

Martha Millet papers

Ms. Coll. 1226

Finding aid prepared by Sam Allingham.

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

2016 July 29

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Millet, Martha
Title	Martha Millet papers
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1226
Date [inclusive]	1920-1997
Extent	8 linear feet (13 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Martha Millet (1918-2004) was a poet and literary critic active in the Communist Party USA. Along with her second husband, noted pamphleteer and left-wing journalist Sender Garlin (1902-1999), she was a frequent contributor to Marxist, Communist, and left-leaning journals, and published several books of poetry. This collection includes 9 boxes of material related to her poetic and political writings. It contains most of her poetic and critical work in manuscript form; copies of journals and anthologies to which she contributed; scrapbooks assembled by Millet to commemorate her publications; documents from the Helsinki Peace Conference of 1955 which Millet attended; work by her husband, Sender Garlin, as well as a transcript of his FBI file; and works by others, including the transcripts of Ezra Pounds WWII era radio broadcasts, which Millet used to write a book attacking Pound's political thought.</p>

Cite as:

Martha Millet papers, 1920-1997, Ms. Coll. 1226, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Martha Millet was a poet, Marxist literary critic, and radical political activist. Born in the Bronx in 1918 to Russian immigrants, Millet was raised by her father, a founding member of the Communist Party USA, and became a member of the Young Communist League as a teenager. She married at nineteen, divorced, and in 1944 married her second husband, Sender Garlin, a well-known Marxist journalist and pamphleteer with whom she had two children. During the 1930s and 40s, Millet was a regular contributor to prominent Marxist periodicals, but after World War II the McCarthyite blacklists – as well as Millet’s own opposition to the poetic and literary trends of the day - made it difficult for her to find an audience. Most of her manuscripts, including a revisionist history of Ezra Pound’s sociopolitical perspective and Fascist radio broadcasts, were never published. She did succeed in publishing several books of poems: *Thine Alabaster Cities* (1952) and *Dangerous Jack : a Fantasy in Verse* (1953) – as well as a poetic anthology, *The Rosenbergs: Poems of the United States* (1957). Millet also found some success in China and the Soviet Bloc; while her *Collected Poems* never appeared in America, a Chinese translation appeared in 1957, and she was featured among other radical poets in a Czech anthology in 1959. She also carried on an active life as a teacher, especially at the Jefferson School for Social Science, an adult education institution in New York City supported by the Communist Party USA. During her later life, Millet and Garlin moved to Colorado, where they were active in political circles, and where Millet contributed columns and editorials to local newspapers.

Scope and Contents

This collection includes material related to Martha Millet’s poetic, critical, and political work. It contains most of her poetic and critical work in manuscript form; copies of journals and anthologies to which she contributed; scrapbooks assembled by Millet to commemorate her publications; documents from the Helsinki Peace Conference of 1955, which Millet attended; work by her husband, political journalist Sender Garlin, as well as a transcript of his FBI file; and works by others, including the transcripts of Ezra Pound’s WWII era radio broadcasts, which Millet used to write a book attacking Pound’s political thought. It also includes a small but significant amount of correspondence between Millet and editors of prominent Marxist journals, as well as with the translator of the Chinese edition of her *Collected Poems*. The collection will be of particular interest to researchers looking for insight into the intersection between

Marxist thought and poetic experimentation among Communist and left-leaning American writers during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, and how these intersections played out within the thriving community of Marxist and Marxist-affiliated journals and magazines.

Administrative Information

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

2016 July 29

Finding aid prepared by Sam Allingham.

Access Restrictions

The bulk of this collection is open for research use. However, access to original audio/visual materials and computer files is restricted. The Kislak Center will provide access to the information on these materials from duplicate master files. If the original does not already have a copy, it will be sent to an outside vendor for copying. Patrons are financially responsible for the cost. The turnaround time from request to delivery of digital items is about two weeks for up to five items and three to seven weeks for more than five items. Please contact Reprographic Services (reprogr@upenn.edu) for cost estimates and ordering. Once digital items are received, researchers will have access to the files on a dedicated computer in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center. Researchers should be aware of specifics of copyright law and act accordingly.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Source of Acquisition

Sold by Bolerium Books, 2015.

