



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Audubon Artists Records,  
1944-2001, in the Archives of American Art

Stephanie L. Ashley

The Audubon Artists records were processed in 2015 with  
funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art

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Archives of American Art  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Audubon Artists records
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.auduarti
<b>Date:</b>	1944-2001
<b>Extent:</b>	6.7 Linear feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Audubon Artists (New York, N.Y.)
<b>Language:</b>	English

The collection is in English.

**Summary:** The records of New York based Audubon Artists, a national exhibiting organization of painters, sculptors, and graphic artists, measure 6.7 linear feet and date from 1944-2001. The collection documents the organization's adoption of its constitution and first major expansion in the mid-1940s, and its subsequent growth to the present day. The records include correspondence with artist members, administrative files, exhibition files, financial records, printed material including an almost complete run of annual exhibition catalogs and prospectuses, and photographs of artwork, juries, and other groups involved in the annual exhibitions from the 1970s to 1999.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The records were donated by Audubon Artists in 1978 (via Mark Freeman, president) and 2001 (via David Pena, president).

### Processing Information

The collection was processed to a minimal level and a finding aid prepared by Stephanie Ashley in 2015, with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art. The Archives of American Art has implemented minimal processing tactics when possible in order to increase information about and access to more of our collections.

Minimal processing included arrangement to the series, subseries, and folder levels. Generally, items within folders were simply verified with folder titles, but not arranged further. Folders within boxes may not be numbered. The collection was rehoused in archival containers and folders, but not all staples and clips were removed.

### Preferred Citation

Audubon Artists records, 1944-2001. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center. Contact Reference Services for more information.

## Conditions Governing Use

The Audubon Artists records 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.

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## Biographical / Historical

Audubon Artists, a national exhibiting society of painters, sculptors, and graphic artists, was founded in New York, New York, in 1940. The organization took its name from the homestead of John James Audubon where it met in December, 1941, to discuss a less regional name than the one it had initially adopted: Professional Arts Group of Washington Heights. The group's association with Audubon, however, begins and ends with the name.

Audubon Artists held its first exhibition at 8th Street Gallery in April-May, 1942, with an exhibiting group of 22 members. In 1943 the group was able to attract a wider pool of recognized professional artists, and by 1944 the membership had increased to 60 and the organization issued its first annual exhibition catalog with the newly adopted eagle and palette emblem.

A reorganization meeting took place on March 27, 1944, to address the growing responsibilities for the annual exhibition. President Frederic Whitaker subsequently oversaw the creation of the original constitution, the credo and the 1946 incorporation of the organization, and led a membership campaign designed to attract nationally renowned artists of various aesthetic persuasions and gain the organization more prestige.

Since then, Audubon Artists has continued to hold an annual exhibition in a variety of locations throughout New York City, including the National Academy of Design, National Arts Club, and the Salmagundi Club. The latter has been the exhibition's preferred home since 1997, and with circa 350 members Audubon Artists remains a thriving organization dedicated to "artistic progress" today.

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## Scope and Contents

The records of New York based Audubon Artists, a national exhibiting organization of painters, sculptors, and graphic artists, measure 6.7 linear feet and date from 1944-2001. The collection documents the organization's adoption of its constitution and first major expansion in the mid-1940s, and its subsequent growth to the present day. The records include correspondence with artist members, administrative files, exhibition files, financial records, printed material including an almost complete run of annual exhibition catalogs and prospectuses, and photographs of artwork, juries, and other groups involved in the annual exhibitions from the 1970s to 1999.

Administration and correspondence files document all aspects of the organization's activities and include founding documents; records of individual officers including presidents Domenico Facci, Joseph Domareki, Mark Freeman, Hughie Lee-Smith, Renee McKay and Frederic Whitaker, and historians Michael Engel and Jan Gary; correspondence with members and prospective members including artists such as John Taylor Arms, Thomas Hart Benton, Peter Blume, Stuart Davis, Walt Disney, Lyonel

Feininger, Malvina Hoffman, William Meyerowitz, Henry Varnum Poor, Stow Wengenroth, and Stark Young; agenda, meeting minutes and reports to the Executive Board; and the correspondence and related records of various committees.

Exhibition files document a variety of activities related to exhibition planning, and include correspondence, entry forms, information on juries and awards, and lists of selected artwork and award winners.

Financial records include scattered treasurer correspondence and notes, records of bills paid, and some reports, investment and tax records from the 1960s-1990s.

Printed material includes an early brochure issued in 1944, and a brochure on the organization's history by Jan Gary, as well as annual exhibition catalogs and/or prospectuses from 1944 to 2000.

