

# Ruth Fine curatorial records for *Procession: The Art of Norman Lewis*

Collection ID: RG.02.01.13

Finding Aid prepared by Hoang Tran

---



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY  
OF THE FINE ARTS

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts  
118-128 North Broad Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

[archives@pafa.org](mailto:archives@pafa.org)

215-972-2066

Prepared May 2015

## **Summary Information**

<b>Repository</b>	The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Dorothy and Kenneth Woodcock Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Ruth Fine
<b>Title</b>	Ruth Fine curatorial records for Procession: The Art of Norman Lewis
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	2014-2015
<b>Extent</b>	2 record cartons
<b>Location note</b>	
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language of Materials note</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	Small collection of curatorial files for PAFA's 2015 exhibition Procession: The Art of Norman Lewis. Collection is currently restricted.

### **Preferred Citation note**

[identification of item], Title of Collection, Collection ID#, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Art Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

## **Historical note**

*Procession: The Art of Norman Lewis* (1909-1979), is the first comprehensive museum overview of this influential artist, who explored multiple styles and whose extraordinary work spanned several decades of the 20th century. Norman Lewis was a pivotal figure in American art, a participant in the Harlem art community, an innovative contributor to Abstract Expressionism, and a politically-conscious activist. Bringing together works from major international public and private collections, the exhibition is organized with the full support of Lewis' family.

It includes approximately 90 paintings and works on paper dating from the early 1930s through the late 1970s, as well as archival materials from the artist's estate. The exhibition highlights the diverse visual apparatus Lewis explored in parallel groups of works over the course of his career.

The "procession" in the exhibition's title evokes Lewis' intriguing painterly process and highlights a prominent thread that runs through his oeuvre: the procession ritual. Processions were both celebratory and terrifying for Lewis, equally carrying allusions to carnevale and Ku Klux Klan marches. Such duality was at the heart of his artistic practice, which consistently employed modes of representation and abstraction; geometric and organic form; and emotional content ranging from joy to rage.

*Procession* considers the complexity of Lewis' art in its entirety: It examines the role of figuration within Abstract Expressionism, considers how Lewis integrated social issues with abstraction, and highlights the surprising and expressive palette the artist championed throughout his career.

## **Scope and Contents note**

### **Arrangement note**

No arrangement.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Conditions Governing Access note**

Collection is restricted.

The archives reserves the right to restrict access to materials of sensitive nature. Please contact the department for further information.

### **Conditions Governing Use note**

The collection is the physical property of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Archives. The Museum holds literary rights only for material created by Museum personnel or given to the Museum with such rights specifically assigned. For all other

Ruth Fine curatorial records for Procession: The Art of Norman Lewis (RG.02.01.13)

material, literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. Researchers are responsible for obtaining permission from rights holders for publication and for other purposes where stated.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

Records transferred to archives by Ruth Fine, 2016.

**Provenance note**

**Processing Information note**

Processed by Hoang Tran.

**Controlled Access Headings**

Person(s)

Corporate Name(s)

Genre(s)

Geographic Name(s)

Subject(s)

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note**

**Collection Inventory**

Date	Folder Title	Box #
circa 2014-2015	Lending continued with galleries and non-lending people, institutions and galleries	1
circa 2014-2015	Lenders to Procession	2