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12/6/21  
INFO 632 Conservation and Preservation

This paper will seek to evaluate and make recommendations for the care and preservation of the Barbara Curtis Adachi Bunraku Collection, located in the C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University. Previously arranged and described in an online finding aid, the collection is grouped by format and further by genre.<sup>1</sup> Following the finding aid, I will discuss condition assumptions, damage remediation (including rehousing if required), and priorities for reformatting for each distinct series. After focusing on each specific needs, I will discuss remaining priorities and issues regarding the treatment and care of the collection as a whole.

## Slides

The collection's finding aid notes 13,571 slides created between 1972-1987, with reference to cardboard mounts.<sup>2</sup> From the age of the slides and their documentary nature, we can assume that many of these slides are in color. Selections on the collection's online web portal support this assumption.<sup>3</sup> From their approximate age, I would assume they are 35mm slides, and expect that much of the series is polyester film. Color slides are especially susceptible to fading, and I would expect to find some amount of the images discolored.

In the tome *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs*, Wilhelm discusses the longevity of several specific manufacturers of film, though it would be difficult to discern

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<sup>1</sup> Maiko O. Cagno, "Guide to the Barbara Curtis Adachi Bunraku Collection, 1964-2003," C. V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University in the City of New York, last modified July 31, 2006, <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/eresources/archives/eastasian/adachi/ldpd.6226404.001.f.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Cagno, "Series: Slides."

<sup>3</sup> Columbia University Libraries, "Dressing Room," The Barbara Curtis Adachi Bunraku Collection, accessed December 7, 2021, <https://bunraku.library.columbia.edu/tags/4/>.

exactly the type of film used to create each slide, especially at such scale. For long-term preservation, I would recommend creating a high-quality digital capture of the slide including both the photograph and the label would be ideal to preserve contextual information and create access copies. Color slides should be prioritized for this effort. Depending on their expected usage, an analog copy of faded slides could be created to ‘halt’ further image fading.

I would also expect to find deterioration of cardboard slide mounts. If stored improperly or exposed to water in any form, cardboard mounts may be separating from the film or warped. Wilhelm notes that should cardboard mounts be in good condition, that “accelerated tests indicate they are not harmful to color slide images during prolonged storage.” He also notes certain plastic mounts to be satisfactory for long-term storage.<sup>4</sup> Slides with mount issues should be remounted after their original labels are digitized or similarly recorded.

The finding aid also notes a chronology-based organizational system in place by Adachi, and additional slides found outside of the system.<sup>5</sup> I would choose to retain Adachi’s order when possible. Loose slides would be grouped together by subject at the discretion of the archivist. Though kept in their original order, slides should be rehoused into archival boxes. For a larger collection, Wilhelm recommends recommends archival boxes.<sup>6</sup> In this instance, I would recommend a modular slide storage box from Gaylord Archival. These acid- and lignin-free boxes will protect the cardboard mounts, and protect the film from light exposure. Each outer box contains 6 inner boxes which hold 220 cardboard mounted 35mm slides, requiring a total of

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<sup>4</sup> Henry G. Wilhelm and Carol Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs: Traditional and Digital Color Prints, Color Negatives, Slides, and Motion Pictures* (Grinnell, IA: Preservation Publishing Company, 1993), 629.

<sup>5</sup> Cagno, “Series: Slides.”

<sup>6</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs*, 650.

62 inner boxes and 11 outer boxes to house the entire series. A full set of 66 will account for the changes in dimension of any slides that require remounting

I would suggest that these slides be stored in cold storage — conditions should be prioritized for the preservation of the film portion of the slide, specifically those in color. ANSI standards suggest a maximum temperature of 35°F and a RH range of 20–30% for extended storage of color film. For black & white film, the RH recommended is the same, with a higher maximum temperature.<sup>7</sup>

### **Photographs and Photo Albums**

The collection's finding aid notes 49 photo albums, containing 205 contact sheets and 4,187 photo prints, spanning the time period 1972-1985.<sup>8</sup> I would assume that many photographs are in color, however, many scanned images from the photo albums on the collection's web portal appear to be in black & white.<sup>9</sup> Similarly to the photo album pages, the contact sheets are mounted photograph prints. As the photographs were kept in albums, I would expect them to be kept flat by the pressure, reducing the possibility of some conservation issues like severe curling.

