



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Charles Hoffbauer Papers, 1891-1975, in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Charles Hoffbauer papers
Date:	1891-1975
Identifier:	AAA.hoffchar
Creator:	Hoffbauer, Charles, 1875-1957
Extent:	6.5 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English and French.
Summary:	The papers of painter Charles Hoffbauer measure 6.5 linear feet and date from 1891 to 1975. The papers document his career through biographical material, correspondence, writings and notes, personal business records, printed materials, and photographic materials.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Charles Hoffbauer papers were donated in 1977-1978 by Joseph Gropper, except for correspondence dated 1905-1957, which was donated in 1978 by Lewis Gelbert.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2020.

Preferred Citation

Charles Hoffbauer papers, 1891-1975. 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.

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Biographical / Historical

Charles Hoffbauer (1875-1957) was a painter primarily in Paris, France, and New York, NY.

Hoffbauer was born in Paris and came to the United States in 1909 and established himself in the New York art community. Eventually, he became represented by the Knoedler Galleries and maintained a close, professional relationship with Roland Knoedler throughout his life. Before moving to the U.S., Hoffbauer attended the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris for three years before entering mandatory military service in Normandy. Once his military duty was fulfilled in 1897, he returned to Paris to begin his career as an artist. Years later he returned to France to fight in World War I.

Hoffbauer produced murals for the Confederate Memorial Institute, Missouri State Capitol, Arras town hall in France, New England Life Insurance Company, and Hayden Planetarium. In the 1930s, he proposed the idea of an animated, historical film based on Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 to Walt Disney. Hoffbauer prepared a set of paintings titled "Napoleon's Russian Campaign" to support this idea. Disney declined to make the film, however he hired Hoffbauer as a research artist and remained at Disney for several years.

Hoffbauer died in Boston in 1957.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter Charles Hoffbauer measure 6.5 linear feet and date from 1891 to 1975. The papers document his career through biographical material, correspondence, writings and notes, personal business records, printed materials, and photographic materials.

Biographical materials include biographical sketches, certificates and awards, diary excerpts, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents, and other records. Correspondence is with family and colleagues, including letters from Rudolph Evans describing work on the Jefferson Memorial statue, letters relating to Hoffbauer's military service during World War I, and other letters regarding murals. Writings and notes include notebooks, drafts, manuscripts, photographs of artwork, and other material for "The Incredible Prophecy," "Napoleon's Russian Campaign," and "War and Peace." Personal business records consist of inventories and price lists, project and exhibition files, business files for Schweitzer Gallery and Walt Disney Productions, and studio records. Booklets, clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, a scrapbook, and other printed materials document Hoffbauer and his career. Photographic materials include slides, glass slides and negatives, and vintage photographs of Hoffbauer, friends and family, Europe and World War I, and works of art.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as six series.

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1898-circa 1950s (0.3 linear feet; Box 1, OV 8)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1891-1974 (2.0 linear feet; Boxes 1-3)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, circa 1908-circa 1955 (1.0 linear feet; Boxes 3-4, 7)
- Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1912-1975 (0.6 linear feet; Box 4)
- Series 5: Printed Materials, circa 1905-1967 (0.8 linear feet; Boxes 5, 7, OV 9)
- Series 6: Photographic Materials, 1893-circa 1970 (1.8 linear feet; Boxes 5-7)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Mural painting and decoration
World War, 1914-1918

Types of Materials:

Scrapbooks

Names:

Jefferson Memorial (Washington, D.C.)

Schweitzer Gallery

Walt Disney Productions

Occupations:

Painters -- France -- Paris

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1898-circa 1950s

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 8)

Scope and Contents: The series contains biographical sketches, certificates and awards from the Société des Artistes Français and the University of Richmond among others, typed excerpts of letters and diary entries by Hoffbauer, documents from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a passport, and tax form.

