



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Edith Bry Papers,  
1914-1969, in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art  
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Washington, D.C. 20001  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Edith Bry papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.bryeditp
<b>Date:</b>	1914-1969
<b>Extent:</b>	1.3 Linear feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Bry, Edith
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of Edith Bry measure 1.3 linear foot and date from 1914 to 1969. The papers document her art career and her activities with the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors through biographical material, correspondence, writings and notes, personal business records, printed material, photographs, artwork, and two scrapbooks.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Edith Bry loaned her papers for microfilming and later donated them to the Archives of American Art from 1969 to 1976.

### Available Formats

The collection is available on 35mm microfilm reels 3621 and 114-115 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the material described in the container inventory not reflect the order of the material on microfilm.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2019.

### Preferred Citation

Edith Bry papers, 1914-1969. 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.

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## Biographical / Historical

Edith Bry (1898-1991) was an assemblage artist, collagist, painter, and lithographer active in New York City, New York.

Edith Bry was born in 1898 in St. Louis, Missouri and moved to New York City to study art. She began her career making batik and went on to produce oil paintings, enamels, mosaics, jewelry, lithographs, stained glass, collages, assemblage works, woodcuts and silkscreen prints. Later in life, she became an officer with the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors.

Bry married Maurice Shevelson Benjamin and together they had one child, Bry Benjamin. Edith Bry died in 1991 at her apartment located in the Beresford along Central Park in New York City, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of Edith Bry measure 1.3 linear foot and date from 1914 to 1969. The papers document her art career and her activities with the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors through biographical material, correspondence, writings and notes, personal business records, printed material, photographs, artwork, and two scrapbooks.

Correspondence from friends and colleagues largely discusses Bry's artwork and activity within committees and organizations. Correspondents include John Taylor Arms, Alfred H. Barr, Marc Blitzstein, Adolf Dehn, Alma Dettinger, George Gershwin, Adolph Gottlieb, Marsden Hartley, Ruth Lembeck, Abraham Rattner, Sigmund Romberg, C. L. Sulzberger, Louis Untermeyer, John von Wicht, Stow Wengenroth, Harold Weston, and others.

Writings include notes on various techniques and materials used by Bry in her artwork. An etching is by Hermann Struck and a doodle is by Adolph Gottlieb. Two mixed media scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings and exhibition announcements and catalogs spanning Bry's career from 1922 to 1967.

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## Arrangement

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

- Series 1: Edith Bry papers, 1914-1967 (Boxes 1-3; 1.0 linear feet)

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Edith Bry papers, 1914-1969

#### *1 Linear foot (Boxes 1-3)*

Biographical materials include awards, biographical sketches, and resumes. Correspondence from friends and colleagues largely discusses Bry's artwork, commissions, and activity within committees and organizations. Correspondents include John Taylor Arms, Alfred H. Barr, Marc Blitzstein, Adolf Dehn, Alma Dettinger, George Gershwin, Adolph Gottlieb, Marsden Hartley, Ruth Lembeck, Abraham Rattner, Sigmund Romberg, C. L. Sulzberger, Louis Untermeyer, John von Wicht, Stow Wengenroth, Harold Weston, and others. Letters from organizations, galleries, institutions, and museums include American Camouflage Corps, Art Institute of Chicago, Artists for Victory, Dayton Art Institute, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum for the City of New York, National Association of Women Artists, New York Public Library, Noonan-Kocian Co., the Whitney Museum of Art, and many others. Letters from the Armed Service Forces describe Bry's surgical illustrations. Letters from Harold Weston comment on Bry's participation with the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors.

Personal business records consist of royalty statements, price lists, inventories, and records regarding sales, loans, insurance, and donations. The bulk of Bry's writings are on techniques and materials for her various media. Other writings include notes for a class taught by Abraham Rattner at The New School in the late 1940s and a transcript of a radio talk given by Bry on WQXR. A guestbook spans the years 1947-1949 of meetings of the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors.

Printed materials include exhibition announcements, catalogs, and bulletins as well as reproductions of Bry's works of art in magazines, surgical illustrations, holiday greeting cards, and book jackets. Photographs of Edith Bry include a portrait by Alfredo Valente and of the artist at work in her studio, teaching, and painting en plein air, and scattered family snapshots. Other photographs are of works of art, exhibitions, and works in situ. Artworks are by Adolph Gottlieb and Hermann Struck. Two mixed media scrapbooks concern Bry's career and include clippings and exhibition materials.

Box 1, Folder 1	Awards, 1942-1961
Box 1, Folder 2	Biographical Sketches and Resumes, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence, 1922-1929
Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence, 1930-1939
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1940-1949
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1950-1959
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, 1960-1969
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence, circa 1920s-1960s
Box 1, Folder 9	Personal Business Records, 1929-1967

Box 1, Folder 10	Writing, "Art in a Democracy" Transcript for Radio Talk, circa 1940
Box 1, Folder 11	Lists, Buyers, Prices, and Works of Art, circa 1920s-1960s
Box 1, Folder 12-14	Notes and Notebook, on Materials and Techniques, circa 1940s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 1	Notes, from The New School Class, 1948-1949
Box 2, Folder 2	Guest Book, Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors, 1947-1949
Box 2, Folder 3	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1927-1968
Box 2, Folder 4	Reproductions of Works of Art, circa 1930s-1950s
Box 2, Folder 5	Holiday and Greeting Card Designs, circa 1930s-1950s
Box 2, Folder 6	Photographs, of Edith Bry, circa 1930s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 7	Photographs, Exhibitions and In Situ, 1935-1960s
Box 2, Folder 8	Photographs, Works of Art, 1940s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 9	Sketch, Adolph Gottlieb, 1943
Box 2, Folder 10	Etching, Hermann Struck, 1914
Box 2, Folder 11	Artifacts, Frame Labels and Stained Glass Mock-up, circa 1950
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Scrapbooks, 1922-1967

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