



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Dane Chanase Papers, circa 1916-1976 in the Archives of American Art

Sabine Lipten

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Dane Chanase papers
Date:	circa 1916-1976
Identifier:	AAA.chandane
Creator:	Chanase, Dane, 1894-1975
Extent:	2.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	<p>The Dane Chanase papers measure 2.4 linear feet and date from circa 1916-1976. The papers document Chanase's career as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) muralist in New York through biographical material; correspondence; writings including a travel diary to Palestine and extensive notes on art, color and expressionism as well as notes on topics of personal interest; and subject files on art related theories and concepts as well as research pertaining to mural locations. Also found are subject files on Sheva Ausubel who was an American painter, textile artist and Chanase's wife; printed materials which include reference clippings, information on other artists and document a number of Chanase's interests in science and society; transparencies of paintings by the artist and photographs of other artist's murals as well as topics of interest such as early computers and industrial labor. Also included are large preparatory drawings for a WPA mural in Columbus High School, Washington D.C. as well as other pencil, pen and watercolor sketches.</p>

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated in 1977 by Genie and Moshe Szajngarten who occupied Chanase's former residence.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sabine Lipten in 2022.

Preferred Citation

Dane Chanase papers, circa 1916-1976. 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.

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Biographical / Historical

Dane Chanase (1894-1975) was a Works Progress Administration (WPA) muralist, printmaker and sculptor from Palermo, Italy who moved to New York City in 1932 where he began working for the New York division of the Works Progress Administration. His wife Sheva Ausubel (1896-1957), was also a New York WPA artist known for her weavings and tapastry designs. Some locations of Chanase's WPA murals include the Welfare Island Hospital, New York, Baron de Hirsch Trade School, New York, and Columbus High School, Washington, D.C. In addition to his murals, Chanase exhibited at the 1930 Salon d'Automne in Paris, France and his work is in the collections of the Los Angeles Museum of Art; Bezael National Museum; Brooklyn Museum; Library of Congress; and the New York Public Library.

Scope and Contents

The papers of Works Progress Administration (WPA) muralist Dane Chanase measure 2.4 linear feet and date from circa 1916-1976. Included are drafts and completed biographical summaries and an illustrated letter from Chanase to a W. Dee and a letter from Chanase to Charmion von Wiegand regarding his participation in the Federal Arts Program. The writing series consists primarily of extensive notes on various subjects of scientific and artistic interest to Chanase such as physics, color, expressionism and mechanical technology. Also found are artist statements and notes on art including a notebook that contains writings on various mediums of art including etching, fresco and ceramics. Subject files reflect topics of interest or research for mural projects in New York and subjects such as the history of the post office, kinetic color, optics, lights and vision as well as document Chanase's wife Sheva Ausubel's career as an artist. Printed Material are mostly comprised of newspaper and magazine clippings related to mural research and reference, other artists and scientific and social topics of interest. Also included are post cards, booklets and photographic reproductions. Photographic material contains two slides of paintings by Chanase as well as photographs of murals by other artists, people performing industrial labor, early computers, and various bridges. The Artwork series contains large preparatory drawings for a WPA mural at Columbus high school in Washington D.C., as well as smaller preparatory sketches for unnamed murals, and assorted sketches in pencil, pen and watercolor.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as seven series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1974 (1 Folder; Box 1)
- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1933-1943 (2 Folders; Box 1)
- Series 3: Writings, circa 1920-1965 (0.5 Linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 4: Subject Files, circa 1924-1974 (0.3 Linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 6: Printed Material, circa 1916-1974 (0.7 Linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 7: Photographic Material, circa 1916-1956 (0.2 Linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 8: Artwork, circa 1921-1974 (0.6 Linear feet; Box 2, Rolls 1-3)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Drawings

Names:

Ausubel, Sheva, , 1896-1957
United States. Works Progress Administration

Occupations:

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

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, circa 1974

1 Folder (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Biographic Materials consist of drafts and completed biographical summaries.

Box 1, Folder 1 Biographical Summaries, circa 1974

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Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1933-1943

2 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence includes an illustrated letter from Chanase to a W. Dee and a letter from Chanase to Charmion von Wiegand regarding his participation in the Federal Arts Program.

Box 1, Folder 2 Letter to W. Dee from Dane Chanase, 1933

Box 1, Folder 3 Letter to Charmion Von Wiegand from Dane Chanase, circa 1935-1943

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Series 3: Writings, circa 1920-1965

0.5 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: The Writing series consists primarily of extensive notes on various subjects of scientific and artistic interest to Chanase such as physics, color, expressionism and mechanical technology. Also found are artist statements and notes on art including a notebook that contains writings on various mediums of art including etching, fresco and ceramics. There is also a travel diary from Chanase's trip to Palestine and surrounding West Asia titled "A Voyage to the Holy Land".

