The New York Public Library Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center Billy Rose Theatre Collection

Ping Chong Archive 1971-2007 LPA Mss 2009-001

Matthew Snyder November 2010

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Summary

Main entry: Chong, Ping

Title: Ping Chong archive, 1971-2007 (bulk 1980-2007)

Size: 35.3 linear feet (63 boxes)

Source: Donated by Ping Chong & Co., 2008.

Sponsor: The processing of the Ping Chong Archive was made possible, in

part, through the generous assistance of the Leon Levy Foundation.

Abstract: The Ping Chong Archive reveals the creative and production

process of an important innovator in experimental theater and intercultural dialog, as well his work's reception. It contains extensive documentation of over 50 projects which Chong created and/or directed from 1972-2007, including original theater works, art installations, film/video productions, theater and opera directing projects, published works, and collaborations with other artists. including Meredith Monk and Muna Tseng. Productions with substantial documentation in the collection include *Undesirable* Elements, Chinoiserie, Deshima, Kind Ness, Maraya - Acts of Nature in Geological Time, Nosferatu: A Symphony of Darkness, Nuit Blanche, and OBON: Tails of Rain and Moonlight. The collection also includes the files of Chong's production company (Ping Chong & Co.), which contain development files and grant applications that shed further light on Chong's work and its creation. The collection contains scripts, notes, production files, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, programs, set and technical designs,

posters and electronic records.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying will

apply. Advance notice may be required. Inquiries regarding audio material, video materials and electronic records may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration

prior to access.

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information: Division.

Preferred citation: Ping Chong Archive, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York

Public Library.

Special formats Electronic records, Negatives, Photographs, Slides, Sound

recordings, Video recordings.

Related materials note

Meredith Monk Archive, LPA 2006-001. Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Biographical note

Ping Chong is an interdisciplinary theatre director, choreographer, videographer and installation artist. He studied visual arts, dance, and filmmaking, and originally intended to work in film. His career began in the early 1970s when he joined Meredith Monk's performance company. Monk, a pioneer of experimental and interdisciplinary theater, steered Chong in that direction; his collaborations with Monk included *The Travelogue Series* and, later, *The Games*.

Since 1972, he and his company (Ping Chong & Co.) have created over 50 works for the stage, which have been presented at major venues all over the world. He is the recipient many awards, including two Obies, a National Institute for Music Theatre Award, a Playwrights USA Award, and two "Bessie" Awards for creative achievement. He has also received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, the TCG/Pew Charitable Trust, and the USA Artist Fellowship in recognition of his contribution to American arts and culture.

Among Ping Chong's many significant works are:

The *East-West Quartet*, a four-work series exploring east-west relations past, present, and future, comprised of the productions *Deshima*, *Chinoiserie*, *After Sorrow* (a collaboration with choreographer Muna Tseng and composer Josef Fung), and *Pojagi*;

Kwaidan and OBON: Tales of Rain and Moonlight, two puppet theatre works based on Japanese ghost stories;

EDDA: Viking Tales of Lust, Revenge and Family, a music-theatre work created in collaboration with Ben Bagby and the Sequentia Ensemble;

Blind Ness: The Irresistible Light of Encounter, an exploration of Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness and the colonial history of the Belgian Congo;

Undesirable Elements, an on-going series of works exploring the effects of history, culture and ethnicity on the lives of individuals living in a particular community (he has created over 25 versions of *Undesirable Elements* in cities such as Atlanta, Charleston, Chicago, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Seattle, Long Beach, Newark, Clinton, Rotterdam and Tokyo);

Children Of War, created in collaboration with Center for Multi-Cultural Human Services in Virginia with a group of young people who have experienced war and civil turmoil;

I Will Not Be Sad In This World and Plage Concrète, video works which have been screened internationally and on public television;

and several environmental art installations, including *In The Absence Of Memory, Tempus Fugit, A Facility For The Containment And Channelling Of Undesirable Elements* and *Testimonial*.

Source: http://www.pingchong.org/30th/ping.html (Accessed Sept. 27, 2010)

Scope and content note

The Ping Chong Archive reveals the creative and production process of an important innovator in experimental theater, as well his work's reception. It contains extensive documentation of over 50 projects which Chong created and/or directed from 1971-2007, including original theater works, art installations, film/video productions, theater and opera directing projects, published works, and collaborations with other artists, including Meredith Monk and Muna Tseng. Productions with substantial documentation in the collection include *Undesirable Elements*, *Chinoiserie*, *Deshima*, *Kind Ness, Maraya - Acts of Nature in Geological Time*, *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Darkness, Nuit Blanche*, and *OBON: Tails of Rain and Moonlight*. The collection also includes the files of Chong's production company (Ping Chong & Co.), which contain development files and grant applications that shed further light on Chong's work and its creation. The collection contains scripts, notes, production files, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, programs, set and technical designs, posters and electronic records.

