



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Betty Esman papers

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

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Betty Esman papers
Date:	1926-1980
Identifier:	AAA.esmabett
Creator:	Esman, Betty, 1904-1996
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet ((microfilmed on 1 partial reel)) 0.2 Linear feet (Addition)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Material on reel 4861 donated 1986-1989 by Esman; it was microfilmed in 1994 with funding provided by the Henry and Lucy Moses Fund. The remainder was donated October 1994 by Esman.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reel 4861 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Microfilmed materials must be consulted on microfilm. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Painter, collector, art patron; New York, N.Y.

Scope and Contents

Primarily correspondence, mail art, and printed material documenting Esman's career and her personal and professional relationships with artists Ray Johnson, Rufino Tamayo, Jacques Lipchitz and others.

Scope and Contents

REEL 4861: Included are: a resume; letters, 1936-1979 from Ulla and Jacques Lipchitz, James Johnson Sweeney of the Guggenheim Museum, Ben Shahn, Chaim Gross, and museums, galleries, publishers, and associations regarding personal relationships, travel, exhibitions, and sales. One file on Rufino Tamayo

contains letters from Tamayo to Esman and printed material, 1956-1971, and two files contain undated mail art from Ray Johnson to Esman and others. Printed material, 1932-1980, includes exhibition announcements and catalogs, clippings, and autographed Abraham Walkowitz exhibition catalogs, 1944-1950. Photographs, many taken by Vernon Samuels, Esman's husband, are of Esman, friends, artists and works of art. Original works of art include handpainted cards from Yasu Kobashi, 1970, 1976 and undated, and an undated woodcut print by Tamayo.

Scope and Contents

ADDITION: A resume; five figure drawings by Esman, 1926-1928 and ca. 1939-1945; photographs, including 7 of Esman with Jacques Lipchitz and his family taken by Samuels, 3 of the old sculpture garden at MoMA, a signed photograph of Tamayo, 2 of Esman in her studio, and 2 of other artists taken by Samuels. Also included are a signed exhibition catalog, "Rufino Tamayo: Myth and Magic, and an article on Mexico's Tamayo Museum, Smithsonian Magazine, August 1975.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art -- Collectors and collecting
- Art patronage
- Jewish artists
- Mail art
- Women artists
- Women painters

Names:

- Johnson, Ray, 1927-1995
- Kobashi, Yasuhide
- Lipchitz, Jacques, 1891-1973
- Samuels, Vernon
- Shahn, Ben, 1898-1969
- Tamayo, Rufino, 1899-
- Walkowitz, Abraham, 1880-1965

Occupations:

- Art patrons -- New York (State) -- New York
- Painters -- New York (State) -- New York