



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Charles Lang Freer selected papers

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Archives of American Art |
| Title: | Charles Lang Freer selected papers |
| Date: | 1876-1931 |
| Identifier: | AAA.freechar |
| Creator: | Freer, Charles Lang, 1856-1919 |
| Extent: | 34 Microfilm reels |
| Language: | English . |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Selected for microfilming from the Charles Lang Freer papers at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives. Microfilmed 1992 by the Archives of American Art with funding provided by the Smithsonian Institution's Office of Fellowships and Grants Research Resources Program. Portions of the correspondence and the letterpress books were previously filmed by the Freer in the 1970 (AAA reels 77, 453-456, and 1217-1232); those reels have been replaced by this microfilming project. See Finding Aid for information on papers not selected for microfilming.

Location of Originals

Originals in: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 4720-4753 available for use at Archives of American Art offices, the Freer Gallery of Art/Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, and through interlibrary loan.

Restrictions

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

Biographical / Historical

Art collector; Detroit, Michigan. Collected Asian, American, and European art, including a large collection of works by James McNeill Whistler. Founded the Freer Gallery of Art, which is now part of the Smithsonian Institution.

Scope and Contents

Papers concerning Freer's art collecting activities, including correspondence, diaries, art inventories, scrapbooks of clippings on James McNeil Whistler and other press clippings, and photographs. In addition to Freer's own correspondence, the papers include correspondence collected by Freer of James McNeill

Whistler and of Whistler collector Richard A. Canfield, correspondence of Freer's assistant Katharine Nash Rhoades, and correspondence regarding Freer's bequest to the Smithsonian Institution.

Scope and Contents

Correspondence, ca. 1860-1921, includes Freer's correspondence, 1876-1920, with artists, dealers, collectors, museums, and public figures; 30 v. of letterpress books containing copies of letters sent, 1892-1910; correspondence collected by Freer of James McNeill Whistler, and his wife Beatrix, 186?-1909, with Lady Colin Campbell, Thomas R. Way, Alexander Reid, Whistler's mother, Mrs. George W. Whistler, and others; correspondence of Whistler collector Richard A. Canfield, 1904-1913, regarding works in Canfield's collection; and correspondence of Freer's assistant, Katharine Nash Rhoades, 1920-1921, soliciting Freer letters and regarding the settlement of his estate.

Scope and Contents

Also included are twenty-nine pocket diaries, 1889-1890, 1892-1898, 1900-1919, recording daily activities, people and places visited, observations, and comments; a diary kept by Freer's caretaker, Joseph Stephens Warring, recording daily activities at Freer's Detroit home, 1907-1910;

Scope and Contents

Inventories, n.d. and 1901-1921, of American, European, and Asian art in Freer's collection, often including provenance information; vouchers, 1884-1919, documenting his purchases; five volumes of scrapbooks of clippings on James McNeill Whistler, 1888-1931, labeled "Various," "Peacock Room," "Death, etc.," "Paris, etc.," and "Boston...London"; three volumes of newsclippings, 1900-1930, concerning Freer and the opening of the Freer Gallery of Art;

Scope and Contents

correspondence regarding Freer's gift and bequest to the Smithsonian Institution, 1902-1916; and photographs, ca. 1880-1930, of Freer, including portraits by Alvin Langdon Coburn and Edward Steichen, Freer with others, Freer in Cairo, China and Japan, Freer's death mask, and his memorial service, Kyoto, 1930; photographs of artists and others, including Thomas Dewing, Ernest Fenellosa, Katharine Rhoades taken by Alfred Stieglitz, Rosalind B. Philip, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Abbott H. Thayer, Dwight Tryon, and Whistler; and photographs relating to Whistler, including art works depicting him, grave and memorial monuments, works of art, the Peacock Room, and Whistler's memorial exhibition at the Copley Society.

