A Finding Aid to the Chiura Obata Papers, 1891-2000, bulk 1942-1945, in the Archives of American Art

Rayna Andrews and Rihoko Ueno

Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation.

2019/01/07
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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Chiura Obata papers
Identifier: AAA.obatchiu
Date: 1891-2000 (bulk 1942-1945)
Extent: 3.6 Linear feet
Creator: Obata, Chiura
Language: The collection is in English and Japanese.
Summary: The papers of Japanese-American artist and educator Chiura Obata measure 3.6 linear feet and date from circa 1891 to 2000 with the bulk of the material dating from 1942 to 1945. The collection contains biographical material primarily related to Obata's family's forced relocation from Berkeley to Tanforan detention center and incarceration at the Topaz Relocation center; correspondence with family, friends, and colleagues; writings by Chiura Obata and others; material related to the art schools Obata established at Tanforan and Topaz; teaching files and professional activities; exhibition files; printed material, including TREK, and Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata's Art of Internment; photographic material; and sketches and sketchbooks. There is a 1.0 linear foot unprocessed addition to this collection donated in 2020 that includes correspondence, writings, subject files and printed material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
The Chiura Obata papers were donated to the Archives of American Art in 2018 and 2020 by Kimi Kodani Hill and Mia Kodani Brill, Chiura Obata's grandchildren.

Available Formats
The bulk of the collection was digitized in 2019 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Processing Information
The collection was minimally processed and a finding aid prepared by Rayna Andrews in 2019. The collection was fully processed, prepared for digitization, and described in a finding aid by Rihoko Ueno in 2019 with funding provided by the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation.

Preferred Citation
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

Chiura Obata (1885-1975) was a Japanese-American artist and educator. Born Zoroku Sato in Okayama prefecture in Japan, Obata showed artistic talent early in life. He joined the artist group Nihon Bijutsuin (the Japan Art Institute) and apprenticed with Tanryo Murata. Obata also trained in Western and modern Japanese art.

In 1903 Obata immigrated to the United States. He worked as a commercial designer and as an illustrator for newspapers including the New World and the Japanese American, San Francisco's two Japanese newspapers. In 1921 he co-founded the East West Art Society in San Francisco. He had his first exhibition for American audiences in 1928 and began teaching at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1932.

In April of 1942, as a result of Executive Order 9066, Chiura Obata and his family were forcibly relocated from Berkley to Tanforan detention center. By May he and fellow artists had established an art school with over 900 students. The school was successful and they were able to hold an exhibition outside of the camp in July. In September of 1942, the Obatas were moved to the Topaz War Relocation center, where Obata founded the Topaz Art School.

In the spring of 1943 in the wake of the controversy over loyalty oaths, Obata was attacked by another prisoner who considered him to be a spy. After recovering in Topaz's hospital, he was released for his own safety. He and his family moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where his son Gyo was attending architecture school.

In 1945 Obata was reinstated as an instructor at the University of California, Berkeley. He continued to exhibit his artwork and went on sketching and painting trips with the Sierra Club. In 1954 he became a naturalized citizen.

After his retirement from the University of California, Berkeley in 1953, Obata and his wife, Haruko, led tours to Japan to see Japanese gardens and art. He also gave lectures and demonstrations on Japanese brush painting and led tours through California. In 1965 Obata received the Order of the Sacred Treasure Emperor's Award for promoting good will and cultural understanding between the United States and Japan. Chiura Obata died in 1975 at the age of 90.
Scope and Contents

The papers of Japanese-American artist and educator Chiura Obata measure 3.6 linear feet and date from circa 1891 to 2000 with the bulk of the material dating from 1942 to 1945. The collection contains biographical material primarily related to Obata's family's forced relocation from Berkeley to Tanforan detention center and incarceration at the Topaz Relocation center; correspondence with family, friends, and colleagues; writings by Chiura Obata and others; material related to the art schools Obata established at Tanforan and Topaz; teaching files and professional activities; exhibition files; printed material, including TREK, and Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata's Art of Internment; photographic material; and sketches and sketchbooks.

Biographical material includes Chiura Obata's school diplomas and resumes, as well as material related to his family's forced relocation and incarceration at Tanforan and Topaz, and eventual resettlement. There is a small amount of biographical material on others, such as records of memorial meetings held for Perham Nahl and material related to the forced relocation of Hiro Niwa.

