



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Alvord Eiseman research
material concerning Charles Demuth, circa
1914-2005, in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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Collection Overview

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Repository: | Archives of American Art |
| Title: | Alvord Eiseman research material concerning Charles Demuth |
| Identifier: | AAA.eisealvo |
| Date: | circa 1914-2005 |
| Extent: | 10.8 Linear feet |
| Creator: | Eiseman, Alvord, 1916-1991 |
| Language: | English Collection is in English |
| Summary: | Alvord Eiseman's research on painter Charles Demuth dates from circa 1914-2005 and measures 10.8 linear feet. The collection is comprised of correspondence, writings, artwork files, printed material, and photographic material that were used in Eiseman's research toward a catalogue raisonné on Demuth. |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated in 2016 by Grete Meilman, a friend of Alvord Eiseman's who received the collection at the time of Eiseman's death.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art are the papers of Charles Demuth, 1883-1935, available on microfilm reel 2385.

Processing Information

The collection was processed to a minimal level and a finding aid prepared by Hilary Price in 2017.

Preferred Citation

Alvord Eiseman research material concerning Charles Demuth, circa 1914-2005. 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.

Conditions Governing Use

The Alvord Eiseman research material concerning Charles Demuth is owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

Biographical / Historical

Alvord Eiseman (1916-1991) was an art historian and specialist on painter Charles Demuth (1883-1935). Eiseman was born in New York and received his degree from the College of the City of New York in 1936. He also studied at Cooper Union, the Teachers College at Columbia University, the New School for Social Research, the University of Minnesota, and New York University. In 1975, Eiseman completed his dissertation in art history titled, "The Study of the Development of an Artist: Charles Demuth, Volumes I and II." Eiseman spent the next decade and a half continuing his research and writing on Demuth, authoring a draft manuscript of a catalogue raisonné on the artist.

Scope and Contents

Alvord Eiseman's research on Charles Demuth dates from circa 1914-2005 and measures 10.8 linear feet. The collection is comprised of authenticating correspondence, unpublished writings, comprehensive artwork files, printed material, and photographic material that were used in Eiseman's research toward a catalogue raisonné on Demuth.

Writings make up a significant portion of the collection and include a manuscript of Eiseman's unpublished "Catalogue Raisonné of the Complete Works of Charles Demuth," which includes five parts, as well as numerous lists, appendices, a bibliography, and multiple drafts of certain sections. Eiseman's dissertation, "The Study of the Development of an Artist: Charles Demuth, Volumes I and II" is also found here, as well as numerous other writings about Demuth. Artwork files include hundreds of index cards organized by artwork date and contain the size, medium, signature location, collection, exhibitions, reproductions, and provenance of each work. Most cards are also accompanied by a reproduction of the artwork.

Eiseman died before his manuscript could be published and his research material was given to the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco by Eiseman's friend Grete Meilman. The catalogue raisonné research continued until 2001, although the project was never completed. Meilman then handed the project over to historian Ulrich Hiesinger in 2003. Despite the additional attempts to complete the project, the catalogue raisonné was never published.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as six series

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1969-1991 (0.9 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 2: Writings, circa 1914-1985 (1.7 linear feet; Box 1-3)
- Series 3: Artwork Files, circa 1970-2003 (5.8 linear feet; Box 3-9)
- Series 4: Printed and Research Material, circa 1966-1986 (0.3 linear feet; Box 9)
- Series 5: Photographic Material, circa 1970-1972, undated (0.6 linear feet; Box 9-10)

- Series 6: Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco Catalogue Raisonné Research Material, circa 1970-2005 (1.5 linear feet; Box 10-12)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art historians

Types of Materials:

Catalogues raisonnés

Manuscripts

Photographs

Names:

Demuth, Charles, 1883-1935

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1969-1991

0.9 Linear feet (Box 1)

Correspondence dates from 1969-1991 and is primarily comprised of letters to Eiseman, however some drafts and copies of outgoing letters are also included. Correspondence is predominantly related to provenance and authenticity research for the Demuth catalogue raisonné project. Other letters relate to publication prospects, authentication requests, and obtaining photographs of works. In addition to numerous individual collectors, Eiseman corresponded with institutions including Amherst College, Barnes Foundation, Brooklyn Museum, Columbus Museum of Art, Demuth Foundation, Denver Art Museum, Hirshhorn Museum, National Endowment for the Arts, Parrish Museum, Philadelphia Art Museum, Phillips Collection, Provincetown Art Association, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Sotheby's, Toledo Museum, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Walker Art Center, Whitney Museum, and Yale University. Galleries, historical societies, publishers, and magazines are also among the correspondents. A small number of photographs and printed materials are included with the letters.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Box 1, Folder 1 | A, General, 1972-1988 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | B, General, 1971-1988 |
| Box 1, Folder 3-4 | C, General, 1972-1987 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | D, General, 1972-1986 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | E-F, General, 1971-1988 |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | G, General, 1971-1990 |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | H, General, 1972-1989 |
| Box 1, Folder 9 | L, General, circa 1985 |
| Box 1, Folder 10-11 | M, General, 1972-1989 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | N, General, 1971-1985 |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | O, General, 1977-1988 |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | P, General, 1971-1988 |
| Box 1, Folder 15 | R, General, 1972-1988 |
| Box 1, Folder 16-17 | S, General, 1969-1991 |

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Box 1, Folder 18 | T, General, 1972-1987 |
| Box 1, Folder 19 | U-V, General, 1972-1987 |
| Box 1, Folder 20 | W, General, 1972-1987 |
| Box 1, Folder 21 | X-Z, General, 1971-1987 |

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Series 2: Writings, circa 1914-1985

1.7 Linear feet (Box 1-3)

Writings date from circa 1941-1985 and include original clippings that date from circa 1914. The bulk of material in this series is a manuscript of Eiseman's unpublished "Catalogue Raisonné of the Complete Works of Charles Demuth," which includes five parts, as well as numerous lists, appendices, a bibliography, and multiple drafts of certain sections. Eiseman's dissertation "The Study of the Development of an Artist: Charles Demuth, Volumes I and II" is also found here, as well as numerous other writings about Demuth, and a few of his writings as a student. Writings by others about Demuth are arranged at the end of the series.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 22 | "Addenda: Stieglitz and Demuth", circa 1980 |
| Box 1 | "Catalogue Raisonné of the Complete Works of Charles Demuth" |
| Box 1, Folder 23 | "Part 1, Introduction-1908", circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 1-2 | "Part 2, 1909-1915", circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 3-4 | "Part 3, 1916-1917", circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 5-6 | "Part 4, 1918-1922", circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 7-8 | "Part 5, 1923-1934", circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 9 | List of Exhibition Catalogs, Brochures, and Articles Containing Lists and Illustrations of Works by Charles Demuth, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 10 | List of Institutions with Work by Demuth, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 11 | List of Published and Unpublished Material Authored by Demuth, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 12-13 | Appendices, circa 1914-1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 14 | Bibliography, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 15-16 | Drafts, Catalog of Works, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 17 | Drafts, Chronology, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 18 | Drafts, Key to Abbreviations, circa 1985 |
| Box 2, Folder 19 | Drafts, List of Exhibitions, circa 1985 |
| Box 3, Folder 1 | Drafts, List of Newspaper and Magazine Articles, circa 1985 |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Box 3, Folder 2 | Curricula Vitae, circa 1972 |
| Box 3, Folder 3 | "Charles Demuth", circa 1982 |
| Box 3, Folder 4 | Charles Demuth and American Modern Art Movements, circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 5 | "The Enigma of Demuth of Lancaster", 1970 |
| Box 3, Folder 6 | "The Figures of Charles Demuth", circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 7 | Notes on Individual Watercolors and Oils, circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 8 | Poems, circa 1966 |
| Box 3, Folder 9 | Review of <i>Behind a Laughing Mask: Charles Demuth</i> by Emily Farnham, 1971 |
| Box 3, Folder 10 | "The Still Lifes of Charles Demuth", circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 11 | Student Papers, 1966, 1971 |
| Box 3, Folder 12-13 | "The Study of the Development of an Artist: Charles Demuth" Volume I, 1975 |
| Box 3, Folder 14-15 | "The Study of the Development of an Artist: Charles Demuth" Volume II, 1975 |
| Box 3, Folder 16 | "Unseen and Seldom Seen Drawings and Watercolors of Charles Demuth", circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 17 | Fragments, circa 1980 |
| Box 3, Folder 18 | Scattered Notes, circa 1980 |
| Box 3 | Writings by Others |
| Box 3, Folder 19 | "Chapter 9: Charles Demuth" by Sherman E. Lee, 1941 |
| Box 3, Folder 20 | "Demuth in Bermuda" by Charles V. Zuill, 1975 |
| Box 3, Folder 21 | "Charles Demuth, Lancaster Artist", 1958 |