Given the finding aid's description of the photographs contained in each album as "regular prints," and the scale of the collection, it is difficult to determine the exact processes, but based on the age of the photographs, I would expect to find both resin-coated (RC) paper prints and chromogenic prints. RC paper prints are notorious for their tendency to easily fade, and with older versions also noted to crack or delaminate under certain conditions. Wilhelm notes that modern chromogenic prints have been known to develop a "yellowish stain that forms

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<sup>7</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, 545.

<sup>8</sup> Cagno, "Series: Photo Albums."

<sup>9</sup> Columbia University Libraries, "Dressing Room."

over time during dark storage,” permanently altering the colors even without light exposure.<sup>10</sup>

It is noted that Adachi’s photo albums were carefully organized, with detailed information handwritten on many pages. I would first see if it would be possible to preserve the photographs in place, and test the album pages for the presence of lignin and acid. Otherwise, it could become necessary to demount the photos for long-term preservation. As Wilhelm notes, “Unmounting photographs, especially old prints attached with unknown adhesives, is a complex and hazardous procedure and should not be attempted unless adequate equipment and thoroughly experienced personnel are available.”<sup>11</sup> I agree with the choice the archivists in this project made to create a digital surrogate of the photo albums before beginning conservation, but as unmounting the photographs was such a large undertaking, I would have then opted to reformat the photos by remounting the photos into an archival album after conservation.

The collection’s finding aid also describes a number of photographic prints separate from the photo albums. Of these 6,225, the bulk described are the photographs from the photo albums, unmounted by the archivists. There is another group of photographs comprised of prints created in 2007 from photographic negatives described later in the collection. The remaining photographs span 1977-1987, and are publication images and professional photographic prints taken by other photographers, a small number of which the finding aid defines as “formats different from those used by Adachi”.<sup>12</sup> No further information is given, but as many of the photos are of a more professional quality, I would expect to find some larger-scale gelatin prints, and that the prints added in 2007 are digital prints.

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<sup>10</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs*, 63.

<sup>11</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, 531.

<sup>12</sup> Cagno, “Series: Photographic Prints.”

With gelatin prints, I would expect to find some prints stuck together as a result of softness caused by high RH. Gelatin prints may also have mold growth. Digital prints may have become affected by water damage, and I would expect to see the ink become faded or blotchy. I recommend creating digital surrogates of the photographs in this collection for long-term preservation, especially of the earlier photographic prints. Color images should be prioritized and furthermore, images with clear degradation or fading signs should be prioritized. Depending on anticipated usage, access copies can be made with archival inks and papers.

The photographs should be rehoused in archival boxes, and kept in the organization originally created by Adachi for her photograph albums, with any additional to be grouped at the discretion of the archivist. Polyester sleeves for each individual photograph will help protect the images without degrading the image over time.<sup>13</sup> I have identified archival, acid- and lignin-free boxes and polyester sleeves for two sizes of photograph — up to 8x10” for contact sheets and professional photos totaling 630 images, and up to 5x7” for the bulk of Adachi’s own photos, totaling 5595. Assuming 100 images per box, 56 smaller boxes and 7 larger boxes will be required. I have also identified acid-free tabs for use in creating divisions in the collection. For storage, it is my recommendation that these photographs be placed in cold storage. Wilhelm recommends photograph storage at 0°F or lower, with 40% RH.<sup>14</sup>

### **Photograph Negatives and Transparencies**

In addition to the photographs and slides, the collection finding aid describes 1,087 color and black & white photo negatives, along with 10 folders of related paper materials.<sup>15</sup> Many of

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<sup>13</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs*, 490-491.

