
Guide to the Gregory Corso Papers, 1960-1970

Collection number: M721

Department of Special Collections and University Archives
Stanford University Libraries
Stanford, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Gregory Corso Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1960-1970

Collection number: Special Collections M721

Creator: Purchased, 1994, as part of the Stephen Rodefer papers.

Extent: 1 linear ft.

Repository: Stanford University. Libraries. Dept. of Special Collections and University Archives.

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Access Restrictions:

None.

Publication Rights:

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Provenance:

Purchased, 1994, as part of the Stephen Rodefer papers. Corso had given these materials to Rodefer in payment for a large telephone bill Corso had accrued when he stayed with Rodefer in Corrales, New Mexico, in 1969.

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ABSTRACT

The material in the collection is somewhat fragmentary; many of the manuscript pages are handwritten and unidentifiable as part of larger works, although the emendations on the drafts provide a glimpse of Corso's revision process. The correspondence includes both professional and highly personal material.

BIOGRAPHY

Gregory Nunzio Corso, an associate of Beat writers Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, is the author of over twenty volumes of poetry, numerous magazine articles and essays, plays, and a 1961 novel, *The American Express*.

Born in New York City in 1930, Corso worked as a migrant laborer, newspaper reporter for the L.A. Examiner, and merchant seaman before joining the English Department at SUNY Buffalo in 1965. In the mid-1950s he began to give public readings of his poetry, often sharing the stage with other Beats. His 1958 volume, *Gasoline*, marks the beginning of his long association with San Francisco's City Lights Bookstore and the Bay Area in general, which figures prominently in much of Corso's work.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Gregory Corso Archive includes manuscript notebooks, published materials and personal and professional ephemera of Gregory Corso. They are housed in 3 document boxes and occupy 1.5 linear feet.

The collection covers Corso's work in the 1980s and early 1990s, including both manuscript notebooks and published works. The ephemera includes professional and personal correspondence with Allen Ginsberg as well as materials documenting Corso's public appearances and professional collaborations. The ephemera series also includes photographs of Corso. Most of the items in the collection are signed.

The Corso Papers were received by the Stanford Library as part of the Stephen Rodefer Collection. Corso gave these materials, which were housed in a suitcase at the time, to Rodefer in payment for a large telephone bill Corso had accrued when he stayed with the poet in Corrales, New Mexico, in 1969. During this visit, Corso guest-lectured in Rodefer's class; Rodefer, in turn, hosted Corso's first reading, in ten years.

The material in the collection is somewhat fragmentary; many of the manuscript pages are handwritten and unidentifiable as part of larger works, although the emendations on the drafts provide a glimpse of Corso's revision process. The correspondence in the collection's second box is a sampling of professional and highly personal material, ranging from solicitations for magazine submissions to contract copies, to angry drafts. As representation of Corso's personal and professional life--quite literally what he was carrying around with him--the papers chronicle the important events of Corso's written life in the years 1969-70 and indicate the peripatetic nature of that existence.