Series I, Project Files, contains documentation of over 50 works. Some projects have manifestations in more than one medium. Nearly all of Chong's work has significant amounts of documentation; projects with the most material include *Undesirable Elements*, *Chinoiserie*, *Deshima*, *Kind Ness*, *Maraya - Acts of Nature in Geological Time*, *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Darkness*, *Nuit Blanche*, and *OBON: Tails of Rain and Moonlight*.

This series contains scripts, production files, photographs, negatives, slides, filmstrips, clippings, set, lighting and other technical plans, posters, sound and video recordings, and electronic records. Electronic records exist from the 1980s productions forward and can contain correspondence, scripts, technical notes and photographs. Files labeled "technical" include descriptions and discussion of staging, venues, lighting, sound, and other production-related issues.

Almost every project is also documented by audio or visual material. Audio/video items are not described in this finding aid. Inquiries regarding audio materials, video materials and electronic records in the series may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Series II, Ping Chong & Co. General Files, contains the papers of Chong's production company. It includes clippings, development files containing grant correspondence, photographs, posters and electronic records. The largest amounts of development correspondence are with the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Japan Foundation. Photographs include promotional headshots of Chong, both solo and with collaborators including Meredith Monk and Muna Tseng. The electronic records in this series contain development files regarding the National Endowment for the Arts, and the text of an unpublished book by Chong.

Arrangement note

The Ping Chong Archive are organized in the following series:

Series I: Project Files, 1971-2007, undated

Series II: Ping Chong & Co. General Files, 1972-2005, undated

Series descriptions and container list

Series I: Project files, 1971-2007, undated Inquiries regarding audio materials, video materials and electronic records in the series may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	Acus America, 4000
1	1	4am America, 1990 Clippings
	2	Photographs Programs
	3 4-6	Scripts
	7	Slides
	8	Absence of Memory, 1989 (Slides.)
	9 10	After Sorrow, 1996-1998, 2007 Part of the East-West Quartet. Created in collaboration with Muna Tseng and Josef Fung. This project is partially documented by electronic records. Clippings, 1997 Notes, undated
2	1-2	Photographs, 1996, undated
	3-9	Programs, 1996-1999
Dies	10-11	Slides, 1999, undated
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<u>Box</u> 2	<u>Fol</u> 12	Technical, 1997-1999, 2007
		AM/AM - The Articulated Man
3	1	Clippings, 1982-1983
	2	Photographs 1982
4	1	1986
5 3	3	Poster, undated Programs, 1982-1986
3	4	Script and technical, undated
•	5	Slides, undated
6		Slides, undated
3	6	American Gothic Clippings, 1999
J	7	Correspondence and programs, 1999, undated
5		Poster, undated
3	8 9	Script, 1992 Slides, 1992
7	1 2	Angels of Swedenborg Clippings, 1986 Photographs, 1986
5		Posters, 1986-1987
7	3-9	Programs, 1985-1989
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9		Slides, undated
8	7	Anna Into Nightlight Clippings, Photographs and Programs, 1982
4	2	Photographs, 1982
5		Posters, undated
8	8 9	Script, 1982 Slides, 1982
10		Slides, 1982
8	10	Technical, undated
11	2	Arrivals - 301. 2' 1:, undated Created in collaboration with Paul Krasniak. Clippings. Astonishment and the Twins Clippings, 1986
	3 4	Photographs, 1984 Programs, 1984-1987 Slides
	5	1984
6		undated
11	6	Text and technical, 1984 Blind Ness: The Irresistible Light of Encounter, 2004 Created in collaboration with Michael Rohd. This project is partially documented by electronic records.
Diag	7	Photographs
<u>Disc</u> 2-5		Photographs (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	Bright Ness, 1989-1990 (Created in collaboration with Michael Rohd.)
11	8 9 10 11 12	Clippings Photographs Programs Script Slides Children of War, 2002-2004, undated
40	13	Clippings
12	1 2-3 4	Programs Scripts Slides and photographs
<u>Disc</u> 11-12		Chinoiserie Part of the East-West Quartet. Music by Guy Klucevsek and lyrics by Michael Matthews. This project is partially documented by electronic records. Background material and research, undated (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u> 12	<u>Fol</u> 5 6-9	Clippings, 1995-1996 Notebooks, 1994-1995