<sup>14</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, 697.

<sup>15</sup> Cagno, “Series: Negatives.”

these negatives correspond directly to the contact sheets described earlier, so we can infer that they are from the same time period, 1972-1985. I would expect that Adachi's image negatives are mostly comprised of polyester film. Similarly to my discussion of the slides, color film is especially susceptible to fading, and I would expect to find some amount of the film strips discolored. Any damage to this film would likely be a result of its original storage — strips may be stuck together, or warped from exposure to heat.

For long-term preservation of the images, I would recommend digitizing the negatives to create digital access copies. As in the slide series, color film should be prioritized for this effort due to fading concerns. Depending on the expected usage of these negatives, an analog copy of faded and other color negatives could be created. For storage, the film negatives should be carefully rehoused first in individual polyester sleeves to protect from any sort of dust or other contaminant that may scratch the surface.<sup>16</sup> Polyester will remain stable over time, and will leave no residue on the objects. The film and transparencies should then be housed in acid- and lignin-free housing. I would suggest that the film negatives be placed in cold storage. ANSI standards suggest a maximum temperature of 35°F and a RH range of 20–30% for extended storage of color film. For black & white film, the RH recommended is the same, with a higher maximum temperature. Storage conditions should be prioritized for the preservation of the color film.<sup>17</sup>

### **Audio and Visual Materials**

The collection's finding aid describes 60 audiocassettes and 1 videocassette produced by Adachi between 1970-1985, as well as 7 commercially produced audiocassettes and 3 vinyl

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<sup>16</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs*, 488.

<sup>17</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, 545.

records.<sup>18</sup> Based on their age and the history of consumer recording media, the media produced by Adachi is likely to be magnetic media. I would expect to see degradation of the polyurethane binder, with the tape either becoming soft and brittle, or with the degradation of the binder lubricant, causing the tape to develop “sticky-shed syndrome,” particularly on the older tapes. I would also expect the vinyl records to be scratched over time or if exposed to any sort of heat, to have softened and to have become distorted in tone or even unplayable.<sup>19</sup>

I recommend that any original magnetic media in the collection be reformatted to digital surrogates both for access and long-term preservation.<sup>20</sup> Any labels on the tapes should be preserved in this process as well, by taking high-quality color photographs of the cassettes. With regards to commercially produced media, if it is impossible to find elsewhere, these objects should also be reformatted to digital audio, only after original material has been completed.

For storage, the audiocassettes and videocassettes should be housed in archival boxes to protect labels from fading and stood on edge to transfer the tape’s weight to the reels.<sup>21</sup> Vinyl records can also be stored on their edges. The original sleeves can be retained for storage, but the discs should be placed into high-density polyethylene sleeves.<sup>22</sup> John Van Bogart suggests a storage environment of 59±5° F and 40% RH as ideal for these recordings to slow the effects of

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<sup>18</sup> Cagno, “Series: Audio and Visual Materials.”

<sup>19</sup> Harrison Behl, "Audio Formats: Characteristics and Deterioration," in *ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation*, Harrison Behl et al. (Washington, D.C.: CLIR, 2015), 19, <https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub164/>.

<sup>20</sup> John Van Bogart, *Magnetic Tape Storage and Handling: A Guide for Libraries and Archives* (Washington, D.C.: CLIR, 1995), 5-6, <https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub54/>.

<sup>21</sup> Van Bogart, 18.

