

## OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

**Title:** Joan E. Biren (JEB) Queer Film Museum Collection

**Collection Date(s):** 1931-2010, undated

**Extent and Forms of Material:** 5 cubic feet (8 boxes, 14 oversize folders)

**Creator:** Joan E. Biren

**Abstract:** Joan E. Biren (JEB) is an internationally recognized photographer and documentary artist. She assembled this collection as her Queer Film Museum. It consists of a variety of materials about and associated with queer films, both foreign and domestic.

**Repository:** Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. [archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu) 202-633-3270  
[www.americanhistory.si.edu/archives](http://www.americanhistory.si.edu/archives)

**Collection Number:** AC1216

**Processing Note:** Processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., archives specialist, November, 2010; assisted by Theresa Worden, intern, and supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist.

## INFORMATION FOR USERS OF THE COLLECTION

**Conditions Governing Access:** The collection is open for research use.

**Physical Access:** Researchers must handle unprotected photographs with gloves.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:** Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Reproduction permission from Archives Center: reproduction fees may apply. All duplication requests must be reviewed and approved by Archives Center staff. Potential users must receive written permission from appropriate rights holders prior to obtaining high quality copies.

**Preferred Citation:** Title and date of item, Joan E. Biren (JEB) Queer Film Museum Collection, dates, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, box number X, folder number XX, digital file number XXXXXXXXX

## IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLECTION

**Administrative/Biographical History:** Joan E. Biren (1944-), also known professionally as JEB, is an internationally recognized lesbian photographer and

documentary artist. She grew up in Washington, D.C. graduating from Mount Holyoke College in 1966. She later pursued graduate study at Oxford University and the American University. Biren was a vocal and out lesbian joining the women's liberation in the late 1960s and the lesbian movement in the early 1970s. A member of the Furies, she was an associate of authors Rita Mae Brown and Charlotte Bunch

Biren became known for her photographic documentation of late 20<sup>th</sup> century lesbian culture. Biren published two collections of her photography: *Eye to Eye: Portraits of Lesbians* (1979) and *Making a Way: Lesbians Out Front* (1987). Biren pursued filmmaking in the 1990s through her company Moonforce Media, Inc. She produced and directed the documentaries, *For Love and For Life* (1990) about the 1987 March on Washington and *A Simple Matter of Justice* (1993), about the April 1993 March on Washington. She is the creator (writer, director, and producer) of the award-winning film, *No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon* (2003) on two pioneers of the LGBT movement.

Over many years she assembled a collection of ephemera and materials relating to queer film. One of the accepted definitions of the word queer is, "Of or relating to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, or transgendered people". "Queer film" may be defined as any film or televised entertainment that has as a part of its subject matter or story line anything having to do with or pertinent to homosexuality (male or female), bisexuality, or transgendered people. Biren named her collection the Queer Film Museum and it was displayed in her home. The sign she created and hung on the basement door leading downstairs to the display of her collection (and coincidentally her laundry room) was meant to be ironic and read, "JEB's Queer Film Museum, Dirty Pictures & Clean Laundry". Biren amassed her collection, mostly by purchase, over the course of many years.

Some of the titles in the collection classified as "queer" were not specifically produced with the homosexual audience in mind but have come to be identified with homosexual culture, Greta Garbo's 1931 film *Queen Christina* for instance.

**System of Arrangement:** The material is arranged into two series.

**Series 1: Posters and Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated**

**Series 2, Film Festival Programs, Queer Film Museum Files, and Related Material, 1975-2010, undated**

**Scope and Content:** A comprehensive collection of material relating specifically to queer film. The bulk of the collection consists of ephemera and film posters from theatrical releases in the United States. The collection also contains catalogues from video houses, film festivals, posters, and other material collected by Biren from on-line auction sites. Some of the items have Biren's annotations written within them. The collection contains material associated with United States releases and foreign releases. Production dates are year of first release.

**Series 1: Posters and Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated**, contains posters and ephemera (primarily postcards, pressbooks, production stills, lobby cards, and advertising ephemera) for theatrical productions, both domestic and foreign, documentaries, and posters for film festivals. There is also material relating to televised work and promotional material relating to television stations carrying LGBT related programming. The two subseries are arranged alphabetically.

Subseries 1, Posters, 1966-2010, is arranged by size, then alphabetically within the folder.

Subseries 2, Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated, is arranged alphabetically by production title. This series includes postcards, mailings, lobby cards, pressbooks, advertising ephemera, and one set of trading cards (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*).