The correspondence series consists of letters between Chiura Obata and family, friends, and colleagues, primarily while he was incarcerated at Tanforan and Topaz. Notable correspondents include John Boylin, Monroe Deutsch, Dorothy Parker, Miné Okubo, and Ruth Kingman. There are also letters of appreciation from students who attended the art schools established by Chiura Obata at Tanforan and Topaz.

Writings include diaries, lecture drafts, notes, and essays. Most of the writings are about art, but some are about Obata's experiences at Tanforan and Topaz. Also included in this series are translations of Obata's paintings and poems and writings by others on various subjects.

The professional activities series contains materials related to Obata's work as an artist and educator from his time teaching at the University of California, Berkeley, to the Tanforan and Topaz Art Schools he founded. Most of the series consists of teaching files, but there are other files on projects, commissions, inventory lists, and art donations.

Exhibition files include a range of materials related to group and solo exhibitions of Chiura Obata's paintings. There are exhibition lists, price lists, catalogs, photographs, correspondence, loan forms, clippings, printed material, and one guest register.

Printed material includes exhibition announcements, catalogs, magazines, newspapers, clippings and calendars. Noteworthy items include copies of TREK, which were published by the Japanese Americans incarcerated at Topaz; printed material related to Miné Okubo; and copies of Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata's Art of Internment.

Photographic material includes an album from the Pan Pacific International Exposition and photographs of the Obata family's forced relocation from Berkeley, the Tanforan Art School, and their home in Webster Groves, Missouri, after they left the incarceration camps. There are also photographs used in the book Topaz Moon and photographs by the War Relocation Authority.

Artwork consists of a few watercolors, sketchbooks, and sketches, some of which were created during Obata's incarceration at Topaz. Other sketches were done for commercial work in St. Louis. There is an autograph book containing sketches and paintings by others.

Researchers should note that the term "evacuation" has been replaced in original folder titles with "forced relocation" for more accurate historical representation.
Arrangement

The collection is arranged in 9 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1894-1898, 1935-circa 1975 (Box 1, OV 4; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1925-1992 (Box 1; 0.4 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings, 1924-circa 1964, circa 1986 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 4: Professional Activities, 1913, 1924-1967 (Boxes 1-2, OV 4; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 5: Exhibition Files, 1925-1951 (Box 2, OV4; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 6: Printed Material, 1901-circa 1906, 1925-2000 (Box 2, OV 5; 0.8 linear feet)
- Series 7: Photographic Material, circa 1891-1969 (Box 3; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 8: Artwork, 1917-circa 1945 (Box 3, OV 5; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 9: Unprocessed Addition (Box 6; 1.0 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
  - Asian American artists
  - Japanese American artists
  - Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
  - World War, 1939-1945 -- Japanese Americans

Types of Materials:
  - Diaries
  - Drawings
  - Sketchbooks

Names:
  - Central Utah Relocation Center
  - Obata, Gyo, 1923-
  - Okubo, Miné, 1912-2001
  - Tanforan Assembly Center (San Bruno, Calif.)

Occupations:
  - Artists -- California
  - Educators
  - Painters -- California -- Berkeley
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1894-1898, 1935-circa 1975

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 4)

Included in this series are Chiura Obata's school diplomas and resumes, as well as material related to his family's forced relocation and eventual resettlement. Also included is material related to another prisoner's attack on him while incarcerated in Topaz in 1943. There is a small amount of biographical material on other people, such as documents related to memorial meetings held for Perham Nahl, a friend, artist and Berkeley art professor; and material related to the forced relocation of Hiro Niwa, a fellow Japanese American who was also incarcerated at Tanforan and Topaz along with the Obata family during World War II.

A biographical sketch and chronology on Chiura Obata are at the beginning of the series; the rest of the material is in chronological order.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Materials which have not been digitized include blank pages of notebooks and duplicates. A few publications have only had their covers and relevant pages digitized.