Scope and Contents

Among Freer's correspondents are: Otto Bacher, Bernard Berenson, Siegfried Bing, Laurence Binyon, W.K. Bixby, Sigisbert Chretien Bosch-Reitz, Charles H. Caffin, Colin Campbell, Richard Canfield, William Merritt Chase, Frederick Stuart Church, Alfred Vance Churchill, Thomas Wilmer Dewing, Arthur Wesley Dow, Ernest Fenellosa, Albert Gallatin, John Gellatly, Frederick W. Gookin, Sadakichi Hartmann, Frank J. Hecker, Dikran Kelekian, M. Knoedler & Co., Berthold Laufer, Lien Hui Ching Collection, W.A. Livingstone, Frederick McCormick, Bunkio Matsuki, Gari Melchers, Agnes Meyer, Eugene Meyer, Charles Moore, Yozo Nomura, Rosalind Birnie Philip, Charles A. Platt, Theodore Roosevelt, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the Smithsonian Institution, Joseph Stephens Warring, Thomas Way, Abbott Handerson Thayer, Dwight W. Tryon, Charles

Walcott of the Smithsonian Institution, Beatrix Whistler, James McNeill Whistler, K.T. Wong, Yamanaka & Co., and Seouke Yue.

Arrangement

All correspondence except letterpress books: arranged alphabetically by correspondent; letterpress books are chronological.

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, American -- Collectors and collecting
- Art, Asian -- Collectors and collecting

Names:

- Bacher, Otto H. (Otto Henry), 1856-1909
- Berenson, Bernard, 1865-1959
- Bing, Siegfried, 1838-1905
- Binyon, Laurence, 1869-1943
- Bixby, William K. (William Keeney), 1857-1931
- Bosch-Reitz, Sigisbert Chretien, 1860-
- Caffin, Charles Henry, 1854-1918
- Campbell, Colin, Lady, 1857-1911
- Campbell, Colin, Lord, 1853-1895
- Canfield, Richard A. (Richard Albert), 1855-1914
- Chase, William Merritt, 1849-1916
- Church, Frederick S. (Frederick Stuart), 1842-1924
- Churchill, Alfred Vance, 1864-1949
- Coburn, Alvin Langdon, 1882-1966
- Dewing, Thomas Wilmer, 1851-1938
- Dow, Arthur W. (Arthur Wesley), 1857-1922
- Fenollosa, Ernest Francisco, 1853-1908
- Freer Gallery of Art
- Gallatin, A. E. (Albert Eugene), 1881-1952
- Gellatly, John, 1853-1931
- Gookin, Frederick William
- Hartmann, Sadakichi, 1867-1944
- Hecker, Frank J. (Frank Joseph), 1846-1927
- Kelekian, Dikran, 1868-1951
- Laufer, Berthold, 1874-1934
- M. Knoedler & Co.
- Matsuki, Bunkio, 1867-1940
- McCormick, Frederick, 1870-
- Melchers, Gari, 1860-1932
- Meyer, Agnes Elizabeth Ernst, 1887-1970
- Meyer, Eugene, 1875-1959
- Moore, Charles, 1855-1942

Nomura, Yozo
Philip, Rosalind Birnie, 1873-1958
Platt, Charles A. (Charles Adams), 1861-1933
Reid, Alexander
Rhoades, Katharine N., 1885-1965
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919
Saint-Gaudens, Augustus, 1848-1907
Smithsonian Institution
Steichen, Edward, 1879-1973
Stieglitz, Alfred, 1864-1946
Thayer, Abbott Handerson, 1849-1921
Tryon, Dwight William, 1849-1925
Walcott, Charles D. (Charles Doolittle), 1850-1927
Warring, Joseph Stephens, 1863?-1944
Way, Thomas R. (Thomas Robert), 1861-1913
Whistler, Beatrix Philip Godwin, d. 1896
Whistler, James McNeill, 1834-1903
Wong, K. T.
Yamanaka & Company
Yue, Seaouke