



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Katherine Thayer Hobson Papers, 1930-1982, in the Archives of American Art

Judy Ng

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

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Archives of American Art
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3
Series 1: Personal Papers, 1930-1982.....	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Katherine Thayer Hobson papers
Date:	1930-1982
Identifier:	AAA.hobskath
Creator:	Hobson, Katherine Thayer, 1889-1982
Extent:	0.6 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English.
Summary:	The papers of sculptor Katherine Hobson Thayer measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1930 to 1982. Found within the collection are personal and professional correspondence; writings on art and anticommunist activities; printed materials; sketches; and photographs and slides of Hobson, her friends, and her artwork.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Katherine Thayer Hobson donated her papers to the archives in 1979. Additional material was donated by Hobson's sister, Eleanor Hobson McKenzie, in 1982.

Processing Information

The collection was minimally processed and described by Judy Ng in 2013 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art. The Archives of American Art has implemented minimal level processing tactics when possible in order to increase access to more of its collections. Minimal processing included merging all accretions and arranging to the series and folder level. Original folder titles were maintained; contents were verified and not arranged further. All materials were rehoused in archival folders and containers for long-term stability, but staples and other fasteners were not removed.

Preferred Citation

Katherine Thayer Hobson papers, 1930-1982. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical / Historical

Sculptor Katherine Thayer Hobson (1889-1982) lived and worked in New York City. She is known for her sculptures of racehorses, war memorials, and portrait busts.

Hobson was born in Denver, Colorado and received her education in the United States and continued her art studies in Europe. Her early career focused on commissioned portrait busts, war memorials, and relief sculptures, including a relief of St. George (1945) at St. James Episcopal Church in New York City, and a World War I memorial installed in Dresden during the 1920s. In the mid-1960s, after watching the horse Buckpasser win a stakes race, Hobson sculpted his bust, after which she earned additional commissions for the racehorses Dr. Fager and Ruffian.

She was a member of the National Sculpture Society, the American Artists Professional League (AAPL), and the Society of Western Artists. Two awards, the AAPL's Katherine Thayer Hobson Award, and Pen and Brush's Katherine Thayer Hobson Memorial Award, are given in her honor. Hobson died in her home in New York City in 1982.

Scope and Contents

The papers of sculptor Katherine Hobson Thayer measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1930 to 1982. Found within the collection are personal and professional correspondence; writings on art and anticommunist activities; printed materials; sketches; and photographic materials of Hobson, her friends, and her artwork.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as one series.

- Series 1: Personal papers, 1930-1982 (0.6 linear feet; Box 1-2)
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Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Anti-communist movements
Artists -- Political activity
Women artists
Women sculptors

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Sketches

Occupations:

Sculptors -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Personal Papers, 1930-1982

0.6 Linear feet (Box 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Personal papers consist of professional correspondence related to gallery openings, artist representation, and potential commissions for architectural firms; personal correspondence with friends and family; and letters to government officials regarding concern over radical Communist activities. Correspondents of note responding to gallery invitations and letters of inquiry regarding commissions include: Malvina Hoffman, Leon Kroll, Colette Roberts, Eero Saarinen, Lawrence Grant White, and William Zorach. There are also two letters from the University of Gottengen and two postcards of the bust "Charlotte Muller" describing Hobson's work on those projects.

Writings include notes and essays on art topics, as well as additional writings and miscellaneous materials related to Hobson's anticommunist correspondence and work for the National Sculpture Society. Printed materials include art related bulletins, clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and periodicals. Sketches are figure studies and potential sculptural projects, including concept drafts for the doors of St. Peter's in Rome. Photographic materials are of Hobson and her friends, models that she employed, and documentation of her artwork. The series also includes two certificates awarded to Hobson.

Arrangement: Materials are arranged by document type. Correspondence is in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 1	Awards, 1964-1979
Box 1, Folder 2	Letters, circa 1930-1981
Box 1, Folder 3-6	Letters, 1930-1981
Box 1, Folder 7	Writings and Notes, circa 1930-1981
Box 1, Folder 8	Writing Miscellany, circa 1930-1981
Box 1, Folder 9	Anti-Communitistic Activities, circa 1950-1965 Notes: Includes Wheeler Williams' report, "Confusion in the Art World," published by Awake, Inc.
Box 1, Folder 10	National Sculpture Society Activities, circa 1950-1970 Notes: Includes the National Sculpture Society's 1971 Treasurer's Report.
Box 1, Folder 11	Printed Materials, Bulletins, 1953-1979
Box 1, Folder 12	Printed Materials, Clippings, circa 1950-1983
Box 1, Folder 13	Printed Materials, Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1953, 1976
Box 1, Folder 14	Printed Materials, Periodicals, 1930, 1955

Box 1, Folder 15	Printed Materials, Miscellaneous Materials, circa 1946-1964
Box 1, Folder 16	Sketches, circa 1930-1982
Box 1, Folder 17	Sketches, Diocesan Garden, Cincinnati, Ohio, circa 1930-1982
Box 1, Folder 18	Sketches, St. Peters Door Competition, Rome, Italy, circa 1957
Box 2, Folder 1	Photographs of Katherine Thayer Hobson, circa 1930-1980
Box 2, Folder 2	Photographs of Models, circa 1940s
Box 2, Folder 3	Photographs of Artwork, Fountains at Berlin Park, circa 1977
Box 2, Folder 4	Photographs of Artwork, Head of Buckpasser, Dr. Fager,, and Ruffian, (horses), circa 1968
Box 2, Folder 5	Photographs of Artwork, Head of Eleanor Fitzsimmons, circa 1970s
Box 2, Folder 6	Photographs of Artwork, Reliefs, circa 1945-1970
Box 2, Folder 7	Photographs of Artwork, Sculptures, circa 1930-1980
Box 2, Folder 8	Slides of Katherine Thayer Hobson and Artwork, circa 1970s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)