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Sketches, circa 1950s
Oversize 8	Certificates and Awards, 1898-1938
Box 1, Folder 2	Excerpts of Diary Entries and Letters by Hoffbauer, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	French Ministry of Foreign Affairs Documents, 1906-1928
Box 1, Folder 4	Passport, 1921
Box 1, Folder 5	Tax Form, 1933

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1891-1974

2 Linear feet (Boxes 1-3)

Scope and Contents: General correspondence includes personal letters between Hoffbauer and his parents and sister, Yvonne, relating to his military duty at Falaise, Normandy (1896-1897), his first years in the United States (1909-1911), and military duty during World War I. Also included are letters from sculptor Rudolph Evans describing his work on the Jefferson Memorial statue, French artists and writers, art dealer Roland Knoedler, film directors and producers, and American socialites, scholars, writers, and artists. Other correspondence discusses historical films, United States Forces panels, West Point Military paintings, and other projects.

Box 1, Folder 6-22	General, 1891-1957
Box 2, Folder 1-20	General, 1909-1956
Box 3, Folder 1-9	General, 1940-1974
Box 3, Folder 10	General, undated
Box 3, Folder 11	Bouchard, M. Henri, 1958
Box 3, Folder 12	Calling Card, circa 1900s
Box 3, Folder 13	Historical Animated Films, Regarding, circa 1940
Box 3, Folder 14	Historical Motion Pictures, Regarding, 1938-1940
Box 3, Folder 15	Hotel des Invalides, 1923-1933
Box 3, Folder 16	Jefferson City, Missouri State Capital Murals, 1919-1923
Box 3, Folder 17	Postcards, circa 1920-circa 1965
Box 3, Folder 18	Roswell Museum and Art Center, 1969
Box 3, Folder 19	United States Forces Panels, Regarding, 1941-1944
Box 3, Folder 20	West Point Military Paintings, Regarding, 1959-1967

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Series 3: Writings and Notes, circa 1908-circa 1955

1 Linear foot (Boxes 3-4, 7)

Scope and Contents: The series includes drafts, manuscripts, notes, photographs of artwork, synopsis, and related material for Hoffbauer's play "The Incredible Prophecy," "War and Peace," and manuscript with a typed account of the origin and development of "Napoleon's Russian Campaign." The file for Hoffbauer's lecture at UCLA titled "Paris à travers les âges" contains manuscripts and clippings. Also included are nine notebooks regarding Boston, the United States Constitution, inventories, appointments, lists, and other small notes, as well as a few sketches.

Box 3, Folder 21-27	"The Incredible Prophecy", circa 1943 Notes: Includes seven notebooks.
Box 3, Folder 28-29	"Napoleon's Russian Campaign", circa 1935
Box 4, Folder 1	"Napoleon's Russian Campaign", circa 1935
Box 7, Folder 1	"Napoleon's Russian Campaign", circa 1935
Box 4, Folder 2-4	Notebooks, circa 1950s Notes: Includes seven notebooks containing studio inventories, appointments, lists, sketches, and other small notes.
Box 4, Folder 5	Notebook, Boston, 1941
Box 4, Folder 6	Notebook, U.S. Constitution, 1941
Box 4, Folder 7	Notes, circa 1908
Box 4, Folder 8	"Paris à travers les âges" Lecture, 1951
Box 4, Folder 9-11	"War and Peace", circa 1955

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Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1912-1975

0.6 Linear feet (Box 4)

Scope and Contents: Hoffbauer's personal business records contain contracts, correspondence, employment records, photographs, and budget plans for projects including the Arras City Hall murals, Confederate memorials in Richmond, Virginia, and for work with Walt Disney Productions; material regarding exhibitions at the South County Art Association and Olivo Gallery; bookkeeping records for Hoffbauer's studios, including his studio in Hollywood; shipping and loan records; inventory and price lists; a ledger book; book lists; and general business records containing a mixture of correspondence, invoices and receipts, and notes. After Hoffbauer's death in 1957, his wife, Henrietta, managed his business dealings.

