



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

William Benton papers

Archives of American Art
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	William Benton papers
Identifier:	AAA.bentwill
Date:	1940-1983
Extent:	1 Linear foot ((on 3 microfilm reels))
Creator:	Benton, William, 1900-1973
Language:	Reel 4073:1-1134, Rockwell Kent exhibition catalog is in Russian.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Material on reel 925 and 3134 donated by Benton 1968. His family donated and lent additional material 1985-1986, including originals of some letters which were originally donated as photocopies.

Location of Originals

Albright and Marsh sketchbooks; and Marsh letter (reel 4073, fr.1158-1266: Originals returned to the lenders, Charles and Marjorie Benton, after microfilming.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 925, 3134, and 4073 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

Reproduction Note

Most letters are photocopies.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Microfilmed materials must be consulted on microfilm. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Art collector, politician; Chicago, Ill. Publisher of ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, Vice-President of the University of Chicago, Congressman from Connecticut, and an avid collector of American art. Benton and Reginald Marsh were classmates and collaborated respectively as editor and illustrator for the Yale

newspaper. During the Depression, Benton provided Marsh with a monthly stipend for which he received a monthly painting. When he became chairman of the board of ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, Benton collected contemporary American painting to Americanize BRITANNICA's British image.

Scope and Contents

Correspondence; writings; notes; estate lists; contracts; photographs of works of art; exhibition catalogs; clippings; miscellaneous printed material.

Scope and Contents

REEL 925: Correspondence with artists, 1954-1968, concerning Benton's purchase and background of their works; and writings by Benton on Soviet art.

Scope and Contents

REEL 3134: A 13-page, incomplete, typescript, 1955, "Reginald Marsh as I Remember Him," by Benton. He writes of working with Marsh on the YALE RECORD and collecting Marsh's paintings.

Scope and Contents

REEL 4073: Correspondence, 1940-1983, with artists; typescripts on Marsh; writing by Jack Levine "How the Witches' Sabbath was Painted";

Scope and Contents

photographs and lists of works of art; a notebook "Works of Art on Loan to the William Benton Museum, University of Connecticut" from Benton's estate; a notebook "Painting Contracts" between artists, galleries, and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.; notebook "Sold," containing data on the sale of Reginald Marsh's work;

Scope and Contents

printed material on Rockwell Kent, Thomas Hart Benton, Benton's collection, and others; photocopies of 2 portions of Ivan Albright's sketchbooks; a notebook "Britannica Painting Exhibitions Manual of Procedure"; a 2 p. typescript "The Story of My Portrait" by Grant Wood's sister Nan Wood Graham; 3 illustrated notebooks by Ivan Albright; and a sketchbook by Reginald Marsh containing 33 figure sketches.

Scope and Contents

Correspondents include Ivan Albright, Thomas Hart Benton, George Biddle, Isabel Bishop, Aaron Bohrod, Salvador Dali, Abner Dean, Koren Der Harootian, Jimmy Ernst, Milton Hebal, Joseph Hirsch, Ben Johnson, Rockwell Kent, Frank Kleinholz, Jack Levine, Reginald Marsh, Henry Varnum Poor, James N. Rosenberg, Hella Moravic Sachs, and Orest G. Vereisky.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Collectors and collecting -- United States
Art, American
Art, Modern -- 20th century -- History -- United States

Names:

Albright, Ivan, 1897-1983
Benton, Thomas Hart, 1889-1975
Biddle, George, 1885-1973
Bishop, Isabel, 1902-1988
Bohrod, Aaron
Dalí, Salvador, 1904-
Dean, Abner, 1910-
Der Harootian, Koren, 1909-
Ernst, Jimmy, 1920-1984
Hebal, Milton
Hirsch, Joseph, 1910-1981
Johnson, Ben
Kent, Rockwell, 1882-1971
Kleinholz, Frank, 1901-
Levine, Jack, 1915-2010
Marsh, Reginald, 1898-1954
Poor, Henry Varnum, 1887-1970
Rosenberg, James N. (James Naumburg), b. 1874
Sachs, Hella Moravic
Vereisky, Orest G.
Wood, Grant, 1891-1942