<sup>22</sup> Carla Anton, "Care and Maintenance," in *ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation*, Carla Anton et al. (Washington, D.C.: CLIR, 2015), 63, <https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub164/>.

binder degradation in magnetic media.<sup>23</sup>

## **Printed Material**

The collection's finding aid describes 913 printed materials, created between 1964-2003, containing objects such as programs, fliers, and other performance resources. The finding aid defines the objects in this series as professionally published material, with the bulk of material published in Japan.<sup>24</sup> As ANSI/NISO 'permanent paper' standards were developed in the 1980s, I would definitely expect to see degradation in the older objects in this series. Older commercial paper is more prone to hydrolysis, causing paper to become brittle with time.

Depending on how these materials were previously stored, I would also expect to see some fading of printing inks as a result of time and any exposure to light. Bound materials may be less faded than any looseleaf objects, but may be more prone to breakage if brittle.

An additional concern with the storage of this series is the acidification of paper over time. The Library of Congress warns "Wood pulp paper from before the 1980s also tends to be acidic from alum-rosin sizing, ... which, in the presence of moisture, generates sulfuric acid."<sup>25</sup> This would not only damage an individual object, but those directly next to it in storage. To slow the rate of degradation and prevent acid generation, printed materials in this series should be kept according to NISO standards for optimal preservation, between 35-65° F and 30-50% RH.<sup>26</sup>

## **Realia**

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<sup>23</sup> John Van Bogart, *Magnetic Tape Storage and Handling*, 19-20.

<sup>24</sup> Cagno, "Series: Printed Materials and Realia."

<sup>25</sup> Library of Congress, "The Deterioration and Preservation of Paper: Some Essential Facts," accessed December 7, 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/deterioratebrochure.html>.

<sup>26</sup> William K. Wilson, *NISO TR01-1995, Environmental Guidelines for the Storage of Paper Records*, (Bethesda, MD: NISO Press, 1995), <http://www.niso.org/publications/niso-tr01-1995-environmental-guidelines-storage-paper-records>.

The most diverse series in the collection, the finding aid describes 89 objects of varied provenance, including textiles, ceramics, puppets, postcards, and more.<sup>27</sup> This series contains a number of different textiles, including *noren* (shop curtains), *hakama* (skirt), and *tenugui* (hand towels). I would expect to see some amount of wear from their former lives, or fading from light and elemental exposure, particularly to the *noren*. The textiles may also show signs of previous storage, such as staining, creasing, or creature damage. In rehousing, the textiles should be stored flat, using acid-free tissue paper to support the objects and line archival boxes, taking care to avoid folds in the textiles.<sup>28</sup> Items stored together, such as the *tenugui*, should have tissue paper interleaving. I've selected unbuffered archival textile boxes to house these objects.

The series also contains a number of paper items, including postcards, calendars, and an original *yukahon* (narrator's text). As discussed in the Paper Materials section, I would expect to find items in this grouping brittle and possibly faded from light exposure. Notably, postcards may be beat up from travel, and the *yukahon* may show signs of wear from use in performance. I've selected acid- and lignin-free archival boxes to house these objects.

For the ceramics in this series, I might expect to see items cracked, chipped, or broken. Depending on the makeup of the object, it may also show signs of deterioration due to salt crystallization, primarily seen in more porous ceramics.<sup>29</sup> For storage, the ceramics in this series should be kept in individual sturdy, acid- and lignin-free archival boxes, wrapped with archival tissue paper. I've selected archival clamshell boxes for housing to allow for easier access.

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<sup>27</sup> Cagno, "Series: Printed Materials and Realia."

<sup>28</sup> American Institute for Conservation, *Caring for Textiles*, (n.d), <https://learning.culturalheritage.org/public>.

<sup>29</sup> American Institute for Conservation, *Caring for Ceramics and Glass Objects*, (n.d), <https://learning.culturalheritage.org/public>.

The series finding aid also notes a pair of *geta* (wooden clogs). Wood is very sensitive to light, and I would expect these clogs to be slightly sun-bleached based on their exposure. I would also expect to see signs of wear from their use, and in a worst case-scenario, it is possible the wood of the shoes could have an insect infestation. Any possible signs of such an infestation should result in the item's isolation from the rest of the collection until treatment is complete. For storage, the *geta* should be wrapped with archival tissue paper and housed in acid- and lignin-free flat archival boxes, which I've identified.

