A Finding Aid to the Herbert Aach Papers, 1942-1988, in the Archives of American Art

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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Herbert Aach papers
Identifier: AAA.aachherb
Date: 1942-1988
Extent: 2.4 Linear feet
Creator: Aach, Herbert, 1923-1985
Language: English
Summary: The papers of New York painter, art instructor and writer Herbert Aach (1923-1985) measure 2.4 linear feet and date from 1942 to 1988. Papers include biographical materials, correspondence, scattered financial and legal records, notes and writings, subject files, a scrapbook, printed materials, photographs, and one videocassette.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
Herbert and Doris Aach donated the papers to the Archives of American Art in 1984 and 1989.

Processing Information
The collection was arranged and cataloged by Jean Fitzgerald in 1991. The finding aid was created by Eden Orelove in 2011.

Preferred Citation

Restrictions
Use of original papers requires an appointment. Use of archival audiovisual recordings with no duplicate access copy requires advance notice.

Conditions Governing Use
The Herbert Aach papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.
Biographical / Historical

Painter, art instructor and writer Herbert Aach (1923-1985) worked primarily in New York City. Born in Cologne, Germany, Aach came to the United States in 1939. He taught at the Brooklyn Museum School (1947-1951), Pratt Institute (1966-1969), and at Queens College (1966-1985). In 1971 he was editor and translator of *Goethe’s Color Theory*. Aach was president of the Artists Technical Research Institute, which was founded in 1959 by Bena Frank and Ralph Mayer to conduct scientific and educational research of materials and methods used in the visual arts.

Scope and Contents

The papers of New York painter, art instructor and writer Herbert Aach (1923-1985) measure 2.4 linear feet and date from 1942 to 1988. Papers include biographical materials, correspondence, scattered financial and legal records, notes and writings, subject files, a scrapbook, printed materials, photographs, and one videocassette.

Legal records include materials relating to a lawsuit against Larry Rivers for a lease termination. Letters are from colleagues including Emily Genauer and Edwin W. Zoller regarding exhibitions and other art-related matters and brief letters from Elaine DeKooning, John Ferren, Adolph Gottlieb, and Rufino Tamayo. Subject files are found for many organizations of which Aach was a member, including the American Society for Testing and Materials, the Artists Technical Research Institute, and the Inter-Society Color Council. Printed materials include one scrapbook, clippings, and exhibition catalogs. There is documentation of Aach's work translating and editing *Goethe’s Color Theory*, one 55 minute videocassette entitled *Herbert Aach* by Albright Knox Gallery, and photographs of Aach and his artwork.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 8 series. Records are generally arranged by material type and chronologically thereafter.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1985 (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1949-1988 (Box 1; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 3: Financial Material, 1964-1981 (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 4: Legal Records, 1951-1986 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 5: Notes, 1961-1984 (Box 1; 6 folders)
- Series 6: Writings, 1950-1985 (Boxes 1-2; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 7: Subject Files, 1942-1984 (Box 2; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 8: Photographs, 1952-1960 (Box 2; 3 folders)
- Series 9: Scrapbook, 1951-1958 (Box 2; 1 folder)
- Series 8: Printed Material, 1948-1988 (Boxes 2-3; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 8: Videocassette, 25 April 1975 (Box 3; 1 folder)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:
Subjects:

Art teachers -- New York (State) -- New York
Artists' materials
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks
Video recordings

Names:

American Society for Testing and Materials
Artist's Technical Research Institute
De Kooning, Elaine
Ferren, John, 1905-1970
Genauer, Emily, 1910-2002
Inter-Society Color Council
Rivers, Larry, 1925-2002
Tamayo, Rufino, 1899-
Zoller, Edwin W., 1900-1967
Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1985

1 Folder (Box 1)
Biographical materials include a resume, exhibition records and three biographical essays about Aach.

Box 1, Folder 1 Biographical Material, 1985, undated

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1949-1988

0.6 Linear feet (Box 1)

Correspondence is primarily between Aach and various art suppliers and chemical analysis laboratories concerning the technical standards for artists' materials. Also included are letters from colleagues including Emily Genauer and Edwin W. Zoller regarding exhibitions and other art-related matters and brief letters from Elaine DeKooning, John Ferren, Adolph Gottlieb, and Rufino Tamayo agreeing to write recommendations for Aach.

Box 1, Folder 2 Correspondence, undated

Box 1, Folder 3-29 Correspondence, 1949-1988
27 Folders

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1 Folder (Box 1)

Financial material includes a grant proposal to study the serialization and color programming of Gothic rose windows, a price list for fluorochemical additives, and four invoices for the sale of paintings and for supplies.

Box 1, Folder 30 Financial Records, 1964-1981
Series 4: Legal Records, 1951-1986

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Legal records include two contracts with the Creative Gallery, consignment agreements, and material relating to a law suit against Larry Rivers concerning the termination of Aach’s lease on his studio.

