



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Dorothy Block Papers, 1925-1985, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

Processing of this collection received support from
the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Dorothy Block papers
Date:	1925-1985
Identifier:	AAA.blocdoro
Creator:	Block, Dorothy, 1904-1984
Extent:	0.7 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The scattered papers of painter Dorothy Block measure 0.7 linear feet and date from 1925 to 1982. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, photographs of Block and of works of art, printed material, a mixed media scrapbook, sketches, and writings. Also found are clippings and a photo of the artwork of Louis Keila, Block's uncle.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Dorothy Block and her sister Lillian MacKendrick donated Block's papers to the Archives of American Art in 1975 and 1977. Additional material was donated in 1990 by Robert Dublirer, widower of Dorothy Block.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reels 3481 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm

Processing Information

The collection received a preliminary level of arrangement after donation and was partially microfilmed on reel 3481. The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2022 with support from the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

Preferred Citation

Dorothy Block papers, 1925-1982. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Dorothy Block (1904-1984) was a painter active in New York City, New York. Block studied and later taught at the Art Students League and participated in the Federal Art Project.

Scope and Contents

The scattered papers of painter Dorothy Block measure 0.7 linear feet and date from 1925 to 1982. Found are biographical materials, correspondence with Dorothy Grotz, Aristodemos Kaldis, Jacob Lawrence, and others, photographs of Block and of works of art, printed material, a mixed media scrapbook, sketches, and writings. Also found are clippings and a photo of the artwork of Louis Keila, Block's uncle.

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Women artists
- Women painters

Types of Materials:

- Scrapbooks

Names:

- Art Students League (New York, N.Y.)
- Federal Art Project
- Grotz, Dorothy
- Kaldis, Aristodimos, 1899-1979
- Lawrence, Jacob, 1917-2000

Occupations:

- Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Dorothy Block Papers, 1925-1985

0.7 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 2, BV 3)

Scope and Contents: Artwork consists of eleven sketches by Block. Biographical data includes a copy of Block's transcript from the Art Students League, an award, and her obituary. Correspondence is with Dorothy Grotz, Aristodemos Kaldis, Jacob Lawrence, and others. A file on Block's uncle Louis Keila consists of a photo of Keila's sculpture and two clippings.

Photographs depict Block, her family, Michael Freilich, Aristodemos Kaldis, and William von Schlegell; works of art; and an exhibition. Printed material includes clippings and exhibition announcements and catalogs. Writings by Block reflect on her career and the art world, including an article titled "Some Thoughts on Where We Stand" (1972), a fragment of her memoir, and reminiscences of the Federal Art Project.

A mixed media scrapbook contains reproductions of famous paintings annotated by Block for children.

Oversize 2	Artwork, Sketches, circa 1950
Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Material, 1955-1985
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence, 1940-1977
Box 1, Folder 3	on Louis Keila, 1927-1954
Box 1, Folder 4	Photographs, Block, Family and Friends, 1927-1967
Box 1, Folder 5	Photographs, Exhibitions and Works of Art, circa 1950s-1960s
Box 1, Folder 6	Printed Material, Clippings, 1965-1980
Box 1, Folder 7-8	Printed Material, Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1925-1982
Volume 3	Scrapbook, circa 1950
Box 1, Folder 9	Writings, circa 1960-1972

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