

**Judith Belzer: Panama Canal**  
**Collection CAE1705**

**Introduction/Abstract**

Judith Belzer's paintings about the Panama Canal juxtapose a highly geometricized structure with the natural landscape, even as she abstracts away from realistic portraiture of the surroundings. Materials include sketches and watercolors, site photos, installation images, maps and postcards from Panama, research materials, printed ephemera, and correspondence.

**Biographical Note: Judith Belzer**

Judith Belzer was born in Chicago in 1956, studied literature at Bennington and Barnard College and graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1979. She studied at The New York Studio School from 1980-81 and was awarded a fellowship to the Yale University summer art program in 1981. Belzer lived and worked for many years on the East Coast, first in New York City and then in New England, before moving to Berkeley California in 2003. Her current work explores places where the natural and built landscapes meet, and often deploys a vertiginous aerial perspective that has been compared to views created by Diebenkorn and Thiebaud. Belzer's work is exhibited regularly around the country. She received a degree in English from Barnard College, studied at the New York Studio School, and in 2014 was a Guggenheim Fellow.

**Scope and Content**

Belzer's work about the Panama Canal was first prompted by an article in *The New York Times* that described the proposed recent widening of the canal, a development spurred in part by Chinese plans to cut a new canal across Nicaragua. Her Guggenheim Fellowship enabled her to travel to Panama in 2015, and the paintings that she produced are an outgrowth of her Edgelands series about places where the natural and built environments meet. They juxtapose a highly geometricized structure with the natural landscape, even as she abstracts away from realistic portraiture of the surroundings. Materials include sketches and watercolors, site photos, installation images, maps and postcards from Panama, research materials, printed ephemera, and correspondence.

**Inclusive Dates**

2013 – 2017

**Bulk Dates**

2014 – 2016

**Quantity / Extent**

.25 cubic feet

**Language**

English and Spanish

### Arrangement

The folders in the archive *Judith Belzer: Panama Canal* are arranged chronologically.

### Related Publications

Belzer, Judith, and George Lawson. *Judith Belzer: Canal Zone: Recent Work from the Panama Project*. San Francisco, CA: George Lawson Gallery, 2016.

### Container Listing:

#### CAE1705: Folders 1-6, 2013 – 2017

##### CAE Box 95

- 1 Research Materials, 2013 – 2016
- 2 Project Correspondence, 2014 – 2016
- 3 Travel Ephemera, 2013 – 2014
- 4 Panama Site Photographs, 2015 – 2016
- 5 Project Artwork Images and Originals, 2015 – 2017
- 6 Exhibition Ephemera and Images, 2016

#### CAE1705: Additional Materials

##### CAE Box 56: Small Objects

- 3#1 Panama Playing Cards, not dated

##### CAE S-Box 10

- 5#1 Untitled, Panama Project Watercolor, August 2015