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Descriptive Summary

Identifier: ICU.SPCL.PERLBERGM

Title: Perlberg, Mark. Papers

Date: 1953-2010

Size: 3 linear feet (3 boxes)

Repository: Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract: Mark Perlberg (b. 1929, d. June 23rd, 2008) was a poet, journalist, editor, and educator. In 1968, he co-founded the Poetry Center of Chicago. The collection consists of event announcements and correspondence related to the Poetry Center, materials used in Perlberg’s poetry workshop at the Newberry Library, and drafts of Perlberg’s various essays and poems. In addition, there are posters from Poetry Center events, including two that are autographed (one by Stanley Kunitz and another by Galway Kinnell). Materials date from 1953 to 2010.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Perlberg, Mark. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note

Mark Perlberg was born in 1929 in Palisade, New Jersey. In 1950, he graduated from Hobart College with a degree in English Literature. While taking graduate courses at Columbia University in 1952, he was called to serve in the Korean War. In 1953, he married Anna Backer and, in 1954, he was discharged from the service. He then began his career as a journalist with Time Magazine, relocating to Chicago in 1956. He later worked for Encyclopaedia Britannica, World Book Encyclopedia, and Prism. During this time, he and Anna had two daughters, Katherine Eve and Julie Anna. In 1968, he co-founded the Poetry Center of Chicago, serving as president for 13 years. He also taught a poetry workshop at the Newberry Library for nearly 20 years. Perlberg has five published poetry collections: The Burning Field (1970), The Feel of the Sun (1981), The Impossible Toystore (2000), Waiting for the Alchemist (2009), and Theater of
Memory: New and Selected Poems (2012). Mark Perlberg died on June 23rd, 2008 in Skokie, Illinois. His wife, Anna, was instrumental in bringing his final collection to publication.

**Scope Note**

The Mark Perlberg Papers are organized into 7 series:

Series I: Personal Papers; this series contains some of Perlberg’s important personal documents, including his military discharge papers, permissions and copyright information for his published works, and a copy of his birth certificate. Materials date from 1953 to circa 2008 and are arranged chronologically.

Series II: Correspondence; this series contains Perlberg’s personal as well as profession correspondence. The bulk of his personal correspondence is in regards to his poetry while the bulk of his professional correspondence consists of official communications between the Poetry Center of Chicago and various other institutions, including the Museum of Contemporary Art and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Materials date from 1967 to 2010 and are arranged first by type (personal followed by professional), then chronologically.

Series III: Writings; this series contains typescript and holograph drafts of Perlberg’s various essays and poems. Materials date from 1965 to 2008 and are arranged first by type (essays followed by poems), then alphabetically by title.

Series IV: Publicity and Reviews; this series contains publicity information and advertisements as well as literary reviews of Perlberg’s poetry. Materials date from 1977 to 2010 and are arranged first by type (publicity followed by reviews), then alphabetically by the title of the work being reviewed.

Series V: Poetry Center of Chicago; this series contains numerous documents pertaining to the administration of the Poetry Center of Chicago, including an annual report, development prospectus, and event announcements. Materials date from 1978 to 2001 and are arranged chronologically.

Series VI: Newberry Library, Poetry Workshop; this series contains mostly course plans, pamphlets, and course evaluations of Perlberg’s poetry workshop sponsored by the Newberry Library. Materials date from 1986 to 2003 and are arranged chronologically.

Series VII: Oversize; this series contains newspaper clippings of reviews for Perlberg’s book entitled The Burning Field as well as posters for events hosted by Poetry Center of Chicago in
its early years. Also included is a photograph of the Poetry Center founders. Materials date from 1970 to circa 1980 and are arranged chronologically.

