



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Charles Pollock Papers,  
1875-1994, in the Archives of American Art

Judy Ng

Funding for the processing of this collection was  
provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art

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Archives of American Art  
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
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## Collection Overview

**Repository:** Archives of American Art

**Title:** Charles Pollock papers

**Identifier:** AAA.pollchar

**Date:** 1875-1994

**Extent:** 3.1 Linear feet

**Creator:** Pollock, Charles C.

**Language:** English

The collection is in English.

**Summary:** The papers of painter, muralist, and educator Charles Pollock measure 3.1 linear feet and date from 1875 to 1994. Found within the papers are biographical materials; family and personal correspondence; subject files on art and professional topics; writings; printed material; artwork, including political cartoons and figurative sketches; and photographs of Pollock, his family and friends, and his work.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The papers were donated in 1975 by Pollock's first wife, Elizabeth Feinberg Pollock, with assistance from Charles Pollock on the selection of items. Additional materials were donated in 1988 by his second wife, Sylvia Winter Pollock. From 1991 to 1994, Elizabeth Pollock gifted additional correspondence and photographs to the Archives.

### Separated Materials

Nine works of art included in the 1975 gift from Elizabeth Pollock were transferred to the Smithsonian American Art Museum, formerly the National Collection of Fine Arts, in 1976.

### Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art are the Elizabeth Feinberg Pollock memoirs and the Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner papers.

### Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35 mm microfilm reels 1097, 1116, and 4213-4215 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

## Processing Information

Materials received a preliminary level of arrangement after donation and portions of the collection were microfilmed onto reels 1097, 1116, and 4213-4215. Materials were merged and processed to an intermediate level and a finding aid prepared by Judy Ng in 2015, with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art. 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.

Intermediate processing included arrangement to the series and folder levels with greater attention to the artwork and photographic materials series. For other series, items within folders were generally verified with folder titles, but not arranged further. The collection was rehoused in archival containers and folders.

## Preferred Citation

Charles Pollock papers, 1875-1994. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center. Contact Reference Services for more information.

## Conditions Governing Use

The Charles Pollock papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

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## Biographical / Historical

Painter, muralist, and educator Charles Pollock (1902-1988) lived and worked in East Lansing, Michigan, New York City, Detroit, and Paris, France and painted in a social realist style early in his career before transitioning to abstract works in the 1940s. He is also the eldest brother of the abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock.

Born in Denver, Colorado to Stella McClure and LeRoy Pollock, Pollock received his early art training at the Otis Institute in Los Angeles, California. In 1926, he moved to New York City to attend the Art Students League where he studied under Thomas Hart Benton, with whom Jackson also studied after joining Charles in New York in 1930. In New York, he met and married his first wife, Elizabeth Feinberg Pollock, in 1931.

Pollock moved to Washington, D.C. in 1935 to work for the Resettlement Administration, and after two years, accepted a position as the political illustrator for the United Automobile Workers' newspaper in Detroit. After a short stint as the illustrator and layout editor for the paper, Pollock served as the supervisor of the Michigan WPA Mural Painting and Graphic Arts division from 1938 to 1942.

Upon completion of a three panel mural for Michigan State University in 1942, Pollock was invited to join the faculty of the art department, where he taught lettering, printmaking, typography, and design. During his twenty-five year tenure at the University, he also served as a book designer for the University's Press and continued to develop his abstract painting style. He met and married his second wife, Sylvia Winter Pollock, in 1957. Pollock served as the University of Pennsylvania's artist in residence in 1965 and 1967, and was the recipient of a National Foundation of Arts Grant (1967) and a Guggenheim Grant

(1967-1968). The Pollocks moved to Paris in 1970, where Charles died of complications from a stroke in 1988.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of painter, muralist, and educator Charles Pollock measure 3.1 linear feet and date from 1875 to 1994. Found within the papers are biographical materials; family and personal correspondence; subject files on art and professional topics; writings; printed material; artwork, including political cartoons and figurative sketches; and photographs of Pollock, his family and friends, and his work.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 7 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1945-1988 (7 folders; Box 1)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1927-1994 (1 linear foot; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 3: Subject Files, 1931-1988 (0.8 linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 4: Writings, 1935-1965 (2 folders; Box 2)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1930-1990 (4 folders; Box 2)
- Series 6: Artwork, 1925-1949 (0.7 linear feet; Box 3, OV 5-8)
- Series 7: Photographic Materials, 1875-1987 (0.4 linear feet; Boxes 3-4)

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art teachers -- Michigan  
Art teachers -- New York (State) -- New York  
Expatriate painters -- France -- Paris  
Muralists -- New York (State) -- New York  
Painters -- France -- Paris  
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Cartoons (humorous images)  
Photographs  
Sketches

Names:

Pollock, Jackson, 1912-1956

Occupations:

Art teachers -- France  
Muralists -- France -- Paris  
Muralists -- Michigan

Painters -- Michigan

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1945-1988

#### *7 Folders (Box 1)*

Biographical materials include autobiographical summaries, a Pollock family tree, a chronology of events in Pollock's life, employment related correspondence, and a transcript of a 1979 interview with Paul Sporn concerning the Federal Art Project in Michigan.

