



# ArchivesSpace

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## Robert Lavigne papers 4079553

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 14, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

### Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor  
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127  
535 W. 114th St.  
New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

[rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu](mailto:rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu)

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
<b>Creator:</b>	LaVigne, Robert, 1928-2014
<b>Title:</b>	Robert Lavigne papers
<b>ID:</b>	4079553
<b>ID:</b>	MS#0747
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1954-1969
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3 linear feet 2 document boxes 1 map case drawer
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	The papers of artist and Beat Generation figure Robert LaVigne. The collection contains correspondence, artwork, and event invitations.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Robert Lavigne papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Robert LaVigne (1928-2014) was a painter, illustrator, and theatrical set designer associated with the Beat Generation and poets of the San Francisco Renaissance.

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## Biographical / Historical

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LaVigne was born in St. Maries Idaho in 1928, but moved to San Francisco in 1951. There he became associated with a number of poets and counter-culture figures centered around the North Beach neighborhood of San Francisco, including Michael McClure, Philip Whalen, and Peter Orlovsky.

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## Biographical / Historical

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LaVigne met Orlovsky in a coffee shop in San Francisco and almost immediately took the younger man as his muse, bringing him to live with him as a model and lover. It was at LaVigne's studio that Allen Ginsberg first met and subsequently fell in love with Peter Orlovsky-- first his image in a large, nude portrait that LaVigne had painted, and then with the young man himself.

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## Biographical / Historical

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In San Francisco LaVigne worked as a painter, illustrator and a set designer for the San Francisco Actors Workshop. He also worked as the Art Director of the Auerhahn Press-- a small fine press that focused on the work of the San Francisco Renaissance poets.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Like many members of the Beat Generation, LaVigne moved between coasts, leaving San Francisco for New York in the 1960s. While working in New York he was a pioneer of the painting style known as psychedelic painting, and continued to work in the theater, earning an Obie award for Best Design for his work on A Midsummer Nights Dream and Endicott and the Red Cross.

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## Biographical / Historical

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LaVigne eventually returned to the west coast, moving to Seattle in the early 1980s. He died in Seattle on February 20, 2014.

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## Summary

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The Robert LaVigne Papers include correspondence, artwork, manuscripts, and event announcements related to the work of Robert LaVigne and his group of friends.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged in 3 series.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

### **Revision Description**

xml document instance created by Carrie Hintz EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2010-06-26 2019-05-20

### **Custodial History**

Kerouac letter to A. Brown, 23 March 1969, was returned to the Gotham Book Mart, 1 Dec. 1975. KAL/MBB

### **Restrictions on Access**

This collection is located on-site.

### **Restrictions on Access**

This collection has no restrictions.

### **Terms Governing Use and Reproduction**

Reproductions may be made for research purposes. The RBML maintains ownership of the physical material only. Copyright remains with the creator and his/her heirs. The responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Papers: Method of acquisition--Purchase; Date of acquisition--1985. Accession number--M-1985.

### **Processing Information**

Papers Processed HR 09/--/1985.

### **Processing Information**

Papers Reprocessed Carrie Hintz 06/--/2010.

### **Processing Information**

Finding Aid Written Carrie Hintz 06/--/2010.

## Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared.  
Contact [rbml@columbia.edu](mailto:rbml@columbia.edu) for more information.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- American poetry -- 20th century
- Art
- Authors, American -- 20th century
- Avant-garde (Aesthetics)
- Beats (Persons)
- Poets, American -- 20th century
- Theater
- Bohemianism -- United States
- Announcements
- Book jackets
- Catalogs
- Costume design drawings
- Drawings (visual works)
- Poems
- Portraits
- Prefaces
- Set design
- Sketches
- watercolors (painting)
- Woodcuts (prints)
- Artists
- Authors
- Designers
- Illustrators
- Poets
- Cassady, Neal
- Conner, Bruce
- Corso, Gregory
- Ginsberg, Allen, 1926-1997
- Kerouac, Jack, 1922-1969
- Lamantia, Philip, 1927-2005
- McClure, Michael
- Malanga, Gerard
- Olson, Charles, 1910-1970

- Orlovsky, Peter, 1933-2010
- Plymell, Charles
- Whalen, Philip
- Wieners, John, 1934-2002

## Collection Inventory

### Series I: Correspondence and Manuscripts, 1954-1969

#### Scope and Contents

This series is comprised of letters and manuscripts composed by Robert LaVigne and his friends and associates. Because so many of LaVigne's friends were writers, there is a significant set of poetry manuscripts included on this series that were given to or reviewed by LaVigne.

Title/Description	Instances	
Aldan, Daisy-- "Christmas"	box 1	folder 1
Brukenfield, Richard to Gregory Corso, 13, November 1956	box 1	folder 2
Cassady Neal to LaVigne, 24, March 1958	box 1	folder 3
Corso, Gregory to LaVigne, undated and 1957-1958 (4 letters), undated, 1957-1958	box 1	folder 4
Dine, Jim to John Hancock, undated	box 1	folder 5
Doyle, Kirby and Lew Welch to LaVigne, 1961 May 13	box 1	folder 6
Ginsberg, Allen		
to LaVigne, undated and 1960-1968 (4 letters), undated, 1960-1968	box 1	folder 7
<i>Empty Mirror</i> Typescript, 1961	box 1	folder 8
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
(with notes and corrections by LaVigne)		
Poems, 1955-1961	box 1	folder 9
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
(including some omitted from <i>Empty Mirror</i> and "Record of Dream 6 June 1955")		
Preface to LaVigne's LION Exhibition, 1958 May 25	box 1	folder 10
Recipe for Spaghetti with Clam Sauce, undated	box 1	folder 11
Ginsberg, Louis to LaVigne, 1957	box 1	folder 12
Lamantia, Philip		