**Related Resources**
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Poetry Center of Chicago. Records

Chicago Review. Records

Poetry: A Magazine of Verse. Records

**Subject Headings**
- Perlberg, Mark, 1929-
- Poetry Center of Chicago
- Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, Ill.)
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- Newberry Library
- Illinois Arts Council
- Poetry

**INVENTORY**

**Series I: Personal Papers**

**Box 1**
**Folder 1**
  Letter of Recommendation (from van Doren), 1953

**Box 1**
**Folder 2**
  Military Discharge Papers, 1954

**Box 1**
**Folder 3**
  Clippings, 1955

**Box 1**
**Folder 4**
  Copyrights and Permissions, 1976-2009

**Box 1**
**Folder 5**
  Birth Certificate (copy), 1983

**Box 1**
**Folder 6**
  Biographical Information and CV – Typescript drafts, undated
Series II: Correspondence

Box 1
Folder 7
Perlberg, Mark (regarding his writing and editing), 1967-2008

Box 1
Folder 8
Perlberg, Mark (regarding Lannan Residency), 2002

Box 1
Folder 9
Perlberg, Mark (regarding his death), 2008-2010

Box 1
Folder 10
Poetry Center – General, 1975-2004

Box 1
Folder 11
Poetry Center – Illinois Arts Council, 1980

Box 1
Folder 12

Box 1
Folder 13
Poetry Center – Museum of Contemporary Art, 1994-1996

Box 1
Folder 14
Poetry Center – School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 1996

Series III: Writings

Box 1
Folder 15
Essays – Autobiographical Essay – Typescript draft with holograph notes, 1990

Box 1
Folder 16
Essays – “The Growth and Popularity of Poetry Workshops” – Typescript drafts, undated

Box 1
Folder 17
Essays – “Janacek’s Diary of One Who Vanished” – Typescript draft, 1961

Box 1
Folder 18
Essays – “Some Thoughts on Translating Chinese Poetry” – Typescript drafts, undated

Box 1
Folder 19

Box 1
Folder 20
Poems – “Nightsweat” and other poems – Typescript and holograph drafts, 1995
Box 1
Folder 21
Poems – “Odyssey Variations” and other poems – Typescript and holograph drafts, undated
Box 1
Folder 22
Poems – “Song of the Platelets” – Typescript and holograph drafts, 2008

Series IV: Publicity and Reviews

Box 1
Folder 23
Publicity – Flyers, newsletters, clippings, holograph notes, 1977-2005
Box 1
Folder 24
Publicity – Postcard – Theater of Memory, 2012
Box 1
Folder 25
Reviews – The Burning Field, 1970
Box 1
Folder 26
Reviews – The Feel of the Sun, 1982
Box 1
Folder 27
Reviews – The Impossible Toystore, 2000-2001
Box 1
Folder 28
Box 1
Folder 29
Reviews – Waiting for the Alchemist, 2009-2010

Series V: Poetry Center of Chicago

Box 2
Folder 1
Seasonal programs, 1978-2001
Box 2
Folder 2
Annual report, 1980
Box 2
Folder 3
Program evaluation report, circa 1980
Box 2
Folder 4
Resolution by members and board of directors, 1980
Event announcements, 1986-1997

Box 2
Folder 6
Event programs, 1988-1999

Box 2
Folder 7
Lists of readers and contributors, circa 1988-2008

Box 2
Folder 8
Long range plan and development prospectus, 1990-1991

Box 2
Folder 9
Introductions for visiting writers, 2001

Series VI: Newberry Library, Poetry Workshop

Box 2
Folder 10
Pamphlets, 1986-2000

Box 2
Folder 11
Student poems – Typescript drafts with holograph comments, circa 1995-1996

Box 2
Folder 12
Course plans – Typescript drafts and holograph notes, 1995-2000

Box 2
Folder 13
Seminar evaluations, 2002-2003

Box 2
Folder 14
Poems for class, undated

Series VII: Oversize

Box 3
Folder 1
Reviews – The Burning Field – Newspaper Clippings, 1970

Box 3
Folder 2

Box 3
Folder 3
Poetry Center – Photograph of founders, including Mark Perlberg, circa 1970-1980