<u>Box</u>	Fol	Dhotographa
13	1 2 3	Photographs Pre-production, 1995 Walker Arts Center, 1995 General, undated
Disc 13		Production and touring, 1995-1996 (Electronic records)
11		Project description, 1994 (Electronic records)
		Programs
<u>Box</u> 13	Fol 4 5 6 7 8 9	Brooklyn Academy of Music, 1995 Lied Center, 1995 Yellow Springs, 1994 Lafayette College, 1995 Research, 1994 Score, 1995 (Contains note from Guy Klucevsek.) Scripts, 1994-1995 In progress
Disc		p. cg. 555
6-10		In progress (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u> 14	<u>Fol</u> 1-3 4	Final, 1995 (Some contain rehearsal notes.) Slides, 1995
<u>Disc</u> 6		Songlist, undated (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u> 14	Fol 5 6 7 8	La Clemenza di Tito, 2003 Clippings documenting production of the opera by Mozart, directed by Chong. Curlew River Documenting production of the opera by Benjamin Britten, directed by Chong. Clippings, 1997 Photographs and slides, 1997, 2002 Research and scripts, 1997
15		Stage Design, 1997
		Deshima Part of the East-West Quartet. This project is partially documented by electronic records.
14	9	Clippings, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999 Photographs Holland, 1990
16	1	General, undated
17		Posters, 1995-1996, undated
Disc		
14, 32	2	Production files, 1992-1995 (Electronic records)
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Disc 14		Publicity, 1995 (Electronic records)
1-7		Scripts, 1991, 1994, undated
<u>Box</u> 16	<u>Fol</u> 6-8	1991, undated
<u>Disc</u> 15-16		1994 (Electronic records)
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18	1-4	Slides, 1990, undated
19		Stage design, undated
20	1-2 3 4	Technical, 1994-1996 Doppelganger, undated (Proposal for project, never produced.) Duke University Workshop, 1988 (Clippings.)
	5 6 7 8 9 10-11 12-13	EDDA: Viking Tales of Lust and Revenge, 2001-2002, undated This project is partially documented by electronic records of unknown file types. Clippings Photographs Programs Lincoln Center Festival University of Michigan Utrecht General Scripts, undated
Disc	12-13	Scripts, unuateu
39		Unidentified documents (Electronic records)
Box	Fol	Elephant Memories
<u>Box</u> 21	Fol 1 2 3-5 6 7 8	Clippings, 1990-1991 Photographs, 1990-1991 Programs, 1990-1991, 1994 Script, 1994 Slides, 1990 Fear and Loathing in Gotham Clippings, 1975, 1981 Photographs, 1975, undated
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21	10-11	Programs, 1973, 1980-1981
22	1 2 3 4	Script and notes, undated Slides, 1975 Technical and production, undated Festival of World Storytelling, Dance and Music for Young Audiences, 1995 (Programs and photographs.)
	5 6	The Game (Created in collaboration with Meredith Monk.) Clippings, 1984, 1986 Photographs, 1984
17		Poster, 1984
22	7 8-9 10	Production Notes, 1984 Programs, 1984 Script, 1984

Davi	11	Slides, 1984
<u>Вох</u> 22	12 13	Humboldt's Current Clippings, 1977-1984 Photographs, ca. 1977
23		Posters, 1977
22	14	Programs, 1979-1980
24	1 2	Script, 1977 Slides, 1979
10		Slides, undated
24	3 4 5 6	Stage blueprint, 1977 I Flew to Fiji, You Went South Clippings, script and notes, 1973, undated Programs, 1977, undated Slides, 1973 I Will Not Be Sad In This World, undated This project is partially documented by electronic records.
	7	Photographs
<u>Disc</u> 17	·	Photographs (Electronic records)
		Interfacing Joan Written by Louise Smith, directed by Chong at La Mama.
<u>Вох</u> 24	<u>Fol</u> 8 9	Photographs, undated Programs and scripts, 1995 Kind Ness
	10 11	Clippings, 1986, 1988 Photographs, 1986, undated
4	3	Photographs,
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19		1986
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24	12 13-16	Productions by Other Companies, 1993-2003, undated Programs, 1986, 1988-1992
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	6	Clippings, 1999-2000
Disc 19		Interview with citizens of Surinam, undated transcripts (Electronic records)
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		Programs, 1998-2000

