



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Walter and Ise Gropius papers

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Walter and Ise Gropius papers
Date:	1883-1981
Identifier:	AAA.gropwalt
Creator:	Gropius, Walter, 1883-1969 Gropius, Ise
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet ((24 microfilm reels))
Language:	Fifty percent of the collection is in German.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Lent for microfilming by Ise Gropius and her daughter, Beate Gropius Forberg Johansen, 1982-1983, except for selected items on reel 2393, the handwritten translation of Ise's diary on reel 4130 and cassette tapes, which were donated in 1981, 1983 and 1987, respectively. Some photographs from albums on reel 2764 which would not reproduce were not microfilmed.

Location of Originals

Reels 2270-2287a, 2330-2331, 2393, 2764: Originals returned to the lenders, Ise Gropius and Beate Forberg Johansen, after microfilming.

Location of Originals

Ise Gropius' diary: Original in the Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin, Germany.

Related Materials

Additional photographs of Alma (Schindler) Mahler Werfel located at Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin, Germany.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 2270-2287, 2330-2331, 2393, 2764, 4130 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

Reproduction Note

Diary is a typescript.

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

Architect, educator and founder of the Bauhaus school. Born in Berlin, Walter Gropius studied at the University of Charlottenburg-Berlin and Munich. Following European travel and apprenticeship with Peter Behrens in Berlin, he established his own practice in 1910. After military service in WWI, he became director of the School of Applied Arts and the Academy of Arts, united the two and named the new institute Bauhaus Dessau in 1925. Between 1934 and 1937, he had a private practice in London. From 1938 to 1952, Gropius was chairman of Harvard's Graduate School of Design and maintained a private practice with Marcel Breuer from 1938 to 1941. Gropius married Alma Schindler, Gustav Mahler's widow, in 1915. In 1923, he married Ise (or Ilse) Franck (1897-1983).

Scope and Contents

Biographical material, correspondence with architects and artists (1903-1978), writings (1923-1969), a diary, an autograph book, subject files, printed material, photographs (1883-1979) and 5 photograph albums reflect the career of Walter Gropius, the activities of his wife Ise, and her recollections of the Bauhaus. Also included are 5 cassette tapes, untranscribed and unmicrofilmed.

Scope and Contents

REELS 2270-2283: Walter Gropius' correspondence concerns family matters (1903-1933), locating his sister in Berlin after World War II (1945-1946), and the Bauhaus Archiv (1957-1968). Ise Gropius' correspondents (1969-1978) include Alvar Aalto, Herbert Bayer, Hannes Beckmann, Arcangelo Cascieri, Ivan and Serge Chermayeff, Adolf Klarmann, Helmut Koch, Gerhard Marcks, Jack Pritchard, Hans Scharoun, and Konrad Wachsmann. Other correspondence concerns exhibitions about Gropius (1969-1976). Writings by Walter Gropius include lecture notes and short essays on architecture and design. A subject file (1945-1954) concerns visits to Japan. Printed material (1910-1978) includes galley proof sheets and clippings (1913-1957).

Scope and Contents

REELS 2284-2286: Photographs (1896-1937) show family members including Gropius' first wife Alma Schindler and their daughter Manon; Gropius' architectural projects including finished buildings, models, blueprints, and drawings (1906-1952); and an exhibition in London on Gropius.

Scope and Contents

REEL 2287: Biographical material (1883-1979) consists of Gropius' birth, marriage and death certificates, his military record (1914-1917), contracts, U.S. naturalization papers (1941-1944), financial documents (1945), Ise Gropius' will (1979), a list of works, a history of the Gropius family, real estate records, and membership cards. Excerpts from letters written by Marcel Breuer describe his European travels (1931-1937). A file on the Walter Gropius Foundation contains letters and notes (1969). An autograph book kept by Ise Gropius (1924-1981) contains illustrations by Herbert Bayer, Gyorgy and Juliet Kepes, Joan Miro, Kurt Schwitters, and Phyllis Terry, as well as autographs, notes and photographs. Writings by Ise Gropius include lecture notes and printed essays (1935-1943).