Photographic material consists of copy prints and negatives of photographic material used in the annual exhibition catalogs, including photos of artwork, juries and scattered exhibition installations.

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## Arrangement

Before processing, much of the collection was unsorted, and there was little indication of original record keeping practices for a large portion of the material. Some of the earlier material from the 1940s had been sorted by name or activity and where possible this arrangement has been maintained. Researchers should be aware, however, that similar types of material such as correspondence, financial, and administrative records, can be found in various places throughout the collection, particularly throughout Series 1. The collection is arranged as 5 series.

- Series 1: Administration and Correspondence Files, 1944-2000 (2.43 linear feet; Boxes 1-3, OV 8)
- Series 2: Exhibition Files, 1944-1999 (0.67 linear feet; Box 3)
- Series 3: Financial Records, 1962-1999 (0.5 linear feet; Box 4)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1944-2001 (1.7 linear feet; Boxes 4-6)
- Series 5: Photographic Material, circa 1969-1999 (0.9 linear feet; Boxes 6-8)

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Societies, etc. -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Arms, John Taylor, 1887-1953  
Benton, Thomas Hart, 1889-1975  
Blume, Peter, 1906-1992  
Davis, Stuart, 1892-1964  
Disney, Walt, 1901-1966  
Domareki, Joseph

Engel, Michael M., 1896-1969  
Facci, Domenico, 1916-1994  
Feininger, Lyonel, 1871-1956  
Freeman, Mark, 1908-  
Gary, Jan  
Hoffman, Malvina, 1887-1966  
Lee-Smith, Hughie  
McKay, Renee  
Meyerowitz, William, 1887-1981  
Poor, Henry Varnum, 1887-1970  
Wengenroth, Stow, 1906-  
Whitaker, Frederic  
Young, Stark, 1881-1963

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Administration and Correspondence Files, 1944-2000

*2.43 Linear feet (Boxes 1-3, OV 8)*

This series consists of mixed administrative records and correspondence documenting all aspects of the organization's activities. While no records exist from the original meetings of interested parties from 1940-1942, the series does include fragments of the 1946 certificate of incorporation (with a photocopy of the full document), working copies of the constitution and by-laws from 1944-1946 and a 1946 published copy which includes a roll of membership. Subsequent revisions to the constitution from the 1950s-1980s can also be found here.

Correspondence is found throughout the series, but some correspondence of individual presidents, historians, committee chairs and other individuals can also be found in named files. Of particular interest is correspondence documenting Frederic Whitaker's membership campaign to attract nationally renowned artists, which includes dozens of letters to known American artists. These can primarily be found in the general business and correspondence files for the 1940s and includes replies to Whitaker from artists such as Stuart Davis and Lyonel Feininger. The series also houses an honorable mention award presented to Whitaker in October 1945.

Other correspondents during the 1940s include John Taylor Arms, Thomas Hart Benton, Peter Blume, Jon Corbino, Walt Disney, Robert Gwathmey, Raoul Hague, Malvina Hoffman, Peter Hurd, William Meyerowitz, Henry Varnum Poor, Everett Shinn, Benton Spruance, Stow Wengenroth, and Stark Young. There are also numerous letters from presidents who succeeded Whitaker such as Ralph Fabri, Domenico Facci, Mark Freeman, Renee McKay and Hughie Lee-Smith, and the organization's two historians, Michael M. Engel and Jan Gary.

Correspondence related to Eileen and Frederic Whitaker is from Eileen following Frederic's death and includes papers related to a misunderstanding about whether Frederic Whitaker or John J. Karpick was the first president of Audubon Artists.

General correspondence from the 1970s includes documentation of the organization's attempts to secure publicity by means of a promotional video tape submitted to a local cable public access channel.

Also found here are executive board and director's minutes for the 1960s, and some meeting minutes for 1977-1979, 1985 and 1988. Additional scattered agenda, minutes and reports can be found in the general business and correspondence files. The series also includes the correspondence and related records of various committees including those for admissions, awards, and nominations; lists of executive board members, officers, members and associate members; and some financial records.

