

Randolph Sims: Paintings and Land Arts Projects Collection CAE1606

Introduction/Abstract

The archive *Randolph Sims: Paintings and Land Arts Projects* traces the artist's career as he created land arts projects, ephemeral drawings on sand with water, and other two-dimensional bodies of work. Materials include original drawings and paintings, correspondence, exhibition ephemera, slides, negatives, and photographs.

Biographical Note: Randolph Sims

Randolph Sims was born in Muncie, Indiana in 1943. He studied commercial art and then fine art at the San Francisco Art Institute for two-and-a-half years in 1963-64, where he met Michael Heizer. Sims moved to New York City in 1967, worked as a loft painter with Heizer, then as a commercial artist. He moved to upstate New York in 1970, took an extended trip to Europe and Turkey, then returned to live in Connecticut. In 1980, at the invitation of his cousin Sue Clark, he moved to a ranch in California's Plumas County, and eventually settled in Nevada City where he worked intermittently as a carpenter.

Scope and Content

The archive materials trace Sims's work from the time he met Michael Heizer until he stopped making art in 1991. Both artists in 1943-64 were Bay Area Figurative painters under the influence of David Park, Elmer Bischoff, and Richard Diebenkorn—and both would, within two years, start painting hard-edge shaped abstract canvases. While Heizer's paintings were angular and geometrically shaped, Sims were biomorphic and wave-like in form. Both men moved to New York City, Heizer in 1966 and Sims shortly thereafter. Heizer was making a living painting lofts and Sims worked with him, the men spending evenings at Max's Kansas City where Sims met other artists such as Robert Smithson. Sims accompanied Heizer as an unpaid assistant to the Mojave Desert in 1968 to help him work on land art projects at Coyote Dry Lake, where he made his first land art when Heizer lent him the use of a backhoe and operator. At the same time, Sims shaped paintings had enlarged past his capacity to work indoors, and he continued making negative sculptures outdoors, then ephemeral drawings on rock and on sand with water until 1991. Sims seldom had funds to complete his more ambitious land art works, and was only able to make preliminary sketches and then temporary maquettes in the landscape.

Types of Materials Donated: Drawing by Michael Heizer of Vya Project in 1968, and photomontage by Sims of Heizer installing his work at the Whitney in 1968. Six "surf drawings" done from 1969-1970 in Turkey, and eight from Baja California done in 1991; ten "drawings for shaped canvases (1970), thirty "land art project drawings" in ink, pencil, and grease stick on paper, and photocopies from 1968; photographs of land art projects on Coyote Dry Lake in 1968; photographs of land drawings done in Connecticut in 1969; "water drawings" done in Canyonlands, Utah in 1986. Also included are exhibition reviews and correspondence.

This archive is currently in process.