Box 1, Folder 1  Biographical Sketch and Chronology Excerpt, circa 1947-circa 1975  Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 1  Zoroku Sato (Chiura Obata) School Diplomas, 1894-1898  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 2  Memorial Meetings for Perham W. Nahl, 1935-1939  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 3  Forced Relocation of Obata Family, Applications for Certificate of Identification, 1942  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 4  Forced Relocation of Obata Family, Notebooks of Items Packed or Sold, 1942  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 5  Forced Relocation of Hiro Niwa and Material from Tanforan and Topaz, 1942-1945  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 6  Tanforan Camp Visitor's Slip, 1942  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 7  Attack in Topaz and Hospitalization, 1943-1944  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 8  Resettlement from Topaz to St. Louis and Return to Berkeley, 1943-1945
Series 2: Correspondence, 1925-1992

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series includes correspondence between Obata and family, friends, and colleagues, primarily while he was incarcerated at Tanforan and Topaz. Occasional letters addressed to his family members are also included. Notable correspondents include John Boylin, Dorothea Lange, Monroe Deutsch, Dorothy Parker, Miné Okubo, and Ruth Kingman. Much of the correspondence in this series is in Japanese, including letters of appreciation from students who attended the art schools established by Chiura Obata at Tanforan and Topaz. Some correspondence includes explanatory notes summarizing letter contents or providing context, written by either Kimi Kodani Hill or Mia Kodani Brill, Obata's grandchildren who donated the collection to the archives.

Chiura Obata letter drafts to unidentified correspondents are at the beginning of the series. The rest of the correspondence is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Letters and comments from students and Christmas and greeting cards are housed at the end of the series.

The bulk of this series has been digitized, except for duplicates.

Box 1, Folder 9  
Chiura Obata Letter Drafts to Unidentified Correspondents, circa 1942-circa 1945  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 10  
Adams, Ansel and Virginia, circa 1944  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 11  
Blake, Beth, 1935-1943, 1975  
Image(s)  
This file includes notes from an interview with Kim Kodani and Beth Blake, a transcript of Beth Blake's oral history, and a profile of Blake in the February 1939 California Monthly.

Box 1, Folder 12  
Boylin, John "Jack", 1942-1944  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 13  
Breed, Eleanor, 1942-1943  
Image(s)  
Includes a photocopy of typescript "Eleanor Breed Church Diary."

Box 1, Folder 14  
Buckham, Margaret, 1942-1943  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 15  
B, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 16  
C, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943  
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 17  
Deutsch, Monroe E. (University of California, Berkeley), 1942-1945
Box 1, Folder 18  Dungan, H. L., 1942-1945
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 19  D, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 20  Emery, Edwin, 1941-1942
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 21  Fisher, Galen M., 1942-1945
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 22  Frederick, Mrs. Clarence J., 1943-1944
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 23  F, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 24  G, Miscellaneous, 1942
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 25  Haack, Arnold J., 1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 26  Heinz, Doris Hale, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 27  H, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 28  Itow, Sashima, 1943-1944
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 29  I-J, Miscellaneous, 1942-1944
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 30  Kingman, Ruth, 1942-1944, 1986
Image(s)
Includes a transcript of Ruth King's oral history.

Box 1, Folder 31  K, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 32  Lange, Dorothea (Taylor), 1942
| Box 1, Folder 33 | Mission Board, 1939-1943  
| Box 1, Folder 34 | M, Miscellaneous, 1942-1944  
| Box 1, Folder 35 | N, Miscellaneous, 1925-1943  
| Box 1, Folder 36 | Obata, Gyo and Kimio, 1943  
| Box 1, Folder 37 | Obata, Haruko (to Chiura Obata in St. Louis), 1943  
| Box 1, Folder 38 | Obata, Kané, 1943  
| Box 1, Folder 39 | Okubo, Miné, 1948-1954, 1975  
| Box 1, Folder 40 | O, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943  
| Box 1, Folder 41 | Parker, Dorothy, 1942-1944  
| Box 1, Folder 42 | P, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943  
| Box 1, Folder 43 | Roosevelt, Eleanor and Correspondence About Painting *Moonlight Over Topaz, Utah*, 1942-1943, 1962, 1986-1992  
|                | Also includes clippings.  
| Box 1, Folder 44 | Russell Sage Foundation, 1946-1947  
| Box 1, Folder 45 | R, Miscellaneous, 1927, 1942-1949  
| Box 1, Folder 46 | Santa Fe School Students, 1938  

