



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Beatrice S. Levy Papers, 1890-1994, in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Beatrice S. Levy papers
Date:	1890-1994
Identifier:	AAA.levybeat
Creator:	Levy, Beatrice S. (Beatrice Sophia), 1892-1974
Extent:	4.2 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Beatrice S. Levy papers measure 4.2 linear feet and date from 1890-1994. The collection comprises biographical material that includes family and personal letters, awards and certificates, donation records, and biographical statements; 45 diaries and notes detailing Levy's daily life in and out of the studio; professional files consists of correspondence, business records, and files for the Chicago Society of Artists and Chicago Society of Etchers; printed materials include clippings relating to Art News and Levy's work, exhibition catalogs and announcements; photographs of Levy and friends, family and travel in 4 albums, as well as photographs used as source material; and artwork including portraits of friends, prints and sketches, and sketchbooks.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Beatrice S. Levy papers were donated in 2018 and 2023 by Heather Peck, granddaughter of Dorothy Stratton, a friend of Beatrice Levy. Material microfilmed on reel 4190 (frames 773-1023) was originally part of a larger collection of material given to the University of Louisville (Kentucky) by Samuel Steinfeld, a cousin of Beatrice Levy. The University of Louisville transferred this group of papers to the Art Institute of Chicago, who in turn donated them to the Archives of American Art in 1986. Samuel Steinfeld donated additional material on reel 4190 (frames 1024-1311) in 1986.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on microfilm reel 4190 at the Archives of American Art offices, at the Chicago Institute's Ryerson Library, 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

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2023.

Preferred Citation

Beatrice S. Levy papers, 1890-1994. 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

Beatrice S. Levy (1892-1974) was an etcher in Chicago, Ill. and La Jolla, Calif. Levy studied at the Art Institute of Chicago under Ralph Clarkson and with Charles W. Hawthorne in Provincetown, Massachusetts. She had a studio in Chicago's 57th Street Art Colony. Her work was exhibited at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition (1915), the Century of Progress in Chicago (1933-1934), and the New York's World's Fair (1939). Levy was President of the Chicago Society of Artists, Supervisor of the Works Progress Administration Art Project Gallery, and Supervisor of the Easel Painting Division in 1936 for the Federal Art Project. In 1950 she moved to California, where she taught at the La Jolla Museum School of Arts and Crafts (1961-1962) and continued to exhibit her work.

Scope and Contents

The Beatrice S. Levy papers measure 4.2 linear feet and date from 1890-1994. The collection comprises biographical material that includes family and personal letters, awards and certificates, donation records, and biographical statements; 45 diaries and notes detailing Levy's daily life in and out of the studio; professional files consists of correspondence, business records, and files for the Chicago Society of Artists and Chicago Society of Etchers; printed materials include clippings relating to Art News and Levy's work, exhibition catalogs and announcements; photographs of Levy and friends, family and travel in 4 albums, as well as photographs used as source material; and artwork including portraits of friends, prints and sketches, and sketchbooks.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 6 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1910s-circa 1974 (0.4 linear feet; Box 1, OV 7)
- Series 2: Diaries and Notes, circa 1906-1972 (0.6 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 3: Professional Files, 1910s-1994 (0.6 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1890-1985 (0.4 linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 5: Photographic Material, 1894-circa 1950s (1.1 linear feet; Boxes 3, 6)
- Series 6: Artwork, 1900s-1960s (1.1 linear feet; Boxes 4-6, OVs 8-9)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art, Modern -- 20th century -- California
Art, Modern -- 20th century -- Illinois -- Chicago
Women artists
Women educators

Names:

Chicago Society of Artists
Chicago Society of Etchers

Occupations:

Art teachers -- Illinois -- Chicago
Engravers -- Illinois -- Chicago
Etchers -- Illinois -- Chicago

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1910s-circa 1974

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 7)

Scope and Contents: Levy's biographical materials consist of certificates and awards from the Art Institute of Chicago, exhibitions, and school diplomas; family and personal letters with her parents, Jesse Arms Botke, and a few others; annotated calendars; biographical statements; and estate papers and correspondence regarding donations of Levy's artwork after her death in 1974.

