

University of Victoria Special Collections and University Archives

Finding Aid - Robert Sward fonds (SC116)

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Robert Sward fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	University of Victoria Special Collections and University Archives
Title:	Robert Sward fonds
ID:	SC116
Date:	1937 - 1979 (date of creation)
Physical description:	70 cm of textual records and other material
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Revised by JF, August 8, 2013. Finding aid added by JF, August 23, 2019.
Note [generalNote]:	See also "Jean Paul Sartre's Existentialism and Human Emotions (1947, 1957), with marginalia from Robert Sward (1953, 1958)": http://omeka.library.uvic.ca/exhibits/show/movable-type/authorship/sartre-sward

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Robert Sward was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 23 June 1933. He obtained an honours B.A. in English and American literature from the University of Illinois (Urbana) in 1956 and an M.A. in English and American literature from the University of Iowa (Iowa City) in 1958. His teaching experience prior to coming to U. Vic. included teaching English at Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut, from 1958-1959, and at Mitchell College, New London, in 1962, teaching in the writing program at Cornell University (Ithaca, New York), 1962-1964, serving as writer-in-residence as the Aspen Writers' Workshop, Summer 1967, and as poet-in-residence at the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, 1967. In July 1969 Sward was appointed Visiting Lecturer and Poet-in-Residence at the University of Victoria Department of Creative Writing, and was later appointed assistant professor.

Sward's areas of academic interest have included creative writing, particularly poetry; 20th century British and American literature; and American poetry from Walt Whitman to the present. As a writer, his areas of interest include contemporary American poetry, Eastern philosophy and lyric poetry. His first collection of poems, *Advertisements*, was published by Odyssey Chapbook Publications in Chicago in 1958. Subsequent publications included *Uncle Dog and Other Poems* (Putnam, 1962), *Kissing the Dancer and Other Poems* (Cornell University Press, 1964), *The Thousand-Year-Old Fiancée and Other Poems* (Cornell University Press, 1965), and *Horgbortom Stringbottom / I am Yours / You Are History* (Swallow Press, Chicago, 1970). His novel, *The Jurassic Shales* was published by Coach House Press, Toronto, in 1975, and his *Poems: New and Selected, 1957-1976* appeared in 1976. Sward has also published poems in numerous journals and anthologies, including *The New Yorker*, *The Malahat Review*, and *PRISM International*.

Sward won the Bread Loaf Writer's Conference Poetry Fellowship in 1958, a Fulbright Fellowship for study in England (1960-1961), a Guggenheim Fellowship in poetry (1964-1965), and the D.H. Lawrence Fellowship, awarded by the University of New Mexico for residence and writing at the Lawrence Ranch in Taos, New Mexico (1966). Sward has also been a member of the League of Canadian Poets.

At the University of Victoria, Sward has served on the Creative Writing Committee and the Committee on Visiting Poets, the latter being chaired by Robin Skelton. As fellow teachers and poets, Sward and Skelton began collaborating on a collection of poems, "Callsigns and Hannah", but due to personal disagreements the collaboration was abandoned and Skelton eventually completed the work on his own; it was published as *Callsigns* in 1976.

Other collaborations included the novella, *Soft*, which Sward wrote with Judith Sward. He and Judith were also interested in art history, an interest he shared with Irina Schestakowich. Since living in Victoria Sward has spent some time on Lasqueti Island, off eastern Vancouver Island, with Irina and with other friends.

In 1970 Sward founded Soft Press, a Victoria company which published fine limited editions of poetry. As its editor, Sward helped publish 16 poetry collections between 1970 and 1976, including the anthology *West Coast Visions*, and *How Love Gets Around*, by Michael Wolfe.

Custodial history

The records of Robert Sward were acquired by the University Archives in 1982, 1984 and 1994. Most of the material documents facets of his career as a poet and prose writer from the 1950's to the 1970's; his teaching career is mainly documented by holograph lecture notes and course outlines. Among Sward's records are files of the Soft Press, which Sward founded in Victoria, drafts of his poems and prose works, and many photographs and slides of Sward, his family and close friends. These records will be of particular interest to researchers studying not only Sward's own career but also the creative process in general and the development of small publishing companies in British Columbia.

Scope and content

The fonds consists of rough drafts and notes for Sward's poetry and prose fiction; publicity material for poetry readings given by Sward; correspondence relating to monetary appraisal of Sward's papers, correspondence between Sward and Wayne Carver, and correspondence regarding grants; Sward's daily journals, lecture notes and notebooks; publications, including magazines, brochures, chapbooks and booklets; Sward family photographs and photographs of Sward with friends and fellow writers, and slides of art works by Judith Sward; art work for publications by Soft Press; film, "The July Movie", by Frederick Edell; and, correspondence, essay and notebook of Irina Schestakowich.

