



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Kathleen Blackshear and Ethel Spears papers

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Kathleen Blackshear and Ethel Spears papers
Identifier:	AAA.blackath
Date:	1920-1990
Extent:	8.4 Linear feet
Creator:	Blackshear, Kathleen, 1897-1988 Spears, Ethel, 1903-1974
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 1990 by William Terrell, Blackshears' nephew and executor.

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.

Biographical / Historical

Painter, lecturer, writer, educator; Chicago, Ill. As a graduate student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Blackshear worked as a teaching assistant under Helen Gardner and then continued to teach there for 35 years. She had a lifetime friendship with painter and instructor Ethel Spears.

Scope and Contents

Spears papers (ca. 0.5 ft.) include photographs of Spears and her work; writings about Spears; letters, 1935-1967; a file on the WPA; and travel notes. Blackshear's papers include: writings by and about Blackshear, including an unpublished manuscript by Blackshear, SURVEY OF ART, 1926, and an editor's proof of Helen Gardner's ART THROUGH THE AGES (3rd ed.); photographs of Blackshear and her work; travel diaries, 1920 and undated; ca. 80 sketches; a sketchbook; letters, 1925-1986; address books, 1947-1963 and undated; clippings, 1926-1967; exhibition announcements, 1929-1965; files on Gertrude Abercrombie, Alexander Archipenko, Florence Arquin, Helen Gardner, Whitney Halstead, Tom Kapsalis, Ray Yoshida, and others, containing letters, printed material, photographs of works of art, and personal photographs; and 2.0 ft. of notebooks on art.

Scope and Contents

Also included are 2.0 ft. of handmade Christmas cards to both Blackshear and Spears from Barbara Aubin, Fred Biesel, Frances Foy, Rockwell Kent, Ray Yoshida, and many others.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Illinois -- Chicago
Women painters -- Illinois -- Chicago

Names:

Abercrombie, Gertrude, 1909-1977
Archipenko, Alexander, 1887-1964
Arquin, Florence
Art Institute of Chicago
Art Institute of Chicago. School
Aubin, Barbara, 1928-2014
Biesel, Fred, 1893-1954
Foy, Frances M., 1890-1963
Gardner, Helen, d. 1946
Halstead, Whitney
Kapsalis, Thomas Harry, 1925-
Kent, Rockwell, 1882-1971
Yoshida, Ray

Occupations:

Art teachers -- Illinois -- Chicago
Painters -- Illinois -- Chicago