Related Materials

Separated Materials note

Box 12 of this collection held microfilms of Ezra Pound transcripts of short wave broadcasts from Rome, 1941 Dec. 7-1943 July 25. The originals are held at the Library of Congress. They were published in 1977 in this collection: http://franklin.library.upenn.edu/record.html?id=FRANKLIN_455022. The microfilms in this collection were deaccession and box 12 no longer exists.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Audiovisual materials
- Correspondence
- Scrapbooks
- Writings (documents)

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Garlin, Sender
- Millet, Martha

SUBJECT(S)

- American literature--History and criticism
- American literature--Periodicals
- American poetry--20th century
- Anti-communist movements--United States--History
- Authors, American--20th century
- Communism--United States
- Literature
- Poetry
- Poets, American--20th century
- Women authors
- Women poets

Collection Inventory

SERIES I. WRITINGS AND NOTES.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains notes, manuscripts, and typescripts related to Millet's writing, including poetry, plays, criticism, editorials published in periodicals, translations, and anthologies which Millet edited. All works are arranged chronologically. The majority of Millet's works were not published in her lifetime, and many of the poems and essays recur – sometimes with revisions – in several manuscripts. The critical manuscripts provide a picture of Millet's attitude toward what she saw as the poetry establishment, her antipathy toward many of its main figures, including James Tate, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound, and her complicated feelings towards the literary experimentation associated with Modernism. This series also contains correspondence related to Millet's poetry and political writing, including issues debated within leftist political and artistic circles, such as segregation and the representation of working-class struggle. Millet's correspondence with the editors of *Masses and Mainstream* over her poem concerning Emmett Till is of particular interest, as is her discussion with a Chinese translator concerning the Chinese edition of her *Collected Poems*.

A. POETRY MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
Various poems, typescript, 1931-1947.	1	1
Various poems, typescript, 1934-1954.	1	2-4
Uncollected poems, typescript, 1934-1977.	1	5-6
<i>Untoward Ways</i> and various poems, typescript, 1943-1979.	1	7
<i>Many Dawns</i> with notes on <i>Kid with a Kazoo</i> , typescript, 1952-1953.	1	8

<i>Many Dawns</i> typescript, 1953.	1	9
Poems and translations, typescript, 1954-1968.	1	10
<i>Kid with a Kazoo</i> typescript, 1958-1959.	1	11
<i>Kid with a Kazoo</i> early draft, circa 1958.	1	12
Various poems, typescript, 1966-1967.	1	13
Notebook of poetry drafts, 1967-1971.	1	14
<i>Chain Reaction</i> , <i>Fragments for a Civilization</i> , various poems, typescript, 1968-1969.	1	15
<i>Chain Reaction</i> typescript, circa 1969.	1	16
<i>American Century</i> , vol. 1, typescript, 1972-1977.	1	17
<i>American Century</i> , vol. 2, typescript, 1972-1977.	1	18
<i>Untoward Ways</i> typescript, 1979.	1	19
Correspondence concerning Martha Millet's poetry, 1946-1980.	1	20

B. THEATER MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
<i>Genesis</i> , <i>Genesis</i> typescript, 1966.	2	1-4
<i>Genesis</i> , <i>Genesis</i> notebooks, 1966.	2	5

C. ANTHOLOGY MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
<i>Freedom Poems</i> typescript, 1935-1938.	2	6
<i>Freedom Poems</i> vol. II, typescript, 1935-1938.	2	7
<i>Men and the Sea</i> typescript, 1944-1950.	2	8
<i>Men and the Sea</i> vol. II, 1944-1950.	2	9
Correspondence concerning <i>Men and the Sea</i> , 1945-1965.	14	12

D. CHILDRENS' MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
Homemade manuscripts for Millet's children, circa 1951.	2	10
Various typescripts of work for children, 1952-1959.	2	11
Various grammar exercises, circa 1956.	2	12
Manuscripts of poems for children, 1999.	14	11

E. CRITICAL MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
Notes for a work on Eliot, after 1955.	2	12
Literary essays, typescript, circa 1959.	2	13
Literary essays, typescript, circa 1959.	2	14
Notes for a work on James Tate and the New Critics, circa 1959.	2	15-16
<i>The Troll King: Studies in Contemporary Poetry</i> typescript, 1959.	3	1-2

Correspondence concerning <i>The Ezra Pound Myth</i> , 1967-1968.	3	3
Application for grant from the Rabinowitz Foundation to complete <i>The Ezra Pound Myth</i> , 1968.	3	4-6
Correspondence concerning <i>The Ezra Pound Myth</i> , 1969-1979.	3	7
<i>The Ezra Pound Myth</i> typescript, 1971.	3	8-10
Notes on <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> for a work on slavery, 1979.	3	11