Box 1, Folder 4	Artist Statements, circa 1963
Box 1, Folder 5	Personal and Art Philosophy Notes, circa 1953-1965
Box 1, Folder 6-7	"A Voyage to the Holy Land" Palestine Travel Diary, 1932
Box 1, Folder 8	"Notes IIII" Notebook on various mediums of art, circa 1929-1935
	Notes
Box 1, Folder 9	Expressionism, circa 1925
Box 1, Folder 10	Art, circa 1925-1936, 1963
Box 1, Folder 11	Color, circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 12	Astronomy, circa 1940-1964
Box 1, Folder 13	Atmosphere and Weather, circa 1920-1940s
Box 1, Folder 14	Sound and Music, circa 1920-1940s
Box 1, Folder 15	Mechanical Technology, circa 1940-1951
Box 1, Folder 16	Lights and Optics, circa 1920-1940s
Box 1, Folder 17	Technical Notes on Painting, circa 1935-1943
Box 1, Folder 18	Physics, circa 1920-1940s
Box 1, Folder 19	Birds, circa 1920-1940s
Box 1, Folder 20	Miscellaneous Notes, circa 1965

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Series 4: Subject Files, circa 1924-1974

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Subject files reflect research for mural projects in New York and topics of interest such as the history of the post office, kinetic color, optics, lights and vision. Subject files also document Chanase's wife Sheva Ausubel's career as an artist. Materials include exhibition chronologies, correspondence, handwritten notes, price lists, photographic prints and two slides of artwork, press clippings and exhibition invitations and catalogs, sketches, including a blueprint of Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York, bulletins and writings by others.

Box 1, Folder 21	Color Theory, circa 1924-1953
Box 1, Folder 22	Kinetic Color, circa 1934-1974
Box 1, Folder 23	Optics, Light and Vision, circa 1944-1965
Box 1, Folder 24	History of the U.S. Post Office, circa 1933
Box 1, Folder 25	Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn New York, circa 1941
Box 1, Folder 26	Bronx Borough, New York, circa 1937
Box 1, Folder 27	Hempstead, Long Island, New YorkIsland, circa 1935
Box 1, Folder 28-30	Sheva Ausubel, circa 1931-1963

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Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1916-1974

0.6 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Printed Material are mostly comprised of newspaper and magazine clippings related to mural research and reference, other artists and scientific and social topics of interest. Also included are post cards, booklets and photographic reproductions.

Clippings

Box 2, Folder 1-3	Historic Figures and Scenes, circa 1916-1939
Box 2, Folder 4	Murals for reference, circa 1921-1940
Box 2, Folder 5	Reference, circa 1962-1964
Box 2, Folder 6	Art, circa 1932-1974
Box 2, Folder 7	Boardman Robinson, circa 1931
Box 2, Folder 8	Theodore Chasseriau, circa 1932-1974
Box 2, Folder 9	Clemente Orozco, circa 1934-1943
Box 2, Folder 10	Diego Rivera, circa 1929-1941
Box 2, Folder 11	Dean Cornwell, circa 1928-1945
Box 2, Folder 12	Frank Brangwyn, circa 1924-1925
Box 2, Folder 13	Thomas Hart Benton, circa
Box 2, Folder 14	Giotto, circa 1936
Box 2, Folder 15	Titian, circa 1929-1941
Box 2, Folder 16	George Baer, circa 1929
Box 2, Folder 17	Raphael, circa 1929-1941
Box 2, Folder 18	Interior Design and Architecture, circa 1923-1925
Box 2, Folder 19	Atmosphere and Weather, circa 1934-1952
Box 2, Folder 20	Astronomy, circa 1937-1952
Box 2, Folder 21	Sound, circa 1949-1950

Box 2, Folder 22	Communication Technology, circa 1938
Box 2, Folder 23-25	Industrial Manufacturing and Construction, circa 1933-1959
Box 2, Folder 26	Science, circa 1934-1959
Box 2, Folder 27	Ship Building, circa 1941-1963
Box 2, Folder 28	Human Population, circa 1933, 1955
Box 2, Folder 29	Fashion, circa 1953-1955
Box 2, Folder 30	Other Artist's Exhibition Catalogs, 1927, 1952
Box 2, Folder 31	Television and Projection, circa 1944-1950
Box 2, Folder 32	Transportation, circa 1933-1940
Box 2, Folder 33	Industrial Booklets, circa 1935-1952
Box 2, Folder 34	Maps, circa 1933-1943
Box 2, Folder 35	Miscellaneous Printed Material, circa 1942-1963

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Series 6: Photographic Material, circa 1916-1956

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Photographic material contains two slides of paintings by Chanase as well as photographic prints of murals by other artists, people performing industrial labor, early computers, and various bridges.

Box 2, Folder 36	Slides of Paintings by Dane Chanase, 1963
Box 2, Folder 37	Photographs of Other Artist Murals, circa 1916-1939
Box 2, Folder 38	Photographs of Industrial Labor, circa 1935-1943
Box 2, Folder 39	Photographs of Early Computers, circa 1956
Box 2, Folder 40	Photographs of Bridges, circa 1942

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Series 7: Artwork, circa 1921-1974

0.6 Linear feet (Box 2, Rolls 1-3)

Scope and Contents: The Artwork series contains large preparatory drawings for a WPA mural at Columbus high school in Washington D.C., as well as smaller preparatory sketches for unnamed murals, and assorted sketches in pencil, pen and watercolor.

Roll 1	Preparatory WPA Mural Drawings for Columbus High School, Washington D.C., circa 1935-1943
Roll 2	Preparatory WPA Mural Drawings for Columbus High School, Washington D.C., circa 1935-1943
Roll 3	Preparatory WPA Mural Drawings for Columbus High School, Washington D.C., circa 1935-1943
Box 2, Folder 41	Preparatory Mural Sketches, circa 1935-1943
Box 2, Folder 42	Pencil Sketches, circa 1957-1976
Box 2, Folder 43	Pen Sketches, circa 1953-1963
Box 2, Folder 44	Watercolor Sketch, circa 1921-1974

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