; 126 pp
Folder 4	Copy manuscript; 8c-1
Folder 5	Pages recopied; 8c-2
Folder 6-7	Big Payola (hold); 8c-3
Folder 8	Scenes and incidents; 8c-4
Folder 9	Chapters 9 and 10: 8c-5

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Stand-up comic novel; 8c-7	Box 32 Folder 1
Clippings, posters, miscellaneous correspondence (three letters; one from Noordberg, J. W.)	Folder 2
Street Shares; 9-1, 9-2?, 9-3?	Folder 3
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Four issues of <i>Dirt Bike</i> magazine; 9-4	Box 32 Folder 4
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Baja California guide book; 9-14	Box 33 Folder
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