Box 1, Folder 1	Annotated Calendars, 1968-1971
Box 1, Folder 2	Awards and Certificates, 1940-1953
Oversize 7	Awards and Certificates, 1910s-1920s
Box 1, Folder 3	Award Medal, Chicago Society of Artists, 1928
Box 1, Folder 4	Biographical Statements, circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 5	Death and Donations of Artwork, circa 1974
Box 1, Folder 6	Family and Personal Letters, circa 1919-1958
Box 1, Folder 7	Resumes and Professional Lists, 1940s-1960s

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Series 2: Diaries and Notes, circa 1906-1972

0.6 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: The series contains approximately 45 diaries dating from circa 1906 to 1959 including photocopies of diary pages from 1972. In 2 slide boxes (box 1, folders 8-9) are 33 miniature diaries. The diaries log Levy's work in the studio, membership meetings, appointments, and social gatherings. Some of the diaries also contain memorabilia, pressed flowers, sketches, and notes. Also found in the series are 5 miniature notebooks containing notes about daily events, similar to the content of her diaries, and postcards with photographs of Taos and Levy's musings about the pictures on the backs.

Box 1, Folder 8	Diaries, 1921-1940 Notes: Folder 8 is actually a slide box containing 14 miniature diaries.
Box 1, Folder 9	Diaries, 1941-1959 Notes: Folder 9 is actually a slide box containing 19 miniature diaries.
Box 1, Folder 10	Diaries, circa 1906, circa 1946 Notes: The folders contains 2 diaries.
Box 1, Folder 11	Diaries, 1911-1920 Notes: The folder contains 2 diaries.
Box 1, Folder 12	Diaries, 1913-1941 Notes: The folder contains 4 diaries and fragments of other diaries.
Box 1, Folder 13	Diaries, 1920-1925 Notes: The folder contains 3 diaries.
Box 1, Folder 14	Diary (Photocopies), 1972
Box 1, Folder 15	Notebooks, 1937-1938 Notes: The folder contains 5 miniature notebooks. The writings inside the books are similar to Levy's notations about daily activities in her diaries.
Box 1, Folder 16	Notes and Postcards Regarding Taos, circa 1920 Notes: Many of the postcards have Levy's thoughts about Taos on the backs. A postcard from Levy to her father describing her travels is also in the folder.
Box 1, Folder 17	Notes, circa 1930s

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Series 3: Professional Files, 1910s-1994

0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of correspondence with galleries, arts organizations, and artist friends regarding exhibitions, teaching at the Art Institute of Chicago, various print clubs, and sales and consignment transactions; invoices, receipts, artwork lists, consignment and sales records, expense ledgers, and other business records; files for the Chicago Society of Art, Gustaf Dalstrom, and Ed Garman; an employment agreement between Levy and the Art Center in La Jolla; address books; and a file regarding an exhibition of portraits that consists of price lists with notations of works returned and sold.

Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence, 1910s
Box 1, Folder 19-20	Correspondence, 1920s
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Correspondence, 1930s
Box 2, Folder 3	Correspondence, 1940s
Box 2, Folder 4	Correspondence, 1950s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 5	Address Books and Fragments, 1930s Notes: The folder contains 3 address books and a couple loose address book pages.
Box 2, Folder 6	Artwork Lists, 1926-1962
Box 2, Folder 7	Chicago Society of Artists, 1928-1944
Box 2, Folder 8	Chicago Society of Etchers, 1920s-1940s
Box 2, Folder 9	Dalstrom, Gustaf and Frances Foy, 1930s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 10	Donations, 1994
Box 2, Folder 11	Employment Agreement, Art Center in La Jolla, 1961
Box 2, Folder 12	Exhibitions of Portraits and Prints, circa 1932
Box 2, Folder 13	Expense Ledgers, 1924-1927 Notes: The folder contains 2 ledger books.
Box 2, Folder 14	Garman, Ed and Frederick O'Hare, 1956-1957
Box 2, Folder 15	James S. Copley Library, circa 1979-1988
Box 2, Folder 16	Receipts, 1927-1940

Box 2, Folder 17	Receiving Records, 1923-1963
Box 2, Folder 18	Sales Statements, 1908-1989
Box 2, Folder 19	Supply Invoices, 1928-1940

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Series 4: Printed Materials, 1890-1985

0.4 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: A large portion of the series are newspaper clippings relating to Levy's art and exhibitions. Other material includes exhibition catalogs and announcements, magazine clippings, and miscellaneous materials.