**Series 2, Film Festival Programs, Queer Film Museum Files, and Related Material, 1975-2010, undated**, includes film festival catalogues and ephemera related to festivals. This series also contains reference files Biren compiled on the titles in her collection and queer film in general. This series includes a program from the Persistent Vision 2001 convention. The Reel Affirmations catalogues for the years 1993 and 1996 are annotated by Biren.

**Languages:** Some materials are in Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish.

**Acquisition Information:** This collection was donated by Joan E. Biren in 2011.

**Related Archival Materials:** Collections of Joan E. Biren's personal and professional papers are located at Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts. Her work may be found in a number of archival repositories. The National Museum of American History's Archives Center Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Collection #1146 contains an addendum of material donated by Biren in 2011.

**Access Points:**

**Subject/Names:**

Biren, Joan E.

JEB

Moonforce Media, Inc.

**Subject/Topical:**

Bisexuality

Documentary films

Homosexuality

Lesbianism

Motion Pictures

Programs

Television

Transgender people

Transvestites

**Geographic:**

Albany (N.Y.)  
 Austin (Tex.)  
 Berlin (Germany)  
 Chicago (Ill.)  
 Hamburg (Germany)  
 Hollywood (Calif.)  
 Long Island (N.Y.)  
 Los Angeles (Calif.)  
 New York (N.Y.)  
 Olympia (Wash.)  
 Philadelphia (Penn.)  
 Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania)  
 Portland (Ore.)  
 San Francisco (Calif.)  
 Santa Fe (N.M.)  
 Seattle (Wash.)  
 Torino (Italy)  
 Vancouver (Canada)  
 Washington (D.C.)

**Form/Genre:**

Advertisements  
 Lobby cards  
 Motion picture posters  
 Pressbooks  
 Postcards  
 Film festival programs

**Occupations:**

Actors  
 Entertainers

**CONTAINER LISTING**

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
		<b>Series 1: Posters and Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated</b>
		<b><u>Subseries 1, Posters, 1966-2010</u></b>
	OS1	<i>Antonia's Line</i> , 1995
		<i>Better Than Chocolate</i> , 1999
		<i>Bound</i> , 1996
		<i>But I'm a Cheerleader</i> , 1999
		<i>Brother Outsider</i> , 2003
	OS2	<i>Claire of the Moon</i> , 1992

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		<i>Dr. Jekyll &amp; Mistress Hyde</i> , 2003
		<i>Emilienne</i> , 1975
		<i>Even Cowgirls Get the Blues</i> , 1993
		<i>Fire</i> , 1996
		<i>Forbidden Love</i> , 1992
		<i>The Fox</i> , 1967
		<i>French Twist</i> , 1995
OS3		<i>The Celluloid Closet</i> (mounted on foam core), 1995
		<i>Desert Hearts</i> (mounted on foam core), 1985
		<i>Forbidden Love</i> (mounted on foam core), 1992
OS4		<i>Fire</i> , 1996
		<i>The Kids Are All Right</i> , 2010
		<i>No Secret Anymore</i> (mounted on foam core), 2003
		<i>The Real Ellen Story</i> , 1997
OS5		<i>Gia</i> , 1998
		<i>Go Fish</i> , 1994
		<i>The Group</i> , 1966
		<i>High Art</i> , 1998
		<i>The Hours</i> , 2002
		<i>The Times of Harvey Milk</i> , 1984
OS6		<i>If These Walls Could Talk 2</i> , 2000
		<i>The Incredibly True Adventures of 2 Girls in Love</i> , 1995
		<i>I've Heard the Mermaids Singing</i> , 1987
		<i>The Killing of Sister George</i> , 1968
		<i>Kissing Jessica Stein</i> , 2002
OS7		<i>The Killing of Sister George</i> (mounted on foam core), 1968
8		<i>The L Word</i> (bus shelter size poster), 2003
OS8		<i>Lustful Addiction</i> , 2003
		<i>Myra Breckinridge</i> , 1970
		<i>The Rocky Horror Picture Show</i> , re-release, 1998
		<i>The Secrets</i> , 2007
		<i>When Night is Falling</i> , 1995
OS9		<i>Late Bloomer</i> , 2004
		<i>The Legend of Lylah Clare</i> , 1968
		<i>The Monkey's Mask</i> , 2000
		<i>Personal Best</i> , 1982
		<i>Saving Face</i> , 2004
		<i>The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe</i> , 1991
		<i>My Summer of Love</i> , 2004
		<i>Therese and Isabelle</i> , 1968
		<i>When Night is Falling</i> , 1995
		<i>Windows</i> , 1980
		<i>Word is Out</i> , 1977
OS14		<i>Silvia Ama a Raquel</i> , 1978
OS10		Absolut Achievement, Absolut Vodka (banner style advertisement)