F. POLITICAL MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
Correspondence with editors of <i>Masses and Mainstream</i> concerning Millet's poem about Emmett Till, 1955-1956.	3	12
Letter to the Editor of <i>Manhattan Tribune</i> , 1968.	3	13
Essays for <i>the Daily Worker</i> , 1968.	3	14
Essays for <i>the Daily World</i> , 1976-1978.	3	15
Columns by Millet for the <i>Colorado Daily</i> , 1982.	3	16
Letters to the Editor by Millet, published in various Colorado newspapers, 1982-1984.	3	17
Letters to the Editor by Millet, published in various Colorado newspapers, 1985-1995.	3	18

G. TRANSLATED MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
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Correspondence and notes concerning Chinese translation of Millet's work, 1955-1960.	4	1
Chinese translation of Millet's <i>Collected Poems</i> , 1957.	4	2
Correspondence to Millet from China, 1958-1964.	4	3

H. PROSE MANUSCRIPTS.

	Box	Folder
<i>The Last of the Lemmings</i> typescript, 1967.	4	4

I. UNCATEGORIZED MANUSCRIPTS AND NOTES.

	Box	Folder
Letters from literary figures supporting Millet's application for a Houghton-Mifflin fellowship, 1945-1949.	4	5
Millet's <i>Magazine Rack</i> columns, 1946-1947.	4	6
Reviews of Millet's work, 1947-1956.	4	7
Miscellaneous poetry and prose manuscripts, 1952-1959.	4	8
Miscellaneous Manuscripts, 1954-1966.	4	9
Miscellaneous manuscripts, 1954-1966.	4	10
Notecards recording Millet's publications up to 1957, circa 1957.	4	11
Notes for unpublished anthology, unknown.	4	12-16
Brief autobiography of Millet for Colorado University at Boulder, after 1980.	4	17

Artistic material collected by Millet, 1926-1946.	8	1
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J. PUBLICATIONS CONTAINING WORK BY MARTHA MILLET.

I. MAGAZINE PUBLICATIONS.

	Box	Folder
<i>The Archer- Jewish Currents</i> , 1954-1969.	5	1
<i>Masses and Mainstream</i> , 1953-1956.	5	2
<i>Mainstream-Trace</i> , 1947-1956.	5	3
Our Women, 1953.	8	2

II. BOOK PUBLICATIONS.

	Box	Folder
<i>Saplings: 1935</i> (collection of work by U.S. high school students), 1935.	14	1
<i>Contemporary American Women Poets</i> , 1936.	14	2
<i>American Women Poets 1937</i> , 1937.	14	3
<i>Music Unheard: an anthology of hitherto unpublished verse</i> , 1939.	14	4
<i>Eros: an anthology of modern love poems</i> , 1939.	14	5
<i>Seven Poets in Search of an Answer</i> , 1944.	14	6
<i>Jewish Life Anthology</i> , 1946-1956, 1956.	14	7

<i>The New Orlando Poetry Anthology</i> , hardback and paperback copies, 1958.	14	8
<i>Pata Rocni Doba (American Radical Poetry)</i> , Czech anthology, 1959.	14	9
Photocopies of books featuring Millet's work, 1935-1956.	14	10

SERIES II. SCRAPBOOKS.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains scrapbooks which Millet made of her own work. Some contain clippings of Millet's poetry and criticism from periodicals, while others collect public response to her published books of poetry, *Thine Alabaster Cities* and *Dangerous Jack*, and the anthology she edited, *Poems for the Rosenbergs*.

	Box	Folder
Millet's magazine publications, 1934-1944.	7	1
Millet's magazine publications, 1944-1953.	6	1
<i>Thine Alabaster Cities</i> , 1952.	10	1-2
Millet's magazine publications, 1953-1955.	6	2
Millet's magazine publications, 1953-1955.	11	2
<i>Dangerous Jack</i> , 1953-1954.	6	3
Scrapbook of Millet's magazine publications, 1955-1971.	6	4
<i>Poems for the Rosenbergs</i> , 1957.	11	1

SERIES III. HELSINKI PEACE CONFERENCE.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains materials related to Millet's participation in the 1955 Helsinki Peace Conference, an international gathering of Communist and leftist activists sponsored by the Soviet government. It includes materials collected by Millet from delegates representing different countries, memorabilia and textiles from the conference (including a rug and a commemorative plate), and a poem Millet wrote in response to her experience.

