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Call for Submissions: Announcing the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Correspondence Archive at the Archives of American Art

The Archives of American Art is pleased to announce that we will serve as the leading repository for the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Correspondence Archive. The artist's correspondence—original letters, postcards, snapshots with notes, and other personal communications, sent to his friends, colleagues, and family—share a rich relationship with his work and providing access to this material will benefit future scholarship. The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation has been conducting research and outreach on behalf of the Archives of American Art since 2018. Their visionary efforts will ensure that these primary sources will be preserved and made available for generations to come.

The Archives welcomes contributions from all those who communicated with Felix Gonzalez-Torres in his life to submit materials for consideration. Those wishing to suggest a contribution are invited to contact Liza Kirwin, Interim Director, Archives of American Art at KirwinL@si.edu

About Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Felix Gonzalez-Torres is one of the most significant artists to have emerged in the 1980s. While Gonzalez-Torres referred to himself as American, he was born in Guaimaro, Cuba, in 1957 and raised in Puerto Rico. He moved to New York in 1979 and died of AIDS-related causes in 1996.

Gonzalez-Torres produced quietly provocative, minimal works that utilized a variety of media. His major bodies of work include stacks of sheets of paper, fields of wrapped candies, strings of lights, public billboards, and "portraits" using words and dates. In many cases his work relies on the intellectual and physical involvement of the viewers—to take a piece of candy, remove a sheet of paper, fill in their own memories and associations—to complete the artwork. Many of these works operate in a state of tension between disintegration, dispersion and regeneration, and between private and public. He was a key member of the artist-activist collective GROUP MATERIAL, a collective of artists dedicated to cultural activism whose exhibitions have been presented worldwide.

The artist corresponded with many people over the course of his life and these deeply personal vehicles for communication often have a dynamic relationship with his work. Written on a snapshot by the artist in 1993, Gonzalez-Torres inscribed, "To a year full of justice, blue deep skies, tough beautiful art objects, good gentel [sic] friends, happy children, long unforgettable trips, health, hope, compassion, and more hunger for life." (from *A Selection of Snapshots Taken by Felix Gonzalez-Torres*).

About the Archives of American Art

Founded in 1954, the Archives of American Art fosters advanced research through the accumulation and dissemination of primary sources, unequalled in historical depth and breadth, that document more than 200 years of the nation's artists and art communities. The Archives provides access to these materials through its two research centers, exhibitions, and publications, including Archives of American Art Journal, the longest-running scholarly journal in the field of American art. An international leader in the digitizing of archival collections, the Archives also makes nearly three million images freely available online. The oral history collection includes more than 2,400 audio interviews, the largest accumulation of in-depth, first-person accounts of the American art world.

About the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation

The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation was established in 2002 by the Estate of Felix Gonzalez-Torres. The Foundation maintains, builds, and facilitates knowledge and understanding around the work of Gonzalez-Torres. The Foundation strives to create a multi-pronged, robust archive approach both within and outside the Foundation, with an emphasis on archival practices that respond to the specific nature of experiencing Gonzalez-Torres's work.

The Foundation deeply appreciates the Archives of American Art for its efforts in establishing an accessible context for submissions of Gonzalez-Torres's correspondence material. Various repositories include such correspondence and related materials, either as part of recipients' papers, collections held in museums, libraries, archives, or private holdings. The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation respects the individual's choice of where to situate their material and is committed to creating an index of correspondence in its multiple locations.