Box 2, Folder 20	Clippings, Magazines, 1918-1948, Undated
Box 2, Folder 21-23	Clippings, Newspapers, 1890-1920s
Box 2, Folder 24-25	Clippings, Newspapers, 1930s-1940s
Box 2, Folder 26-27	Clippings, Newspapers, 1950s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 28	Clippings, Newspapers, undated
Box 2, Folder 29-31	Exhibition Catalogs and Announcements, 1915-1985
Box 2, Folder 32	Miscellaneous, 1906-1972

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Series 5: Photographic Materials, 1894-circa 1950s

1.1 Linear feet (Boxes 3, 6)

Scope and Contents: The series includes 4 photograph albums, photographs, tintypes, and negatives of Levy and her family; a Picto Viewer with slides (some glass) of Levy's exhibition; photographs of travel and theater performances; and portraits of Levy, photographs of Levy in the studio, and at events.

Box 3, Folder 1	Portraits of Levy, 1894-circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 2	Levy Working in Studio, circa 1920, circa 1952
Box 6, Folder 1	Group Photograph of Levy's High School Class, 1910
Box 3, Folder 3	Album, Family, 1904-1919
Box 3, Folder 4	Album, Travel, 1915-1916
Box 3, Folder 5	Album, Travel and Friends, circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 6	Album, Travel, circa 1921
Box 3, Folder 7-8	Candid Photos of the Levy Family and Friends, circa 1910s-circa 1930s
Box 3, Folder 9	Picto-Viewer and Slides of Levy's Exhibition, circa 1950 Notes: The Picto-Viewer and 11 slides (some glass) are in the original box.
Box 3, Folder 10	Renaissance Pageant and Aztec Dance, circa 1910
Box 3, Folder 11	Source Material, circa 1940s-1950s Notes: The photographs were labeled as source material when received from the donor. The photographs are of city streets, architecture, and landscapes.
Box 3, Folder 12-14	Travel, 1910s-1930s
Box 3, Folder 15	Works of Art and Related Materials, 1920s-1930s

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Series 6: Artwork, 1900s-1960s

1.1 Linear feet (Boxes 4-6, OVs 8-9)

Scope and Contents: The artwork in the series is by Levy and includes sketches, painted sketches, prints, and sketchbooks. Artwork includes portraits and sketches of friends, architecture, nudes, and the travel locations of Goldfield, Tucson, Corsica, and other places. A couple of Levy's boards used to print fibrous textures are also in the series, along with the resulting prints.

Box 4, Folder 1	Pastel and Painted Sketches, 1930s-1940s
Box 4, Folder 2	Portraits, 1900s-1920s
Box 6, Folder 2	Portraits, 1920s-1950s
Box 4, Folder 3	Portraits and Related Material, 1910s-1920s
Box 4, Folder 4	Prints, 1920s-1960s
Oversize 8	Prints, 1920s-1960s
Box 6, Folder 3	Prints, circa 1950s
Box 6, Folder 4	Prints and Printing Boards, circa 1950s
Box 4, Folder 5	Sketchbook, 1911-1912
Box 4, Folder 6	Sketchbooks, 1928-1952 Notes: The folder contains 3 books.
Box 4, Folder 7	Sketchbook, Kentucky, 1930s
Box 4, Folder 8	Sketchbook, 1937-1942
Box 4, Folder 9	Sketchbook, 1945-1947
Box 5, Folder 1	Sketchbooks, Goldfield, 1948-1949 Notes: The folder contains 2 books.
Box 6, Folder 9	Sketchbook, Tucson and Self-Portraits, 1949
Box 5, Folder 2	Sketches, 1912-1967
Box 5, Folder 3	Sketches, Architectural Homes and Streets, 1930s
Box 6, Folder 5	Sketches, Architecture, circa 1930s-1940s
Box 6, Folder 6	Sketches, Corsica and Corte, 1920s

Box 6, Folder 7	Sketches, Nudes, circa 1940s-1950s
Box 6, Folder 8	Sketches and Painted Sketches, 1930s-1940s
Oversize 9	Sketches and Painted Sketches, circa 1940s
Box 5, Folder 4	Sketches, Various Locations, 1920s-1940s
Box 6, Folder 10	Sketches, Various Locations, 1920s-1940

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