Box 1, Folder 47  Schenkofsky, Henry D., 1942-1943
Box 1, Folder 48  Simmons, Dorothy, 1942-1943
Box 1, Folder 49  S, Miscellaneous, 1941-1944
Box 1, Folder 50  Tanforan Wartime Civil Control Administration, 1942
Box 1, Folder 51  Topaz Art School, 1942-1943
Box 1, Folder 52  Topaz War Relocation Authority, 1943-1945
Box 1, Folder 53  T, Miscellaneous, 1942-1943
Box 1, Folder 54  University of California, Berkeley, 1941-1950
Box 1, Folder 55  University of North Carolina, 1937-1938
Box 1, Folder 56  University of Redlands, 1941
Box 1, Folder 57  U, Miscellaneous, 1943-1944
Box 1, Folder 58  Washington University, 1942-1945
Box 1, Folder 59  Weidman, Merle and Herald, 1942
Box 1, Folder 60  W-Y, Miscellaneous, 1942
Box 1, Folder 61  Unidentified Correspondent, circa 1945
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 62  Letters and Comments from California Students, 1933-1934
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 63  Letters of Appreciation from Tanforan and Topaz Art School Students, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 64  Christmas and Greeting Cards, A-H, circa 1943-circa 1944
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 65  Christmas and Greeting Cards, K-Y, and Unidentified Correspondents, 1943-1944
Image(s)
Series 3: Writings, 1924-circa 1964, circa 1986

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series contains writings by Chiura Obata, including 3 diaries, mostly from his time at Topaz incarceration camp; handwritten and typescript drafts of lectures; notes; and essays. Most of the writings, especially the lectures, are about art, but there are some writings about his experience inside the incarceration camps. Some writings were probably delivered to classes, but it is not clear if they were lectures or essays. Also included in this series are writings by others on issues related to second generation Japanese Americans, as well as translations of the Japanese text accompanying Obata's paintings. Many of the writings are in Japanese.

The diaries are at the beginning of the series, followed by writings in alphabetical order by title. The remainder of the series is loosely arranged by type of writing such as lectures, notes, reports, and writings by others.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Materials which have not been digitized include blank pages, and duplicates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 66</th>
<th>Diary 1 from Topaz, circa 1943</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Image(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 67</td>
<td>Diary 2 from Topaz, 1943</td>
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<td>Image(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 68</td>
<td>Diary from Topaz and St. Louis Resettlement, circa 1943</td>
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<td>Image(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 69</td>
<td>&quot;Art and Individuality&quot; Lecture Notes for University of California Student Exhibition, 1933</td>
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<td>Image(s)</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 70</td>
<td>&quot;Boku-ga&quot; and Explanations of Other Painting Techniques, circa 1930-circa 1950</td>
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<td>Image(s)</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 71</td>
<td>&quot;Dots and Lines&quot;, circa 1933-circa 1935</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Image(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 72</td>
<td>&quot;Individuality and Painting&quot;, 1933</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Image(s)</td>
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<td>Box 1, Folder 73</td>
<td>&quot;Japanese Architecture and Its Original Background&quot;, 1933</td>
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<td>Image(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 74</td>
<td>&quot;Kiin-Seido: The Fundamental Idea of Japanese Painting&quot;, circa 1933-1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 75</td>
<td>&quot;Lecture on Japanese Painting&quot;, circa 1930-circa 1950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Natural Rhythm and Its Harmony," Address at California School of Fine Art San Francisco Society of Women Artists, 1933

"Nature of California As I See It", 1928

"Self-Reflection in Art", 1935

"Sumi (Ink-Stick) and the Oriental Arts" and "Bokushoku, Sumi Iro", 1935

"Three Fundamental Strokes", circa 1930-circa 1950

"The Three Great Essentials in Art Production", circa 1933-circa 1935

"Two Methods of Gyotaku", 1956

"Wood Block Prints", circa 1936

"Ye-fude' Japanese Painting Brushes", circa 1930-circa 1950

Lecture Notes, 1933-1938

Lecture Series on Perham W. Nahl and Ukiyoe Artists, 1936

Lectures, Speeches, and Other Writings from Topaz, circa 1942-circa 1943

Notes and Outlines for Materials and Pigments in Japanese Painting, circa 1930-circa 1950

Notes, Lists, and License Related to Gyotaku (Fishing), 1924, 1945-circa 1964
Box 1, Folder 90  "Report to Mayor C. W. Culp", circa 1943

Box 1, Folder 91  Statement on Forced Relocation and Activities (Incomplete), circa 1945-circa 1960

Box 1, Folder 92  Translation of Tanforan and Topaz Paintings and Poems, circa 1986

Translation from Japanese to Romaji and English. Romaji refers to the romanization of Japanese using Latin script. This file also includes some English translations.