Folders are arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Box 1, Folder 1	Admissions Committee, 1944-1946
Box 1, Folder 2-4	Admissions Committee, 1963-1966
Box 1, Folder 5	Admissions Committee, circa 1980s-1994
Box 1, Folder 6-9	Agenda, Minutes and Reports, 1960s-1998

Box 1, Folder 10	Awards Committee, 1944-1946 Oversized material housed in OV 8
Box 1, Folder 11-14	Awards Committee, 1964-1968
Box 1, Folder 15-19	Awards Committee, 1973-1999
Box 1, Folder 20	Awards, Joe and Emily Lowe Foundation, Inc., 1970s
Box 1, Folder 21	Certificate of Incorporation, Fragments, 1946
Box 1, Folder 22	Committees, General, 1940s-1960s
Box 1, Folder 23-26	Constitution and By-Laws, 1944-1980s
	Correspondence by Name/Office
Box 1, Folder 27	Directors and Vice Presidents, 1944-1945
Box 1, Folder 28	Domareki, Joseph, President, 1965-1967
Box 1, Folder 29	Engel, Michael M., Chair of Exhibition Committee, 1944-1945
Box 1, Folder 30-31	Engel, Michael M., Historian, 1960s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 32	Everett, Len G. (Vice President for Oils), 1980
Box 1, Folder 33-36	Facci, Domencio, President, 1963-1977
Box 1, Folder 37	Freeman, Jane, 1945
Box 1, Folder 38	Freeman, Mark, President, 1976-1981
Box 1, Folder 39	Gary, Jan, Historian, 1980s
Box 1, Folder 40	Katz, Hilda, Chair of Awards Committee, 1944-1945
Box 1, Folder 41	Leason, Percy, Chair of Nominating Committee, 1945
Box 1, Folder 42-43	Lee-Smith, Hughie, President, 1980-1982
Box 2, Folder 1-2	McKay, Renee, President, 1979-1980



Box 2, Folder 3	Melrose, Alice, 1963
Box 2, Folder 4	Metzler, Anna E., Treasurer, 1944-1945
Box 2, Folder 5	Penny, Carlton, 1944
Box 2, Folder 6	Roller, Marion, President, 1995-1999
Box 2, Folder 7	Schaeffer, Rockwell B., 1944-1945
Box 2, Folder 8	Schrick, Linton F., Secretary, 1944-1945
Box 2, Folder 9	Stoloff, Carolyn, Publicity, 1983-1984
Box 2, Folder 10	Whitaker, Eileen and Frederic, 1970s-1980
Box 2, Folder 11	Demonstrations, 1945
Box 2, Folder 12-15	Form Letters and Memoranda, 1944-1980s
Box 2, Folder 16-19	General Business and Correspondence Files, 1944-1945
Box 2, Folder 20-26	General Business and Correspondence Files, 1959-1960s
Box 2, Folder 27-31	General Business and Correspondence Files, 1960s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 32-36	General Business and Correspondence Files, 1980-2000
Box 2, Folder 37	Letterheads and Blank Certificates, circa 1970s-circa 1980s
Box 3, Folder 1	Lists, Executive Board and Officers, 1980-1989
Box 3, Folder 2	Lists, Members and Associate Members, 1946-1999
Box 3, Folder 3	Lists, Officer Duties, circa 1970s-circa 1980s
Box 3, Folder 4	Nominations, 1945
Box 3, Folder 5	Nominations and Board Directors, 1944
Box 3, Folder 6	Nominating Committee, 1960s
Box 3, Folder 7	Nominating Committee (Membership Resignations), 1974

Box 3, Folder 8	Press Releases, 1963-1965
Box 3, Folder 9	Reception Committee, 1945
Box 3, Folder 10	Restricted Legacies, 1980s
Box 3, Folder 11-15	Slate of Officers and Directors , 1964-1981
Box 3, Folder 16	Stefan Hirsch Memorial Fund, 1966-1967
Box OV 8	Oversized Awards Committee from Box 1, Folder 10

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## Series 2: Exhibition Files, 1944-1999

### *0.66 Linear feet (Box 3)*

While records concerning exhibitions are scattered throughout the collection, this series consists of files specifically documenting individual annual exhibitions, including those at Lever House in 1986, and on the Federal Hall Site in 1996. Also found are records of juries selected for the 1965-1969 annual exhibitions, and some from the 1970s and 1980s. Records include correspondence, entry cards, exhibition forms, 4 leases from the National Academy of Design from 1963-1966, lists and resumes of exhibition participants, as well as correspondence with participants, and printed material.