Box 1, Folder 31  Contracts with Creative Gallery and Consignment Agreements, 1951-1978

Box 1, Folder 32-34  Loft Lease, Aach v. Rivers, 1980-1981
3 Folders

Box 1, Folder 35-37  Transcript of examination before trial, Aach v. Rivers, 1984
3 Folders

Box 1, Folder 38  Loft Lease, Aach v. Rivers, 1984-1986

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Series 5: Notes, 1961-1984

6 Folders (Box 1)

Notes include technical data on paint, exhibition guest registers, and a notebook with outlines for classes taught at Queen's College.

Box 1, Folder 39  
Notebook for Color, Design Class, undated

Box 1, Folder 40  
Queens College Notebook, circa 1968-1984

Box 1, Folder 41  
Color Course at Queens College, 1971-1973

Box 1, Folder 42  
Data on Paint, 1961

Box 1, Folder 43  
Exhibition Guest Registers, 1964-1968

Box 1, Folder 44-45  
Miscellaneous Notes, undated
2 Folders
Series 6: Writings, 1950-1985

0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Writings include texts for lectures, miscellaneous writings by Aach on art techniques and materials, evaluations by students, Gail O'Brien's master's thesis entitled "The Painter's Approach Toward Serialization in Modern Painting", and information about printmaking by Jack Stewart.

Box 1, Folder 46  Lecture Notes, undated, 1968
Box 1, Folder 47  Evaluations by Students, 1981-1985
Box 2, Folder 1-3  Miscellaneous Writings, undated
                     3 Folders
Box 2, Folder 4-7  Miscellaneous Writings, 1950-1981
                     4 Folders
Box 2, Folder 8   Printmaking Information by Jack Stewart, undated
Box 2, Folder 9   Masters Thesis: The Painter's Approach toward Serialization in Modern Painting
                 by Gail O'Brien, 1978
Series 7: Subject Files, 1942-1984

0.6 Linear feet (Box 2)

Subject files contain letters, notes, and printed material concerning the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), the Artists Technical Research Institute, Inc. (ATRI), the Color Forum, the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the Inter-Society Color Council (ISCC), New York Bridges, and the "Structure of Color" exhibition at the Whitney Museum. Also included is the book Goethe's *Color Theory*, which is translated and edited by Aach. The ATRI file contains correspondence between Ralph and Bena Frank Mayer, Ralston Crawford, Rutherford J. Gettens, and others concerning the establishment of ATRI, a copy of the by-laws, technical reports, and minutes of meetings.

Box 2, Folder 10-14  American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Subcommittee D01.57, 1977- 1982
5 Folders

Box 2, Folder 15  By-Laws of ATRI Inc. / Certificate of Incorporation of ATRI Inc., 1959

Box 2, Folder 16  Minutes of ATRI Meetings, 1960-1978

Box 2, Folder 17  Clippings and Articles Regarding Artists Technical Research Institute and Paint Standards, undated, 1957- 1981

Box 2, Folder 18-19  ATRI, 1942-1981
2 Folders

Box 2, Folder 20  Color Forum, 1968-1971

Box 2, Folder 21-23  Goethe Book, 1970-1983
3 Folders

Box 2, Folder 24-26  International Research and Exchanges Board, 1979-1984
3 Folders

Box 2, Folder 27  Inter-Society Color Council (ISCC) Subcommittee 37, 1971-1982

Box 2, Folder 28-29  New York Bridges, 1981-1982
2 Folders

Box 2, Folder 30  The "Structure of Color" Exhibition at the Whitney, 1971
Series 8: Photographs, 1952-1960

3 Folders (Box 2)

The photographs are of Aach and of his works of art.

Box 2, Folder 31  Photographs of Aach, 1956-1960

Box 2, Folder 32-33  Photographs of Works of Art, undated

2 Folders

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Series 9: Scrapbook, 1951-1958

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

The scrapbook is full of clippings, exhibition announcements and articles about Aach and his artwork.

Box 2, Folder 34 Scrapbook, 1951-1958

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0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 2-3)

Printed materials include clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, press releases, brochures and programs.

Box 2, Folder 35  Clippings, undated

Box 2, Folder 36-39 Clippings, 1954-1988
4 Folders

Box 2, Folder 40  Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, undated

Box 2, Folder 41  Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1948-1953
2 Folders

Box 3, Folder 1-5  Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1954-1988
5 Folders

Box 3, Folder 6  Press Releases, 1967-1979

Box 3, Folder 7  Brochures/Seminar Announcements, 1951-1979

Box 3, Folder 8  Programs, 1965-1980

Box 3, Folder 9  Exhibition Entry Brouchures, 1974-1979

Box 3, Folder 10 Miscellaneous, 1963-1977

0.2 Linear feet (Box 3)

The audio-visual materials is comprised of a 55-minute U-matic audiocassette entitled *Herb Aach*, made at the Albright-Knox Gallery.

Box 3, Folder 11 One Inch Videotape: *Herb Aach*, color, 55 min, Albright-Knox Gallery, 25 April 1975

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