Box 1, Folder 93  Writings About Topaz Relocation Center and School, circa 1942-circa 1943

Box 1, Folder 94  Writings by Others - Excerpt of Essay on Sumi by D. T. Suzuki, circa 1930s

Box 1, Folder 95  Writings by Others - Lectures on Japanese Art by Unknown, circa 1930-circa 1935

Lectures possibly by Perham Nahl.

Box 1, Folder 96  Writings by Others - Notes on Chiura Obata's Lectures by Beth Blake, 1934

Box 1, Folder 97  Writings by Others - Writings on the Nisei (2nd Generation Japanese Americans) by Various Authors, circa 1935-circa 1942

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Series 4: Professional Activities, 1913, 1924-1967

0.3 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2, OV 4)

The professional activities series contains materials related to Obata's work as an artist and art educator, including records from his time teaching at the University of California, Berkeley, to the Tanforan and Topaz Art Schools he established, and documents about other activities within the relocation centers. Most of the series consists of teaching files, but there are other files on projects and commissions such as his set design for *Madame Butterfly*, art inventory lists, and the donation of a painting to the Japanese American Citizens League.

This series is arranged in chronological order.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Materials which have not been digitized include blank pages, blank versos of photographs, and duplicates. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages digitized.

Box 1, Folder 98  Portola Festival - Union Square, 1913
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 99  Certificate of Copyright Registration, Telephone Directory Covers, 1924
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 100  *Madame Butterfly* Opera Set, 1924
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 101  Chiura Obata School of Painting Course List, circa 1932
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 102  University of California Course Outlines, 1932-1936
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 103  Yosemite Outdoor Sketching Course List of Materials, 1938
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 104  Chiura Obata Art Inventory and Price Lists at Best's Studio, 1938-1941
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 105  *California Monthly* Covers for *California's Colorful Campuses*, 1939-1940
  (Painting Portfolio), 1939-1947
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 106  Obata Studio Blank Letterhead and Invoice Forms, 1939-circa 1942
  Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 107  Tanforan Art School - Clippings, 1942
  Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 2  Tanforan Art School - Clippings, 1942
Box 1, Folder 108  Tanforan Art School - Exhibition List of Art by Students and Teachers, circa 1942
Image(s)
Work by students and teachers at Tanforan shown in traveling exhibition at Berkeley and Pasadena Art Institute

Box 1, Folder 109  Tanforan Art School - Letter of Intent to Establish Art School, 1942
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 110  Tanforan Art School - Record Book, 1942
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 111  Tanforan Art School - "Survey of Obata Art Project" and "Proposed Project", 1942
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 1  Topaz Art School - "Adult Education Program Guide", 1943
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 2  Topaz Art School - Art School and High School Commencement, circa 1943
Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 3  Topaz Art School - Clippings, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 3  Topaz Art School - "History and Development of Topaz Art School" by Matsusaburo Hibi, circa 1942
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 4  Topaz Art School - Materials Related to Exhibits and Student Art, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 5  Topaz Art School - Student Roster for Sewing and Knitting Classes, circa 1943
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 6  Lectures and Demonstrations in Salt Lake City, Utah, 1943
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 7  University of California Course Outlines, 1946
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 8  Donation of Glorious Struggle to the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), 1965-1967
Image(s)
Series 5: Exhibition Files, 1925-1951

0.3 Linear feet (Box 2, OV 4)

This series includes a range of materials related to group and solo exhibitions of Chiura Obata's work. There are exhibition lists, price lists, catalogs, photographs, correspondence, loan forms, clippings, printed material, and one guest register.

The exhibitions files are arranged in chronological order.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Materials which have not been digitized include blank pages, blank versos of photographs, and duplicates. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages digitized.

Box 2, Folder 9
Chiura Obata Exhibition in Los Angeles - Guest Register (1925), circa 1925
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 10
Exhibition and Presentation of Painting - Pescadero Union High School (1928), 1928, 1978
Image(s)
Includes letters of appreciation and gratitude from students.