Box 3, Folder 17	Entry Cards, 1998
Box 3, Folder 18-19	Exhibition, 1944-1945
Box 3, Folder 20	Exhibition, 1958-1959
Box 3, Folder 21	Exhibitions, 1978-1980s
Box 3, Folder 22-24	Exhibition at Lever House (1986), 1986
Box 3, Folder 25	Exhibition Awards, 1945
Box 3, Folder 26; Box 3, Folder 22-24	Exhibition Forms, circa 1965-1967
Box 3, Folder 27	Exhibition Leases, 1963-1966
Box 3, Folder 28	Exhibition List, 1999
Box 3, Folder 29	Exhibition on Federal Hall Site (1996), 1995
Box 3, Folder 30	Exhibition Printed Material (annotated), 1950s-1980s
Box 3, Folder 31-33	Juries, 1945-1946
Box 3, Folder 34	Juries, 1970s
Box 3, Folder 35	Juries, 1980s
Box 3, Folder 36-43	Juries, 23rd-27th Annual Exhibitions, 1964-1968
Box 3, Folder 44	Juries, Annual Exhibition Selection Lists, 1964-1967
Box 3, Folder 45	Juries, Notes, 1960s

Box 3, Folder 46-47

Medal of Honor Retrospective (1967), 1946-1966

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## Series 3: Financial Records, 1962-1999

### *0.5 Linear feet (Box 4)*

Bills paid include receipted invoices, memos, notes, and handwritten spreadsheets tracking expenditures. Also found are financial reports from the organization's accountant, records of investments and statements of assets, some treasurer correspondence and notes, and annual tax forms from 1978-1986.

Additional financial material can be found in Series 1.

Box 4, Folder 1-5	Bills Paid, 1980s-1999
Box 4, Folder 6	Bills Paid, Medals and Printing, 1970s-1980s
Box 4, Folder 7	Check Stubs, 1996-1998
Box 4, Folder 8-9	Financial Reports, 1981-1985
Box 4, Folder 10	Investment Records, 1992-1999
Box 4, Folder 11	Invoices, 1980s
Box 4, Folder 12	Member Dues, 1999
Box 4, Folder 13	Statement of Assets, 1962-1979
Box 4, Folder 14-15	Tax Records, 1978-1986
Box 4, Folder 16	Treasurer's Correspondence, 1964-1965
Box 4, Folder 17	Treasurer's Notes, circa 1980s, 1997

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## Series 4: Printed Material, 1944-2001

### *1.7 Linear feet (Boxes 4-6)*

This series consists primarily of an almost complete run of the organization's annual exhibition catalogs from 1944 to 2000 with the exception of the years 1949, 1969, 1977 and 1992. Filed with the catalogs are "prospectuses" for most of the years from 1973-2001. From 1962 on, catalogs include printed photographs of the awards and selection juries for each exhibition.

Also found are some announcements and invitations for annual exhibitions, a 1944 brochure about the organization, and a brochure written by historian Jan Gary in the 1980s, based largely on work done by former historian Michael M. Engel.

Printed material of other organizations consists of a March 1965 New York Arts Calendar.

Records are arranged alphabetically by folder title. Annual exhibition catalogs are arranged chronologically thereafter.

Box 4, Folder 18	Announcements and Invitations, 1980-1995
Box 4, Folder 19	Annual Exhibition Catalogs, Bound Volume, 1953-1962
Box 4, Folder 20-30	Annual Exhibition Catalogs, 1944-1971
Box 5, Folder 1-26	Annual Exhibition Catalogs, 1972-2001
Box 6, Folder 1	Brochure, 1944
Box 6, Folder 2	Brochure of Audubon Artists History, circa 1980s
Box 6, Folder 3	News Articles, 1947-1999
Box 6, Folder 4	Newsletter, 1982
Box 6, Folder 5	Other Organizations, 1965

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## Series 5: Photographic Material, circa 1969-1999

*0.9 Linear feet (Boxes 6-8)*

This series consists primarily of copy prints and negatives of the photographs used in the organization's annual exhibition catalogs. It includes photos and negatives of artwork from the exhibitions, juries, and several exhibition installations.

Photographs are arranged alphabetically by folder title. Annual exhibition catalog photos are arranged chronologically by year thereafter.

Box 6, Folder 6-7	Annual Exhibition Catalog, circa 1969
Box 6, Folder 8-12	Annual Exhibition Catalog, 1977-1979
Box 6, Folder 13-35	Annual Exhibition Catalog, 1980-1987
Box 7, Folder 1-10	Annual Exhibition Catalog, 1987-1989
Box 7, Folder 11-13	Annual Exhibition Catalog, circa 1990-1991
Box 8, Folder 1-2	Annual Exhibition Catalog, 1991, 1999
Box 8, Folder 3	Award Winners, circa 1970s-circa 1980s
Box 8, Folder 4	Exhibition Installations, circa 1970s-circa 1980s
Box 8, Folder 5-6	Group and Individual Portraits, circa 1970s-circa 1990s

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