



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Gustav Rehberger Papers,
1924-2004, in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Gustav Rehberger papers
Identifier:	AAA.rehbgust
Date:	1924-2004
Extent:	5.4 Linear feet
Creator:	Rehberger, Gustav, 1910-1995
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Gustav Rehberger papers measure 5.4 linear feet and date from 1924 to 2004. His career as an illustrator, painter, educator, and performance artist is documented by correspondence, scrapbooks, printed material, photographs, and sound and video recordings. A small addition contains printed material, artwork, and photographic material primarily documenting Rehberger's career as an illustrator for magazines, books, advertising, movies, and television.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Gustav Rehberger papers were donated to the Archives of American Art in 2004 and 2016 by his widow, Pamela Demme.

Processing Information

This collection was processed to a minimal level and a finding aid prepared by Justin Brancato in 2007. The addition was processed and the finding aid updated by Hilary Price in 2017.

Preferred Citation

Gustav Rehberger papers, 1924-2004. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment. Use of archival audiovisual recordings with no duplicate access copy requires advance notice.

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Biographical Note

Gustav Rehberger (1910-1995) was an illustrator, designer, painter, educator, and performance artist in New York City.

The Rehberger family emigrated from Austria to Chicago in 1923. At age 14, Rehberger began studying at the Art Institute of Chicago on a scholarship that continued for three years. While still a teenager, he also was enrolled in The Art Instruction Schools, Minneapolis. After declining two college scholarships, he worked as a graphic designer and illustrator to help support his family during the Depression. From 1929-1942, he was Art Director at Reuben H. Donnelly Corporation in Chicago, publishers of telephone directories.

During World War II, the Wartime Committee of the Society of Typographic Artists commissioned Rehberger to paint two murals for the interior of Chicago's Union Station (1942). He moved to New York City in 1943 and soon enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces. While in the service, Rehberger was assigned to the Illustrations and Format Branch where he created visual training aids.

After the war, Rehberger's illustrations appeared in the national advertising campaigns of Celanese Chemicals, Philip Morris and Sheraton Hotels; were featured in major newspaper and magazines such as Chicago Daily Tribune, The New York Times, and Esquire; and in various Christian publications.

In order to focus on painting, in 1969 Rehberger ceased commercial work. From 1972-1993 he taught drawing, anatomy, and composition at the Art Students League of New York. He also became interested in performance art. Evolving out of his classroom drawing demonstrations, Rehberger's performances - the act of painting and drawing before a live audience - soon moved to formal performance spaces and often were accompanied by recorded music.

Throughout his career, Rehberger participated in numerous group shows and was the recipient of many awards and prizes. He also had a number of solo exhibitions, among them shows at the Society of Illustrators in New York, National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and National Gallery of Art in London.

Gustav Rehberger died in New York City on July 22, 1995.

Scope and Content Note

The Gustav Rehberger papers measure 5.4 linear feet and date from 1924 to 2004. His career as an illustrator, painter, educator, and performance artist is documented by correspondence, scrapbooks, printed material, photographs, and sound and video recordings. A small addition contains printed material, artwork, and photographic material primarily documenting Rehberger's career as an illustrator for magazines, books, advertising, movies, and television.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 8 series:

- Series 1: Biographical Materials, circa 2003 (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1938-2003 (Box 1; 0.4 linear feet)
- Series 3: Scrapbooks, 1924-2004; (Box 1; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1937-1972; (Boxes 2, 6, OV 7; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 5: Artwork, 1927-1942 (Boxes 2, 6; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 6: Photographs, 1927-1995 (Boxes 2-3, 6; 1.2 linear feet)
- Series 7: Sound and Video Recordings, 1972-1995 (Boxes 4-5; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 8: Addition to the Gustav Rehberger papers, 1937-1992 (Boxes 8-9, OV 10; 1.4 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Educators -- New York (State) -- New York
Illustrators -- New York (State) -- New York
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York
Performance artists -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks
Sound recordings
Video recordings

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, circa 2003

1 Folder (Box 1)

Rehberger's curriculum vitae and chronology were prepared and added by the family.

Box 1, Folder 1

Curriculum Vitae and Chronology, circa 2003

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1938-2003

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1)

Correspondence is of a professional nature and is mainly with graphic designers and publishers.

Although the correspondence from "Book I" and "Book II" has been removed from the binders, original order has been retained. Additional correspondence is found in the scrapbooks (series 3).

Box 1, Folder 2-4	Book I, 1938-2001, undated
Box 1, Folder 5-7	Book II, 1943-2003, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Gustav Rehberger v. Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1990-1994, undated

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Series 3: Scrapbooks, 1924-2004

0.6 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scrapbooks are composed mostly of items reproducing illustrations by Rehberger.

Although volumes were removed from their binders, the original order remains.

Box 1, Folder 9-11	Scrapbook I, 1924-2004, undated
Box 1, Folder 12-15	Scrapbook II, 1975-2003, undated
Box 1, Folder 16	The Art Students League of New York, 1972-1996
Box 1, Folder 17	Gallery Exhibition Guest Books, 1964-1977 <i>1 Volume (removed from binder)</i>
Box 1, Folder 18	Military, 1943-1945
Box 1, Folder 19-20	Movie Illustrations, 1953-1992

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Series 4: Printed Material, 1937-1972

0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 2, 6, OV 7)

Books, both illustrated by Rehberger, are: *The Gospel Story of Jesus* by Benjamin Bedenbaugh and *Luther* by Robert H. Fischer.