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Series 3: Artwork Files, circa 1970-2003

5.8 Linear feet (Box 3-9)

Artwork files date from circa 1970-2003 and are comprised of three sets of index cards that Eiseman used to collate his research on each individual work of art by Demuth. The third set is by far the most complete (beginning in Box 4, Folder 4 and ending in Box 9, Folder 7), and includes hundreds of index cards organized by artwork date, containing the size, medium, signature location, collection, exhibitions, reproductions, and provenance of each work. Most cards are also accompanied by a reproduction of the artwork. While Eiseman's index cards serve as the foundation of this series, subsequent researchers, including the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco and later Ulrich Hiesinger, added additional information to the files, including photocopies and internet research. These later additions to Eiseman's card index account for the dates of files after Eiseman's death in 1991. A small number of index cards are also included with the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco's artwork research files (see Box 10, Folders 9-12).

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Box 3, Folder 22 | Artworks Card Index for Works circa 1895-1934, circa 1970 |
| Box 4, Folder 1-3 | Artworks Card Index for Works circa 1911-1934, circa 1975 |
| Box 4, Folder 4-6 | Artworks circa 1895, Drawing Book, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 7 | Artworks 1896-1899, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 8 | Artworks 1900, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 9 | Artworks 1902-1906, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 10-11 | Artworks circa 1907, circa 1975-2003 |
| Box 4, Folder 12 | Artworks circa 1908, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 13 | Artworks circa 1909, Sketchbook, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 14 | Artworks circa 1909, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 15 | Artworks circa 1910, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 4, Folder 16 | Artworks circa 1911, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 5, Folder 1-5 | Artworks circa 1912, circa 1970-1995 |
| Box 5, Folder 6 | Artworks circa 1913, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 5, Folder 7 | Artworks circa 1914, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 5, Folder 8-13 | Artworks circa 1915, circa 1975-1995 |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Box 5, Folder 14 | Artworks circa 1916, Titles A-B, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 6, Folder 1-4 | Artworks circa 1916, Titles C-M, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 6, Folder 5-9 | Artworks circa 1916, Titles N-W, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 6, Folder 10-14 | Artworks circa 1917, Titles A-S, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 7, Folder 1 | Artworks circa 1917, Titles T-W, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 7, Folder 2-7 | Artworks circa 1918, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 7, Folder 8-11 | Artworks circa 1919, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 7, Folder 12-14 | Artworks circa 1920, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 7, Folder 15-16 | Artworks circa 1921, Titles A-R, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 1 | Artworks circa 1921, Titles S-Z, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 2 | Artworks circa 1922, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 3 | Artworks circa 1923, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 4-5 | Artworks circa 1924, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 6 | Artworks circa 1925, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 7-8 | Artworks circa 1925, Still Lifes, circa 1972-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 9 | Artworks circa 1926, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 10 | Artworks circa 1926, Still Lifes, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 11 | Artworks circa 1927, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 12-13 | Artworks circa 1928, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 8, Folder 14-15 | Artworks circa 1929, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 9, Folder 1 | Artworks circa 1930, circa 1975-1995 |

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Box 9, Folder 2 | Artworks circa 1931, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 9, Folder 3 | Artworks circa 1932, circa 1975-1995 |
| Box 9, Folder 4 | Artworks circa 1933, circa 1972-1995 |
| Box 9, Folder 5-7 | Artworks circa 1934, circa 1975-1995 |

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Series 4: Printed and Research Material, circa 1966-1986

