



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Karl Gruppe papers, circa 1880-1985, in the Archives of American Art

Allessandra Liberati

The processing of this collection received Federal support from the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund, administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee.

2023 November 9

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	
Administrative Information .....	1
Biographical / Historical .....	2
Scope and Contents .....	2
Arrangement .....	3
Names and Subjects .....	
Container Listing .....	
Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1932-1979 .....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1914-1976 .....	5
Series 3: Project Files, circa 1929-1965 .....	6
Series 4: Personal Business Records, circa 1901-1969 .....	8
Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1893-1978 .....	10
Series 6: Photographic Material, circa 1880-1985 .....	11

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Karl Gruppe papers
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1880-1985
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.grupkarl
<b>Creator:</b>	Gruppe, Karl, b. 1893
<b>Extent:</b>	3 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of Karl Gruppe measure 3 linear feet and date from circa 1880-1985. They illustrate his career through biographical material, correspondence, project files, personal business records, and printed and photographic material.

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Materials on reel N70-35 were lent for microfilming in 1970 by Karl Gruppe. The bulk of the microfilmed material and additional papers were donated in 1970-1973 by Karl Gruppe and by his daughter Elizabeth Gruppe Stover in 1986.

### Separated Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds microfilm of material lent for microfilming (reel N70-35) including correspondence, clippings, and catalogs, 1920-1970, including items about the controversy over New York City's sculpture. Correspondents include Robert Moses, Edmond R. Amateis, Mary W. Harriman, Reginald Marsh, and Henry Wolf. Loaned materials were returned to the donor and are not described in the collection container inventory. Items were returned to Karl Gruppe after microfilming.

### Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reels 104 and N70-35 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

### Processing Information

This collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared, by Alessandra Liberati in 2023.

### Preferred Citation

Karl Gruppe papers, circa 1880-1985. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

## Conditions Governing Use

The Archives of American Art makes its archival collections available for non-commercial, educational and personal use unless restricted by copyright and/or donor restrictions, including but not limited to access and publication restrictions. AAA makes no representations concerning such rights and restrictions and it is the user's responsibility to determine whether rights or restrictions exist and to obtain any necessary permission to access, use, reproduce and publish the collections. Please refer to the Smithsonian's Terms of Use for additional information.

---

## Biographical / Historical

Karl Gruppe (1893-1982) was a sculptor who worked mainly in New York City.

Karl Heinrich Gruppe was born in Rochester, New York. He studied at the Royal Academy in Antwerp, Belgium with Franz Juris and with Karl Bitter at the Art Students League in New York. He was a sculptor in marble and bronze and held the position of Chief Sculptor of the Monument Restoration Project for the New York City Parks Department as part of the Public Works of Art Project.

In 1980 he was awarded the National Sculpture Society's "Special Medal of Honor". He was a member of the National Academy of Design (1968-1971) and served on the National Council of the National Academy of Design from 1956 to 1959, serving as Vice President in 1957. In 1950 he was elected academician. In 1960 Gruppe served as President of the National Sculpture Society and was appointed a member of the New York City Art Commission from 1944 to 1947. Away from the city he shared a studio with his brother Emile Gruppe in Rocky Neck, Massachusetts.

Karl Gruppe died in 1982 in Southold, New York.

---

## Scope and Contents

The Karl Gruppe papers measure 3 linear feet and date from circa 1880-1985. Biographical materials include a resume and family history of Gruppe and various biographical sketches of others. Correspondence is to and from Karl Gruppe and is with Karl Bitter and his family, the Society of Medalists, and David Oppenheim, and regards commissions and organizations. Project files consist of materials related to various projects completed by Gruppe including the Henry Hudson Memorial, the William Rufus King Memorial, and the Monument Restoration Project. Also included are projects for war memorials, a joint outdoor exhibition for the National Sculpture Society, and various Boroughs in New York City. Personal business records include those related to the National Academy of Design and National Sculpture Society including proceedings, financial material, business records, reports, and other materials. Also included are records relating to various other institutions and copyright records.

Printed material consists of exhibition announcements and catalogs, news clippings, materials related to Karl Bitter and Eisenhower College, and a published copy of *The Dream City: A Portfolio of Photographic Views of the World's Columbian Exposition* (1893). Also included are materials related to Gruppe's time working with the Public Works of Art Project in New York City. Photographic material includes personal photographs of Gruppe's family, and friends, including Laura Gardin (Fraser), Anthony de Francisci, Karl Bitter and the Bitter family, photographs of Marcella Sembrich, and photographs of the interior, garden, and studio of Karl Bitter. Also included are photographs of the *Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (1904) and photographs of Gruppe's artwork which include nitrate negatives stored separately.

