



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Michael M. Engel papers, circa 1920-1994, in the Archives of American Art

Allessandra Liberati

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund, administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee.

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Michael M. Engel papers
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1920-1994
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.engemich
<b>Creator:</b>	Engel, Michael M., 1896-1969
<b>Extent:</b>	2.7 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of painter, collector, lecturer, and writer Michael M. Engel Sr. measure 2.7 linear feet and date from circa 1920-1994. They illustrate Engel's career and achievements through correspondence, subject files, personal business records, printed material and scrapbooks, photographic material, and artwork.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The Michael M. Engel papers were donated in 1975 by Mary Black Diller, Engel's widow, and in 1994-1995 by their son Michael.

### Processing Information

This collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared, by Alessandra Liberati in 2023.

### Preferred Citation

Michael M. Engel papers, circa 1920-1994. 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. Researchers interested in accessing born-digital records or audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

Michael M. Engel Sr. (1896-1969) was a painter, collector, lecturer, and writer based in New York City. He worked as a public relations director for M. Grumbacher Incorporated, as an artist, and as a contributor to magazines such as *Art Digest* writing articles including two of his repeat columns titled *Do You Know That?* and *The Bright Palette*. Engel also helped to found the Audubon Artists in 1940 alongside such figures as Andrew Wyeth and Frederick Whitaker. Some of Engel's well known hobbies were collecting autographs from notable artists and other figures and collecting painting palettes. Engel died at the age of 75 on April 27, 1969.

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## Scope and Contents

The Michael M. Engel papers measure 2.7 linear feet and date from circa 1920-1994 and describe his career. Correspondence is to and from the Audubon Artists, M. Grumbacher Incorporated, Florida Southern College regarding Engel's time as Chancellor, and with Andrew and N.C. Wyeth and others. Subject files covers various famous artists and their activities and lives including Michael Grumbacher, Engel's wife Mary Black Diller, and camouflage and its usage, creation, and history. Personal business records consist of materials and drafts for Engel's two magazine columns *The Bright Palette* and *Do You Know That?* and Engel's collection of autographs from various notable figures. Printed material includes exhibition catalogs for the Audubon Artists exhibitions including a ½" video reel, various articles about Engel and his work, and other exhibition catalogs and announcements. Scrapbooks contain notes and other materials surrounding events attended by Engel including Pennsylvania's *National Art Week* (1936) a federal art project, and the *Florida International Art Exhibition at Grand Central Galleries* (1952). Photographic material contains slides of people including Engel and others from his artistic community, photographs of Engel's palette collection, artwork, and demonstration pieces. Artwork includes a folder of sketches by Engel.

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## Arrangement

This collection consists of seven series.

- Series 1: Correspondence, circa 1934-1969 (.5 Linear feet: Box 1)
  - Series 2: Subject Files, circa 1925-1991 (.5 Linear feet: Box 1)
  - Series 3: Personal Business Records, circa 1935-1952 (.2 Linear feet: Box 2)
  - Series 4: Printed Material, circa 1933-1994 (.8 Linear feet: Box 2)
  - Series 5: Scrapbooks, circa 1920-1942 (.4 Linear feet: Boxes 3-4)
  - Series 6: Photographic Material, circa 1930-1958 (.2 Linear feet: Boxes 3-4)
  - Series 7: Artwork, circa 1920-1950 (.1 Linear feet: Box 3)
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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Autographs -- Collectors and collecting  
Camouflage (Military science)

Types of Materials:

Scrapbooks  
Video recordings

Names:

Audubon Artists  
Diller, Mary Black, 1899-

Occupations:

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

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Correspondence, circa 1934-1969

#### *.5 Linear feet (Box 1)*

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is with the Audubon Artists, M. Grumbacher Incorporated regarding Engel's time as a collector, Florida Southern College regarding Engel's time as Chancellor, and with Andrew and N.C. Wyeth and other notable figures.

Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence (1930s), circa 1934-1939
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence (1940s), circa 1940-1949
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence (1950s), circa 1950-1955
Box 1, Folder 4-5	Correspondence (1960s), circa 1960-1969
Box 1, Folder 6-7	Ballin, Hugo, circa 1941-1955
Box 1, Folder 8	Fazzano, Joseph, circa 1956-1958
Box 1, Folder 9	Loring, Paule, circa 1956-1957
Box 1, Folder 10	Whitaker, Frederick, circa 1941-1958
Box 1, Folder 11	Wyeth, Andrew, circa 1939
Box 1, Folder 12	Wyeth, Newell Convers (N.C.), circa 1942-1944
Box 1, Folder 13	American Artist's Professional League, circa 1938-1946
Box 1, Folder 14	Artist's Fellowship Incorporated, circa 1967-1969
Box 1, Folder 15	Audubon Artists, circa 1964-1967
Box 1, Folder 16-17	Florida Southern College, circa 1951
Box 1, Folder 18	M. Grumbacher Incorporated, circa 1961-1964

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## Series 2: Subject Files, circa 1925-1991

### .5 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Subject files covers various known artists and their activities and lives including Michael Grumbacher, Engel's wife Mary Black Diller, and camouflage and its usage, creation, and history.