Notes

Title notes

Finding aids

Inventory available with series and file level control.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
 - **Description identifier:** robert-sward-fonds
 - **Physical description:** Includes ca. 220 photographs; ca. 260 slides; 2 film rolls.
-

Access points

- Soft Press (Victoria, B.C.)
 - Carver, Wayne (subject)
 - Sward, Judith (subject)
 - Schestakowich, Irina, 1944- (subject)
 - Skelton, Robin, 1925-1997 (subject)
 - American poetry--20th century (subject)
 - Authors, American--20th century (subject)
 - Edell, Frederick. July movie (subject)
 - Motion pictures (subject)
 - Sward, Robert, 1933- --Photographs (subject)
-

Series descriptions

Series SC116-I: Poetry

Date: 1970-1976 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Rough drafts of poems for collections of poetry, including "Selected Poems 1959-1971" (published as Poems: New and Selected, 1957-1976); early drafts of "Callsigns and Hannah", written with Robin Skelton and later completed by Skelton alone; holographs and typescripts of uncollected poems, including limericks.

Physical description: 25 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 1; Box 2, Files 1-11

Arrangement:

Arranged chronologically.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-I-1.1	File - Callsigns and Hannah. Notebook, 1971.			
SC116-I-1.2	File - Callsigns and Hannah. Holographs and tss., 1971.			
SC116-I-1.3	File - Callsigns. Photocopy of final draft, tss., 71-9-14.			
SC116-I-1.4	File - Innocence - 1950. Photocopied tss., 71-10-19.			
SC116-I-1.5	File - Suicide. Early, long version. Photocopied tss., Oct. 1971.			
SC116-I-1.6	File - The Champion of Living; "Impossible Hurricane Loss-of-Name Poem". Tss., hol., n.d.			
SC116-I-1.7	File - Ephemera - "Valentine Limericks"; "Outside: Amsterdam, the Seven Judges", by Michael Zwerin, The Village Voice, 17 Dec. 1970, photocopy.			
SC116-I-1.8	File - Selected Poems, 1959-1971. Photocopied tss., ca. 1976. 1 of 2.			
SC116-I-1.9	File - Selected Poems, 1959-1971. Photocopied tss., ca. 1976. 2 of 2.			
SC116-I-2.1	File - Half a Life's History: Poems New and Selected, 1959-1972. Ts. with hol. rev.			
SC116-I-2.2	File - Be a Plant and Other Poems. Photocopied tss.			
SC116-I-2.3	File - Spaceflight to Ice-Hell. Ts. with hol. rev.			
SC116-I-2.4	File - Poems. 1 of 4. Holographs, tss.			
SC116-I-2.5	File - Poems. 2 of 4. Photocopied tss. with hol. rev.			
SC116-I-2.6	File - Poems. 3 of 4. Tss. and photocopies.			
SC116-I-2.7	File - Poems. 4 of 4. Tss. and photocopies; annual report of Sward's work in the U. Vic. Dept. of English, 1971-1972.			
SC116-I-2.8	File - Photocopies of poems featured in New American and Canadian Poetry.			

SC116-I-2.9	File - The Seven of Pentacles. Ts., 6 leaves, with original drawings on each leaf.
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Series SC116-II: Prose Fiction

Date: 1970-1971 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Drafts of The Jurassic Shales, novel; 4 by Robert and Judith Sward, novel; Soft, novella by Robert and Judith Sward; "Journey to Ganeshpuri", novel; and "Events Surrounding the Supposed Progress of Four Homosexual Karate Experts Through the Streets of Chicago Towards the Palace of Hugh Hefner, A Play for Voices". Written by Sward and Lawrence Russell. Includes holograph manuscripts, typescripts and carbons with holograph revisions.