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<u>Disc</u> 18		Story treatment, undated (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u> 28	<u>Fol</u> 1	Laughter in the Dark, undated (Plot summary.) Lazarus
	2	Clippings and Photographs, 1972, 1978
5		Poster, undated
28	3 4 5 6	Programs, 1972, 1978, undated Script, 1971, undated Sketchbook, 1972 Slides, 1971
10		Slides, 1971
28	7 8 9	Technical, 1972, 1979, undated Maraya - Acts of Nature in Geological Time Clippings, 1985, 1988 Photographs, ca. 1987
5		Poster, undated
28	10 11 12 13	Programs and publicity, 1987-1988 Scripts, undated Slides, 1987 Technical, 1987-1988
29	1	Murmurs Of Earth, 1991, 1994, 2009 Script and technical notes. Project never completed. Contains explanatory note from Chong.
	2 3 4	Nocturne in 1200 Seconds, 1998 Photographs and slides Programs Scripts Noiresque - The Fallen Angel
	5 6	Programs, Photographs and Clippings, 1989 Scripts, 1989, undated
	7	Slides, 1989
	8 9	Technical, undated Nosferatu: A Symphony of Darkness Clippings, 1985, 1987, 1991
30	1-2	Photographs, 1985, 1991 undated
23		Posters, 1985, undated
30	3	Programs, 1985, 1987, 1991
	4	Scripts, 1987, 1994, undated

<u>Box</u> 30	<u>Fol</u> 5-9	Slides 1984-1985, 1991
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33	1	Visual elements, undated
	2-4 5-6 7-8 9-11	OBON: Tales of Rain and Moonlight, 2001-2003 With music by Guy Klucevsek. This project is partially documented by electronic records of unknown file types. Clippings Photographs Programs Scripts
34	1-3 4-5	Scripts Slides
35	1	Technical Light plot
34	6-8	Notebooks
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	5	Clippings
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	6 7	Programs and negatives Scripts
	8	A Race, 1983-1984 Clippings Photographs
	9	1983-1984
4	4	1984
41	1	Programs
5		Poster
41	2 3	Script and technical Slides Poince and the Knife 1991 1993 and undeted
	4	Rainer and the Knife, 1981-1982 and undated Clippings and photographs
23		Poster
41	5	Programs and Technical
6		Slides
		Reason, 2001-2002 Created in collaboration with Michael Rohd. This project is partially documented by electronic records.
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<u>Box</u> 41	Fol 7 8 9-10 11	Photographs and slides Programs Scripts Technical, 2002
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Box 42	<u>Fol</u> 6	Technical, 1988-1989
		Slutforart Created in collaboration with Muna Tseng. This project is partially documented by electronic records.
	7	Clippings, 1999-2001
	8	Interview transcripts, 1998 Interviews by Tseng or Chong with Richard Martin, Timothy Greenfield-Saunders, Kwang Chi, Jenny Yee, Kenny Scharf, Bill T. Jones and Ann Magnuson.
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	2	Snow
	3	Clippings, 1988
	4 5	Photographs, 1991 Programs, 1986-1991
	6-7	Scripts, 1988-1989
	8 9	Slides, 1988 Technical, 1988
44	1	The Square, 2000 (Clippings, correspondence and programs.)
	2	Three Rivers Arts Festival, 1983, 1985, 1988, 1991 (Clippings.)
	3-4	The Travelogue Series, 1973, 1987 and undated Created in collaboration with Meredith Monk. Script, notes, cuesheets and programs.
		Truth and Beauty Created in collaboration with Michael Rohd and Jeff Randall.
	5	Clippings and programs, 2000, 2002-2003
	6 7	Photographs, undated Script and Notes, 1999
	8	Technical, 1999
		Undesirable Elements Created in collaboration with cast members of each production. Productions are
		arranged chronologically. This project is partially documented by electronic records.
		Inquiries regarding electronic records may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org).
	9	Cleveland, 1993-1994 Correspondence, programs and notes
	10	Scripts
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		New York City
26		Correspondence, 1998 (Electronic records)
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<u>Box</u> 49	<u>Fol</u> 7	Programs and correspondence
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	9	Atlanta, 2001 Clippings
	10	Programs
	11-12 13	Scripts Charleston, SC (Secret Histories), 2001 (Clippings, programs and scripts.)
50	1	New York City (Dreamyard Project), 2001 (Photographs, programs and
		publicity.) Madison, WI, 2001
	2 3	Clippings Program and scripts
	4-5	Hanover, NH, 2002 (Programs and scripts.)
	6	Berlin, 2003 Clippings
	7	Scripts and programs
	8	Pioneer Valley, MA, 2003 (Program, notes and script.)
51	1 2	New York City (Asian American), 2007 (Script.) Ohio, undated (Unfinished script.)
	3	Lafayette College, 2006 (Script.)
		General, 1990-1995, 2002-2004, undated Tenth anniversary production (92/02)
	4-5	Programs and photographs, 2003
	6	Scripts New York, 2002
	7 8	Lafayette College, 2003 Lille, France, 2003
Disc	O	Lille, I Tallice, 2003
24	Eal	Lille, France, 2003 (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u> 51	Fol 9	Rome, 2004
52	1 2	General, 2002-2003 Photographs, undated
5	_	Photographs, undated
Disc		. notegraphe, andated
38		Production files, undated (Electronic records)
<u>Box</u> 52	<u>Fol</u> 3-4	Research materials, 1990-1995 (Mostly clippings.)
		Scripts, undated (Electronic records)
	5	Slides, undated Without Law, Without Heaven
	6 7	Clippings and photographs, 1987, undated Programs, 1987-1988
53	1	Scripts and Technical, 1987-1988
	2	Slides, 1987 Unidentified, 1992, undated
	3	Calligraphy, undated
	4-6	Photographs, undated
54	1-2 3	Photographs, undated Slides, 1992, undated
9		Slides, undated