Materials are arranged by document type.

Box 1, Folder 1	Autobiographical Material, circa 1970-1985
Box 1, Folder 2	Chronology, 1975
Box 1, Folder 3	Employment, circa 1945-1965
Box 1, Folder 4	Employment, University of Pennsylvania, 1964
Box 1, Folder 5	Family Tree, circa 1988
Box 1, Folder 6	Grants and Fellowships, circa 1950-1970
Box 1, Folder 7	Interview Transcript, with Paul Sporn, 1979

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## Series 2: Correspondence, 1927-1994

### *1 Linear foot (Boxes 1-2)*

Correspondence is arranged as two subseries, family and general. Family correspondence includes substantial letters from Charles Pollock to his first wife, Elizabeth Feinberg Pollock, and incoming letters from his mother, Stella Pollock. There are also letters from Charles's brothers, Frank, Sanford, Marvin Jay, and Jackson, as well as from extended aunts and uncles, and his second wife, Sylvia Winter Pollock. Letters to Elizabeth include scholarly inquiries regarding both Charles and Jackson Pollock.

General correspondence consists of letters to Charles Pollock regarding the exhibition, commission, and sales of his artwork, as well as correspondence from friends, colleagues, and scholarly researchers. Correspondents include musicologist Charles Seeger and Thomas Hart Benton, with whom he met during his time at the Resettlement Administration and the Art Students League respectively.

Correspondence from Jackson Pollock and Thomas Hart Benton were gifted as photocopies only.

The series is arranged as 2 subseries. Letters are arranged chronologically by recipient.

- 2.1: Family, 1929-1994
- 2.2: General, 1927-1988

### 2.1: Family, 1929-1994

Box 1, Folder 8-18	Charles Pollock to Elizabeth F. Pollock, 1929-1986
Box 1, Folder 19	Charles Pollock to Mr. Feinberg (Elizabeth's father), 1931
Box 1, Folder 20	Elizabeth F. Pollock to Charles Pollock, 1929-1974
Box 1, Folder 21	Elizabeth F. Pollock to Stella Pollock (mother-in-law), 1931-1956
Box 1, Folder 22	Elizabeth F. Pollock to Pollock Family, 1981-1994
Box 1, Folder 23	To Elizabeth F. Pollock, Regarding Charles Pollock, 1965-1990
Box 1, Folder 24	To Elizabeth F. Pollock, Regarding Jackson Pollock, 1965-1994
Box 1, Folder 25	To Elizabeth F. Pollock, Others, 1936
Box 1, Folder 26	Charles Pollock to Stella Pollock (mother), 1944
Box 1, Folder 27	Stella Pollock to Charles and Frank Pollock, circa 1929-1931
Box 1, Folder 28-29	Stella Pollock to Charles Pollock and Others, 1931-1933
Box 1, Folder 30	Stella Pollock to Charles Pollock and Elizabeth Pollock, circa 1930-1950
Box 1, Folder 31	Stella Pollock to Charles Pollock and Elizabeth Pollock, 1936-1937
Box 1, Folder 32-40	Stella Pollock to Charles Pollock and Family, 1938-1956
Box 1, Folder 41	To Stella Pollock, from Family and Friends, circa 1930-1956



Box 1, Folder 42	Stella Pollock, Last Illness, 1958
Box 1, Folder 43	Frank Pollock to Charles Pollock and Others, circa 1933-1958
Box 1, Folder 44	Jackson Pollock to Charles Pollock and Others, circa 1929-1944
Box 1, Folder 45	Marvin Jay Pollock to Charles Pollock and Others, circa 1931-1964
Box 1, Folder 46	Sanford ("Sande") Pollock to Charles Pollock and Others, circa 1933-1961
Box 1, Folder 47	Mary Keicher, Les McClure, and Rose Miller to Charles Pollock and Family, 1960-1979

## 2.2: General, 1927-1988

Box 1, Folder 48	A-L, circa 1930-1965
Box 1, Folder 49	M-Z, circa 1930-1965
Box 1, Folder 50	Benton, Thomas Hart and Rita, 1927-1975
Box 1, Folder 51	Hayden, William, circa 1929-1930
Box 1, Folder 52	Huberman, Leo, circa 1935-1938
Box 1, Folder 53	Resettlement Administration, 1935-1937 <a href="#">Image(s)</a>
Box 1, Folder 54	Seeger, Charles, circa 1939-1952 <a href="#">Image(s)</a>
Box 1, Folder 55	Letters of Inquiry, 1977-1986
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Letters of Inquiry, O'Connor, Francis, 1963-1978
Box 2, Folder 3	Letters of Inquiry, Potter, Jeffrey, 1982-1986
Box 2, Folder 4	Letters of Inquiry, Regarding Jackson Pollock, 1963-1988

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## Series 3: Subject Files, 1931-1988

### *0.8 Linear feet (Box 2)*

Subject files are on calligraphy and printing, Pollock's personal exhibition files, and Michigan State University print design projects. The exhibition files contain correspondence with galleries as well as exhibition announcements and catalogs. Files on Michigan State design projects include correspondence, book jackets, stationary samples, and final class projects designed by Pollock's students.

