



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the E. B. Crocker Art Gallery Records, circa 1850s-circa 1970s, bulk 1880s-1950s, in the Archives of American Art

Stephanie Ashley

Funding for the digitization of the microfilm for this collection
was provided in part by The Walton Family Foundation.

2023/10/10

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	E. B. Crocker Art Gallery records
Date:	circa 1850s-circa 1970s (bulk 1880s-1950s)
Identifier:	AAA.ebcrocag
Creator:	E.B. Crocker Art Gallery
Extent:	4 Microfilm reels
Language:	English .
Summary:	The E. B. Crocker Art Gallery records date from the 1850s-1970s with the bulk of the material dating from the 1880s-1950s. The collection documents the gallery's founding and history primarily until the mid-20th century, and includes biographical material on the Crocker family and gallery directors; correspondence primarily related to general inquiries; manuscript material and research notes concerning the Gallery's history; photographs of the museum, Crocker family members, and associated individuals; account books and other financial and organizational records; printed material; and scrapbooks of printed material about the gallery, associated artists, and the arts in Sacramento.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was loaned to the Archives of American Art for microfilming in 1980 by the Crocker Art Museum and was returned after filming.

Location of Originals

Originals are in the Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California.

Available Formats

The collection has been microfilmed on reels 1855-1858. The microfilm has been digitized and is available on the Archives of American Art website.

Processing Information

The collection was microfilmed on Reels 1855-1858 after receipt and was returned to the Crocker Art Museum after filming. The microfilm was described in a finding aid by Stephanie Ashley in 2023 and the microfilm was digitized in 2023 with funding provided by The Walton Family Foundation.

Preferred Citation

E. B. Crocker Art Gallery records, circa 1850s-circa 1970s. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

The Archives of American art does not own the original papers. Use is limited to the microfilm copy.

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Biographical / Historical

E. B. Crocker Art Gallery, located in Sacramento, California, is one of the oldest museums in the Western United States and is known for its collection of works from the Gold Rush era to the present day.

The gallery's collection was given to the city of Sacramento and the California Museum Association by Margaret Crocker (1822-1901) in 1885. Margaret Crocker had begun collecting paintings with her husband Judge Edwin Bryant Crocker (1818-1875), during a trip to Europe in 1869. The Crockers ultimately made 2482 acquisitions, often of work by contemporary artists, at home and abroad.

The gallery was housed in a building adjacent to the Crocker's home, and the Crockers commissioned local architect Seth Babson to renovate the home and connect the gallery. Babson completed the renovation of the Crocker mansion and the building of the gallery in 1872.

After several reconstructions over the intervening decades the gallery's name was changed to the Crocker Art Museum in 1978. The buildings underwent renovations in the late 1980s which restored the historic facade of the mansion and modernized the gallery interior. The gallery building is a California Historical Landmark and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Scope and Contents

The E. B. Crocker Art Gallery records date from the 1850s-1970s with the bulk of the material dating from the 1880s-1950s. The collection documents the gallery's founding and history primarily until the mid-20th century, and includes biographical material on the Crocker family and gallery directors; correspondence primarily related to general inquiries; manuscript material and research notes concerning the Gallery's history; photographs of the museum, Crocker family members, and associated individuals; account books and other financial and organizational records; printed material; and scrapbooks of printed material about the gallery, associated artists, and the arts in Sacramento.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Names:

Crocker family (Sacramento, Calif.)

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- California -- Sacramento

Container Listing

Series 1: E. B. Crocker Gallery Records, circa 1850s-circa 1970s

Scope and Contents: Correspondence includes general requests for information about the museum and responses and documents some general business. Biographical material includes notes on the Crocker family, on directors of the museum, and on prominent members of the Sacramento community associated with the museum, including Seth Babson. Manuscript material consists of what appear to be research notes on the museum including about associated people of note, acquisition of land and museum buildings, financial affairs, museum collections, events, and gifts to the museum. Also included are citations for and notes on articles and other printed resources about the museum, and typescripts of manuscripts about the museum and its history.

Photographs are of the Crocker family, Seth Babson, museum directors, and other individuals. Also found are photos of the interior and exterior of the museum buildings, photos of artwork, and photos of art classes held at the museum. Financial records include receipts, and ledgers and account books, including a series of records titled "Catalog Account."

Organizational records include copies of various certificates given by the museum and by-laws; California Museum Association meeting minutes from the 1940s; attendance rolls for classes held at the museum; and various logbooks recording deliveries of food from the 1870s, and receipt of supplies and other shipping records dating from the 1880s to the 1950s.

Printed material includes news clippings, copies of gallery publications such as "Art Gallery Notes" and other printed material about the gallery and related community events. The bulk of the printed material is found in the scrapbooks which include news clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and other publications documenting the history of the museum and other related institutions and recording the activities of many of the artists whose work was exhibited there.

Reel 1855, Frame 1-134 [Correspondence, circa 1885-circa 1977](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 135-187 [Biographical material, circa 1937-circa 1970](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 188-348 [Manuscript material, circa 1880s-circa 1970s](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 349-459 [Manuscript material, circa 1880s-circa 1970s](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 460-612 [Photographs, circa 1890s-circa 1930s](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 613-709 [Financial papers, 1883-1886](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 710-854 [Financial papers, 1887-1901](#)

Reel 1855, Frame 855-1018	Financial papers, 1901-1921
Reel 1855, Frame 1019-1118	Financial papers, 1921-1927
Reel 1856, Frame 1-160	Financial papers, 1928-1969
Reel 1856, Frame 161-286	Organizational records, 1880s-circa 1960s
Reel 1856, Frame 287-445	Organizational records, 1880s-circa 1960s
Reel 1856, Frame 446-640	Organizational records, 1912-1950s
Reel 1856, Frame 641-759	Organizational records, 1940s-1960s
Reel 1856, Frame 760-839	Organizational records, 1880s, 1940-1960s
Reel 1856, Frame 840-1030	Printed material, 1850s-1970s
Reel 1856, Frame 1031-1123	Printed material, 1890s-1950s
Reel 1857, Frame 1-200	Scrapbooks, 1880s-1930s
Reel 1857, Frame 201-399	Scrapbooks, 1900s-1940s
Reel 1857, Frame 400-599	Scrapbooks, 1930s
Reel 1857, Frame 600-700	Scrapbooks, 1930s-1940
Reel 1857, Frame 701-899	Scrapbooks, 1939-1940
Reel 1857, Frame 900-1030	Scrapbooks, 1940-1941

Reel 1858, Frame 1-199	Scrapbooks, 1941-1942
Reel 1858, Frame 200-399	Scrapbooks, 1942-1943
Reel 1858, Frame 400-599	Scrapbooks, 1943-1945
Reel 1858, Frame 600-799	Scrapbooks, 1945-1947
Reel 1858, Frame 800-949	Scrapbooks, 1947-1950
Reel 1858, Frame 950-1025	Scrapbooks, 1950

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