



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Mitchell Siporin papers

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Mitchell Siporin papers
Identifier:	AAA.sipomitc
Date:	1913-1990
Extent:	5.3 Linear feet
Creator:	Siporin, Mitchell, 1910-1976
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection has been donated in several installments beginning in 1978 when Siporin's widow Miriam lent materials for microfilming (reels 1328 and 1332). She also donated materials at that time and again in 1992, at which time it was also microfilmed (reels 2011-12 and 2061). In 2003, Judith Siporin, Siporin's daughter, donated the materials previously lent on reel 1332 and 16mm motion picture film. In 2005 Mary Siporin, Mitchell Siporin's sister-in law donated papers, and in 2008 Judith donated another installment.

Location of Originals

Reels 1328: Originals returned to lender, Miriam T. Siporin, after microfilming.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 1328, 1332, 2011-2012, and 2061 available for use at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

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.

Biographical / Historical

Mitchell Siporin (1910-1976) was a painter and photographer from Newton, Massachusetts.

Scope and Contents

Biographical information, correspondence, photographs, writings, research and subject files, works of art, motion picture film, interview transcripts, financial material, printed material and miscellany relating to Mitchell Siporin.

Scope and Contents

Personal photographs of Siporin, stage sets and art work by him.

Scope and Contents

Circa 1000 letters relating to his painting, his teaching, his service as a war artist during World War II and the Federal Art Project, including letters from Sheldon Cheney, Edith Halpert, Edward Rowan, Holger Cahill, Edward Millman, Max Abramowitz, Lee Nordness, and others; biographical material; notes and lectures; art history research files; sketches; price lists for his art works; expense accounts and tax records; blueprints and architectural plans; photographs, including WWII photographs and photographs of his art work; reproductions of his art work; exhibition catalogs; and clippings.

Scope and Contents

Letters from Siporin to his brother and sister-in-law, Seymour and Mary Siporin, as well as letters to Siporin from Jack Levine and Carl Holty. Writings, including scripts for lectures, journal articles, an unfinished novel by Siporin, a journal describing his experience in North Africa during WWII as a war photographer and painter, notes taken during sabbaticals, and a eulogy written by Siporin for Henry Varnum Poor. Photographs of Siporin with friends and family, including Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Peter Pollack, Edward Millman, and Philip Guston and a portrait of Siporin by Arnold Newman, as well as Siporin's artwork. Subject files, including the Woodstock Art Conference, American Artists' Congress, the American Federation of Arts, WWII, the Army at War exhibit, Siporin's involvement in the WPA, as well material on Siporin's Haymarket drawings used for a 1934 issue of Left Front magazine. Works of art including two studies for St. Louis, Missouri, Post Office murals, and a sketch of Siporin by S.P. Kaufman.

Scope and Contents

A VHS video and DVD copy, transferred from 16mm motion picture film, showing Siporin at work on his St. Louis frescoes (b&w, 3 min., no sound). Interview transcripts of an interview with Siporin conducted by Geoffrey Swift as well as an interview with Siporin conducted by Melvyn Bragg for the BBC. Financial records, including sales contracts. Printed material, including exhibition catalogs and programs, and newspaper clippings as well as an exhibition poster from Babcock Galleries. Also included is a small amount of material relating to Jennie Siporin, Mitchell Siporin's mother.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Documentary photography
Mural painting and decoration -- United States
Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- United States
War in art
World War, 1939-1945 -- Art and the war

Types of Materials:

Video recordings

Names:

Cahill, Holger, 1887-1960
Cheney, Sheldon, 1886-
Federal Art Project
Halpert, Edith Gregor, 1900-1970
Millman, Edward, 1907-1964
Nordness, Lee
Rowan, Edward Beatty, 1898-1946