to LaVigne, undated and 1962-1964, undated, 1962-1964	box 1	folder 13
"Blue Grace", undated	box 1	folder 14
<b>Scope and Contents</b> (poem, with corrections)		
Draft of Text for Poster Advertising a Poetry Reading, undated	box 1	folder 15
LaVigne, Robert		
To Andreas Brown, 1969 (3 letters), 1969	box 1	folder 16
<i>The Dangerous Garden of Robert LaVigne</i>	box 1	folder 17
<b>Scope and Contents</b> (poems by a number of individuals, including Allen Ginsberg, inspired by LaVigne's art)		
Prologue to <i>Endicott and the Red Cross</i>	box 1	folder 18
McClure, Michael		
To LaVigne, undated (5 letters), undated	box 1	folder 19
"Introduction to the Poems of John Wieners", 1958	box 1	folder 20
<b>Scope and Contents</b> (two drafts)		
Poems, undated and 1959, undated, 1959	box 1	folder 21
Malanga, Gerard		
To Lavigne, undated	box 1	folder 22
Poems	box 1	folder 23
Orlovsky, Peter to LaVigne, 1954-1965	box 1	folder 24
Plymell, Charles-- Poems, undated and 1963, undated, 1963	box 1	folder 25
Rexroth, Kenneth-- Libretto for the ballet <i>Original Sin</i> , undated	box 1	folder 26
<b>Scope and Contents</b> (ballet commissioned by the San Francisco Ballet- file contains the first act)		
Sanders, Ed-- [Poem on the Death of His Mother], 1964	box 1	folder 27
Snow, John to Allen Ginsberg, undated	box 1	folder 28
Whalen, Philip		
To LaVigne, 1957-1964	box 1	folder 29

"Against the Magic War: An Open Letter to Robert Duncan," 1957	box 1	folder 30
Wieners, John		
To LaVigne, undated and 1965, undated, 1965	box 2	folder 1
Poems, 1958	box 2	folder 2

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## Series II: Artwork, 1956-1965

### Scope and Contents

This series includes paintings, sketches, prints, and paintings done by LaVigne, as well as artwork created by his friends. This series includes some of LaVigne's artwork, but also some of his design work including book cover designs and four costume designs for a performance of Picasso's *Desire Caught by the Tail*.

Title/Description	Instances	
Corso, Gregory		
Ink Sketches	box 2	folder 3
Kerouac, Jack		
Sketches, 1956	box 2	folder 4
Ginsberg, Allen-- sketches, 1963	box 2	folder 5
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
(one watercolor sketch)		
LaVigne, Robert		
Cover Designs for <i>Human Universe</i> by Charles Olsen,, 1965	box 2	folder 6
Cover Design for <i>The Hotel Wentley Poems</i> by John Wieners, 1957	box 2	folder 7
Costume Designs for <i>Desire Caught by the Taik</i>		
Big Foot. Arlequino, Handyman, 1967	mapcase 14-E-7	
Naked. A Skinny Anguish of Red Inner Tube, 1967	mapcase 14-E-7	
Silence, 1967	mapcase 14-E-7	
Tart, 1967	mapcase 14-E-7	
Preliminary Sketches of the Album Cover of <i>Allen Ginsberg Reads From Howl and Kadish</i>	box 2	folder 8

Sketches, 1954-1956	box 2	folder 9
Sketches of Peter Orlovsky, 1954 April- June, 1954	mapcase 14-E-7	
Watercolor portrait of Allen Ginsberg, 1971	mapcase 14-E-7	
Oversized Painting	item 13: D/E	
Woodblock Print- "A Strange New Cottage in Berkeley," 1963	box 2	folder 10
McClure, Michael		
Sketches, undated and 1960, undated, 1960	box 2	folder 11
Sketches and Auerhaun Press Broadsides	mapcase 14-E-7	
Whalen, Philip-- Watercolors, undated	box 2	folder 12

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### Series III: Exhibition and Event Announcements, 1958-1964

#### Scope and Contents

The Exhibition and Event Announcements series is comprised of notices of gallery events, art openings, and poetry readings, as well as publication catalogs and announcements from small, independent presses and publishers.

Title/Description	Instances	
Auerhahn Press, undated and 1959-1963, undated, 1959-1963	box 2	folder 13
Connor, Bruce	box 2	folder 14
The Dead Language Press, 1963	box 2	folder 15
Doyle, Kirby, 1964	box 2	folder 16
The Fugs, 1965	box 2	folder 17
Ginsberg, Allen, 1958-1966	box 2	folder 18
Johnson, Ray	box 2	folder 19
Lamantia, Philip	box 2	folder 20
LaVigne, Robert	box 2	folder 21
Malanga, Gerard	box 2	folder 22
McClure, Michael, 1960-1961	box 2	folder 23
Olsen, Charles, 1965	box 2	folder 24

Patchen, Kenneth, 1961	box 2	folder 25
Welch, Lew	box 2	folder 26
Whalen, Philip, 1964	box 2	folder 27
Wieners, John	box 2	folder 28

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