



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the J. B. Neumann papers, 1905-1967, in the Archives of American Art

Rihoko Ueno

Funding for the processing of this collection was
provided by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	J. B. Neumann papers
Date:	1905-1967
Identifier:	AAA.neumjsra
Creator:	Neumann, J. B. (Jsrael Ber)
Extent:	2.1 Linear feet (4 boxes)
Language:	The collection is in English and German.
Summary:	The papers of gallery director, art dealer and publisher Jsrael Ber Neumann (1887-1961) measure 2.1 linear feet and date from 1905 to 1967. The papers document Neumann's career as the director of galleries in Berlin and Munich, Germany (1910-1924) as well as the New Art Circle gallery in New York City (1924-1952). Neumann was a respected art dealer, publisher of <i>Artlover</i> periodical, founder of Gehenna Press, and frequent lecturer. Found within his papers are correspondence with artists and museums, writings, printed materials mostly comprised of exhibition catalogues, artwork, and photographic materials.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Neuman's wife, Elsa Schmid and The Museum of Modern Art lent the Archives of American Art material for microfilming in 1966-1967. The rest of the J.B. Neumann papers were donated in several installments between 1973-2007 by Eva Lee (family friend), Joy Weber, Max Weber's daughter, Neil Richmond, and Hellie Neumann, J.B. Neumann's granddaughter.

Separated Materials

Also available at the Archives of American Art are materials lent for microfilming (reels NJBN-1- NJBN-5) including correspondence with numerous artists, art critics, museum directors and others. The materials on reel NJBN-1- NJBN-4 were returned to Neumann's wife, Elsa Schmid and the original material on reel NJBN-5 is located at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, NY. Loaned material is not described in the collection container inventory.

Related Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds a collection of Josef Albers letters to J. B. Neumann, 1934-1947 on microfilm reel 911.

Additional J.B. Neumann papers are also located at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The museum microfilmed a portion of these papers and donated a copy of that film to the Archives. This material may be viewed on reel NJBN5 at Archives of American Art offices, affiliate centers, and via interlibrary loan.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection and material lent for microfilming are available on 35mm microfilm reels NJBN-1- NJBN-5, N69-93-N69-94, 3533, and 3947 at the Archives of American Art offices 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

Several increments of gifts were microfilmed separately on reels N69/93-94, 3533, 3947, NJBN 1. All filmed and unfiled gifts were integrated and fully processed by Rihoko Ueno in March 2013 with funding provided by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

Preferred Citation

J. B. Neumann papers, 1905-1967. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical / Historical

J. B. (Israel Ber) Neumann (1887-1961) was a gallery director, art dealer and publisher. After immigrating to the U.S., Neumann founded the New Art Circle Gallery in New York City. Before then, he had art galleries in Berlin, Munich, Dusseldorf and Bremen, Germany.

J. B. Neumann was born in Austria in 1887. His father was an oil and lumber dealer. Neumann initially studied business but later apprenticed to a book and picture dealer when he was nineteen. While working as a clerk in a large bookstore in London, Neumann had the opportunity to work at the rare book dealer's table in the British Museum. The job allowed him to assess and handle fine and rare books, starting a lifelong passion, and Neumann went on to amass a substantial personal library.

In 1910, Neumann returned to Berlin, Germany and in 1911 opened a book and art shop where he exhibited the work of Edvard Munch and others. Neumann had many friends who were artists and in 1915-1916 he was secretary to the Berlin Secession, a prominent German artist association. By 1922 Neumann had branch offices in Bremen, Dusseldorf and Munich.

Neumann immigrated to America in 1923 and left the Berlin gallery to the directorship of Karl Nierendorf and the Munich gallery to Günther Franke. Neumann settled in New York City and one year later he opened a 57th Street gallery and bookshop, first called J.B. Neumann's Print Room and later the New Art Circle gallery. He supported numerous artists, including Wassily Kandinsky, Max Beckmann, Paul Klee, and Georges Rouault. Elsa Schmid, Neumann's wife, was an artist who worked in mosaics.

