A Finding Aid to the Robert C. Graham Collection of Artists' Letters, 1783-1935 (bulk 1804-1877), in the Archives of American Art

Erin Corley

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

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Collection Overview

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<th>Repository:</th>
<th>Archives of American Art</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Robert C. Graham collection of artists' letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifier:</td>
<td>AAA.grahrobe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>1783-1935 (bulk 1804-1877)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extent:</td>
<td>0.2 Linear feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creator:</td>
<td>Graham, Robert Claverhouse, 1913-1994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language:</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary:</td>
<td>The Robert C. Graham collection of artists' letters measure 0.2 linear feet and dates from 1783 to 1935, with the bulk of the letters dating from 1804 to 1877. Graham, an art dealer and collector, compiled the unrelated letters of several late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century painters such as Thomas Biddle, Thomas Doughty, G. P. A. Healy, Daniel Huntington, Henry Inman, Emanuel Leutze, Samuel F. B. Morse, Rembrandt Peale, John Singer Sargent, Thomas Sully, John Trumbull, Benjamin West, and others.</td>
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Administrative Information

Provenance

The collection was donated in 1961 by Robert C. Graham.

Related Material

Related material found in the Archives includes the recording and transcript of a 1976 interview of Robert Claverhouse Graham conducted by Paul Cummings for the Archives of American Art. The Archives also holds numerous collections of papers related to or created by the artists who wrote these letters.

Alternative Forms Available

The Robert Claverhouse Graham collection of artists' letters in the Archives of American Art were digitized in 2007, and total 100 images.

Processing Information

The Archives microfilmed the collection on reels D23, D294 and 1236, mostly upon receipt in 1961. The collection was fully processed by Erin Corley in 2006 and digitized in 2007 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.
Preferred Citation

Restrictions on Access
The collection has been digitized and is available online via AAA's website.

Ownership and Literary Rights
The Robert C. Graham collection of artists' letters are 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 Note
Robert Claverhouse Graham (1913-1994) was the director of the Graham Gallery in New York City. He and his brother James were fourth generation owners of the gallery which specialized in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American art.

Scope and Content Note
The Robert C. Graham collection of artists' letters measure 0.2 linear feet dates from 1783 to 1935, with the bulk of the letters dating from 1804 to 1877. Graham, an art dealer and collector, compiled the unrelated letters of several late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century painters such as Thomas Doughty, G. P. A. Healy, Daniel Huntington, Henry Inman, Emanuel Leutze, Samuel F. B. Morse, Rembrandt Peale, John Singer Sargent, Thomas Sully, John Trumbull, Benjamin West, and others.

Arrangement
Folders are arranged alphabetically by the author of the letter. Multiple letters within folders are arranged chronologically.

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 dealers -- New York (State) -- New York
Artists' writings
Painters -- 19th century
Types of Materials:

Letters

Names:

Doughty, Thomas, 1793-1856
Healy, G.P.A. (George Peter Alexander), 1813-1894
Huntington, Daniel, 1816-1906
Inman, Henry, 1801-1846
Leutze, Emanuel, 1816-1868
Morse, Samuel Finley, 1791-1872
Peale, Rembrandt, 1778-1860
Sargent, John Singer, 1856-1925
Sully, Thomas, 1783-1872
Trumbull, John, 1756-1843
West, Benjamin, 1738-1820
Container Listing

Series 1: Robert C. Graham Collection of Artists' Letters, circa 1783 - circa 1935

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Robert Graham's collection of forty artist's letters includes letters to and from numerous significant American artists, primarily from the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Found are letters from John Brown, Thomas Biddle, Thomas Doughty, G. P. A. Healy, Daniel Huntington, Henry Inman, Emanuel Leutze, Samuel F. B. Morse, Rembrandt Peale, Luigi Persico, John Singer Sargent, Benjamin West, Joseph Wood, and other artists.

The letters discuss a wide variety of unrelated scattered topics, but are primarily about current work and commissions. Items of note include three letters from Thomas Doughty and one letter from William M. Hart, both Hudson River School painters, to Uriah Levison, discussing paintings Levison commissioned from them. Also found is a letter from sculptor Luigi Persico to the Library of Congress concerning a possible commission for an equestrian statue of George Washington. Letters from Rembrandt Peale concern a portrait of George Washington, and a letter from Thomas Sully to Asher B. Durand requests engravings of two paintings. Also of note are letters from artist John Trumbull, including one to Andrew Robertson in which he discusses many general issues such as the British economy's effect on arts patronage and the engraving of one of his paintings. The collection contains three letters from Benjamin West, including a letter from West to Charles Willson Peale in which he inquires about a painting of George Washington, and a letter to Trumbull congratulating him on the opening of an "Academy of Art."

The collection contains a few additional items, including an engraved bookplate signed by John Callender, receipts signed by Francis Bicknell Carpenter and William Miller, Thomas Biddle's stock certificate for a share in the Philadelphia Academy of the Fine Arts, and G. P. A. Healy's portrait price list.

Box 1, Folder 1  Biddle, Thomas, 1809
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 2  Brown, John H., 1877
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 3  Callender, John, undated
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 4  Carpenter, Francis Bicknell, 1854
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 5  Clark, Aaron, 1836
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 6  Doughty, Thomas, 1852-1853
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 7  Dreer, Ferdinand J., 1860
Box 1, Folder 8  Durand, John, 1857
Box 1, Folder 9  Hart, William M., 1855
Box 1, Folder 10 Healy, G. P. A., 1857-1873
Box 1, Folder 11 Hinshelwood, Robert, 1839
Box 1, Folder 12 Huntington, Daniel, 1874
Box 1, Folder 13 Inman, Henry, 1837, 1851
Box 1, Folder 14 Kane, Philip Schuyler, 1935
Box 1, Folder 15 Lambdin, James R., 1858
Box 1, Folder 16 Leutze, Emanuel, 1845
Box 1, Folder 17 Miller, William R., 1849
Box 1, Folder 18 Morse, Samuel F. B., 1845
Box 1, Folder 19 Neagle, John, 1838
Box 1, Folder 20 Peale, Rembrandt, 1839, 1853-1854, undated
Box 1, Folder 21 Persico, Luigi, 1845
Box 1, Folder 22 Pine, John, 1846
Box 1, Folder 23  Renault, John Francis, 1804

Box 1, Folder 24  Sargent, John Singer, undated

Box 1, Folder 25  Sully, Thomas, 1825-1840

Box 1, Folder 26  Trumbull, John, 1816, 1835

Box 1, Folder 27  West, Benjamin, 1783, 1808, 1817

Box 1, Folder 28  Wood, Joseph, 1807

Box 1, Folder 29  List of Miniature Painters, undated

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