



Open Places (Columbia, Mo.) Records **(C3705)**

Collection Number: C3705

Collection Title: *Open Places* (Columbia, Mo.) Records

Dates: 1961-1987

Creator: Bender, Eleanor M.

Abstract: The records of a small poetry magazine, edited by Eleanor M. Bender, include correspondence, financial documents, grant information, issues 1-44, Poet Series 1-5, photographs, newspaper clippings, and a recorded interview with Nan A. Talese, senior editor at Random House.

Collection Size: 3.8 cubic feet, 1 audio tape
(269 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia. If you would like more information, please contact us at columbia@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The donor has relinquished their rights in the records and authorized their release to the public domain.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Open Places (Columbia, Mo.) Records* (Collection Number); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Columbia [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Columbia].

Donor Information: The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Eleanor Bender on March 5, 1981 (Accession No. CA4327). Additions were made on May 19, 1981 and May 28, 1981 (Accession No. CA4343) and January 22, 1990 (Accession No. CA4941).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the *Open Places* (Columbia, Mo.) Records collection can be found in the following collections:

[Open Places \(Columbia, Mo.\) Records, \(C3068\)](#)
[Open Places \(Columbia, Mo.\) Records, \(CA6620\)](#)

Processed by: Processed by Karen L. Mitchell, May 3, 1982. Finding aid revised by Nicholas Raya, February 3, 2023.

Biographical Note:

Eleanor M. Bender began editing *Open Places*, a contemporary poetry and review magazine, out of her New York City apartment in 1966. With the support of private monies and subscriptions the magazine was published sporadically.

From its first appearance Bender intended *Open Places* to be a quarterly publication, but this was not realized until 1968 when she moved to Columbia, Missouri. Through the assistance of Max Baird Bender began printing the magazine quarterly as a Southern Critic publication. Together Bender and Baird produced issues 5 and 6.

With issue 7/8 *Open Places* was back on its own, publishing whenever money was available. In October 1971 the magazine gained financial backing from Stephens College when Bender joined the faculty. The magazine became a part of the college's creative writing program, while maintaining its status as a professional poetry quarterly. Stephens College students took on the positions of advisory editors and editorial staff.

Beginning in 1972 *Open Places* was issued semi-annually with an expanded format that included short fiction as well as poetry. In its review section the magazine focused on books printed by small and feminist presses and the importance of "little" magazines. Bender also established the *Open Places* Poet Series in 1972. In numbers 1-5, the works of E.S. Miller, James Camp, X.J. Kennedy, Keith and Rosmarie Waldrop, Peyton Houston, and George Anthony were highlighted.

On the fifteenth anniversary, Bender published a special issue of *Open Places*, a retrospective of issues 1-30. In 1985 Bender put out a special issue focusing on humor in America. The following year Bender published a special twentieth anniversary issue highlighting the works of American writers living abroad.

A "Best Friends" issue, the last issue, was printed in the summer of 1987. It was devoted to the work of writers who had been frequent contributors to *Open Places*.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following three series:

Correspondence
Open Places
Business Records

Scope and Content Note:

Correspondence

This series contains correspondence chronicling *Open Places* from its founding in 1966 to the publication of its 44th number in 1987. The correspondence gives insight into the magazine's contributors and subscribers, the manuscript solicitation and selection process, and publication procedures. Collection C 3068 contains correspondence primarily related to the last six years of

publication, 1981-1987. There is also a small amount of correspondence dealing with Stephens College issues such as pay, where Bender fit into the English department, and the future of the editorial class in the creative writing program

Open Places

This series comprises the bulk of the series. Number 31/32 is the anniversary issue which includes an index of poems and prose published during the preceding fifteen years. Number 38/39 is a special issue focusing on humor in America. Number 42/43 is the twentieth anniversary issue highlighting the works of American writers living abroad.

Numbers 1-5 of the Poet Series, including works by James Camp, X.J. Kennedy, E.S. Miller, Peyton Houston, George Anthony, and Keith and Rosmarie Waldrop, are also found in this series.

Business Records

This series shows the technical and behind-the-scenes operations of a publication. The series is arranged by type of material and includes budgets, invoices, subscriptions, grants, promotions and publicity material, copyrights forms, and printing costs and galleys.

The series also contains an audio taped interview in 1972 with Nan A. Talese, senior editor at Random House, Inc., by Bender and the magazine production class. Talese discusses characteristics of potential editors, job possibilities for women, the treatment of unsolicited manuscripts versus manuscripts introduced by an agent, contracts, the route of a manuscript in a publishing house, an editor's relationship with an author, and other aspects of publishing.

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