Box 2, Folder 11
Sendai Library Exhibition (1929), 1929
Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 4
Sendai Library Exhibition (1929), 1929
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 12
Brush and Sumi Exhibition - Golden Gate Institute (1934 March-April), 1934
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 13
Chiura Obata Exhibition - Tilly Polak, Inc. (1935), 1935
Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 5
Chiura Obata Exhibition - Tilly Pollak, Inc. (1935), 1935
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 14
Chiura Obata Paintings Exhibition - University of California Art Gallery (1937), 1937
Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 6
Chiura Obata Paintings Exhibition - University of California Art Gallery (1937), 1937
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 15
Chiura Obata Exhibition - Greensboro Federal Art Center (1937-1938), 1938
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 16
Chiura Obata Paintings Exhibition - E.B. Crocker Art Gallery (1938), 1938
Series 5: Exhibition Files

Chiura Obata papers
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Image(s)

Box OV 4, Folder 7  Chiura Obata Paintings Exhibition - E.B. Crocker Art Gallery (1938), 1938
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 17  *Golden Gate International Exposition* (1939), 1939-1940
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 18  Chiura Obata Silk Paintings Exhibition - Santa Barbara State College (1941), 1941
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 19  *Relocation Center Art Exhibit* - Friends Center (1943), 1943
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 20  Veteran's Exhibition - University of California, Berkeley (1946), 1943, 1946
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 21  Chiura Obata Exhibition - Raymond and Raymond Galleries (1946), 1946
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 22  Chiura Obata Exhibition - University of Southern California (1946), 1946
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 23  Chiura Obata Exhibitions - Maxwell's Gallery (1947), 1947-1956
Image(s)
Includes paintings inventory and list of artworks sold over the course of several years.

Box OV 4, Folder 8  Chiura Obata Exhibition - Maxwell's Gallery (1948), 1948
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 24  Chiura Obata Painting Exhibition - Doll and Richards, Inc. (1950), 1950-1951
Image(s)

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0.8 Linear feet (Box 2, OV 5)

Printed material includes exhibition announcements, catalogs, magazines, newspapers, and clippings, and calendars. Noteworthy items include copies of TREK, which were published by Japanese Americans incarcerated at Topaz; material from the War Relocation Authority; a copy of the 1948 Sierra Club Base Camp; printed material related to Miné Okubo; and copies of Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata’s Art of Internment.

For the most part, the contents of this series are arranged by publication type such as books, exhibition catalogs, magazines, newspapers clippings, etc. However, there are a few folders which are arranged by subject, which reflect the order in which they were arranged when donated to the archives.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Materials which have not been digitized include blank pages, and duplicates. In some cases, exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages digitized.


Box 2, Folder 26  Book - The Second Generation Problem: Some Suggestions Toward Its Solution by Roy Hidemichi Akagi, 1926

Box 2, Folder 27  Book - Sierra Club Base Camp, 1948

Box 2, Folder 28  Book - Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata’s Art of Internment, Edited with Text by Kimi Kodani Hill, 2000

Box 2, Folder 29  Book - University of California - In Memoriam, 1978 September

Box 2, Folder 30  Calendar With Reproductions of Chiura Obata Work, 1996

Box 2, Folder 31  University of California Engagement Calendar with Paintings by Chiura Obata, 1948

Box 2, Folder 32  Exhibition Announcements, circa 1930-1953

Box 2, Folder 33  Exhibition Catalogs, 1925-1933

Box 2, Folder 34  Exhibition Catalogs, 1933-1934
Box 2, Folder 35  Exhibition Catalogs, 1935
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 36  Exhibition Catalogs, 1936-1942, 1952
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 37  Magazines and Journals, 1934-1939
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 38  Magazines and Journals, 1943-1948
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 39  Magazines and Journals - *California Monthly*, 1938-1939, 1945
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 40  Magazines and Journals - *TREK*, 1942-1943
Image(s)

Box OV 5, Folder 1  Newspaper Clippings, 1901-1903
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 41  Newspaper Clippings, 1932-1940
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 42  Newspaper Clippings, 1942-1945
Image(s)

Box OV 5, Folder 2  Newspaper Clippings, 1942-1945
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 43  Newspaper Clippings, 1946-1987
Image(s)

Box OV 5, Folder 3  Newspaper Clippings, 1946-1987
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 44  Printed Material on 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, circa 1906
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 45  Printed Material on Charles Christian Nahl and Nahl Family, 1937
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 46  Printed Material on Miné Okubo, 1972-1978
Box OV 5, Folder 4  
Printed Material on Miné Okubo, 1965-1966
Image(s)

Box 2, Folder 47  
Printed Material on Forced Relocation and War Relocation Authority Publications, 1934, 1942-1945
Image(s)
Includes a typed copy of *Americans in Concentration Camps* by Harry Paxton Howard from the September 1942 issue of *The Crisis*. Also included is *New Homes for the Issei*, 1945, a WRA publication, in Japanese.