Box 1, Folder 1 **"All Hallows' Eve in Cleveland" n.d. (TMs and AMs)**

Box 1, Folder 2 **Ama Fleming Introduction n.d. (AMs and TMs)**

Box 1, Folder 3 **"American Historia Politica" 1970 (AMs)**

Box 1, Folder 4 **"The American Way" c. 1960s (TMs)**

Box 1, Folder 5 **"August Thoughts" 1969 (AMsS)**

Box 1, Folder 6 **"The Birth of Earth" n.d. (AMs)**

Box 1, Folder 7 **"Common Sensitivity" n.d. (AMs)**

Box 1, Folder 8 **"the dancing boy of the spilling air" n.d. (TMs)**

Box 1, Folder 9 **"Dear Indian" Dec., 1969 (TMs with AN)**

Box 1, Folder 10 **"Down By the Vacant Lot" n.d. (TMs with AN)**

Box 1, Folder 11 **"Elegiac Feelings American" (AMs)**

Box 1, Folder 12 **"Experiences of imagination, dream..." n.d. (TMs with AN)**

Box 1, Folder 13 **"JFK" n.d. (TMs reprint)**

- Box 1, Folder 14 "**The Hounds of Psychosis**" n.d. (TMs)
- Box 1, Folder 15 "**Indomitable Moods**" n.d. (TMs reprint)
- Box 1, Folder 16 "**In this my Pons Asinorum...**" n.d. (TMs with AN)
- Box 1, Folder 17 "**The Last Poem**" n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 18 "**Like I would never kill**" n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 19 "**Marriage Ceremony for Hells Angel Wedding**" (AmsS)
- Box 1, Folder 20 "**1970 Inventory Assessments**" c. 1969-70 (TMs)
- Box 1, Folder 21 "**Old Man Carrying Straw**" n.d. (TMsS)
- Box 1, Folder 22 "**Poem for Belle...**" January, 1970 (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 23 "**St. God...a mystery poem**" n.d. (TMs)
- Box 1, Folder 24 "**Ten Poems a Time...**" n.d. (TMs with AN)
- Box 1, Folder 25 "**Theme for Bill: the Etymological**" n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 26 "**Theme of There's Yet Time**" n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 27 "**A 13 Year Old's Visit to Hell**" n.d. (TMsS with AN)
- Box 1, Folder 28 "**Thor**" n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 29 "**3 Days After Stonehenge**" n.d.(AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 30 "**What Comes from the Head Automaticly**" n.d. (TMs)
- Box 1, Folder 31 "**When Your Child Has Gone to War**" n.d. (TMs)
- Box 1, Folder 32 "**Who is the Face in the Mirror...**" n.d. (TMsS)
- Box 1, Folder 33 "**autobiographical fragments** c. 1969-70
- Box 1, Folder 34 "**film project** n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 35 "**draft of a play [?]** n.d. (AMs)
- Box 1, Folder 36 "**manuscripts--unidentified**
- Box 1, Folder 37 "**manuscripts--unidentified**
- Box 1, Folder 38 "**manuscripts--unidentified**
- Box 1, Folder 39 "**manuscripts--unidentified**
- Box 1, Folder 40 "**manuscripts--unidentified**

Box 1, Folder 41 **manuscripts--unidentified**

Box 1, Folder 42 **manuscripts--unidentified**

Box 1, Folder 43 **manuscripts--unidentified**

Box 2, Folder 1 **Letters to Corso n.d.**

James F. Botta (poem)
Corinth Books, contract copy, Spontaneous Requiem for the American Indian
Allen Ginsberg
Gotham Book Mart re new material
Peter Jones
Peter Orlovsky
Treasury Department, U.S. Government
Wajovi
Unsolicited correspondence

Box 2, Folder 2 **Letters to Corso, 1969**

Sinclair Beiles
City Lights Books, contract Collected Prose [signed by Corso]
Doubleday & Co., permission request to reprint "Requiem for 'Bird' Parker"
Anthony Huck Finneral
Follett Publishing Co., re Chicago 8 defense fund auction
Allen Ginsberg
Gotham Book Mart
Piero Heliczers
Harper & Row re complimentary book
Patrick King re youth response to Kerouac's death
New Directions Publishing Corp. [James Laughlin and Robert McGregor]
receipts addressed to Belle Ostrander

Box 2, Folder 3 **Letters to Corso, 1970**

Corinth Books re contracts
Caresse Crosby memorial service invitation
Fantasy/Galaxy Records re tax forms
Lawrence Ferlinghetti
Louis Ginsberg
Gotham Book Mart
Piero Heliczzer
Midcentury Authors, John Wakeman, ed.
New Directions Publishing Corp [James Laughlin]
New Directions Publishing Corp. U.S. tax form
Phoenix Book Shop
Joe Reynolds
submission requests

Box 2, Folder 4 **Drafts of letters by Corso**

Andreas Blaise
Belle Carpenter

Box 2, Folder 5 **Drafts of letters by Corso**

Lawrence Ferlinghetti
Allen Ginsberg
James Laughlin
Ted Wilentz
to Olga [unidentified] re fame and poverty
unidentified fragments

Box 2, Folder 6 **personal business: writing**

letter from Donald Allen re NAP royalties
royalty statement from Czech government
contract copy: "Spontaneous Requiem for the American Indian"
tax receipt from City Lights Books, 1969
receipts for publishers' advances on Elegiac Feelings American (\$500) and Happy Birthday of Death (\$200);
New Directions Press
U.S. census individual report form: 1970

Box 2, Folder 7 **personal business: miscellaneous receipts (incl. unsigned Prisoner Property Receipt, Santa Fe Jail, Mar. 14, 1970)**

Box 2, Folder 8 **Corso artwork**

Box 2, Folder 9 **printed matter: Andersen's "Takis: Evidence of the Unseen"**

Box 2, Folder 10 **printed matter: manuscripts from others**

Botta (TMs)
"anthology of Power" (unknown)
"spy poem" (unknown)
"the times of the watches" (reprint)
education manifesto (reprint)

Box 2, Folder 11 **printed matter: miscellaneous**

"America Politica Historia..." (reprint from Chelsea Review #8, Oct., 1960)
Caliche County Rendering Works no. 19
"Head Comix"
"3 Spare Parts"
The New Mexico Review and Legislative Journal, "Who Killed Eulogio Salazar?" 1969
"Art: Like the Stumpy Crocus..." NYT Apr. 2, 1966 (review of Raphael Soyer, w/ Ginsberg, diPrima and Corso portrait)
miscellaneous fragments

Box 2, Folder 12 **personal business: artifacts**

bill for medical treatments Feb. 19-Apr. 1, 1970
large envelope containing suitcase debris

Box 2, Folder 13 **prescription bottle: valium (dated Mar. 3, 1970)**