



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Agnes Mills Papers, 1948-1999, bulk 1974-1993, in the Archives of American Art

Rachel Salzmann

2014 June 26

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
Business Number: Phone: 202-633-7950
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Arrangement.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1982-1990.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, 1974-1999.....	5
Series 3: Writings, circa 1980s-1990.....	6
Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1981-1993.....	7
Series 5: Printed Material, 1948-1993.....	8
Series 6: Artwork, circa 1950s-1990s.....	9
Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1974-circa 1993.....	10
Series 8: Photographs, circa 1948-1993.....	11

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Agnes Mills papers
Date:	1948-1999 (bulk 1974-1993)
Identifier:	AAA.millagne
Creator:	Mills, Agnes, 1915-2008
Extent:	1.1 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English.
Summary:	The papers of painter, printmaker and sculptor Agnes Mills measure 1.1 linear feet and date from 1948 to 1999, with the bulk of the material from 1974 to 1993. Her enduring interest in dance theatre is demonstrated in the papers. Reminiscences of her time in the WPA, artist statements, sketchbooks, and a bound compilation of publicity, biographical notes, and images of artwork provide an overview of her professional accomplishments. The collection also includes curricula vitae; correspondence; writings by and about the artist; price lists and inventories; articles, news clippings, press releases and exhibition announcements; original artwork; and photographs of both the artist and her work.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated by the artist's daughter, Margret Mills-Thysen, on October 17, 2013.

Processing Information

This collection was processed to a minimal level and a finding aid prepared in 2014 by Rachel Salzmänn. The Archives of American Art has implemented minimal processing tactics when possible in order to increase information about and access to more of our collections.

Minimal processing included arrangement to the series and folder levels. Generally, items within folders were simply verified with folder titles, but not arranged further. Folders within boxes were not numbered. The collection was rehoused in archival containers and folders, but not all staples and clips were removed.

Preferred Citation

Agnes Mills papers, 1948-1999, bulk 1974-1993. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original material requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Original works of art: Authorization to quote or reproduce for purposes of publication requires written permission from Margret Mills-Thysen. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Terms of 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

Agnes Mills (1915-2008) was a painter, printmaker and sculptor who specialized in dance subjects. She worked in the Long Island/New York City area for most of her career, eventually moving to Florida.

Mills was a graduate of Pratt Institute and Cooper Union Art School and worked for the WPA artist project early in her career. For 25 years she served as resident artist for the Alwin Nikolais Dance Company, and several other dance companies hired her to sketch their rehearsals.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter, printmaker and sculptor Agnes Mills measure 1.1 linear feet and date from 1948 to 1999, with the bulk of the material from 1974 to 1993. Her enduring interest in dance theatre is demonstrated in the papers. Reminiscences of her time in the WPA, artist statements, sketchbooks, and a bound compilation of publicity, biographical notes, and images of artwork provide an overview of her professional accomplishments. The collection also includes curricula vitae; correspondence; writings by and about Mills; price lists and inventories; articles, news clippings, press releases and exhibition announcements; original artwork; and photographs of Mills and her work.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 8 series.

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1982-1990 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1974-1999 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings, circa 1980s-1990 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1981-1993 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1948-1993 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 6: Artwork, circa 1950s-1990s (Box 1, OV2; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1974-circa 1993 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 8: Photographs, circa 1948-1993 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Dance
Sculptors -- Florida
Sculptors -- New York (State)
Women artists

Types of Materials:

Prints
Sketchbooks

Names:

United States. Works Progress Administration

Occupations:

Painters -- Florida
Painters -- New York (State)
Printmakers -- Florida
Printmakers -- New York (State)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1982-1990

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and This series includes curricula vitae and biographical notes.
Contents:

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Materials, 1982-1990
-----------------	-----------------------------------

[*Return to Table of Contents*](#)

Series 2: Correspondence, 1974-1999

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is with galleries, publications, Nikolais Dance Theatre, and Murray Louis Dance Company.

Box 1, Folder 2 Correspondence, 1974-1999

[*Return to Table of Contents*](#)

Series 3: Writings, circa 1980s-1990

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Writings include artist's statements and reminiscences of the WPA artist project. Writings about the artist consist of remarks delivered by Norma Reiner at an exhibition opening.

Box 1, Folder 3 Writings by Agnes Mills, circa 1980s-1990

Box 1, Folder 4 Writings about Agnes Mills, 1981

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Personal Business Records, 1981-1993

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Various inventories, price lists, and receipts are included in this series.

Box 1, Folder 5	Personal Business Records, 1981-1993
-----------------	--------------------------------------

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Printed Material, 1948-1993

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: All printed material mentions Agnes Mills or features reproductions of her work.

Box 1, Folder 6	Press Releases and Exhibition Announcements, 1948-1993
Box 1, Folder 7-8	Articles, 1948-1992
Box 1, Folder 9-10	Bound Copies of Publicity and Artwork, 1948-1993
Box 1, Folder 11	Reproductions of Works of Art, circa 1970s-1980s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Artwork, circa 1950s-1990s

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1, OV2)

Scope and Contents: This series includes sketches in ink, marker, paste and crayon, as well as some monoprints.

Box 1, Folder 12	Artwork, circa 1950s-1990s
	Notes: Oversized material housed in OV2.

Oversize 2	Oversized Artwork (from Box 1 Folder 12), circa 1950s-1990s
------------	---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1974-circa 1993

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Six sketchbooks (3 are accordion style) include landscapes, dancers, and abstract work in gouache ink, pastel, and pencil.

Box 1, Folder 13-14	Sketchbooks, circa 1974-circa 1993
---------------------	------------------------------------

[*Return to Table of Contents*](#)

Series 8: Photographs, circa 1948-1993

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Photographs are in color and black and white. There are formal portraits of the artist as well as candid views. Works by Mills include paintings, drawings and sculpture. There are 2 loose pages from a photograph album and several negatives.

Box 1, Folder 15	Photographs of Agnes Mills, circa 1948-circa 1993
------------------	---

Box 1, Folder 16-18	Photographs of Artwork, circa 1974-circa 1993
---------------------	---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)