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		Absolut Achievement, Absolut Vodka (mounted on foam core)
		15 <sup>th</sup> Queer Film & Video Festival, Vancouver, Canada, 2003
		Torino 18 Festival Internazionale di Film con Tematiche Omosessuali, Torino, Italy, 2003
	OS11	“Queer Film & Video Festival Sing a Long <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> ”, Vancouver, Canada, undated
		Revisions: Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, SUNY, Albany, New York, signed by Laura Catallo, 1991
	OS12	Way Out West, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2004
		“The Second Northwest International Lesbian Gay Film Festival”, Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington (one mounted on foam core), 1989
		“The San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival”, San Francisco, California, 2003
	OS 13	“Seattle Lesbian & Gay Film Festival”, Seattle, Washington (mounted on foam core), 1997
		<b>Subseries 2, Ephemera, 1931-2010, undated</b>
1	1	<i>21</i> , 2002
	2	<i>50 Ways of Saying Fabulous</i> , 2005
5	1	<i>99 Women</i> , publicity still, mounted, 1969
1	3	<i>200 American</i> , 2003
	4	<i>Aimee &amp; Jaguar</i> , 1999
5	2	<i>Aimee &amp; Jaguar</i> , pressbook cover, mounted, 1999
1	5	<i>All My Children</i> , undated
	6	<i>Bad Girls Behind Bars</i> , 2005
	7	<i>Bar Girls</i> , 1995
	8	<i>Bar Talk</i> , 2002
	9	<i>Before Stonewall</i> , 1984
	10	<i>Better Than Chocolate</i> , 1999
	11	<i>Black Aura on an Angel</i> , 2004
	12	<i>Blood and Roses</i> , 1960
	13	<i>Bound</i> , 1996
5	4	<i>Bound</i> , pressbook page, mounted, 1996
1	14	<i>Boys Don't Cry</i> , 1999
	15	<i>Boys on the Side</i> , 1995
	16	<i>Breaking Up Really Sucks</i> , 2001
	17	<i>Brother Outsider</i> , 2003
	18	<i>Brother to Brother</i> , 2004
7		<i>But I'm a Cheerleader</i> and <i>The Eyes of Tammy Faye</i> , beach ball, advertising, undated
1	19	<i>By Hook or By Crook</i> , 2001
	20	<i>The Celluloid Closet</i> , 1995
	21	<i>Chained Girls</i> , 1965
5	5	<i>The Children's Hour</i> , lobby card, mounted, and pressbook, 1961
1	22	<i>Christopher Street</i> , 2002

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	23	<i>Claire of the Moon</i> , 1992
	24	<i>Class Queers</i> , 2003
	25	<i>Club Q: The Legendary Dance Party for Women</i> , 2003
	26	<i>Clean, Sober, and Positive</i> , undated
	27	<i>Dangerous Living – Coming Out in the Developing World</i> , 2003
	28	<i>D.E.B.S.</i> , 2004
	29	<i>Deep Inside</i> , 1981
	30	<i>Desert Hearts</i> , 1985
	31	<i>Desperate Remedies</i> , 1994
	32	<i>Dildo Diaries</i> , 2002
7		DirectTV LOGO, compact mirror, advertising, undated
5	6	<i>The Dirty Girls</i> , publicity still, mounted, 1964
1	33	<i>Divided Loyalties</i> , 2001
	34	<i>Double Dare</i> , 2004
	35	<i>Drag Nuns in Tinseltown</i> , 2005
	36	<i>Eden's Curve</i> , 2003
	37	<i>Farm Family</i> , 2004
	38	<i>The Fluffer</i> , 2001
5	7	<i>The Fourth Sex</i> , lobby card, 1961
	8	<i>The Fox</i> , publicity still and tear sheets, mounted, 1968
	9	<i>The Fox</i> , lobby cards, 1968
	10	<i>The Fox</i> , pressbook, 1967
	11	<i>The Fox, Candid Press</i> newspaper, 1968
1	39	<i>The Fox</i> , 1967
	40	<i>Foxfire</i> , 1995
5	12	<i>La Fuga</i> , lobby card, 1966
1	41	<i>Gasoline</i> , 2003
	42	<i>Gaydar</i> , 2002
	43	<i>Gay Hollywood</i> , 2003
	44	<i>Gay Propaganda</i> , 2002
	45	<i>Gia</i> , 1998
	46	<i>The Gift</i> , 2003
	47	<i>The Girl</i> , 2000
	48	<i>Girl Play</i> , 2004
	49	<i>Go Fish</i> , 1994
	50	<i>Gold</i> , 2005
	51	<i>Hearts Cracked Open</i> , 2004
5	13	<i>Henry &amp; June</i> , publicity still, mounted, 1990
7		here TV, "gay tv is here", necklace with sunscreen, advertisement, undated
1	52	<i>Hide and Seek</i> , 1996
7		<i>High Art</i> , instant 35mm camera, advertising on box, 1998
5	14	<i>High Art</i> , advertisement, mounted, 1998
	15	<i>Higher Learning</i> , lobby card, 1995
	16	<i>Hung Up</i> , lobby card, 1969
1	53	<i>I Am (formerly Out &amp; About)</i> , 2010