Box 4, Folder 12	Arras City Hall Mural, 1932-1933
Box 4, Folder 13	Book Lists, circa 1960
Box 4, Folder 14	Confederate Memorials Project in Richmond, Virginia, 1912-1949
Box 4, Folder 15	Exhibition at South County Art Association in Kingston, Rhode Island, 1966
Box 4, Folder 16	Exhibition at Olivo Gallery in Newport, Rhode Island, 1967
Box 4, Folder 17-23	General, 1912-1971
Box 4, Folder 24	Inventory List, circa 1950s
Box 4, Folder 25	Ledger Book, circa 1953
Box 4, Folder 26-27	Price Lists, 1963-1975
Box 4, Folder 28	Schweitzer Gallery, 1921-1972
Box 4, Folder 29	Shipping and Loan Records, 1969
Box 4, Folder 30	Studio Bookkeeping Records, 1949-1973 Notes: Includes one notebook.
Box 4, Folder 31	Studio in Hollywood, 1940-1951
Box 4, Folder 32	Walt Disney Productions, 1939-1940

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Series 5: Printed Materials, circa 1905-1967

0.8 Linear feet (Boxes 5, 7, OV 9)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of art reproductions, booklets, event programs, exhibition announcements and catalogs, invitations, magazines and journals, and the book *Report of the Capitol Decoration Commission 1917-1928*. Loose clippings and a clippings scrapbook contain articles regarding Hoffbauer, his professional activities, and Walt Disney projects.

Box 7, Folder 2	Art Reproductions, circa 1930-circa 1950
Oversize 9	Art Reproductions, circa 1930-circa 1950
Box 5, Folder 1	Book, Report of the Capitol Decoration Commission 1917-1928, 1928
Box 5, Folder 2	Booklets, circa 1940-1967
Box 5, Folder 3-6	Clippings, circa 1910-circa 1960
Box 7, Folder 3	Clippings, 1904-circa 1940
Oversize 9	Clippings, 1922
Box 5, Folder 7	Event Programs, circa 1915-circa 1938
Box 5, Folder 8-10	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1907-circa 1949
Box 5, Folder 11	Invitations, circa 1919
Box 5, Folder 12-13	Magazines and Journals, 1904-1966
Box 5, Folder 14	Scrapbook, circa 1905
Box 5, Folder 15	Scrapbook, Loose Material, circa 1905

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Series 6: Photographic Materials, 1893-circa 1970

1.8 Linear feet (Boxes 5-7)

Scope and Contents: Photographic materials consist of photographic prints, negatives, vintage photographs, slides, and glass slides and plates of Hoffbauer; of Hoffbauer in his studio; personal photographs of friends and family; works of art that include Hoffbauer's murals in France and Richmond, Virginia, an exhibition at Exeter Art Gallery, and other works; and images of Europe and scenery of World War I that depict the landscape, Hoffbauer's fellow soldiers, and Hoffbauer as a soldier.

Box 5, Folder 16	Hoffbauer, circa 1914-circa 1950
Box 5, Folder 17	Hoffbauer in His Studio, circa 1920-circa 1950
Box 7, Folder 5	Hoffbauer in His Studio, circa 1920-circa 1950
Box 5, Folder 18-20	Personal, 1893-circa 1950
Box 5, Folder 21	Buildings, circa 1920s
Box 5, Folder 22	Event, Richmond Ceremonies, circa 1939 Notes: Glass plates.
Box 5, Folder 23-24	Works of Art, circa 1930-circa 1950
Box 6, Folder 1-12	Works of Art, circa 1920-circa 1965 Notes: Includes slides and glass slides contained in two slide boxes, along with photographs of Hoffbauer's work on the Arras murals in France, Confederate murals in Richmond, Virginia, an exhibition at Exeter Art Gallery, and other works.
Box 7, Folder 4	Works of Art, circa 1920-circa 1950
Box 6, Folder 13-17	World War I, circa 1915-circa 1970 Notes: Includes photographic prints produced circa 1970 from nitrate negatives.
Box 7, Folder 5	World War I, circa 1920

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