



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Silvia Pizitz Papers, 1927-1989, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

Processing of this collection received support from
the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

2023/05/24

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Silvia Pizitz papers
Date:	1927-1989
Identifier:	AAA.pizisilv
Creator:	Pizitz, Silvia
Extent:	1 Linear foot
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of New York art collector Silvia Pizitz (1905-1991) date from 1927 to 1989 and measure 1.0 linear feet. Found are artist files, biographical material, correspondence, photographs and slides, and printed material. Of note are records concerning the donation of Pizitz's art collection and material relating to Pizitz's family department store in Birmingham, Alabama.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 2006 by Raeford Liles, Pizitz's widower.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2023 with support from the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

Preferred Citation

Silvia Pizitz papers, 1927-1989. 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

Art collector Silvia Pizitz (1905-1991) was active in New York City, New York. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Pizitz studied at the Grand Central School of Art and continued her appreciation of art by acquiring a large art collection. Later in life, she donated her collection to various institutions including Cornell University, New York University, and the University of Birmingham.

Scope and Contents

The papers of New York art collector Silvia Pizitz (1905-1991) date from 1927 to 1989 and measure 1.0 linear feet. Found are artist files, biographical material, correspondence, photographs and slides, and printed material. Of note are records concerning the donation of Pizitz's art collection and material relating to Pizitz's family department store in Birmingham, Alabama.

Arrangement

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

Names and Subject Terms

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

Occupations:

Collectors -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Silvia Pizitz Papers, 1927-1989

1 Linear foot (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Artist files are found for Alice Barber, George Chemeche, and Dorothy Gillespie. Files contain photographs, scattered letters, and printed material. Biographical materials include biographical notes, identification cards for art schools, travel papers, and four small date books from the 1980s. Correspondence is with friends and family including writer Joseph Freeman, her siblings, and father Louis Pizitz. Many of the letters concern Silvia Pizitz's strained relationship with her family regarding inheritance and ownership of Pizitz department stores in Alabama. Records on the donation of her art collection to Cornell University, New York University, the University of Birmingham and other institutions include correspondence, appraisals, deeds of gift, and shipping records.

Personal photographs include snapshots and portraits of Pizitz, Pizitz with friends and family, and travel. Photographs, negatives, and slides of works of art are by others, and are presumably pr items from Pizitz's collection. Some photos are of works by Raeford Liles. Of note are photos from an exhibition at the Birmingham Museum of Art of the Silvia Pizitz Collection. Printed materials include clippings and exhibition announcements, many of which concern the Pizitz family and her art collection. Also found are commemorative materials produced for or by the Pizitz department store to celebrate milestones and accomplishments.

Box 1, Folder 1	Artist File, Alice Barber, 1976-1983
Box 1, Folder 2	Artist File, George Chemeche, 1981-1983
Box 1, Folder 3	Artist File, Dorothy Gillespie, 1978-1988
Box 1, Folder 4	Biographical Material, 1927-1989
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, circa 1927-1988
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, circa 1927-1988
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, circa 1927-1988
Box 1, Folder 8-9	Donation of Art Collection, 1968-1989
Box 1, Folder 10	Photographs, Personal, 1969-1984
Box 1, Folder 11	Photographs, Exhibition, 1980
Box 1, Folder 12-13	Photographs, Works of Art, circa 1970s-circa 1980s
Box 1, Folder 14	Printed Material, circa 1960-1978
Box 1, Folder 15	Printed Material, Pizitz Department Store, 1952-1985

Box 1, Folder 16

Slides and Negatives, circa 1960s-circa 1980s

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