Box 1, Folder 19	Dabo, Leon, circa 1935
Box 1, Folder 20	Diller, Mary Black, circa 1928-1981
Box 1, Folder 21	Eilshemius, Louis M. , circa 1931-1959
Box 1, Folder 22	Friburg, Arnold, circa 1958
Box 1, Folder 23-25	Grumbacher, Michael, circa 1925-1961
Box 1, Folder 26	Guimard, Madame Adeline, circa 1943-1952
Box 1, Folder 27	Nodel, Sol, circa 1948-1965
Box 1, Folder 28	Peterson, Jane , circa 1943
Box 1, Folder 29	Winold, Reiss, circa 1945-1991
Box 1, Folder 30	Zacchini, Hugo , circa 1937-1938
Box 1, Folder 31-36	Camouflage, circa 1941-1942

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## Series 3: Personal Business Records, circa 1935-1952

### .2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Personal business records consist of materials and drafts for Engel's two magazine columns *The Bright Palette* and *Do You Know That?* and Engel's collection of autographs from various notable figures.

Box 2, Folder 1      The Bright Palette by Michael Engel, circa 1944

Box 2, Folder 2      Do You Know That? by Michael Engel, circa 1935-1952

Box 2, Folder 3      Autographs and Signatures, circa 1942-1948

Box 2, Folder 4      Miscellaneous Business Records, circa 1935-1938

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## Series 4: Printed Material, circa 1933-1994

### .8 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Printed material includes exhibition catalogs for Audubon Artists exhibitions including a ½" video reel, various articles about Engel and his work, and other exhibition catalogs and announcements, as well as materials related to Engel's art research.

Box 2, Folder 5	Exhibition Announcements, circa 1943-1966
Box 2, Folder 6	Exhibition Catalogs, circa 1938-1968
Box 2, Folder 7-10	Audubon Artists Group, Exhibition Catalogs, circa 1945-1994
Box 2, Folder 11	Audubon Artists Group, Press Materials, circa 1942-1988 1 Videoreels (1/2 inch)
Box 2, Folder 12	Articles about Engel, circa 1938-1975
Box 2, Folder 13	Holy Rood Church, circa 1959-1966
Box 2, Folder 14-16	Art Research Material, circa 1933-1966
Box 2, Folder 17	News Clippings, circa 1939-1964
Box 2, Folder 18	Miscellaneous Printed Material, circa 1942-1965

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## Series 5: Scrapbooks, circa 1920-1942

### .4 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4)

Scope and Contents: Scrapbooks contain notes and other materials surrounding events attended by Engel including Pennsylvania's National Art Week (1936) a federal art project, the Isochromatic Exhibition (1937), and the Florida International Art Exhibition at Grand Central Galleries (1952). Also included is a scrapbook containing materials related to Wayman Adams' film *Painting a Portrait* (1940).

	Titled
Box 3, Folder 1	"American Art Week", circa 1938
Box 3, Folder 2	"Clara Ward Reynolds", circa 1942
Box 4, Folder 2	"Florida International Art Exhibition at Grand Central Galleries", circa 1952
Box 3, Folder 3	"Four Freedoms Publicity Graph", circa 1930-1940
Box 3, Folder 4	"Isochromatic Exhibition", circa 1937
Box 3, Folder 5	"Miscellaneous Art Notes", circa 1936
Box 3, Folder 6	"Pennsylvania's Capital", 1938, Jun. 7
Box 4, Folder 3	"Record of Lancaster, PA Federal Art Project National Art Week", circa 1936
Box 4, Folder 4	"Wayman Adams Film Painting a Portrait", circa 1940
Box 4, Folder 5	Scrapbook, circa 1920-1930
Box 4, Folder 6	Scrapbook of Clippings, circa 1938
Box 4, Folder 7	Scrapbook of Photographs, circa 1936

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## Series 6: Photographic Material, circa 1930-1958

### .2 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4)

Scope and Contents: Photographic materials include slide images of Engel, Ralph Fabri, and Carl Thorpe, as well as photographs of other artists, artwork, and Engels' palette collection.

Box 3, Folder 7	Engel, Michael M., Slides, circa 1958
Box 3, Folder 8	Fabri, Ralph, Slides, circa 1958
Box 3, Folder 9	Thorpe, Carl, Slides, 1958, Jun. 22
Box 3, Folder 10	Photographs of Artists, circa 1946
Box 3, Folder 11	Photographs of Artwork, circa 1957
Box 3, Folder 12	Photographs of Demonstration Pieces, Slides, circa 1930-1950
Box 3, Folder 13	Photographs of Palette Collection, circa 1935
Box 4, Folder 1	Photograph of Robert Phillip and Shirley Temple , 1940, Jan. 26
Box 3, Folder 14	Miscellaneous Photographs, circa 1930-1950

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## Series 7: Artwork, circa 1920-1950

### *.1 Linear feet (Box 3)*

Scope and Contents: Artwork includes a folder of sketches by Engel.

Box 3, Folder 15	Sketches, circa 1920-1950
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