Scope and Contents

REEL 2287a: Twenty-six letters (1932-1952) from Herbert Bayer, written in German and English, to Gropius. Thirteen excerpts from Bayer's letters (1932-1949) are translated into English.

Scope and Contents

REELS 2330-2331: Photographs (1883-1979) show Walter Gropius, family members, and colleagues including Alvar Aalto, Bela Bartok, Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer, Alexander Calder, Arcangelo Cascieri, Naum Gabo, Julian Huxley, Gyorgy Kepes, Paul Klee, Le Corbusier, I. M. Pei, Diego Rivera, Jose Luis Sert, Kenzo Tange, Frank Lloyd Wright, and members of Gropius' firm, The Architects Collaborative. Other photographs show a skit by students of the Harvard Graduate School of Design and a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Bauhaus (1979).

Scope and Contents

REEL 2393: English translations of correspondence between Ise and Walter Gropius (1931-1969) and Ise's 1928 letter to a journalist commenting on Walter Gropius' resignation from the Bauhaus. A handwritten German copy (with a typewritten English translation) of a section of Ise Gropius' unpublished memoir describes her first meeting with Gropius and their courtship and marriage (1923-1929). A German transcript was not filmed. A typewritten English translation of Ise Gropius' diary (1924-1928) describes activities at the Bauhaus and mentions Josef Albers, Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Otto Klemperer, Alma Mahler, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Georg Muche, Kurt Schwitters, Igor Stravinsky, and Franz Werfel. A handwritten translation is filmed on reel 4130.

Scope and Contents

REEL 2764: One photograph album (1925-1930) contains photographs of Walter and Ise Gropius and colleagues including Josef Albers, Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer, Lyonel Feininger, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Georg Muche, Claude Petit, and Joost Schmidt; construction of the Bauhaus (1925-1926); and sights in Germany and Italy. Four albums on the United States contain Gropius' photographs of New York City architecture, the Brooklyn Bridge, Chicago, California housing and industry, the Grand Canyon, and American Indians.

Scope and Contents

UNMICROFILMED: 5 cassette tapes, untranscribed, including a lecture delivered by Walter Gropius as part of "The Heritage of Man" lecture series, Cleveland, Ohio, February 13, 1952; an interview of Ise conducted by the Canadian Broadcasting Company, October 28, 1977; and 3 of a monologue delivered by Ise, 1978, in which she speaks of her early childhood.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Architecture, Modern -- 20th century -- Germany
Architecture, Modern -- 20th century -- United States
Industrial design

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Sound recordings

Names:

Aalto, Alvar, 1898-1976
Albers, Josef
Architects Collaborative, Inc.
Bauhaus
Bayer, Herbert, 1900-1985
Beckmann, Hannes, 1909-1977
Breuer, Marcel, 1902-
Calder, Alexander, 1898-1976
Cascieri, Arcangelo, 1902-1997
Chermayeff, Ivan
Chermayeff, Serge, 1900-
Davis, Charles H. (Charles Harold), 1856-1933
Feininger, Lyonel, 1871-1956
Gabo, Naum, 1890-1977
Gropius, Walter, 1883-1969
Huxley, Julian, 1887-1975
Kandinsky, Wassily, 1866-1944
Kepes, Gyorgy, 1906-2001
Klarmann, Adolf D., 1904-
Klee, Paul, 1879-1940
Klemperer, Otto, 1885-1973
Koch, Helmut
Le Corbusier, 1887-1965
Mahler, Alma, 1879-1964
Marcks, Gerhard
Miró, Joan, 1893-
Moholy-Nagy, László, 1895-1946
Muche, Georg, 1895-
Pei, I. M., 1917-
Petit, Claude
Pritchard, Jack, 1899-
Rivera, Diego, 1886-1957
Scharoun, Hans, 1893-1972
Schmidt, Joost, 1893-1948
Schwitters, Kurt, 1887-1948
Sert, José Luis, 1902-
Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971
Tange, Kenzō, 1913-
Wachsmann, Konrad, 1901-1980
Walter Gropius Foundation
Werfel, Franz, 1890-1945
Wright, Frank Lloyd, 1867-1959
artók, Béla, 1881-1945

Occupations:

Architects
Educators
Painters
Photographers
Sculptors