---

## Arrangement

This collection consists of six series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1932-1979 (.1 Linear feet: Box 1)
- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1914-1976 (.4 Linear feet: Box 1)
- Series 3: Project Files, circa 1929-1965 (.6 Linear feet: Boxes 1-2)
- Series 4: Personal Business Records, circa 1901-1969 (.9 Linear feet: Box 2)
- Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1893-1978 (.4 Linear feet: Box 3)
- Series 6: Photographic Material, circa 1880-1985 (.6 Linear feet: Box 3)

---

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Medals  
Monuments -- Conservation and restoration  
Monuments -- New York (State) -- New York  
Sculptors -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews  
Sculpture -- Conservation and restoration -- New York (State) -- New York

Names:

Public Works of Art Project

Occupations:

Medalists -- New York (State) -- New York

Functions:

Film festivals

---

## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1932-1979

#### .1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Biographical materials include a resume and family history of Gruppe and various biographical sketches of others.

Box 1, Folder 1            Resume, circa 1979

Box 1, Folder 2            Family History, circa 1935

Box 1, Folder 3            Membership, Indoor Birdwatcher Society, circa 1932

#### Biographical Sketches

Box 1, Folder 4            Brandt, Warren , circa 1961

Box 1, Folder 5            Cherry, Herman, circa 1961

Box 1, Folder 6            Morris, Kyle, circa 1960

Box 1, Folder 7            Zogbaum, Wilfrid , circa 1960

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1914-1976

### .4 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is to and from Karl Gruppe and is with Karl Bitter and his family, the Society of Medalists, and David Oppenheim, and regards commissions and organizations.

Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence (1910s), circa 1915-1919
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence (1920s), circa 1922-1929
Box 1, Folder 10	Correspondence (1930s), circa 1930-1939
Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence (1940s), circa 1940-1947
Box 1, Folder 12	Correspondence (1940s), circa 1948-1949
Box 1, Folder 13	Correspondence (1950s), circa 1950-1952
Box 1, Folder 14	Correspondence (1950s), circa 1953-1957
Box 1, Folder 15	Correspondence (1950s), circa 1958-1959
Box 1, Folder 16	Correspondence (1960s), circa 1960-1965
Box 1, Folder 17	Correspondence (1960s), circa 1966-1969
Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence (1970s), circa 1976
Box 1, Folder 19	Alben W. Berkley Competition, circa 1949-1950
Box 1, Folder 20	Benjamin Franklin Ferguson Fund, circa 1949-1954
Box 1, Folder 21	David Oppenheim, circa 1949-1951
Box 1, Folder 22	Ella Burr McManus Fund, circa 1949-1953
Box 1, Folder 23	Karl Bitter and Family, circa 1914-1966
Box 1, Folder 24	Medals and Memorials by Gruppe, circa 1919-1964
Box 1, Folder 25	Society of Medalists, circa 1949-1952

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 3: Project Files, circa 1929-1965

### .6 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Project files consist of materials related to various projects completed by Gruppe including the Henry Hudson Memorial, the William Rufus King Memorial, and the Monument Restoration Project. Also included are projects for war memorials, a joint outdoor exhibition for the National Sculpture Society, and various Boroughs in New York City. Material related to the New York City Boroughs consist of a list of monuments and fountains in New York City surveyed for renovation by Gruppe under the PWAP from 1934-1937. Each survey includes a general description, sometimes a photograph, a statement of its condition, repairs needed and renovation costs.

Box 1, Folder 26	American Artists Professional League, circa 1955-1962
Box 1, Folder 27	The American Federation of Arts, circa 1945-1950
Box 1, Folder 28	The Architectural League, circa 1956
	City of New York
Box 1, Folder 29	Borough of Bronx, circa 1934-1937
Box 1, Folder 30	Borough of Manhattan, circa 1935-1936
Box 1, Folder 31	Borough of Richmond, circa 1935-1936
Box 1, Folder 32	Fort Clinton, circa 1934-1947
	Henry Hudson Memorial
Box 1, Folder 33	Correspondence, circa 1937-1938
Box 1, Folder 34	Blueprints, circa 1937-1959
Box 1, Folder 35	Business Records and Printed Material, circa 1937-1959
Box 1, Folder 36	Medallic Art Company, circa 1950-1953
Box 1, Folder 37-38	Monument Restoration Project, circa 1934-1936
Box 1, Folder 39	National Sculpture Society, Joint Outdoor Exhibition, circa 1950
Box 1, Folder 40	U.S. State Department, circa 1964-1965
	William Rufus King Memorial
Box 1, Folder 41	Blueprints, circa 1930



Box 1, Folder 42	Correspondence, circa 1929-1930
Box 1, Folder 43	Notes, Sketches, and Business Records, circa 1930
Box 1, Folder 44	Photographs, circa 1930
Box 2, Folder 1	Designs for Sculptures, circa 1930-1950
Box 2, Folder 2	Plaster Casts for Museums, circa 1948
Box 2, Folder 3	War Memorials, circa 1944-1948
Box 2, Folder 4	Miscellaneous Sculpture Competitions, circa 1949-1959

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 4: Personal Business Records, circa 1901-1969

### .9 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Personal business records include those related to the National Academy of Design and National Sculpture Society including proceedings, financial material, business records, reports, and other materials. Also included are records relating to various other institutions and copyright records.