Neumann also worked as a publisher. He created the printing company Gehenna Press and published a series of periodicals including *Bilderhefte* (Berlin, 1920-1922) and *Artlover* (New York, 1926-1945, 1959). The New Art Circle gallery closed circa 1952 and, after working as its director for nearly three decades, Neumann became a consultant for museums and collectors. He was also a lecturer and he frequently spoke about art at universities, museums and galleries.

Neumann died in Rye, New York on April 28, 1961. He is survived by his widow, Elsa Schmid (d. 1970); two sons, Peter and Albrecht; and a daughter, Mrs. Johanna Lam.

Scope and Contents

The papers of gallery director, art dealer and publisher Jsrael Ber Neumann (1887-1961) measure 2.1 linear feet and date from 1905 to 1967. The papers document Neumann's career as the director of galleries in Berlin and Munich, Germany (1910-1924) as well as the New Art Circle gallery in New York City (1924-1952). Neumann was a respected art dealer, publisher of *Artlover* periodical, founder of Gehenna Press, and frequent lecturer. Found within his papers are correspondence with artists and museums, writings, printed materials mostly comprised of exhibition catalogues, artwork, and photographic materials.

Correspondence is between Neumann and friends, colleagues, and museums. There is also correspondence with notable artists, including Josef Albers, Leonard Baskin, Max Beckmann, Wassily Kandinsky, and Abraham Rattner, among others. There are also condolence letters from friends and colleagues to Elsa Schmid, Neumann's wife.

Scattered writings consist of typescript drafts of Neumann's speeches and one article on expressionism. There is also one speech written by curator Richard Klein.

Printed materials comprise the bulk of the collection and include a bound gallery guest register, a disbound scrapbook, exhibition catalogs and announcements, brochures, magazines, posters, and news clippings. There are many exhibition catalogs from Neumann's galleries in Berlin and Munich as well as from the New Art Circle gallery in New York. Artwork consists of two etchings and one drawing by an unknown artist or artists.

Photographic materials include black and white photographs and negatives, including notable portraits of Neumann by photographers Helen Balfour Morrison, Clarence White, and Hans Namuth.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged as 5 series.

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1925-1961 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
 - Series 2: Writings, 1919, 1954-circa 1960 (5 folders; Box 1)
 - Series 3: Printed Materials, 1910-1967 (1.7 linear feet; Box 1-4)
 - Series 4: Artwork, 1919-circa 1960 (3 folders; Box 3-4)
 - Series 5: Photographic Materials, 1905-circa 1950 (0.2 linear feet; Box 3-4)
-

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Periodicals
Art, Modern -- 20th century -- United States -- History

Types of Materials:

Drawings
Etchings
Photographs

Scrapbooks

Names:

Albers, Josef
Artlover
Baskin, Leonard, 1922-2000
Beckmann, Max, 1884-1950
Gehenna Press
Kandinsky, Wassily, 1866-1944
Morrison, Helen Balfour, 1901-1984
Namuth, Hans
New Art Circle (New York, N.Y.)
Rattner, Abraham
Schmid, Elsa, 1897-
White, Clarence H., 1871-1925

Occupations:

Art directors -- New York (State) -- New York
Gallery directors -- New York (State) -- New York
Publishers -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1925-1961

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: This series contains a mixture of personal and professional correspondence between J. B. Neumann and his friends, colleagues, and museums. There is also scattered correspondence with artists, including Josef Albers, Leonard Baskin, Max Beckmann, Wassily Kandinsky, Abraham Rattner, and Georges Rouault. Correspondence with museums and galleries concerns Neumann's proposal for a German Expressionism exhibition. There are letters of condolence to Elsa Schmid, Neumann's wife, from friends and colleagues.

Box 1, Folder 1	Albers, Josef, 1945
Box 1, Folder 2	Baskin, Leonard, 1958-1959
Box 1, Folder 3	Beckmann, Max, 1925-1932
Box 1, Folder 4	German Expressionism Exhibition, 1950-1951
Box 1, Folder 5	Kandinsky, Nina, 1936-1960
Box 1, Folder 6	Kandinsky, Wassily, 1935-1940
Box 1, Folder 7	Klee, Felix, 1952-1956, 1934
Box 1, Folder 8	Rattner, Abraham, 1944
Box 1, Folder 9	Rouault, Georges, circa 1930-1933
Box 1, Folder 10	Thompson, G. D. , 1944
Box 1, Folder 11	Valentiner, W. R. , 1956
Box 1, Folder 12	Condolence Letters to Elsa Schmid, 1961

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Series 2: Writings, 1919, 1954-circa 1960

5 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Writings consist primarily of scattered typescript drafts of speeches by Neumann for various occasions. There is a memorial speech for Curt Valentin, an introductory speech for artist Max Beckmann, and what appears to be a brief untitled speech about retiring and making his personal art collection available for viewing. There is also a typescript draft of a speech by Richard Klein, a curator and director who attributes his success to Neumann.

Box 1, Folder 13	Brief Article on Expressionism, 1919
Box 1, Folder 14	Typescript Draft of Obituary for Curt Valentin, 1954
Box 1, Folder 15	Typescript Draft of Speech "How J. B. N. Started My Career" by Robert Klein, circa 1954
Box 1, Folder 16	Typescript Draft of Speech about Max Beckmann, 1955
Box 1, Folder 17	Typescript Draft of Untitled Retirement Speech, circa 1960 Notes: This is a typescript draft of a short speech after J. B. Neumann's retirement as director of the New Art Circle gallery in which he appears to be making his personal collection of art available for viewing during an exhibition.

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Series 3: Printed Materials, 1910-1967

1.7 Linear feet (Box 1-4)

Scope and Contents: Printed materials include a bound gallery guest register, a disbound scrapbook, exhibition catalogs and announcements, brochures, magazines, posters, and news clippings. Most of the printed materials consist of exhibition catalogs from Neumann's galleries in Berlin and Munich, Germany and the New Art Circle gallery in New York. Exhibition catalogs from other galleries and museum, such as World House Galleries, are also included.

Box 1, Folder 18	Guest book, 1929-1935
Box 1, Folder 19	Disbound Scrapbook, 1925-1934
Box 1, Folder 20	Disbound Scrapbook, 1940-1944
Box 1, Folder 21	Disbound Scrapbook, 1951-1957
Box 1, Folder 22	Disbound Scrapbook Undated Pages, 1925-1957
Box 1, Folder 23	Berlin Art Gallery Exhibition Catalogs, 1910-circa 1922 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 1.
Box 1, Folder 24	Munich Art Gallery Exhibition Catalogs, 1927-1931 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 2.
Box 1, Folder 25	New Art Circle Exhibition Catalogs, 1924-1951
Box 1, Folder 26	Neumann-Willard Gallery Exhibition Catalogs, 1939-1940
Box 1, Folder 27	J. B. Neumann at World House Galleries Bound Exhibition Catalog, 1957-1959
Box 1, Folder 28	World House Galleries Exhibition Catalogs, 1958-1959
Box 1, Folder 29	World House Galleries Bound Edition of Exhibition Catalogues, 1958-1959, 1958-1959
Box 1, Folder 30	World House Galleries Exhibition Catalog Bound Edition, 1959-1960, 1959-1960
Box 1, Folder 31	Exhibition Catalogs for Assorted Galleries and Museums, 1931-1958, 1967 (bulk 1931-1958)
Box 1, Folder 32	New Art Circle Exhibition Announcements, 1924-1932
Box 1, Folder 33	New Art Circle Exhibition Announcements, 1934-1943
Box 1, Folder 34	New Art Circle Exhibition Announcements, 1945-1950

Box 2, Folder 1	New Art Circle Exhibition Announcements, 1950-1957
Box 2, Folder 2	Sales and Auction Catalogs, 1936-1940
Box 2, Folder 3	Maxim Karolik Estate Auction Catalog , 1964
Box 2, Folder 4	Archiv J. B. Neumann Auction Catalog , 1962
Box 2, Folder 5	J. B. Neumann Lecture Invitations and Announcements, 1934-circa 1951
Box 2, Folder 6	Brochures, circa 1925-circa 1940
Box 2, Folder 7	Artlover: J. B. Neumann's Bilderhefte Anthology, Volume III, circa 1924-circa 1936
Box 2, Folder 8	Artlover Issues, circa 1926-circa 1945
Box 2, Folder 9	Artlover Library, Volumes 1, 2 and 5, circa 1926-circa 1945
Box 3, Folder 1	Americana, February, April, May, July Issues, 1932
Box 3, Folder 2	Americana, January-June Issues, 1933
Box 3, Folder 3	Art Front, 1936 March
Box 3, Folder 4	New Masses, 1934
Box 3, Folder 5	New Masses, 1936
Box 3, Folder 6	Booklets, circa 1955
Box 3, Folder 7	Miscellaneous Articles, circa 1929-circa 1934
Box 3, Folder 8	News Clippings, circa 1931
Box 3, Folder 9	News Clippings about J. B. Neumann, 1957
Box 3, Folder 10	J. B. Neumann Obituary, 1961
Box 3, Folder 11	Miscellaneous Max Beckmann Sales Records, 1923
Box 3, Folder 12	Neumann's Gallery Georges Rouault Exhibition Poster, circa 1923-circa 1950 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 3.
Box 3, Folder 13	Metropolitan Museum of Art Fellowship Certificate, 1956 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 4.
Box 3, Folder 14	Guggenheim Museum Press Release, circa 1966

Box 4, Folder 1	Oversized Berlin Art Gallery Exhibition Catalog, 1910-circa 1922 Notes: Oversized material from Box 1, Folder 23.
Box 4, Folder 2	Oversized Munich Art Gallery Exhibition Catalog, 1927-1931 Notes: Oversized material from Box 1, Folder 24.
Box 4, Folder 3	Oversized Georges Rouault Exhibition Poster, circa 1923-circa 1950 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 12.
Box 4, Folder 4	Oversized Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art Certificate, 1956 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 13.

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Series 4: Artwork, 1919-circa 1960

3 Folders (Box 3-4)

Scope and Contents: This series contains two etchings and one drawing. All three peices depict black and white sketches of faces, one of which appears to be an image of J. B. Neumann. Each artwork is signed by the artist, but the names are illegible.

Box 3, Folder 15	Etching , 1919
Box 3, Folder 16	J. B. Neumann Etching , circa 1920-circa 1960 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 5. The etching might be of Neumann. There are a few illegible annotations and the artist signature below the etching and the words "Kunsthändler (art dealer) J. B. Neumann" written on the bottom left corner of the paper.
Box 3, Folder 17	Drawing , circa 1940-circa 1960 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 6.
Box 4, Folder 5	Oversized J. B. Neumann Etching, circa 1920-circa 1960 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 16.
Box 4, Folder 6	Oversized Drawing, circa 1940-circa 1960 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 17.

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Series 5: Photographic Materials, 1905-circa 1950

0.2 Linear feet (Box 3-4)

Scope and Contents: Photographic materials include black & white photographs and negatives. Most of the photographs are portraits of Neumann by photographers Helen Balfour Morrison, Clarence White, and Hans Namuth. There are also negatives of a few announcements and brochures which can also be found in printed materials series. Other miscellaneous photographs include a photograph of Edvard Munch and a portrait of Neumann and his wife Elsa Schmid.

Box 3, Folder 18	Edvard Munch, 1905
Box 3, Folder 19	Willy Jaeckel's Painting of J. B. Neumann, circa 1920
Box 3, Folder 20	J. B. Neumann Portraits by Clarence H. White, 1925
Box 3, Folder 21	J. B. Neumann and Serge Koussevitzky, circa 1930
Box 3, Folder 22	J. B. Neumann and Elsa Schmid, circa 1930 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 7.
Box 3, Folder 23	J. B. Neumann Portraits by Helen Balfour-Morrison, circa 1950 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 8.
Box 3, Folder 24	J. B. Neumann Portrait by Hans Namuth, circa 1950 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 9.
Box 3, Folder 25	Negatives of Exhibition Announcements and Brochures, circa 1920-circa 1950
Box 4, Folder 7	Oversized Photograph of J. B. Neumann and Elsa Schmid, circa 1930 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 22.
Box 4, Folder 8	Oversized J. B. Neumann Portraits by Helen Balfour-Morrison, circa 1950 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 23.
Box 4, Folder 9	Oversized J. B. Neumann Portrait by Hans Namuth, circa 1950 Notes: Oversized material from Box 3, Folder 24.

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