0.3 Linear feet (Box 9)

Printed and research material dates from circa 1966-1986. Printed material is comprised of a binder of clippings and loose clippings saved and compiled by Eiseman about Demuth, as well as a few publications including an auction catalog, exhibition catalog, a magazine, and brochures. Research material includes copies of archival documents such as correspondence and school records. Copies of writings by Demuth are also arranged here. The dates of publication or creation of copied material is circa 1917-1980.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Box 9, Folder 8 | Archival Documents (copies), circa 1980 |
| Box 9, Folder 9-10 | Clippings Binder (disbound), circa 1975-1986 |
| Box 9, Folder 11 | Publications, 1966-1985 |
| Box 9, Folder 12 | Publicity and Loose Clippings, circa 1975-1985 |
| Box 9, Folder 13 | Writings by Demuth, Published and Unpublished (copies), circa 1975-1985 |

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Series 5: Photographic Material, circa 1970-1972, undated

0.6 Linear feet (Box 9-10)

Photographic material dates from circa 1970-1972 and includes photographic prints, transparencies, contact sheets, negatives, and slides. One undated folder contains copy print photographs of Demuth and his family. The bulk of the material is photographs of Demuth's artwork that Eiseman collected over the course of his research. Some materials, especially the slides, have descriptive labeling identifying the title, medium, and year, while other materials are unlabeled. Other research photographs include views of the Demuth house, the town of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and pages of a book about Demuth. Additional photographs of artwork are included in Series 3: Artwork Files.

| Box 9 | Artwork |
|---------------------|--|
| Box 9, Folder 14-15 | Photographic Prints, circa 1970 |
| Box 9, Folder 16 | Transparencies, circa 1970 |
| Box 9, Folder 17 | Contact Sheets and Negatives, circa 1970 |
| Box 9, Folder 18 | Slides, circa 1972 |
| Box 10, Folder 1 | Slides, circa 1972 |
| Box 10, Folder 2 | Slides, circa 1972 |
| Box 10, Folder 3 | Demuth Bust by Arnold Rönnebeck, circa 1970 |
| Box 10, Folder 4 | Artwork by Others, circa 1970 |
| Box 10, Folder 5 | Demuth and Family, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 6 | Demuth House and Memorabilia, circa 1972 |
| Box 10, Folder 7 | Lancaster, Pennsylvania, circa 1972 |
| Box 10, Folder 8 | Photographs of Demuth Book Pages, circa 1970 |

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Series 6: Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco Catalogue Raisonné Research Material, circa 1970-2005

1.5 Linear feet (Box 10-12)

The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco catalogue raisonné research material dates from circa 1970-2005, but predominantly contains materials dating after Alvord Eiseman's death in 1991, at which time his research material was given to the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco by Eiseman's friend Grete Meilman. The catalogue raisonné research continued until 2001, although the project was never completed. Meilman then handed the project over to historian Ulrich Hiesinger in 2003, but the raisonné was still never published. Material in this series dating from before it was given to the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco is mostly the photographic prints originally accumulated by Eiseman. The bulk of material here is artwork research files and authenticating correspondence. Artwork research files expand on Eiseman's research found in Series 3: Artwork Files, but do not reflect Demuth's complete oeuvre. In a few instances, Eiseman's original index cards were included with this newer research. Also found here are a few inventory lists, example catalogue raisonné formats, and largely unsorted photographic material and reproductions.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Box 10, Folder 9-12 | Artwork Research Files, 1991-2000, circa 1975 |
| Box 10, Folder 13 | Chronological Correspondence, 1991-1994 |
| Box 10, Folder 14-16 | Chronological Correspondence, 1995 |
| Box 11, Folder 1 | Chronological Correspondence, 1996 |
| Box 11, Folder 2 | Chronological Correspondence, 1997-2001 |
| Box 11, Folder 3 | Lists, circa 1995 |
| Box 11 | Photographic Material and Reproductions |
| Box 11, Folder 4 | Figures, circa 1995, circa 1970 |
| Box 11, Folder 5 | Flowers and Still Lifes, circa 1970, circa 1995 |
| Box 12, Folder 1 | Poster Portraits and Still Lifes, circa 1995, circa 1970 |
| Box 12, Folder 2-3 | General, circa 1995, circa 1970 |
| Box 12, Folder 4 | Sample Forms and Formats, circa 1995-2000 |
| Box 12, Folder 5 | Ulrich Hiesinger File, 2003-2005 |

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