Box 2, Folder 5	Allied Artists of America, circa 1951-1963
Box 2, Folder 6	Art Commission Associates , circa 1949-1968
Box 2, Folder 7	The Century Association, circa 1952
Box 2, Folder 8	The Fine Arts Federation, circa 1938-1969
Box 2, Folder 9	The First Art Film Festival in America, circa 1950-1957
Box 2, Folder 10	Municipal Art Society, circa 1949-1957
Box 2, Folder 11	Museum of Modern Art, New York, circa 1951-1952
National Academy of Design	
Box 2, Folder 12	Business Records, circa 1951-1957
Box 2, Folder 13	Finance Committee, circa 1953-1954
Box 2, Folder 14	Proceedings, circa 1951-1952
Box 2, Folder 15	Proceedings, circa 1953-1955
Box 2, Folder 16	Proceedings, circa 1956-1957
National Sculpture Society	
Box 2, Folder 17	Advisory Committee, circa 1949-1959
Box 2, Folder 18	Announcements of Meetings, circa 1949-1954
Box 2, Folder 19	Competition Program Committee, circa 1951-1952
Box 2, Folder 20	President's Reports, circa 1950-1953
Box 2, Folder 21	Proceedings, circa 1947-1949
Box 2, Folder 22	Proceedings, circa 1950

Box 2, Folder 23	Proceedings, circa 1952-1953
Box 2, Folder 24	Proceedings, circa 1954
Box 2, Folder 25	Proceedings, circa 1955
Box 2, Folder 26	Proceedings, circa 1956
Box 2, Folder 27	Receipts and Disbursements, circa 1952-1953
Box 2, Folder 28	Miscellaneous, circa 1948-1953
Box 2, Folder 29	Report on Pan-American Exhibition, Buffalo, New York, circa 1901
Box 2, Folder 30	The Studio Center of Art for Colleges, Budget, circa 1940
Box 2, Folder 31	Copyright Records, circa 1916-1937

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1893-1978

### .4 Linear feet (Box 3)

Scope and Contents: Printed material consists of exhibition announcements and catalogs, news clippings, materials related to Karl Bitter and Eisenhower College, and a published copy of *The Dream City: A Portfolio of Photographic Views of the World's Columbian Exposition* (1893). Also included are materials related to Gruppe's time working with the Public Works of Art Project in New York City.

Box 3, Folder 1           Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, circa 1940-1945

Box 3, Folder 2           American Academy of Arts and Letters, circa 1953-1959

Box 3, Folder 3           The Committee of Government and Art, circa 1953-1957

Box 3, Folder 4           The Dream City: A Portfolio of Photographic Views of the World's Columbian Exposition (1893), circa 1893

Box 3, Folder 5           Eisenhower College, circa 1967

Box 3, Folder 6           Karl Bitter, circa 1914-1956

Box 3, Folder 7           Clippings, circa 1949-1978

Box 3, Folder 8           Invitations, circa 1945-1955

Box 3, Folder 9           Miscellaneous , circa 1949-1976

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 6: Photographic Material, circa 1880-1985

### .6 Linear feet (Box 3)

Scope and Contents: Photographic material includes personal photographs of Gruppe's family, and friends, including Laura Gardin (Fraser), Anthony de Francisci, Karl Bitter and the Bitter family, photographs of Marcella Sembrich, and photographs of the interior, garden, and studio of Karl Bitter. Also included are photographs of the *Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (1904), and photographs of Gruppe's artwork which include nitrate negatives stored separately.

Box 3, Folder 10	Personal Photographs, circa 1914-1918
Box 3, Folder 11	Marcella Sembrich, circa 1888
Box 3, Folder 12	Historical Artwork, circa 1890-1920
Box 3, Folder 13	Interior, Garden, and Studio of Karl Bitter, circa 1940
Box 3, Folder 14	Louisiana Purchase Exposition (1904) Photographs, circa 1904
Box 3, Folder 15-20	Photographs of Artwork, circa 1915-1985
Box NTR2	Nitrate Negatives, circa 1915-1985
Box NTR5	Nitrate Negatives, circa 1915-1985
	Photographs of Artwork by Others
Box 3, Folder 21	Cecil Howard and Ana Huntington, circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 22	Chester Black, circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 23	Daniel Chester French, circa 1915
Box 3, Folder 24	Herbert Adams and Robert Aitken, circa 1911
Box 3, Folder 25-26	Karl Bitter , circa 1880-1907
Box 3, Folder 27	Lachaise, Manship, and Gaudens, circa 1885-1926
Box 3, Folder 28	Sterling Calder, circa 1915-1924
Box 3, Folder 29	Unknown Artists, circa

[Return to Table of Contents](#)