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Flywheel Community Arts Space Collection and Zine Library

1963 - 2024 (*Bulk:* 1992 - 2015)
33 boxes (34.67 linear feet)
Call no.: MS 1261



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Read collection overview

Background on Flywheel Community Arts Space

BIOGHIST

Scope of collection

The Flywheel collection documents its history from its inception as VAMA in 1998, to its transformation into Flywheel in 1999 and through its continued operation in the early to mid 2000s. These records document the construction and operation of Flywheel's space at 2 Holyoke Street through photographs, correspondence, meeting minutes, digital files, and financial records. In addition, Flywheel and VAMA's programming is reflected through vast amounts of promotional materials such as show flyers, posters, monthly schedules, correspondence, contracts, signage, artwork, and audiovisual materials. These items illustrate the rise of the do-it-yourself (D.I.Y.) music scene in Easthampton and Western Massachusetts as well as the national/international underground music community of the late 20th/early 21st century. Established, or soon to be established, "indie" artists such as Versus, Kim Gordon, Lightning Bolt, Ted Leo and the Pharmacists, The Gossip, Pernice Brothers, Dresden Dolls, Pansy Division, High Rise, Bright Eyes, and thousands of experimental artists, filmmakers, and musicians in a variety of genres/mediums from noise, electronic and jazz to hardcore, folk, and punk are represented in printed calendars and flyers. As a volunteer-run, consensus-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization with no paid employees, Flywheel's success depended on small-scale fundraising efforts, volunteers, and community support. This structure is well documented through meeting minutes, fundraising appeals, a website, internal correspondence, signage, and collaboratively-produced guidebooks. In addition to organizational records, there is a large collection of fanzines and underground publications that constituted Flywheel's "infoshop". This collection of over 3,500 publications, which makes up the bulk of the collection, was built over the course of 20 years through donations by volunteers and supporters, show goers, zine

makers, and by being listed in Slingshot, the Berkeley, CA anarchist newspaper.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged.....

Series descriptions

Series 1. Booking and Promotion

1998 - 2024
2 boxes (.8 linear feet)

The booking and promotion series is arranged alphabetically by folder title then chronologically.

The booking and promotion series documents Flywheel’s programming history through band contracts, records of ticket sales, and correspondence, as well as event schedules, fliers, and show posters. The quantity of posters and fliers within the collection illustrate the wide variety of artists, musicians, performers, filmmakers, and bands that travelled through Easthampton during this transitional time in the underground music community. The programming at Flywheel was wide and varied and spanned many genres, styles, and forms including: folk, jazz, punk, hardcore, noise, circus, electronic, psych, film, theater, poetry, and many more. This series also demonstrates Flywheel’s commitment to accessibility through an emphasis on low-cost, all-ages shows, and kid-friendly events.

Series 2. Administrative

1977 - 2025
4 boxes (1.668 linear feet)

The booking and promotion series is arranged alphabetically by folder title then chronologically.

The administrative series illustrates the administrative business of Flywheel through financial and tax documents, meeting minutes, and correspondence, all of which demonstrate Flywheel’s non-traditional structure as a volunteer-run, consensus-based, collectively-run non-profit. This series also contains information on the organizational structure of Flywheel through its by-laws, policies, procedures, and mission statement. A large collection of email from volunteer Jeremy Smith documenting internal discussions is also included.

Series 3. Artwork

1984 - 2020
4 boxes (1.668 linear feet)

The booking and promotion series is arranged alphabetically by folder title then chronologically.

The artwork series is arranged thematically then chronologically. Contents: The artwork series contains artwork generated by local artists as well as everyday show goers who passed through Flywheel’s doors. This artwork is represented in doodle pads and books, non-show posters, paintings, and mixed media artworks. The “Doodle pads” are notebooks that were made available to show-goers to write or doodle freely in, providing valuable insight into the culture of Flywheel and the music scene in general. This series also contains a selection of non-Flywheel show posters, which provides insight into the D.I.Y. music scene in surrounding towns and throughout Western Massachusetts.

Series 4. Audiovisual

1998 - 2020
2 boxes (.8 linear feet)

The Audiovisual series is arranged alphabetically by folder title then chronologically.

The audiovisual series contains print and digital photographs and videotapes generally concentrated around Flywheel’s founding in 1999 and early 21st century. The photographs capture the construction of Flywheel’s original location, performances, and Flywheel-associated volunteers. The digital photographs are concentrated around the renovation and construction of Flywheel’s second location, Easthampton Town Hall, as well as performances and people.

Series 5. Zines and Underground Publications

XXXX-XXXX
4 boxes (1.668 linear feet)

The Zines and Underground Publications series is arranged alphabetically by creator last name, publication name, then chronologically.

SERIES SCOPE NOTE

Inventory

Series 1. SERIES NAME
XXXX-XXXX
X.X boxes (X.XX linear feet)
FOLDER TITLE
XXXX-XXXX
Box BOX NO: FOLDER NO.

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

The collection came to us from

Gift of Flywheel, 2024.

The original collection had been organized...

Separated Material

Zines removed

Processing Information

Processed by Jeremy Smith and Sophia Pylon, 2025.

Language:

English

Copyright and Use (More information)

Cite as: Flywheel Community Arts Space Collection and Zine Library (MS 1261). Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

- Counterculture--Massachusetts
- Easthampton (Mass.)
- Underground music--United States--Massachusetts
- Underground press publications--United States
- Underground press publications--United States--Zines
- Zines

Contributors

- Flywheel Community Arts Space [main entry]
- Smith, Jeremy, 1972-
- Davies, Diana, 1938-
- Millman, Dan
- Harrison, Helen
- Bow, Cindy

Genres and formats

- Agendas (administrative records)
- Bylaws (administrative records)
- Color photographs
- Drawing books
- Electronic documents
- Electronic mail
- Fliers (printed matter)
- Minutes (administrative records)
- Music posters
- Posters
- Sketchbooks
- Videotapes



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