Physical description: 18 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 2, Files 12-20

Arrangement:

Arranged chronologically.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-II-2.10	File - The Jurassic Shales. Tss., n.d.			
SC116-II-2.11	File - The Jurassic Shales. Tss., 1970-1971.			
SC116-II-2.12	File - 4 by Robert Sward and Judith Sward. Novel, n.d. Photocopied ts., 138 leaves; carbons, 3 leaves.			
SC116-II-2.13	File - Novel in progress, untitled, n.d. Photocopied ts., 28 leaves.			
SC116-II-2.14	File - Soft: A Novella. Ts. with hol. rev., ca 125 leaves.			
SC116-II-2.15	File - Soft: A Novella. Carbon ts., 124 leaves.			
SC116-II-2.16	File - Journey to Ganeshpuri. Novel. Ms. with holograph and typed leaves, ca. 50 leaves total.			
SC116-II-2.17	File - Journey to Ganeshpuri. Photocopied ts., 88 leaves.			
SC116-II-2.18	File - Events Surrounding the Supposed Progress of Four Homosexual Karate Experts Through the Streets of Chicago Towards the Palace of Hugh Hefner, A			

	Play for Voices. Written by Sward and Lawrence Russell. Ts., 1 leaf; carbon with hol. rev., 42 leaves.			
Series SC116-III: Publicity and Reviews				
<u>Date</u> : 1958-1972 (date of creation)				
<u>Scope and content</u> :				
Publicity material for poetry readings given by Sward; reviews of Sward's poetry collections, Honey Bear and Horgborton, Stringbottom, I Am Yours / You Are History; interview with Sward in The Martlet; lists of Sward's publications.				
<u>Physical description</u> : 5 cm.				
<u>Note</u> :				
Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 2, Files 21-26				
<u>Arrangement</u> :				
Arranged chronologically.				
<u>Publication status</u> :				
Published				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-III-2.19	File - Publicity broadside, n.d.			
SC116-III-2.20	File - Poetry reading publicity, 1958-1969. Photograph of Sward, correspondence, clippings.			
SC116-III-2.21	File - Cornell Publicity, 1963-1969. Re. publicity for readings at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Photographs, c.v.'s, announcements, brochure on the Guggenheim Foundation, photocopies of poems.			
SC116-III-2.22	File - Reviews of Honey Bear and Horgborton, Stringbottom, I am Yours, You Are History. Correspondence, clippings, 1978, n.d.			
SC116-III-2.23	File - Interview with Sward in The Martlet, 17 February 1972. Clipping.			
SC116-III-2.24	File - Bibliography. C.v.'s, annual reports, lists of publications, 1964-1972.			
Series SC116-IV: Correspondence				
<u>Date</u> : 1964-1975 (date of creation)				
<u>Scope and content</u> :				

Correspondence relating to monetary appraisal of Sward's papers by American appraisers; correspondence between Sward and Wayne Carver; correspondence and applications relating to grants, including the Guggenheim Fellowship.

Physical description: 10 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 2, File 27; Box 3, Files 1-6

Arrangement:

Arranged by subject.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-IV-2.25	File - Correspondence re. monetary appraisal of Sward's papers by American appraisers, 1967-1969.			
SC116-IV-2.26	File - Correspondence - Wayne Carver to Sward, 1 tls., 1972.			
SC116-IV-2.27	File - Lists of Grants and Awards Available to American Writers, published by P.E.N., 1969-1970.			
SC116-IV-2.28	File - Grants. Correspondence, 1966.			
SC116-IV-2.29	File - Grants. Applications, c.v.'s, 1964-1972.			
SC116-IV-2.30	File - Grants. Correspondence, 1972-1975.			
SC116-IV-2.31	File - Guggenheim Fellowship. Application, correspondence, 1972.			

Series SC116-V: Notes and Notebooks

Date: 1951-1973 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Daily journal, 1973; lecture notes, n.d.; copy of Current Thinking and Writing, Second Series (New York, 1951), used by Sward while at San Diego Junior College, 1953, with extensive holograph notes by Sward in the margins and on the front and back fly-leaves.

Physical description: 12 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 3, Files 7-9; Accession 84-5, Box 1 File 1

Arrangement:

Arranged chronologically within each accession.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-V-2.32	File - Daily journal, 1973.			
SC116-V-2.33	File - Lecture notes, holographs re. Yates, Robert Lowell, Plato, etc. n.d.			
SC116-V-2.34	File - Lecture notes, handouts. Re. structure of poetry; romance languages. Tss. with hol. rev. n.d.			
SC116-V-3.22	File - Bachelor, Joseph M., Ralph L. Henry and Rachel Salisbury. Current Thinking and Writing, Second Series. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951). 316 p. With extensive holograph notes written by Sward in margins and on front and back fly-leaves.			

Series SC116-VI: Publications

Date: 1966-1979 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Magazines; brochures; chapbooks; maps; booklet, "Thus Spake Prophet Muhammad".