Box 2, Folder 1	<i>Everywoman's Magazine</i> , 1955-1957, undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Illustrations, Miscellaneous, 1937-1972, undated
Box 2, Folder 3-4	Books, 1964-1966 <i>2 Volumes</i>
Box 2, Folder 5	Church Publications, 1964-1965
Box 2, Folder 6	Reproductions of Miscellaneous Artwork (1980s), undated
Box 6	Oversized Printed Material, 1936-1992 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>27 Chicago Designers</i>• Calendars• <i>Esquire</i>• Sheraton Hotels• World War II, Union Station, Chicago
Box OV 7	Oversized Printed Material, 1962-1964, undated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celanese Chemicals• <i>New York Times</i> and <i>Chicago Daily Tribune</i>

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Series 5: Artwork, 1927-1942

0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 2, 6)

Of particular interest are maquette drawings of Rehberger's murals for Chicago's Union Station (1942).

Box 2, Folder 7	Schoolwork Assignments, 1927-1928
Box 2, Folder 8-11	Sketchbooks, undated <i>9 Volumes</i>
Box 2, Folder 12-14	Index Cards of Sketches, undated
Box 6	Oversized Artwork, Paintings, 1942

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Series 6: Photographs, 1927-1995

1.2 Linear feet (Boxes, 2-3, 6)

Photographs are of Rehberger, artwork, lectures, and performances.

Box 2, Folder 15	Rehberger (1920s-1990s), undated
Box 2, Folder 16-17	Rehberger with Artwork (1950s-1990s), 1991-1994, undated
Box 2, Folder 18	Art Students League Lectures, Art and Music Performance, 1972-1993
Box 3, Folder 1-2	Illustrations, Miscellaneous (1949-1989), undated
Box 3, Folder 3	Artwork and Classroom Demonstrations (1960s-1993), undated
Box 3, Folder 4-6	Artwork, Miscellaneous (1927-1992), undated oversized material housed in Box 6
Box 3, Folder 7-12	Transparencies, Illustrations (1943-1969), undated
Box 3, Folder 13-22	Transparencies, Artwork (1949-1993), undated
Box 3, Folder 23	Slides, Artwork and Classroom Demonstrations (1972-1995), undated
Box 3, Folder 24-25	Slides, Artwork, Miscellaneous (1960s-1991)

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Series 7: Sound and Video Recordings, 1972-1995

0.5 Linear feet (Boxes 4-5)

Five sound cassettes and 11 videocassettes record interviews with Rehberger, lectures, his memorial service, demonstrations and performances.

Box 4, Folder 1	Interviews, Lectures, and Memorial Service, 1986-1995 <i>5 Sound cassettes</i>
Box 4, Folder 2	Pastel Society Demonstrations, Two Horses, 1990 <i>2 Videocassettes (VHS)</i>
Box 4, Folder 3	Documentary Footage, 1972, 1990 <i>2 Videocassettes (VHS)</i>
Box 4, Folder 4	Performances, 1982-1983, undated <i>3 Videocassettes (VHS)</i>
Box 5, Folder 1-2	Art Students League Lectures, 1990, 1987, undated <i>4 Videocassettes (VHS)</i>

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Series 8: Addition to the Gustav Rehberger papers, 1937-1992

1.4 Linear feet (Box 8-9, OV 10)

The addition dates from 1937-1992 and contains printed material, artwork, and photographic material primarily documenting Rehberger's career as an illustrator for magazines, books, advertising, movies, and television. The printed material includes clippings of illustrations and advertisements, including the Marlboro Man; book covers and illustrations; movie and television promotions, including posters; a calendar; and several religious illustrations. Artwork includes dozens of original illustrations and sketches in pen, pencil, ink, charcoal, gauche, and collage. Photographic material consists of black and white and color prints, negatives, and transparencies of many of Rehberger's book, magazine, and other illustrations.

The series is arranged as three subseries.

- 8.1: Printed Material
- 8.2: Artwork
- 8.3: Photographic Material

8.1: Printed Material, 1937-1985

0.7 Linear feet (Box 8-9, OV 10)

Box 8, Folder 1	Book Illustrations, <i>The Odyssey</i> , 1969
Box 8, Folder 2	Book Illustrations, General, 1937-1985
Box 8, Folder 3-4	Magazine Illustrations, <i>Coronet</i> , 1949-1961
Box 8, Folder 5	Magazine Illustrations, <i>Esquire</i> , 1946-1954
Box 8, Folder 6	Magazine Illustrations, <i>Everywoman's</i> , 1948-1977
Box 8, Folder 7-8	Movie and Television Promotional Illustrations, 1953-1976
Box 8, Folder 9	Religious Illustrations, 1941-1966
Box 8, Folder 10	Illustrations, General, 1940s-1970s
Box 9, Folder 1	Oversized Calendar, 1953-1954
Box 9, Folder 2-4	Oversized Magazine Illustrations, <i>Esquire</i> , from Box 8, Folder 5
Box 9, Folder 5	Oversized Magazine Illustrations, <i>Everywoman's</i> from Box 8, Folder 6
Box 9, Folder 6-7	Oversized Illustrations, General from Box 8, Folder 10
Box OV 10	Posters, 1966-1980

8.2: Artwork, 1947-1976

0.2 Linear feet (Box 8-9, OV 10)

Box 8, Folder 11 Illustrations and Sketches, 1947-1976

Box 9, Folder 8-10 Oversized Illustrations and Sketches

Box OV 10 Oversized Illustrations and Sketches

8.3: Photographic Material, 1949-1992

0.5 Linear feet (Box 8-9)

Box 8, Folder 12 Book Illustrations, *The Odyssey*, 1969

Box 8, Folder 13 Magazine Illustrations, *Coronet*, 1949-1955

Box 8, Folder 14 Magazine Illustrations, *Esquire*, 1949-1953

Box 8, Folder 15-17 Illustrations, General, 1951-1992

Box 9, Folder 11 Oversized Illustrations from Box 8, Folders 15-17

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