



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Gordon Kelly Papers, 1942-1988, in the Archives of American Art

Caroline Donadio

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

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Gordon Kelly papers
Date:	1942-1988
Identifier:	AAA.kellgord
Creator:	Kelly, Gordon Ray, 1924-2018
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of portrait painter and art teacher Gordon Kelly measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1942 to 1988. The collection primarily documents Kelly's brief tenure at the Art Students League and his extensive correspondence and collaboration with artist Kenneth Hayes Miller. The papers include correspondence, contracts, writings, artwork, printed material and four photographs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Gordon Kelly papers were donated to the Archives of American Art in 1987 by Mark Kelly, the son of Gordon Kelly.

Processing Information

The collection was processed to a minimal level shortly after donation. A finding aid was created by Caroline Donadio in 2018.

Preferred Citation

Gordon Kelly papers, 1942-1988. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Gordon Kelly (1924-2018) was a painter born in Wells County, Indiana. While a student at the Art Students League of New York, Kelly was a promising portrait painter and a protege of Kenneth Hayes Miller. Kelly also studied with Reginald Marsh. Kelly helped Miller develop his (unpublished) manuscript "The Third Dimension in Painting" and Miller supported Kelly's teaching appointment at the League. Kelly taught at the Art Students League for one year before moving back to Indiana and finally settling in Maryland.

Scope and Contents

The papers of portrait painter and art teacher Gordon Kelly measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1942 to 1988. The collection primarily documents Kelly's brief tenure at the Art Students League and his extensive correspondence and collaboration with artist Kenneth Hayes Miller. The papers include correspondence, contracts, writings, artwork, printed material and four photographs.

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

Series 1: Gordon Kelly papers, 1942-1988 (Box 1; 22 folders)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Portrait painters -- New York (State) -- New York
Portrait painters--Indiana

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Art Students League (New York, N.Y.)
Miller, Kenneth Hayes, 1876-1952

Occupations:

Art teachers -- Indiana
Art teachers -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Gordon Kelly Papers, 1942-1988

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence consists mainly of letters from Kenneth Hayes Miller concerning Miller's manuscript, "The Third Dimension of Painting," letters concerning the activities of the Art Students League, and letters concerning Christian art. Three contracts detail Kelly's employment at the Art Students League (1949-1951).

Writings include an unpublished manuscript by Kelly about Miller's theories; an edited typescript of Miller's lecture "The Third Dimension in Painting" and five typescripts explicating Kelly's theories about Christian art: "Aesthetics: A Christocentric View," "Art Renewed: A Vision of Christian Art," "Art and Conscience in Pluralism," "The Artist with Theological Presuppositions," and "Art, Christianity and Culture."

Printed material consists of clippings, eight exhibition announcements and catalogs including three from Miller's memorial exhibitions, a 1967 program for "I Am the Way," miscellaneous printed material concerning Nancy Boas' book *The Society of Six: California Colorists*, a 1950 brochure for the Art Students League and a picture postcard of St. Michael Church, Brookville, Indiana.

Artwork consists of two ink figure sketches, and photographs includes a group photograph of Art Students League instructors, among them Kelly, Robert Ward Johnson, Louis Bouche, and John Carroll, and three photographs of works of art.

Box 1, Folder 1-6	Correspondence, 1947-1985
Box 1, Folder 7	Letters, Art Students League, 1948-1968
Box 1, Folder 8	Business Records, Contracts, 1949-1951
	Writings
Box 1, Folder 9	General, undated
Box 1, Folder 10	Lecture Typescript, undated
Box 1, Folder 11	Aesthetics-A Christo-Centric View, undated
Box 1, Folder 12	Art Renewed: A Vision of Christian Art, undated
Box 1, Folder 13	Art and Conscience in Pluralism, undated
Box 1, Folder 14	The Artist with Theological Presuppositions, undated
Box 1, Folder 15	Art, Christianity and Culture, 1970
Box 1, Folder 16	Artwork, undated

Printed Material

Box 1, Folder 17	Clippings, 1948-1966, undated
Box 1, Folder 18	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1942-1953
Box 1, Folder 19	Programs, 1967
Box 1, Folder 20	Society of Six, 1988
Box 1, Folder 21	Miscellaneous, 1950, undated
Box 1, Folder 22	Photographs, undated

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