Physical description: 7 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 3, File 10

Arrangement:

Arranged chronologically.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-VI-2.35	File - Publications. Magazines, brochures, chapbooks, maps, booklet,			

	"Thus Spake Prophet Muhammad". 1966-1979.			
Series SC116-VII: Graphic Materials				
<u>Date</u> : 1937-1975 (date of creation)				
<u>Scope and content</u> :				
Sward family photographs; collage; photographs of Sward at the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, at readings, and with Irina Schestakowich and friends at Lasqueti Island, B.C.; colour slides of art works by Judith Sward; slides and negatives of Sward family members.				
<u>Physical description</u> : 12 cm.				
<u>Note</u> :				
Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 4, Files 1-6; Box 6				
<u>Arrangement</u> :				
Arranged chronologically.				
<u>Publication status</u> :				
Published				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-VII-3.1	File - Sward family photographs, 1937-1973. Includes Gertrude Sward (mother), Betty Ann Sward (sister), childhood photos of Sward and photos of Sward at the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference (1959).			
SC116-VII-3.2	File - Photograph of Sward, ca. 1969.			
SC116-VII-3.3	File - Photographs of Sward and Irina Schestakowich, 1974.			
SC116-VII-3.4	File - Photographs of Sward at readings and with friends and family. n.d.			
SC116-VII-3.5	File - Photographs of Sward with Irina and friends on Lasqueti Island; drawing; card. n.d., 1975.			
SC116-VII-3.6	File - Collage of photographs of Sward, n.d.			
SC116-VII-3.7	File - Photographs by Tom Gore. Two collages, one view of James Bay, Victoria. n.d.			
SC116-VII-3.8	File - Art work for Vancouver Island Poems. Two photographs by Leonard Trabka, Olympia, Washington, "Dance of Siva I" and "Dance of Siva II". n.d.			
SC116-VII-3.9	File - Six photographs by Leonard Trabka, with covering note to Sward. n.d.			

SC116-VII-3.23	File - b/w 8 x 10" photograph of Robert Sward (ca.1994); reviews, clippings, and brochures re Sward's poetry, mainly about 4 Incarnations ; biographical information; Sward's Poetry and Fiction Workshop brochure; and a photocopy of a letter/poem from Michael Sward (son).
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Series SC116-VIII: Soft Press

Date: 1970-1979 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Art work for publications by Soft Press, Victoria B.C., including photographs by Tom Gore and Leonard Trabka; master set list; correspondence; reviews.

Physical description: 20 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 4, Files 7-12; Box 5, Files 1-4

Arrangement:

Arranged by subject.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-VIII-3.10	File - Soft Press. Drawings for publications, n.d., 1973.			
SC116-VIII-3.11	File - Soft Press. "Rare Master Set List" for publications, 1970.			
SC116-VIII-3.12	File - Soft Press. Correspondence from the B.C. Publishers Group and the Literary Press Group, 1978-1979.			
SC116-VIII-3.13	File - Soft Press. "West Coast Visions". Holograph notes, n.d.			
SC116-VIII-3.14	File - Soft Press. Ed Varney manuscript. Notes, holograph draft, n.d.			
SC116-VIII-3.15	File - Soft Press. Review of How Love Gets Around, by Michael Wolfe, Soft Press. Reviewed in The Victorian, 18 November 1974.			
SC116-VIII-3.16	File - Soft Press. Drawings, n.d.			

Series SC116-IX: Films

Date: 1970-1971 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

"The July Movie", by Frederick Edell, June-July 1970, completed 3 October 1971. Inscribed "To Robert and Judith Sward, with love", on film leader.

Physical description: 12 cm x 2 cm. ; Permaflex Dual 8 reel film.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 7

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
SC116-IX-3.17	File - Ca.240 colour slides of art works, some by Judith Sward; slides of Hannah Sward and other family members. 1969. Plus 1 16mm reel and 3 35mm negative strips.			
SC116-IX-3.18	File - The July Movie, by Frederick Edell, June-July 1970, completed 3 October 1971. Permaflex Dual 8 reel film. Inscribed "To Robert and Judith Sward, with love", on film leader.			

Series SC116-X: Records of Irina Schestakowich

Date: 1976 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Correspondence; art history essay; notebook.

Physical description: 5 cm.

Note:

Former location: Accession 82-3, Box 8, Files 1-3

Arrangement:

Arranged chronologically.

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
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SC116-X-3.19	File - Correspondence. "Raymond" [?] to Irina Schestakowich, 1 als., 1976.
SC116-X-3.20	File - Irina Schestakowich. Essay for Art History 490, 1976. 13 p., with copies of photographs of art works.
SC116-X-3.21	File - Irina Schestakowich. "Multi-purpose book" [notebook], n.d.