Box 2, Folder 48  
Image(s)

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Series 7: Photographic Material, circa 1891-1969

0.2 Linear feet (Box 3)

Included in this series are photographs for the book *Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata’s Art of Internment*, photographs of the Obata family's forced relocation from Berkeley, photos from the War Relocation Authority, and photographs of their home in Webster Groves, Missouri. Also included are photos of works of art and a photograph album from the Pan Pacific International Exposition. There are only a few photographs of Chiura Obata scattered throughout the series.

The photographs used in the book *Topaz Moon* are at the beginning of the series. The rest of the series is arranged alphabetically by subject.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Materials which have not been digitized include blank versos of photographs and duplicates.

**Box 3, Folder 1**

*Image(s)*
Includes photographs of Chiura Obata and family, photographs of Tanforan Art School and students taken by Dorothea Lange, and photographs of Obata's artwork.

**Box 3, Folder 2**
*Before Singing*, Portrait of Talia Savanieva (Thalia Sabanieva) by Chiura Obata, circa 1924

*Image(s)*

**Box 3, Folder 3**
Forced Relocation From Berkeley, 1942

*Image(s)*
Includes 2 photocopies of photographs of Chiura Obata and his wife Haruko.

**Box 3, Folder 4**
Gyosei Hall Exhibition, San Francisco, 1930 November

*Image(s)*

**Box 3, Folder 5**
Hawai‘i and Fruit Industry, circa 1953

*Image(s)*

**Box 3, Folder 6**
Home in Webster Groves, Missouri, 1945

*Image(s)*

**Box 3, Folder 7**
Photograph Album of *Pan Pacific International Exposition*, 1915

*Image(s)*

**Box 3, Folder 8**
San Francisco After 1906 Earthquake, circa 1906

*Image(s)*

**Box 3, Folder 9**
S.S. Shinyo Maru Trip, 1928 November

*Image(s)*
Includes steamship company booklet in Japanese.
Box 3, Folder 10  
Uesugi Kenshin Portrait (1903) by Chiura Obata, 1969  
Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 11  
War Relocation Authority Photographs, circa 1944-circa 1945  
Image(s)  
Includes photographs of Chiura Obata and family, photographs of an exhibition of art by Japanese Americans during their incarceration, and photocopies of images held at the National Archives and associated catalog records.

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Series 8: Artwork, 1917-circa 1945

0.2 Linear feet (Box 3, OV 5)

This series contains sketches and two sketchbooks, some of which were created during Obata's incarceration at Topaz though they do not appear to be of the inside of Topaz Relocation Center. There are a few watercolor drawings based on a trip to Hawaii (see Hawaii images in photographic material series). Also included is an autograph book containing sketches and paintings by others and sketches Obata created for commercial work in St. Louis.

The material in this series is in alphabetical order by folder title.

The bulk of this series has been digitized. Blank pages of sketchbooks have not been digitized.

- Box 3, Folder 12: Autograph Book With Sketches and Notes From Others, 1917-1927
  - Image(s)

- Box 3, Folder 13: Hawaii Watercolor Drawings, circa 1935
  - Image(s)

- Box 3, Folder 14: Modern Dance Sketches, circa 1933-1934
  - Image(s)

- Box 3, Folder 15: Sketch on Verso of Letter Draft to Dorothy Swaine Thomas, circa 1943
  - Image(s)

- Box 3, Folder 16: Sketchbook, 1943
  - Image(s)

- Box 3, Folder 17: Sketchbook, 1943-1944
  - Image(s)

- Box 3, Folder 18: Sketches Created While in Topaz, 1942-circa 1943
  - Image(s)
  - Does not appear to consist of sketches of Topaz Relocation Center.

- Box 3, Folder 19: Sketches for Commercial Work in St. Louis, circa 1945
  - Image(s)

- Box OV 5, Folder 5: Sketches for Commercial Work in St. Louis, circa 1945
  - Image(s)
Series 9: Unprocessed Addition

1 Linear foot

Box 6  Unprocessed Papers

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