

PAULA COOPER GALLERY



Peter Moore, *Charlotte Moorman and Takehisa Kosugi performing "Infiltration Homogen for Cello" by Joseph Beuys, 4th Annual New York Avant Garde Festival, Central Park, 1966*, vintage gelatin silver print. Peter Moore Photography Archive, Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University Libraries. © Northwestern University.

March 21, 2022—Paula Cooper Gallery is delighted to announce the acquisition of the Peter Moore Photography Archive by Northwestern University Libraries.

The archive spans the length of Moore's photographic career, from his college years in the 1950s to his death in 1993. Encompassing Moore's photographs of avant-garde art and performance in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, his documentation of the destruction of Penn Station (1962-66), and his work as a photographer of painting and sculpture for a generation of artists, the archive provides a diverse and multifaceted view of an extraordinarily talented photographer of a particular time and place.

Moore moved to New York at the beginning of a vibrant period in art and performance, and took on the unique and important role of documenting the exhilarating environment into which he arrived. Many significant events were captured by Moore and are known largely through his images. A few examples include *New Cinema Festival 1* in 1965 (known colloquially as the *Expanded Cinema Festival*) and the groundbreaking theatrical productions of Robert Wilson, such as *Einstein on the Beach*, his collaboration with Philip Glass, performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1976 and 1984.

Moore's best-known work is his documentation of avant-garde events performed, for the most part, in and around New York City. Encompassing experimental genres such as Fluxus, Happenings, Judson Dance Theater performances, and video and multimedia art, the archive includes images of performances by notable artists such as Trisha Brown, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Bill Dixon, Philip Glass, Allan Kaprow, Joan Jonas, George Maciunas, Meredith Monk, Charlotte Moorman, Claes Oldenburg, Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik, Yvonne Rainer, and Robert Rauschenberg, among many others.

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The destruction of Penn Station, once a grand and dramatic entrance to New York City, was a preservationist catastrophe that helped save subsequent architectural masterpieces slated for demolition. Peter Moore took on the singular task of documenting this process over a period of four years, returning to the gradually shrinking building as its layers were peeled off to reveal a steel skeleton, and photographing in both black and white and color in various film formats. In 2000, seven years after Moore's death, a selection of the black and white photographs was published in a book edited and with an introduction by Barbara Moore. *The Destruction of Penn Station* was reissued and is now out of print. Moore's color photographs from this project were only recently uncovered in the years since its publication.

Simultaneous to these endeavors, Moore worked as a photographer documenting the work of New York painters and sculptors. Richard Serra, Louise Bourgeois, and Nancy Graves are some of the artists Moore worked with consistently, sometimes bridging two photographic categories, as with the documentation of the sculpture of Nam June Paik, who Moore also captured in performance. The extensive coverage of this material itself forms an incredible body of work for research into the artists who hired Moore.

The Archive includes approximately 15,000 master contact sheets and corresponding rolls of black and white film, more than 5,000 color transparencies, and related ephemera. In addition to those significant bodies of work mentioned above, revealing the influence of Life magazine and the photo essay format, the archive also contains Moore's extensive street photography and witty images of signage, press coverage for the New School, and family photographs.

The Peter Moore Photography Archive is a key addition to Northwestern's Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections and University Archives, which has a core strength in the study of the 1960s, particularly avant-garde art. Moore's archive joins the archives of performance artist Charlotte Moorman, Fluxus co-founder Dick Higgins, artist and graphic designer Jim McWilliams, composers John Cage and Philip Corner, and most recently, artist Geoffrey Hendricks. Moore's unmatched photographic archive documenting New York's blossoming art community in the 1960s will bridge and provide continuity and context for the Libraries' existing archival holdings.

As with all collections at Northwestern University Libraries, after the collection is processed the Archive will be open to scholars, researchers, and the public. The Libraries are a frequent collaborator with the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern's public art museum, and the Peter Moore Photography Archive will add rich, varied documentation for future exhibitions at the museum, while also functioning as a vital resource for research for Northwestern's Performance Studies, Art History, Dance, and other academic departments.

On February 26, Paula Cooper Gallery in New York will present an exhibition of Moore's photographs, focusing on key festivals, such as the *First New York Theater Rally* (1965), *9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering* (1966), and *Flux Game Fest* (1973) capturing the defiance and spirit of the era's experimental performances. The exhibition will be on view at 521 West 21st Street through March 26.

Peter Moore (b. 1932, London, UK, d. 1993, New York) produced an archive of Fluxus, Judson Dance Theater, and countless Happenings, capturing in his photographs the defiance and spirit of the era's experimental performances. Moore began his career in New York as a photo lab technician at Life magazine, and in the 1970s and 1980s, he wrote prolifically on the mechanics of photography for *Modern Photography* magazine. His work was prominently included in the 1970 show "Happening &

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Fluxus” at the Kölnischer Kunstverein in Cologne, Germany; “Alternative Gestures: Another Look at Dance Photography” at P.S. 1, Long Island City, New York (1978); the Fluxus pavilion at the 1990 Venice Biennale; “In the Spirit of Fluxus” at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1993); the 2nd Lyon Biennale (1993); “Art, Lies and Videotape” at Tate Liverpool (2003); “Simone Forti. Thinking with the Body: A Retrospective in Motion” at the Museum der Moderne in Salzburg (2014); “The City Lost and Found: Capturing New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles: 1960-1980” at the Art Institute of Chicago (2014-15); and the 14th Lyon Biennale (2017), among many others. A large selection of Moore’s photographs were on view at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in the exhibition “Judson Dance Theater: The Work Is Never Done” (2018–2019).

Northwestern University Libraries serve the Evanston, Chicago, and Qatar campuses by providing access to more than 6 million books; 3.5 linear miles of manuscripts, archives, and unique materials; and tens of thousands of journals, databases, and periodicals. Its distinctive holdings include the Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections and University Archives and the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies.