

Victor Bockris papers

Ms. Coll. 931

Finding aid prepared by Alina Josan and Carey Hedlund.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2013.10.03

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Bockris, Victor, 1949-
Title	Victor Bockris papers
Call number	Ms. Coll. 931
Date [inclusive]	1970-1973
Extent	0.8 linear feet (2 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	Victor Bockris (born in 1949) is a poet, editor, and biographer of artists, authors, and musicians. The Victor Bockris papers document the activities of a community of avant-garde poets and artists of the early 1970s, mainly active in Philadelphia and New York City.

Cite as:

Victor Bockris papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Victor Bockris is a poet, editor, and biographer of artists, authors, and musicians. Born in Sussex, England in 1949, Bockris and his parents moved to Philadelphia when he was four years old. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1971, and while there contributed to the *Pennsylvania Review*. During his early career in Philadelphia, Bockris wrote poetry and began his work as a biographer with a work entitled "The Poetry of Performance: An Interview with Patti Smith," in 1972. Through Red Room Books, several of Bockris' writings were published, including *Finished: A Novel* and poems in both *Contact* and *Sly*. He also founded Telegraph Books. In 1973, Bockris left Philadelphia to live and work in New York. He has written biographies on Lou Reed (and The Velvet Underground), Andy Warhol, Keith Richards, William S. Burroughs, Terry Southern, Blondie, Patti Smith, and Muhammad Ali, as well as a book called *Beat Rock*.

Scope and Contents

The Victor Bockris papers contain works from his early writing career (1972-1973), along with his personal collection of publications and correspondence. Numerous contributions to independent publications and an interview with Patti Smith form a significant part of this collection. The Victor Bockris papers document the activities of a community of avant-garde poets and artists of the early 1970s, mainly active in Philadelphia and New York City.

The collection is arranged in four series, Letters to Victor Bockris, Writings by Victor Bockris, Writings by Others, and Memorabilia. In Letters to Victor Bockris, researchers will find both professional and personal letters. To the letters, auxiliary material was attached; including poems, snapshots, and publicity for poetry readings and other events. A letter from Patti Smith includes a snapshot by Robert Mapplethorpe. Many of the letter writers are identified only by first or last name, but the content provides an interesting glimpse into the lives of Bockris and his fellow poets.

Writings by Victor Bockris, includes works only from 1970 to 1973, during his early career in Philadelphia. His writings are primarily poems, but the collection does include "The Poetry of Performance, an Interview with Patti Smith," from 1972. Most of Bockris' works were published by Red Room Books, which was located on Powelton Avenue in Philadelphia.

Writings by Others, consists of books of poetry, largely published by Angel Hair Books. These writings are arranged alphabetically by author; and *Kodak* is signed by author Patti Smith.

Finally, Bockris' Memorabilia includes a review of his book *In America*; photographs and a cover, possibly for "Back from Boston;" and flyers and publicity for poetry readings and other events in which Bockris participated.

This collection would be of interest to researchers interested in Bockris' early career as well as Philadelphia's avante-garde poetry circles in the 1970s.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2013.10.03

Finding aid prepared by Alina Josan and Carey Hedlund.

Sponsor

The processing of this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources' "Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives" Project.

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Victor Bockris in 1973.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Correspondence
- Interviews
- Photographs
- Poems
- Writings (documents)

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Bockris, Victor, 1949-
- Smith, Patti

SUBJECT(S)

- Authors
- Authors, American--20th century
- Poetry
- Poets
- Publishers and publishing
- Small presses

Collection Inventory

I. LETTERS TO VICTOR BOCKRIS, 1972.

	Box	Folder
Acey-Moore, 1972.	1	1
Otis-WPVI-TV, 1972.	1	2

II. WRITINGS BY VICTOR BOCKRIS, 1970-1973.

	Box	Folder
"Cadillac Piece," manuscript, 1973.	1	3
"Electric Generation," proposal and drafts, 1973.	1	4
<i>Finished: A Novel</i> (Red Room Books), 1972.	1	5
<i>Pennsylvania Review</i> , No. 1, 1970.	1	6
Poems in <i>Contact</i> , Volumes 1-2 (Red Room Books), 1972.	1	7
Poems in <i>Contact</i> , Volumes 3-4 (Red Room Books), 1972.	1	8
Poems in <i>Contact</i> , drafts of issue and notes (Red Room Books), 1972.	1	9
Poems in <i>Sly</i> (four copies) (Red Room Books), 1972.	1	10

"The Poetry of Performance: An Interview with Patti Smith" (four copies), 1972.	2	1
Unidentified works, notes and drafts, 1972-1973.	2	2

III. WRITINGS BY OTHERS, 1970-1972.

	Box	Folder
Bernstein, Robert, <i>Read It</i> , 1971.	2	3
Elmslie, Kenward, <i>Girl Machine</i> (Angel Hair Books), 1971.	2	4
Fagin, Larry, <i>Landscape and Twelve Poems</i> (Angel Hair Books), 1972.	2	5
Mayer, Bernadette, <i>Moving</i> (Angel Hair Books), 1971.	2	6
Schjeldahl, Peter, <i>An Adventure of the Thought Police</i> (inscribed), 1971.	2	7
Smith, Patti, <i>Kodak</i> (signed), 1972.	2	8
Thomas, Lorenzo, <i>Fit Music</i> (Angel Hair Books), 1970.	2	9
Vermont, Charlie, <i>Two Women</i> (Angel Hair Books), 1971.	2	10
Watt, Marty, <i>Satin Alley Drag</i> (Red Room Books), 1972.	2	11
Wilkie, B., <i>Limits of Space and Time</i> (Angel Hair Books), 1971.	2	12
Multiple authors, <i>The Harris Review</i> and <i>The Telephone</i> , 1972.	2	13

IV. MEMORABILIA, CIRCA 1970-1973.

	Box	Folder
Die, a "Quiet" sign, and review of <i>In America</i> , by Bockris, in <i>The Drummer</i> , circa 1970-1973.	2	14
Photographs and cover, possibly for "Back from Boston", circa 1970-1973.	2	15
Poetry readings, programs and publicity, 1972.	2	16