



Guide to the Austine Wood Comarow Papers

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University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.

Box 457010

4505 S. Maryland Parkway

Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-7010

special.collections@unlv.edu

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Comarow, Austine Wood
Title:	Austine Wood Comarow Papers
ID:	MS-01239
Date [inclusive]:	1971 to 2005
Physical Description:	2.98 Cubic Feet (4 boxes and 1 flat file)
Physical Description:	2.50 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Austine Wood Comarow Papers (1971-2005) consist of newspaper and magazine articles, press releases, brochures, artwork reproductions, exhibit promotions, and audiovisual material relating to the career of artist Austine Wood Comarow. The materials detail Comarow's career through correspondence with galleries and collaborators, price lists, resumes, and interviews, and document the development of Comarow's signature art form, Polage, which uses polarized light and cellulose to create colorful images. The audiovisual material includes interviews, news stories, lectures, and gallery displays of Comarow's work.

Preferred Citation

Austine Wood Comarow Papers, 1971-2005. MS-01239. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada. <http://n2t.net/ark:/62930/f1tr38>

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Biographical Note

Born in Louisville, Kentucky on November 10, 1942, artist Austine Wood Comarow began developing a new light-based art medium called Polage in 1967. Comarow discovered that putting clear cellulose between polarized light filters created images that shifted colors as the viewer

moved positions. Known professionally as Austine, Comarow and her husband David opened a studio and gallery in Boulder City, Nevada in 1985.

A large-scale, 75-foot-long Polage mural is displayed at the Spring Mountains Visitor Center at Mt. Charleston, just outside of Las Vegas, Nevada. Austine's art also appears in the permanent collections of museums such as the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science; Museum of Science, Boston; and Swarthmore College; as well as private collections around the world.

Austine Wood Comarow passed away suddenly at age 77 on July 31, 2020. Her daughters, Cara Wood Ginder and Erika Wood, continued her legacy at Austine Studios until 2025, and later created Lightread Studios to continue the Polage art form.

Sources:

Austine Studios. "About Austine." Accessed June 29, 2026. <https://www.austine.com/aboutaustine>

The Library District. "Three Generations of Polarized Light Art." September 20, 2025. <https://thelibrarydistrict.org/blogs/post/cara-wood-ginder-three-generations-of-polage-art/>

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Scope and Contents Note

The Austine Wood Comarow Papers (1971-2005) consist of newspaper and magazine articles, press releases, brochures, artwork reproductions, exhibit promotions, and audiovisual material relating to the career of artist Austine Wood Comarow. The materials detail Comarow's career through correspondence with galleries and collaborators, price lists, resumes, and interviews, and document the development of Comarow's signature art form, Polage, which uses polarized light and cellulose to create colorful images. The audiovisual material includes interviews, news stories, lectures, and gallery displays of Comarow's work.

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Arrangement

Materials are arranged in chronological order.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research. Advanced notice is required for access to audiovisual materials. Please contact Special Collections and Archives for more information.

Publication Rights

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Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 2026 by David Comarow; accession number 2026-055.

Appraisal Note

Acquired by Aaron Mayes, Visual Materials Curator, as part of UNLV Special Collections and Archives holdings on art and artists in Nevada. All material that formed the original gift has been retained.

Processing Note

In 2026, Landon Paljusaj rehoused the materials and wrote the description in ArchivesSpace. Original folders with the creator's labels were retained where possible, and loose materials were foldered with devised titles.

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Names and Subjects

- women artists
- Art
- Boulder City (Nev.)
- Las Vegas (Nev.)

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Artwork reproductions, newspaper and magazine articles, press releases, exhibition reviews, and promotional materials, 1971 to 1992	box 01 oversized flat file box 04 SH-086
Artwork reproductions, newspaper and magazine articles, press releases, exhibition reviews, and promotional materials, 1992 to 2002	box 02
Artwork reproductions, newspaper and magazine articles, press releases, exhibition reviews, and promotional materials, 2002 to 2005	box 03
Audiovisual materials, 1981 to 1999	box 05
Physical Description: 40 VHS Tapes	
Physical Description: 2 Optical Discs	
General Note: A donor-provided inventory of titles is available upon request.	