Materials are arranged by subject and document type.

Box 2	Calligraphy and Printing
Box 2, Folder 5-7	Correspondence, 1944-1967
Box 2, Folder 8-9	Design and Printing, circa 1945-1965
Box 2, Folder 10	Emulsions and Media, circa 1945-1965
Box 2	Charles Pollock Exhibitions
Box 2, Folder 11-15	Correspondence, 1931-1985
Box 2, Folder 16	Dayton Art Institute, 1969-1972
Box 2, Folder 17	Gertrude Kasle Gallery, 1965-1969
Box 2, Folder 18	Henri Gallery, 1966-1970
Box 2, Folder 19	Lists, Forms, and Invitations, circa 1936-1947
Box 2, Folder 20	Clippings, 1955-1988
Box 2, Folder 21-22	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1936-1988
Box 2	Michigan State University
Box 2, Folder 23-25	Correspondence, 1945-1954
Box 2, Folder 26	Pollock Murals, circa 1952
Box 2, Folder 27	Research Grant, 1966-1967
Box 2, Folder 28	Designs, circa 1949-1951
Box 2, Folder 29-30	Designs, Book Jackets, circa 1945-1955
Box 2, Folder 31-32	Design Projects by Pollock Students, circa 1945-1955

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## Series 4: Writings, 1935-1965

### *2 Folders (Box 2)*

Writings consists of lists, notes, and speech fragments by Pollock and an undated typescript of a memoir by Jellyroll Morton.

Materials are arranged by document type.

Box 2, Folder 33	Notes, Lists, Speeches, and Etc., circa 1935-1965
Box 2, Folder 34	Memoir, by Jellyroll Morton (typescript), circa 1935-1965

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## Series 5: Printed Material, 1930-1990

### *4 Folders (Box 2)*

Printed material includes a chapbook of poems, *These Intensities*, by Sylvia Pollock and illustrated by Charles Pollock. There are also magazines and copies of *United Automobile Worker* newspapers from 1937-1938.

Materials are arranged by document type.

Box 2, Folder 35	Chapbook, <i>These Intensities</i> by Sylvia and Charles Pollock, 1981
Box 2, Folder 36	Clippings, 1930, 1984-1990
Box 2, Folder 37	Periodicals, Magazines, 1936, 1977, 1990
Box 2, Folder 38	Periodicals, <i>U.A.W.</i> Newspapers, 1937-1938

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## Series 6: Artwork, 1925-1949

### *0.7 Linear feet (Box 3, OV 5-8)*

Artwork consists of etchings, a sketchbook, loose sketches, and political cartoons. Political cartoons include original oversize renderings and prints depicting U.A.W. labor disputes. Sketches are rendered in pen and ink, graphite, and watercolor and include figure studies of family and labor workers. The sketchbook also contains music scores for Thomas Hart Benton's amateur harmonica group.

Materials are arranged by document type.

Box 3, Folder 1	Etchings, circa 1948-1949
Box 3, Folder 2	Political Illustrations, Originals, circa 1935-1940 Oversized material housed in OV 5-8.
Box 3, Folder 3	Political Illustrations, Prints, circa 1935-1940 Oversized material housed in OV 7.
Box 3, Folder 4	Sketchbook, circa 1930
Box 3, Folder 5	Sketches, Loose, circa 1925-1933 Oversized material housed in OV 7.
Box OV 5-8	Oversize Political Illustrations (originals) from Box 3, Folder 2, circa 1935-1940
Box OV 7	Oversize Political Illustrations (prints) from Box 3, Folder 3, circa 1935-1940
Box OV 7	Oversize Loose Sketches from Box 3, Folder 5, circa 1925-1933

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## Series 7: Photographic Materials, 1875-1987

### *0.4 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4)*

Photographic materials include 48 numbered photos from a Pollock family album that includes Pollock's parents, brothers, wife, daughter, and various extended family members and friends. Additional photographs depict Pollock family members, artist friends, including Frank Goeritz, and Arthur Millier, and reproductions of artwork.

Materials from the album are ordered numerically as arranged by the donor. Other photographs are arranged by subject.

Box 3, Folder 6	Photographs of Charles Pollock and Family (#1-20), 1904-1937
Box 3, Folder 7	Photographs of Charles Pollock and Family (#21-48), 1938-1975
Box 3, Folder 8-9	Photographs of Charles Pollock and Family, circa 1875-1960 Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 1.
Box 3, Folder 10	Photographs of Charles, Elizabeth F., and Jeremy Pollock, circa 1930-1941
Box 3, Folder 11	Photographs of Charles Pollock, Frank Goeritz, and Arthur Millier, circa 1922-1923
Box 3, Folder 12	Photographs of Charles Pollock and Others, circa 1938-1987 Oversized material housed in Box 4, Folder 2.
Box 3, Folder 13	Photographs of Friends, circa 1920-1935
Box 3, Folder 14	Photographs of Artwork, circa 1940-1960
Box 4, Folder 1-2	Oversized Photographs of Charles Pollock and Family from Box 3, Folders 8 and 12, circa 1905-1965

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