Haselwood, David.

John Wieners publisher's files for *The Hotel Wentley Poems*
1963-1971
(bulk date 1965)

Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 626
Creator: Haselwood, David.
Title: John Wieners publisher's files for *The Hotel Wentley Poems*
Inclusive Dates: 1963-1971
Bulk Dates: 1965
Extent: .3 linear feet and 1 oversize box (2 boxes)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 626, David Haselwood, John Wieners, publisher's files for *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes; Removals: Shelved in SPEC MSS oversized boxes (17 inches)

Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/

Source: Purchase, September 2010.
Processing: Processed and encoded by Julia Pompetti, October 2010.
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Biographical Note

American poet John Wieners (1934-2002) is identified with both the Black Mountain School as well as the Beats. His poetry contains themes of drug abuse and mental illness, as well as a concern for women's rights, gay rights, and other social issues.

Wieners was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1934. He received his A.B. from Boston College in 1954. With encouragement from poet Charles Olson (1910-1970), Wieners attended Black Mountain College in North Carolina from 1955-1956, where he studied writing with poets Robert Creeley (1926-2005) and Robert Duncan (1919-1988). Wieners is also identified with the American Beat poets, having spent time in San Francisco at the height of the movement in the late 1950s. Wieners's first collection of poetry, The Hotel Wentley Poems (1958), was written in San Francisco and became an instant sensation with the Beats.


Struggles with substance abuse and mental illness over the course of Wieners's life led to periods of institutionalization in 1959, 1969, and at various times in the early 1970s. Yet Wieners continued to write and publish, gaining insight and inspiration from those difficult times, and the early 1970s proved to be a particularly prolific period for Wieners. While institutionalized in 1969, Wieners composed Asylum Poems (1969). 1970 saw the publication of Nerves, Wieners’s first international volume. Wieners was also very active in promoting political causes, taking part in the antiwar movement, speaking out against racism, and campaigning for the rights of women and homosexuals. Cincinnati Pike, Or Behind the Sate Capitol (1975) was another landmark piece for Wieners, a volume that combines a variety of media and poetic forms.

Wieners published little new work after 1975 and remained largely out of the public eye. In 1986, he produced a retrospective collection Selected Poems, 1958-1984, edited by Raymond Foye and with a forward by Allen Ginsberg. In 1996, Wieners’s previously unpublished journal was produced in an edited form by The Sun and Moon Press; the volume documents his life in San Francisco around the time he composed The Hotel Wentley Poems. The volume titled The Journal of John Wieners is to be called 707 Scott Street for Billy Holiday, 1959 contains Wieners’s prose, poetry, and various impressions of the creative atmosphere in San Francisco at the onset of the 1960s.

Wieners died on March 1, 2002, in Boston, Massachusetts.

Historical Note

Friend of the Beat poets and artists in San Francisco, American publisher David Haselwood opened the Auerhahn Press in 1958 with the goal of publishing the books of young Beat poets that many larger, commercial publishers would not.

John Wieners's The Hotel Wentley Poems (1958) was the first book published by the Auerhahn Press, with Haselwood handling the design and layout and the printing delegated to the commercial firm East Wind.
Printers. Ultimately, the final product did not meet Haselwood's expectations and some of Wieners’s language had been censored. This convinced Haselwood to purchase a Hartford letterpress and handset future publications. The Auerhahn Press went on to publish poetry by Philip Lamantia, Michael McClure, and Diane DiPrima, along with other notable Beat poets from the San Francisco Renaissance. Haselwood took on a partner, Andrew Hoyem, in 1961. Constantly struggling to remain financially solvent, the press survived thanks to fundraisers and commissioned publications. However, financial problems eventually overwhelmed the business and the Auerhahn Press closed in January 1965. The press had published a total of 40 books. Haselwood continued to publish 18 more books, working with many of the same writers he had before, under the imprint Dave Haselwood Books. This included the 1965 edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*. Haselwood closed this second publishing venture in 1968, moving on to other interests.

**Sources:**


The John Wieners publisher's files for *The Hotel Wentley Poems* consists of .3 linear feet of materials comprising manuscripts, proofs, artwork, page layouts, and correspondence created and revised by American poet John Wieners (1934-2002), publisher David Haselwood, and artist Robert Lavigne (born 1928) relating to the publication of Wieners's *The Hotel Wentley Poems: Original Version* (1965). This collection provides examples of Wieners's revision process and relationship with his editor Haselwood while preparing the second edition. The collection is divided into three series: I. Correspondence; II. Manuscripts and proofs; and III. Artwork and ephemera.