Perhaps the most unique items in the collection, this series also holds a set of *bunraku* puppets and heads. These puppets are carefully constructed, with a wooden skeleton and head, and an elaborate costume sewn on to hide the frame.<sup>30</sup> The wooden parts of the puppet should be inspected for insect damage similarly to *geta*, and I might expect to see peeling or cracking paint and missing hair on the head of the puppets depending on their age and upkeep by the performer.

For storage, each puppet or head should be kept in individual sturdy, acid- and lignin-free archival boxes, wrapped and padded with archival tissue paper. The puppets should also be supported with a stockinette roll stuffer to cushion their frames. Any additional costumes should be stored separately to avoid undue wear, and stored like other textiles in the series. I've selected flat archival boxes for housing the puppets and their costumes.

The items in this series should be divided for storage based on their conservation needs. Paper materials should be stored according to NISO standards for optimal preservation, or between 35-65° F and 30-50% RH.<sup>31</sup> Textiles should be kept between 50-68° F, with a RH range

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<sup>30</sup> "Bunraku," Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, last modified November 11, 2021, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunraku#Puppets>.

<sup>31</sup> Wilson, *NISO TR01-1995*.

of 35-65% for long-term storage.<sup>32</sup> The *bunraku* puppets should be stored at this range as well, to best preserve the costumes. Ceramics should be stored in a dry environment with a steady RH to avoid salt re-crystallization.<sup>33</sup> The *geta* should be stored at a RH between 40-60% with minimal temperature fluctuation.<sup>34</sup>

## **Personal Papers**

The collection's finding aid notes 26 boxes of personal papers, containing roughly 2,500 personal papers from the time range 1970-2004. These objects are more often produced by Adachi, and include research notes, newspaper clippings, tickets, books, magazines, and correspondence.<sup>35</sup> Depending on the age of these materials, there is likely to be deterioration visible in different forms. As discussed in the Printed Materials section, I would expect paper produced before the mid-1980's to be brittle, affecting Adachi's notes, correspondence, and likely books as well. Paper materials created closer to 2004 are more likely to retain their structure, but may display some fading based on light exposure. There is likely to be a range of paper quality in this collection, creating variation in the states of photodegradation. Newspaper, created with a mechanical pulping, is also likely to become brittle and fade yellow with age. The books may also have conservation needs relating to their bindings.

The finding aid also notes photocopies as present in this series. Depending on the age of these materials, I would expect to see a greater amount of faded ink, yellowing, or thinner pages

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<sup>32</sup> American Institute for Conservation, *Caring for Textiles*.

<sup>33</sup> American Institute for Conservation, *Caring for Ceramics*.

<sup>34</sup> American Institute for Conservation, *Caring for Furniture*.

<sup>35</sup> Cagno, "Series: Personal Papers."

more subject to wear and tear damage both from the printing process, and from usage.<sup>36</sup> Due to photocopies' more sensitive nature and the chemical processes used to create them, I would recommend that the photocopies be placed into sleeves or folders to prevent interaction with other portions of the series. I would also recommend that these photocopies be reformatted to a more stable print to retain long-term usability.

The paper materials in this series should be stored according to NISO standards for optimal preservation, or between 35-65° F and 30-50% RH.<sup>37</sup> The larger items in the series, such as notes, magazines, and correspondence, should be housed in A4 document cases. Smaller objects such as books, tickets, and newspaper clippings can be stored in flat boxes. This series should be organized at the discretion of the archivist, and divided using folders when possible.