Series II: Ping Chong & Co. general files, 1972-2005, undated Inquiries regarding electronic records in the series may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org).

<u>Box</u> 54	Fol 4	Clippings, 1983-2002
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56	1 2 3-4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15-18	CalArts Alpert Award, 1995-1999 Chase Manhattan, 1994-1998 Con Edison, 1983-1999 Edith C. Blum Foundation, 2002 Experimental Television Center Ltd., 2001 Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, 2001-2004 Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, 1998 Goodman, Senator Roy, 1998 Harkness Foundation For Dance, 1995 Harvard Institute On The Arts And Civic Dialogue, 1999 Heathcote Art Foundation, 1993-1996 Howard Gilman Foundation, 2002 James E. Robison Foundation, 2002 Japan Foundation, 1997-2003
57	1-4 5 6 7-9 10-11 12 13 14-16	Japan - U.S. Friendship Commission, 1985, 1995-1997, 2001 Jim Henson Foundation, 2001-2003 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, 1983-1991 Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation, 1991-1996 JPMorgan, 1985-1994 Laura J. Pels Foundation, 1996 Leadership For A Changing World, 2002-2003 Lila Acheson Wallace Theater Fund, 1994-2000
58	1-4 5-7 8 9	Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, 1991, 1995-2000 Meet the Composer, 1991, 1994-1997 MetLife, 2001-2002 Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, 1999 National Endowment For The Arts, 1992-2002 (Portions of these files are electronic records) 1992-2002
59	1-5	1992-2002
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<u>Box</u> 59	<u>Fol</u> 7-9	New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, 1992, 1996-2003
60	1-4 5-7	New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, 1992, 1996-2003 New York Foundation For The Arts, 1992, 1996-1998, 2002 New York State Council On The Arts, 1992, 1997-2003 New York State Council On The Arts, 1992, 1997-2003
61	8-9 1-4 5 6 7 8-12 13 14 15	New York State Council On The Arts, 1992, 1997-2003 New York Times Company Foundation, 1991, 2002-2003 Newman's Own, Inc., 2002 Office of the Manhattan Borough President, 1999-2000 Philip Morris, 1991-2005 The Playwrights' Center, 1992-1996 Princess Grace Foundation, 1995 Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, 2002 Rockefeller Brother Fund, 2002
62	1-10 11-14 15 16	Rockefeller Foundation Multi-Arts Production Fund, 1989-2004 Theatre Communications Group, 1998-2004 Time Warner Inc., 1992 World Trade Center Business Recovery Grant, 2002
63	1 2	Photographs, 1970s-1984, 1995, undated Ping Chong portraits, 1970s-2003 Ping Chong and Meredith Monk, 1972-1984 1972-1984
4	5	ca. 1984
63	3 4	Ping Chong and Muna Tseng, 1995 Unidentified, 1970s, undated (Some date from work with Meredith Monk.)
23		Posters, 1984-1986, ca. 1995, undated 1984
19		1984-1986, ca. 1995, undated
Disc 30		Text, undated (Electronic file) Partial text for uncompleted book by Chong. This text is in the electronic records.