Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 099, F954
Creator: Alexander, Charles, 1954-
Title: Charles Alexander letter to Tom Clark
Inclusive Dates: 1984 April 9
Extent: 1 item (1 p.)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 099, F954, Charles Alexander letter to Tom Clark, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 66, F954: Shelved in SPEC MSS 099 manuscript boxes

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Source: Purchase, November 2013.

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Biographical Notes

Charles Alexander

American poet, publisher, and book artist Charles Alexander (born 1954) is the founder and director of Chax Press, which specializes in innovative poetry and the book arts.

Alexander is the author of five books of poetry, most recently *Pushing Water* (2011), and nine chapbooks. Previously, Alexander was the director of the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (1993-1995); a Senior Lecturer at University of Arizona South, where he also co-directed the program for English majors; and taught at the Naropa University Summer Writing Program.

Alexander has given poetry readings, lectures, and workshops throughout the country at colleges, universities, art centers, and has also performed poetry in galleries and art centers in collaboration with musicians and dancers.

Charles Alexander was the recipient of the 2006 Arizona Arts Award.

Tom Clark

American poet Tom Clark (born 1941) has authored poems, biographies, plays, book reviews, histories, and sports stories.

In 1963, on the recommendation of his former teacher, poet Donald Hall, Clark became the poetry editor of the *Paris Review*, a position he continued until 1973. During a portion of that period Clark studied in England, where he completed an MA at Cambridge University (1965) and then pursued graduate study at the University of Essex (1965-1967). In England he met other writers such as Robert Graves, Gregory Corso, Andrei Voznesensky, and Adrian Mitchell; gave poetry readings; and traveled the country with Beat poet Allen Ginsberg. Clark’s first two books of poems, *Airplanes* and *The Sand Burg: Poems* were published in England in 1966.

Clark's most recent volume, *Light & Shade: New and Selected Poems* (2006), reflects both his early optimistic poetry and the darker, moodier poetry from his later years. His poetry and other writing incorporate his passion for the sport of baseball, including poems on baseball legends as Catfish Hunter, Vida Blue, and Bert Campaneris, and a history of the Oakland A's baseball team.

Clark has been the biographer for a diverse range of personalities, from pop musician Neil Young, to baseball pitcher Terry Leach, as well as such literary figures as Damon Runyon, Jack Kerouac, Ted Berrigan, Louis Ferdinand Celine, Charles Olson, Ed Dorn, and Robert Creeley.

Clark has contributed book reviews to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* and has been an instructor in poetics at the New College of California since 1987.

Sources:


Alexander's letter conveys some of Hamady's ideas on the quality and texture of ink on paper, how to use a press, and the definition of a book. Alexander wrote, "I learned that each single book (from the typographer's view) is a response to the text, and has to be different because of that text, that the book maker makes a significant contribution so that the final product is more than just the book form or just the words - it is an enriched & participatory & sensual reading experience." Alexander also mentioned the enclosed books and pamphlets (no longer with the letter) he had published with Black Mesa Press, particularly the book, *American Sentences* (1981).
Selected Search Terms

**Personal Names**

Alexander, Charles--Correspondence.

Clark, Tom, 1941- --Correspondence.

Hamady, Walter.

**Corporate Names**

Black Mesa Press--Correspondence.

Chax Press--Correspondence.

**Topical Terms**

Authors, American--20th century--Correspondence.

Book designers--United States--20th century--Correspondence.

Book design--United States--History--20th century.

Private Presses--United States--History--20th century.

Graphic design (Typography)--United States--History--20th century.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Correspondence.

**Personal Contributors**

Clark, Tom, 1941- , correspondent.

**Related Materials in this Repository**

This item forms part of MSS 099 Miscellaneous Literary and Historical Manuscripts.
Detailed Description of the Collection

Charles Alexander typed letter signed to Tom Clark, 1984 April 9 [Box 66 F954]