*The Hotel Wentley Poems* was written during the week of June 15 to June 23, 1958, when John Wieners visited David Haselwood in the Wentley Hotel in San Francisco, California. These poems became the first book published by Haselwood’s San Francisco Auerhahn Press in 1958; a reprint of *The Hotel Wentley Poems* was issued in 1959 with minor corrections. Approximately 1,000 copies of this edition were printed. As a result, Wieners and Haselwood worked to publish a second edition entitled *The Hotel Wentley Poems: Original Versions* (1965), which included major revisions made by Wieners to the poems.

Series I. contains 5 items of correspondence from Wieners to Haselwood between 1963 and 1971, arranged chronologically. The letters discuss Wieners's revision process for the second edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, his struggles with mental illness and drug abuse, and his attempts to find employment. The final piece of correspondence is an antique embossed Christmas card addressed in Wieners's hand to "The Hon. Secretary to the President Mr. David M. Haselwood" from Richard Milhous Nixon, likely as a joke.

Series II. consists of materials tracing the revision and production processes of Weinners's *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, including a typescript manuscript, newsprint proofs, and letterpress proofs. All corrections to the poems are in Wieners and Haselwood's hands, as specified. The typescript and newsprint proofs include the eight poems that appeared in the 1965 edition in the published order: "A poem for record players," "A poem for vipers," "A poem for painters," "A poem for early risers," "A poem for cocksuckers," "A poem for the old man," "A poem for museum goers," and "A poem for the insane." In the typescript, there are multiple versions of some of the poems as well as editorial revisions by Haselwood and explanatory notes by Wieners. The first set of newsprint proofs contains Weinners's revisions concerning punctuation, line and stanza breaks, and page layout with explanatory notes, as well as a long letter from Wieners written to Haselwood on the verso of "A poem for painters." The second set of newsprint proofs includes Haselwood's notes regarding pagination and layout finalization; this set is missing "A poem for the old man." There is also one newsprint proof of "A poem for benzadrine," written in 1958 but not used in either edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, which includes Haselwood's holograph editorial revisions. "A poem for benzadrine" was included in Wieners’s later books titled *Selected Poems* (1972) and *Collected Poems, 1958-1984* (1986). Also included are three sets of incomplete letterpress proofs of the 1965 edition with some pages uncut. These proofs are of the first and final pages of poetry including "A poem for record players" and "A poem for the insane." The proofs are followed by a mock-up of the colophon and a mock-up of the title page that includes a mention of an introductory note by poet Michael McClure, which did not appear in either the 1958 or 1965 editions.
Series III. contains artwork and a cover mock-up by Robert LaVigne (born 1928) used in the 1965 edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems* and publication announcement for the 1958 edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*. Material is arranged into two groupings: artwork and ephemera, and chronologically within these groupings. There is an original ink portrait of Wieners signed and dated by LaVigne; also included are two magnesium plate print copies of the portrait. A blue-line sheet accompanies the portrait with notes on dimensions and type to be used in the edition. The portrait is included in the published volume alongside "A poem for painters," which refers to Wieners sitting for LaVigne. The mock-up of the cover includes two cut-outs with a hand-painted pattern in black, grey, and white, a black circle upon which a Jerry Burchard photograph (not present) would be placed, and a sample typeset for the title. Also included is a white back board with remnants of glue to which the mock-up was presumably attached, and a manila envelope which contained the cover mock-up, addressed in LaVigne’s hand.
Selected Search Terms

**Personal Names**


**Topical Terms**

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

Beat generation--California--San Francisco.

Beat generation--Poetry.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Correspondence.

Manuscripts.

Proofs.

Mock-ups.

Portraits.

**Occupation**

Authors.

Publishers.

Artists.

**Personal Contributors**

LaVigne, Robert, 1928-

Haselwood, David.


**Corporate Contributors**

Auerhahn Press.

Dave Haselwood Books.
Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 555 Robert Wilson - John Wieners collection

MSS 138 John Wieners papers
Arrangement

I. Correspondence
II. Manuscripts and proofs
III. Artwork and ephemera
Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I. Correspondence, 1963-1971

Contains 5 items of correspondence from Wieners to Haselwood between 1963 and 1971, arranged chronologically. The letters discuss Wieners's revision process for the second edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, his struggles with mental illness and drug abuse, and his attempts to find employment. The final piece of correspondence is an antique embossed Christmas card addressed in Wieners's hand to "The Hon. Secretary to the President Mr. David M. Haselwood" from Richard Milhous Nixon, likely as a joke.

John Wieners to David Haselwood, 1963-1971

1963 November 14 [Box 1 F1]

1965 September 18 [Box 1 F1]

1965 November 25 [Box 1 F1]

1966 February 7 [Box 1 F1]

1971 November 1971 [Box 1 F1]

An antique embossed Christmas card to David Haselwood with envelope addressing him as the Hon. Secretary to the President and a return address for President Nixon in Wieners's hand.

