A Finding Aid to the John Gellatly Letters
Received from Artists, 1887-1931

Judy Ng

Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: John Gellatly letters received from artists
Identifier: AAA.gelljohn
Date: 1887-1931
Extent: 0.2 Linear feet
Creator: Gellatly, John, 1853-1931
Language: The collection is in English.
Summary: The John Gellatly letters received from artists measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1887 to 1931. Found within the collection are 120 letters to Gellatly from Emma and Abbott H. Thayer, Frederick S. Church, Irving Wiles, Albert Pinkham Ryder, C. E. S. Wood, and George Grey Barnard. Some of the letters contain sketches, particularly those from Church. Topics include the price and progress of artworks, requests for commissions, mutual friendships, and daily events. There are also two copies of the poem "The Flying Dutchman" by Albert P. Ryder.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
The collection was initially bought by art historian Thomas Brumbaugh of Vanderbilt University from Walter R. Benjamin Autographs of Madison Avenue, and subsequently acquired in 1978 by the National Collection of Fine Arts, now the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Shortly thereafter, the letters were transferred to the Archives of American Art.

Other Finding Aids
List of letters available at Archives of American Art offices.

Available Formats
The collection was digitized in its entirety in 2016 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Processing Information
Materials received a preliminary level of arrangement after donation and the collection was microfilmed onto reel 2041. The collection was prepared for digitization and described by Judy Ng in 2016, with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.
Preferred Citation

John Gellatly letters received from artists, 1887-1931. 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.

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Biographical / Historical

Art collector John Gellatly (1853-1931) lived in New York City, N.Y. and established a real estate and insurance business in 1885. An art enthusiast, Gellatly furthered his interests by enrolling in classes. There, he would meet his future wife, the heiress Edith Rogers, whom he married in 1886. Together, they began collecting decorative art objects and contemporary paintings, including works by Albert P. Ryder, Abbott Thayer, and Childe Hassam. After Edith’s death in 1917, Gellatly continued to collect art and eventually gifted the 1,640 objects and paintings in his collection to the Smithsonian in 1929. He died of complications from pneumonia in 1931.

Scope and Contents

The John Gellatly letters received from artists measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1887 to 1931. Found within the collection are 120 letters to Gellatly from Emma and Abbott H. Thayer, Frederick S. Church, Irving Wiles, Albert Pinkham Ryder, C. E. S. Wood, and George Grey Barnard. Some of the letters contain sketches, particularly those from Church. Topics include the price and progress of artworks, requests for commissions, mutual friendships, and daily events. There are also two copies of the poem "The Flying Dutchman" by Albert P. Ryder.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 1 series.

• Series 1: John Gellatly Letters Received from Artists, 1887-1931 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
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 -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:
  Illustrated letters
  Sketches

Names:
  Barnard, George Grey, 1863-1938
  Church, Frederick S. (Frederick Stuart), 1842-1924
  Ryder, Albert Pinkham, 1847-1917
  Thayer, Abbott Handerson, 1849-1921
  Thayer, Emma B., 1850-1924
  Wiles, Irving Ramsay, 1861-1948
  Wood, Charles Erskine Scott, 1852-1944
Series 1: John Gellatly Letters Received from Artists, 1887-1931

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

The John Gellatly letters received from artists measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1887 to 1931. Found within the collection are 120 letters to Gellatly from Emma and Abbott H. Thayer, Frederick S. Church, Irving Wiles, Albert Pinkham Ryder, C. E. S. Wood, and George Grey Barnard. Some of the letters contain sketches, particularly those from Church. Topics range from the price and progress of artworks and requests for commissions to mutual friendships and daily events. There are also two copies of the poem "The Flying Dutchman" by Albert P. Ryder.

Correspondence is arranged alphabetically by surname of the artist.

This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 1  Correspondence, Barnard, George Grey, 1925
  Image(s): Correspondence, Barnard, George Grey: 1925

Box 1, Folder 2  Correspondence, Church, Frederick S., 1887-1919
  Image(s): Correspondence, Church, Frederick S.: 1887-1919

Box 1, Folder 3  Correspondence, Church, Frederick S., 1920 January-July
  Image(s): Correspondence, Church, Frederick S.: 1920

Box 1, Folder 4  Correspondence, Church, Frederick S., 1920 August-December
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 5  Correspondence, Church, Frederick S., 1923
  Image(s): Correspondence, Church, Frederick S.: 1923

Box 1, Folder 6  Correspondence, Ryder, Albert Pinkham, 1897-1910
  Image(s): Correspondence, Ryder, Albert Pinkham: 1897-1910

Box 1, Folder 7  Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma, circa 1903-1923
  Image(s): Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma: circa 1903-1923

Box 1, Folder 8  Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma, 1903
  Image(s): Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma: 1903

Box 1, Folder 9  Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma, 1905
  Image(s): Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma: 1905

Box 1, Folder 10 Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma, 1907-1908
Image(s): Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma: 1907-1908

Box 1, Folder 11
Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma, 1912-1923
Image(s): Correspondence, Thayer, Abbott and Emma: 1912-1923

Box 1, Folder 12
Correspondence, Wiles, Irving R., 1929-1931
Image(s): Correspondence, Wiles, Irving R.: 1929-1931

Box 1, Folder 13
Correspondence, Wood, C.E.S., 1919
Image(s): Correspondence, Wood, C.E.S.: 1919

Box 1, Folder 14
Correspondence, Miscellaneous, circa 1885-1930
Image(s): Correspondence, Miscellaneous: circa 1885-1930

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