	Box	Folder
Materials from delegates at the 1955 Helsinki Peace Conference, 1955.	5	4
Textiles from Helsinki Peace Conference, 1955.	5	5
Plate and rug from Helsinki Peace Conference, 1955.		9
Millet poem in response to Helsinki Peace Conference, 1956.	5	6

SERIES IV. SENDER GARLIN MATERIALS.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains material related to Millet's second husband, Sender Garlin. The majority of the material comes from the latter part of Garlin's life, and includes editorials published in Colorado newspapers and audiocassette recordings of talks given by Garlin at KGNU, the Boulder community radio station. The audiocassette recordings are restricted. However, there is some material from Garlin's earlier life, including correspondence with other radicals and a manuscript he gave to Millet near the time of their marriage entitled "The Truth About Readers' Digest." In addition, the series contains Garlin's extensive FBI file, parts of which were redacted by the Bureau.

A note on the audiocassette material: Access to original audio/visual materials and computer files is restricted. The Kislak Center will provide access to the information on these materials from duplicate master files. If the original does not already have a copy, it will be sent to an outside vendor for copying. Patrons are financially responsible for the cost. The turnaround time from request to delivery of digital

items is about two weeks for up to five items and three to seven weeks for more than five items. Please contact Reprographic Services (reprogr@upenn.edu) for cost estimates and ordering. Once digital items are received, researchers will have access to the files on a dedicated computer in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center. Researchers should be aware of specifics of copyright law and act accordingly.

WRITINGS AND CORRESPONDENCE BY AND ABOUT SENDER GARLIN.

	Box	Folder
Sender Garlin correspondence, 1924-1999.	5	7
Articles, Promotional material, and Biographical sketch, 1931-1946.	5	8
Articles by Sender Garlin in Colorado newspapers, 1980-1992.	5	9
Sender Garlin FBI file, 1981.	5	10-14
Posters for talks by Sender Garlin at University of Colorado, Boulder, circa 1982.	8	3
Obituaries for Sender Garlin, 1999.	5	15

AUDIOCASSETTES OF SENDER GARLIN TALKS (RESTRICTED).

	Box	Item
on Labor Day, 1982.	13	17
on Big Bill Haywood, 1982.	13	16
on Scott Nearing, 1984.	13	20
on Joe Hill, 1984-1988.	13	19
on Clarence Darrow, <i>The People's Advocate</i> , 1985.	13	26

Sender Garlin appreciation party at University of Colorado alumni center, 1986.	13	21
on the Colorado Coal Strike, 1987.	13	7
<i>Mark Twain as Social Critic</i> , 1988.	13	24
<i>The Menace of McCarthyism</i> , 1989.	13	3
On Scott Nearing, 1990.	13	1
<i>Three American Radicals</i> , interview on KGNU, 1991.	13	15
on James Reston, KGNU Boulder Community Radio program "Hemispheres", 1992.	13	4
on Mother Jones, on KGNU Boulder Community Radio program "Hemispheres", 1992.	13	5
on Mother Jones, circa 1992.	13	12
on Jack London, 1992.	13	14
<i>War against Labor + Left</i> , KGNU radio broadcast, 1992.	13	22
Sender Garlin Memorial, 1999.	13	2
on Mark Reston, KGNU broadcast for show "Hemispheres", undated.	13	25
on W.E.B. DuBois, undated.	13	23
on Labor and the Media, KGNU radio broadcast, undated.	13	8
on Eugene V. Debs, undated.	13	9
on Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, undated.	13	10

<i>How I Got to Be This Way</i> , KGNU, undated .	13	11
on the Russian Revolution and the movie <i>REDS</i> , undated.	13	18
<i>Sender Reminiscences</i> , undated.	13	13

SERIES V. WRITINGS AND WORKS BY OTHERS.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains work by writers others than Millet and Garlin. It includes microfilm reproductions and typed transcriptions of Ezra Pound's WWII-era radio broadcasts, a collaborative poem produced by Millet's students at the Jefferson School of Social Science, a Chinese translation of William Blake's work inscribed to Millet, and several poems by Nazim Hikmet transcribed by Millet.

	Box	Folder
Ezra Pound quotes collected for <i>The Ezra Pound Myth</i> , 1927-1943.	5	16-18
Ezra Pound radio transcripts with Millet's note, 1941-1943.	5	19-22
Poems by Nazim Hikmet, transcribed by Millet, circa 1955.	5	23
Collective poem by Millet's poetry workshop at the Jefferson School of Social Science, 1955.	5	24
Chinese translation of William Blake, inscribed to Millet, 1957.	5	25