Series II. Manuscripts and proofs, circa 1965

Consists of materials tracing the revision and production processes of Wieners's *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, including a typescript manuscript, newsprint proofs, and letterpress proofs. All corrections to the poems are in Wieners and Haselwood's hands, as specified. The typescript and newsprint proofs include the eight poems that appeared in the 1965 edition in the published order: "A poem for record players," "A poem for vipers," "A poem for painters," "A poem for early risers," "A poem for cocksuckers," "A poem for the old man," "A poem for museum goers," and "A poem for the insane." In the typescript, there are multiple versions of some of the poems as well as editorial revisions by Haselwood and explanatory notes by Wieners. The first set of newsprint proofs contains Wieners's revisions concerning punctuation, line and stanza breaks, and page layout with explanatory notes, as well as a long letter from Wieners written to Haselwood on the verso of "A poem for painters." The second set of newsprint proofs includes Haselwood's notes regarding pagination and layout finalization; this set is missing "A poem for the old man." There is also one newsprint proof of "A poem for benzadrine," written in 1958 but not used in either edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, which includes Haselwood's holograph editorial revisions. "A poem for benzadrine" was included in Wieners's later books titled *Selected Poems* (1972) and *Collected Poems, 1958-1984* (1986). Also included are three sets of incomplete letterpress proofs of the 1965 edition with some pages uncut. These proofs are of the first and final pages of poetry including "A poem for record players" and "A poem for the insane." The proofs are followed by a mock-up of the colophon and a mock-up of the title page that includes a mention of an introductory note by poet Michael McClure, which did not appear in either the 1958 or 1965 editions.
Typescript with revisions by Wieners and Haselwood, circa 1965 [Box 1 F2]


Newsprint proofs, revisions by Wieners, circa 1965 [Box 1 F3]

A complete set of newsprint proofs with extensive revisions by Wieners including changes to line and stanza breaks, page layout and explanatory notes. There is also a long letter written by Wieners to Haselwood on the verso of "A poem for painters" regarding the revision process.

Newsprint proofs, revisions by Haselwood, circa 1965 [Box 1 F4]

Two nearly complete sets of proofs with holograph notations by Haselwood regarding page breaks and finalizing page layout. Set is missing "A poem for the old man."

Newsprint proofs for "Benzadrine", circa 1965 [Box 1 F5]

"Benzadrine" was written in 1958 along with the other poems in *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, but it was not included in either the 1958 or 1965 editions.

Letterpress proofs, circa 1965 [Box 1 F6]

Three incomplete sets of folded and gathered letterpress proofs; several pages are uncut.

Mock-ups of colophon and title page, circa 1965 [Box 1 F7]

The colophon mock-up consists of a folded leaf with blank end papers and colophon page marked. Title page mock-up includes a line indicating that the book will include a note by Michael McClure that is not included in the published version.

Series III. Artwork and ephemera, 1958-1965

Contains artwork and a cover mock-up by Robert LaVigne (1928- ) used in the 1965 edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems* and publication announcement for the 1958 edition of *The Hotel Wentley Poems*. Material is arranged into two groupings: artwork and ephemera, and chronologically within these groupings. There is an original ink portrait of Wieners signed and dated by LaVigne; also included are two magnesium plate print copies of the portrait. A blue-line sheet accompanies the portrait with notes on dimensions and type to be used in the edition. The portrait...
is included in the published volume alongside "A poem for painters," which refers to Wieners sitting for LaVigne. The mock-up of the cover includes two cut-outs with a hand-painted pattern in black, grey, and white, a black circle upon which a Jerry Burchard photograph (not present) would be placed, and a sample typeset for the title. Also included is a white back board with remnants of glue to which the mock-up was presumably attached, and a manila envelope which contained the cover mock-up, addressed in LaVigne’s hand.

Portrait of John Wieners by Robert Lavigne, 1958-1965

Original ink portrait, 1958 June 18 [Box 1 F8] (Removed to SPEC MSS oversized boxes (17 inches))

An ink portrait of Wieners signed and dated by LaVigne. This portrait appears in the 1965 edition accompanying "A poem for painters," which mentions LaVigne sketching Wieners.

Magnesium plate print, undated [Box 1 F8]

Blue line sheet, circa 1965 [Box 1 F8]

The blue-line sheet details the sizing and placement of the portrait for the published volume.

Cover art mock-up, circa 1965 [Box 1 F9] (Removals to SPEC MSS oversized boxes (17 inches))

Includes five pieces used for the mock-up of the cover: three pieces of handpainted pattern, a typeset title mock-up, and backing board.

Envelope for cover art, circa 1965 [Box 1 F10] (Removed to SPEC MSS oversized boxes (17 inches))

Addressed to Haselwood in LaVigne's hand and originally contained the cover artwork.

Publication announcement, 1958 [Box 1 F11]

Announcement for the 1958 publication of The Hotel Wentley Poems.