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	54	<i>I Want What I Want</i> , 1972
	55	<i>If These Walls Could Talk 2</i> , 2000
5	17	<i>If These Walls Could Talk 2</i> , publicity still, mounted, 2000
	18	<i>If These Walls Could Talk 2</i> , <i>Lesbian News</i> , article, 2000
1	56	<i>In Good Conscience</i> , 2004
	57	<i>In Their Absence</i> , 2003
	58	<i>Just Because of Who We Are</i> , 1986
	59	<i>The Kids Are All Right</i> , 2010
6	1	<i>The Killing of Sister George</i> , pressbook, 1968
1	60	<i>Kissing Jessica Stein</i> , 2002
	61	<i>The L Word</i> , 2003-2005, undated
7		<i>The L Word</i> , paper tiara, advertising, 2003
1	62	<i>Ladies Tea</i> , 2002
	63	<i>The Lancebian</i> , 2002
	64	<i>Late Bloomers</i> , 1996
	65	<i>Laurel Canyon</i> , 2002
	66	<i>Let's Get Frank</i> , 2003
	67	<i>Love Life</i> , 2003
	68	<i>Madchen in Uniform</i> , 1931
6	2	<i>Madchen in Uniform</i> , pressbook cover, mounted, 1931
1	69	<i>Mango Kiss</i> , 2004
	70	<i>Mistaken Identity</i> , 2005
	71	<i>Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing</i> , 2005
	72	<i>My Summer of Love</i> , 2004
	73	<i>Nico and Dan</i> , 2001
	74	<i>No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon</i> , 2003
7		<i>No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon</i> , promotional buttons, 2003
1	75	<i>Not All Parents Are Straight</i> , 1988
	76	<i>On the Low</i> , 2005
	77	<i>Out for a Change: Addressing Homophobia in Women's Sports</i> , 1994
	78	<i>P.S. Your Cat is Dead</i> , 2002
	79	<i>Paternal Instinct</i> , 2004
	80	<i>People Like Us: Making "Philadelphia"</i> , 2003
6	3	<i>Personal Best</i> , lobby card and advertisement, mounted, 1991
1	81	<i>Piki &amp; Poko Adventures in Starland</i> , 2003
	82	<i>The Politics of Fur</i> , 2002
6	4	<i>The Politics of Fur</i> , poster, 2002
1	83	<i>Polyester</i> , 1981
	84	<i>Precious Moments</i> , 2003
	85	<i>Pretty Ladies</i> , 2002
6	5	<i>Prey for Rock and Roll</i> , article from <i>Lesbian News</i> , 2003
2	1	<i>Queen Christina</i> , 1933
6	6	<i>Queen Christina</i> , publicity still, mounted, 1933
	7	<i>Queer as Folk</i> , advertising fans, 2000