### **The Collection as a Whole**

When discussing cold storage, Wilhelm notes, "Large collections may find it economical to segregate color materials in groups, according to their dark fading stability characteristics. The most unstable products should be stored at low temperatures and, for economy, the more stable materials can be kept in more moderate conditions."<sup>38</sup> Given the scale of this collection, an audit of the collection and space should be made, however keeping all items in a series together would be preferred. For overall prioritization of reformatting and treatment, items which are in the most danger of permanent loss should be prioritized. It is my recommendation that reformatting and treatment begin by prioritizing magnetic media and color film due to urgency of lost media.

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<sup>36</sup> Janien Kemp, *A Survey of the Material Deterioration of Office Copies*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam City Archives, 2018), [https://www.metamorfoze.nl/sites/default/files/publicatie\\_documenten/OfficeCopyingResearch.pdf](https://www.metamorfoze.nl/sites/default/files/publicatie_documenten/OfficeCopyingResearch.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Wilson, *NISO TR01-1995*.

<sup>38</sup> Wilhelm and Brower, *The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs*, 697.

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*Photographs: Traditional and Digital Color Prints, Color Negatives, Slides, and Motion Pictures.* Grinnell, IA: Preservation Publishing Company, 1993.

Archives Preservation Project - Housings						
Name:	Lisa Peck					
Collection:	Barbara Curtis Adachi Bunraku Collection					
Format type	Name/description of housing product	Name of supplier	Product number or other precise description	Quantity	Cost (each)	Cost (total)
Slides	Modular Slide File Storage System Kit	Gaylord Archival	SFS11153X6B	11	\$55.55	\$611.05
Photographs	Barrier Board Flip-Top Photo & Print Box	Gaylord Archival	CB755BG (5 5/8W x 7 5/8L x 5"H)	56	\$13.73	\$768.88
Photographs	2 mil Archival Polyester Negative & Print Sleeves (100-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	MP57 (5x7")	56	\$81.10	\$4,541.60
Photographs	Negative & Photo Index Cards (24-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	IND57 (5 1/2H x 7 1/2"W)	3	\$15.15	\$45.45
Photographs	Barrier Board Flip-Top Photo & Print Box	Gaylord Archival	CB1085BG (5W x 10 5/8L x 8 5/8"H)	7	\$15.80	\$110.60
Photographs	2 mil Archival Polyester Negative & Print Sleeves (100-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	MP810 (8x10")	7	\$135.45	\$948.15
Photographs	Negative & Photo Index Cards (24-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	IND810 (8 1/2H x 10 1/2"W)	2	\$15.90	\$31.80
Personal Papers	Barrier Board Shallow Lid Box	Gaylord Archival	PB9125S (9 1/2W x 12 1/2L x 5"H)	3	\$16.10	\$48.30
Realia	Barrier Board Textile & Costume Box	Gaylord Archival	TB30104 (10W x 30L x 4"H)	4	\$42.35	\$169.40
Realia	Barrier Board Clamshell Box	Gaylord Archival	CL17115 (11 1/2W x 17 1/4L x 5"H)	5	\$18.65	\$93.25
Realia	Unbuffered Acid-Free Tissue (100-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	UT2024 (20 x 24")	2	\$52.25	\$104.50
Realia	Stockinette Roll Stuffer	Gaylord Archival	51022	3	\$29.99	\$89.97
Personal Papers	Barrier Board Flip-Top International A4 Size Document Case	Gaylord Archival	D13105 (5W x 13L x 10 1/4"H)	20	\$8.65	\$173.00
Personal Papers	Reinforced Third-Cut Tab International A4 Size File Folders (100-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	ARF330	1	\$58.23	\$58.23
Personal Papers	Barrier Board Shallow Lid Box	Gaylord Archival	PB9125S (9 1/2W x 12 1/2L x 5"H)	6	\$16.10	\$96.60
Personal Papers	Classic Third-Cut Tab Letter Size File Folders (25-Pack)	Gaylord Archival	F9113-25	1	\$12.60	\$12.60
						\$0.00
						\$0.00
						\$7,903.38 Total