



Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Art

History of the Woman's Building, circa 1975-1979

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In 1972, artist, Judy Chicago, graphic designer Sheila de Bretteville, and art historian Arlene Raven formulated plans for the Feminist Studio Workshop. They sought to organize an alternative school for women based on a desire to support and develop a female perspective in the arts. Together with other women's art and socio-political groups, the Feminist Studio workshop founded "The Woman's Building", named after the structure at the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. It was built by the first woman architect to graduate from MIT.

The Woman's Building houses the Feminist Studio Workshop (an intensive two-year educational program), the Center for Feminist Art Historical Studies, the Extension Program, Olivia Records, A Performance Space, Women's Community Press, the Women's Graphic Center, The Women's Community and Rental Galleries, the Identified Woman Cafe, The Women's Slide Registry, and the Women's Switchboard.

A Performance Space

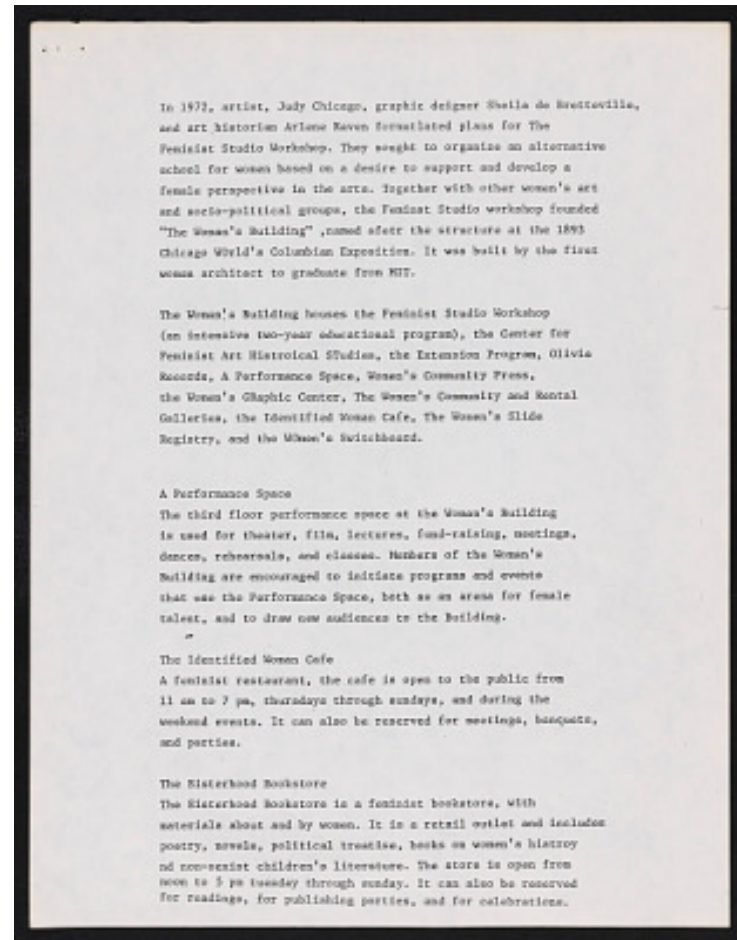
The third floor performance space at the Woman's Building is used for theater, film, lectures, fund-raising, meetings, dances, rehearsals, and classes. Members of the Woman's Building are encouraged to initiate programs and events that use the Performance Space, both as an arena for female talent, and to draw new audiences to the Building.

The Identified Woman Cafe

A feminist restaurant, the cafe is open to the public from 11am to 7pm, thursday through sundays, and during the weekend events. It can also be reserved for meetings, banquets, and parties.

The Sisterhood Bookstore

The Sisterhood Bookstore is a feminist bookstore, with materials about and by women. It is a retail outlet and includes poetry, novels, political treatise, books on women's history and non-sexist children's literature. The store is open from noon to 5 pm tuesday through sunday. It can also be reserved for readings, for publishing parties, and for celebrations.



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