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7		<i>Queer as Folk</i> , necklace, advertising, undated
2	2	<i>Queer as Folk</i> , 2000
	3	<i>Queer Son</i> , 1993
	4	<i>The Rocky Horror Picture Show</i> , 1980
	5	<i>Rights and Reactions</i> , 1987
	6	<i>Rise Above</i> , 2003
	7	<i>The Runaway</i> , 1972
6	8	<i>The Seducers</i> , publicity still, mounted, 1970
2	8	<i>Show Me Love</i> , 1999
7		Showtime, cable channel, balloon, advertising, 2002
2	9	<i>Stand By</i> , 2003
	10	<i>Stonewall</i> , 1996
	11	<i>Straight Out</i> , 2003
	12	<i>Summer Blues</i> , 2002
	13	<i>Superfag</i> , 2003
	14	<i>Talk to Her</i> , 2002
	15	<i>The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me</i> , 2000
	16	<i>Therese and Isabelle</i> , 1968
6	9	<i>Therese and Isabelle</i> , publicity still and lobby card, mounted, 1968
2	17	<i>The Times of Harvey Milk</i> , 1984
	18	<i>Tipping the Velvet</i> , 2003
6	10	<i>Tipping the Velvet</i> , lobby card, mounted, 2003
2	19	<i>Tom Clay Jesus</i> , 2002
	20	<i>Trembling Before God</i> , 2001
6	11	<i>The Twilight Girls</i> , lobby card, 1961
2	21	<i>Unhung Heroes</i> , 2002
	22	<i>Venus Boyz</i> , 2002
	23	<i>Wave Babes</i> , 2003
	24	<i>When Night is Falling</i> , 1995
6	12	<i>X Y &amp; Zee</i> , publicity still, mounted, and lobby card, 1972
5	3	Triptych: <i>Better Than Chocolate</i> , <i>Go Fish</i> , and <i>The Incredibly True Adventures of 2 Girls in Love</i> , 1994-1999
		<b>Series 2, Film Festival Catalogues, Queer Film Museum Files, and Related Material, 1975-2010, undated</b>
2	25	"Austin Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival", Austin, Texas, undated
	26	Iris Films Festival, Washington, D.C., 1975
	27	Lesben Film Festival, Berlin, Germany, 2001
	28	Lesbisch-Schwule Filmtage Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany, 2001
	29	Long Island Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Long Island, New York, 2003
	30	National Gay and Lesbian Film Tour, 1991
	31	Netherlands Transgender Film Festival, 2001-2003
	32	Newfest New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, New York, New York, 2003
	33	The 4 <sup>th</sup> Northwest International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Olympia,

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		Washington, 1991
	34-37	Outfest, Los Angeles, California, 1997-2005
	38	"Philadelphia International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival", Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1999
	39	Q Doc Portland Queer Documentary Film Festival, Portland, Oregon, 2007
6	13	"Planet Q, Lesbian & Gay Film Festival", newspaper, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1999
2	40	Portland Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Portland, Oregon, 2003
2	41-52	Reel Affirmations, Washington, D.C., 1991-2004
6	14	Reel Affirmations III, Washington, D.C., 1993
3	1-4	Reel Affirmations, Washington, D.C., 2005-2008
	5	Reeling '96: The Chicago Lesbian and Gay International Film Festival, Chicago, Illinois, 1996
6	15	Rehobeth Beach Independent Film Festival, 1999
3	6-8	San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, San Francisco, California, 1991, 1999, 2001
	9	Southwest Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, 2004
	10	Torino Film Festival, Torino, Italy, 2003
	11	Tranny Fest, San Francisco, California, 2003
	12	Queer Film Museum signage, undated
	13	Queer Film Museum display labels, undated
	14	Inventory, undated
	15	Descriptions, 2002-2004, undated
	16	Movie reviews, 2002-2010, undated
	17	Book reviews, 2004-2005, undated
	18	Articles, 1992-2009, undated
	19	About collecting, undated
	20	Vendors, 2002-2004, undated
	21	JEB's VHS only video collection, undated
4	1	Moonforce Media, 1975-1980
	2	Persistent Vision, 2001
	3	Symposium: Out of the Closet and into the Vaults, 2006
	4	TLA Video catalogues, 1990-2005
	5	Wolfe Video catalogues, 1999, undated
	6	Frameline catalogues, 2002-2003
	7	<i>Out in Video</i> , newsletter, 1991-1993
	8	<i>MW Metro Weekly</i> , 1999
	9	<i>Diva Magazine</i> , April 2002
	10	LVA: Lesbians in the Visual Arts and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society, 2002
	11	Advertisements, 1980-2005, undated
	12	Pamphlets, undated
	13	Reference file: Lesbian and Gay film and video, 1986-1996, undated
	14	Clipping file: LGBT film and video, 1990-2000, undated
6	16	<i>Variety</i> , "Gay Hollywood" article, 2000

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