



City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division

Guide to the Boston Arts Festival records

Finding aid prepared by Jessica Bitely
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Repository:	City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division
Title:	Boston Arts Festival records
Collection No.:	0272.001
Dates:	1952-1964
Quantity:	1.75 Cubic feet (1 records carton, 6 volumes)

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SERIES LIST

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Historical note

The Boston Arts Festival, originally called the Boston Art Festival, began in June 12, 1952 with Nelson W. Aldrich, a Boston architect, as the general chairman of the committee in charge of the festival. The Festival began under the auspices of Daniel J. Ahern, the executive chairman of the New Boston Committee along with Mayor Hynes.

The first festival included a free program of painting, sculpture and music presented outdoors at the Boston Public Garden. Over the years, the Festival would expand upon this program by adding film, dance, and theater. The duration of the Festival was gradually increased as well. At various times, the selection process of the art shows and the perceived focus on modern arts attracted controversy, and the Festival often faced budget shortfalls due in part to the decision to allow free admittance to all performances while trying to provide quality programming on a large scale. Nonetheless, the Festival continued to operate with the goal of presenting a mass audience with a "broad cross-section of the arts of our time [and arts] of as high an artistic standard as economically possible" until 1964.

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Scope and Contents note

Records of the Boston Arts Festival. The bulk of the materials in this collection are news clippings and scrapbooks, 1952-1954 and 1962-1963, covering all aspects of the festival including performances, award winning works, events and programming, community involvement, and critical response. Also included in the collection are the 10th Anniversary Report from 1962, covering expenses, fundraising, and programming; Executive Committee minutes, 1958-1964; trustees meeting minutes, 1952, 1954-1958; income sources; membership mailings; and press releases.

Scrapbooks in good condition were retained, but two binders from 1963 were disassembled and became the News clippings series. Additional loose materials from the various scrapbooks were photocopied and filed chronologically at the end of the collection.

The materials are arranged in three series: I. 10th Anniversary Report, 1962, II. Administrative records, 1952-1964, III. News clippings, 1952-1954 and 1962-1963.

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Series I: 10th Anniversary Report, 1961

Box	Folder	
1	1	Expenses, 1961
1	2	Festival Overview, 1961
1	3	Fine Arts Division, 1961
1	4	Fundraising, 1961
1	5	Installation, 1961
1	6	Programming, 1961

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Series II: Administrative records, 1952-1964

Volume

1		Chart of Accounts, 1960-1961
Box	Folder	
1	7-10	Executive Committee minutes, 1958-1964
1	11-16	Income Sources, 1956, 1958, 1959-1963
1	19	Painting and Sculpture Awards, 1964
1	17-18	Membership Mailings and Results, 1961-1962
1	20-25	Press Releases, 1957, 1961

Printed Materials, 1958

Volume

2		Scrapbook vol. 2, 1958
Box	Folder	
1	52	vol. 2 loose Printed Materials, 1958

1 26-28 Trustees minutes, 1961-1962

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Series III: News clippings, 1963

Box	Folder	
1	29	4th of July, 1963
1	30	Architects, 1963
1	31	Award Winners, 1963
1	32	Children's Art, 1963
1	33	Closing, 1963
1	34	Community Appreciation, 1963
1	35	Crafts, 1963
1	36	Dance, 1963
1	37	Festival Jurors, 1963
1	38-40	Events Programming, 1963
1	41	Film, 1963
1	42	Music, 1963
1	43-44	Opening, 1963
1	45	Painting and Sculpture, 1963
1	46	Responses to Festival, 1963
1	47	Theater, 1963
1	48	Volunteers, 1963
1	49	Miscellaneous, 1963

Scrapbooks, 1952, 1954

Volume		
3		vol. 3, 1952
Box	Folder	
1	50	vol. 3 loose materials, 1952
Volume		
4		vol. 4, 1954
Box	Folder	
1	51	vol. 4 loose materials, 1954
Volume		
5		vol. 5, 1956
6		vol. 6, 1962

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