



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Bettina Steinke Papers, 1936-1998, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

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

2023/01/31

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
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3
Series 1: Bettina Steinke Papers, 1936-1998.....	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Bettina Steinke papers
Date:	1936-1998
Identifier:	AAA.steibett
Creator:	Steinke, Bettina, 1913-1999
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The scattered papers of portrait painter Bettina Steinke measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1936-1998. The collection focuses on Steinke's portraits of the members of the Circus Saints and Sinners Club of America (CSSCA) and military figures and includes photographs and printed material. Also found are two buttons, depicting Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower and made from Steinke's portraits.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 2001 by the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution via curator Wendy Reaves who received the papers from Susan Conway, a friend of Steinke's.

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

Bettina Steinke papers, 1936-1998. 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.

Conditions Governing Use

The Archives of American Art makes its archival collections available for non-commercial, educational and personal use unless restricted by copyright and/or donor restrictions, including but not limited to access and publication restrictions. AAA makes no representations concerning such rights and restrictions and it is the user's responsibility to determine whether rights or restrictions exist and to obtain any necessary permission to access, use, reproduce and publish the collections. Please refer to the Smithsonian's Terms of Use for additional information.

Biographical / Historical

Bettina Steinke (1913-1999) was a portrait painter in New York, New York. During World War II, she painted portraits for the United States War Department and was a member of The Circus Saints and Sinners Club of America (CSSCA), a national organization that raises money for local charities.

After ten years as a commercial illustrator Steinke's World War II portraits included subjects President Franklin Roosevelt, Generals Douglas MacArthur and Henry "Hap" Arnold, Admiral Chester Nimitz, and Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek.

Steinke became involved with the National Cowboy Hall of Fame (NCHF) in Oklahoma City during the 1960s, and was a founding member of the National Academy of Western Art. The NCHF held a retrospective of her work in 1995 and in 1996 Steinke received the John Singer Sargent Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Society of Portrait Artists.

Scope and Contents

The scattered papers of portrait painter Bettina Steinke measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1936-1998. The collection focuses on Steinke's portraits of the members of the Circus Saints and Sinners Club of America (CSSCA) and military figures and includes photographs and printed material. Also found are two buttons, depicting Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower and made from Steinke's portraits.

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:

Subjects:

- Women artists
- Women painters
- World War, 1939-1945 -- Art and the war

Names:

- Circus Saints & Sinners Club of America

Occupations:

- Portrait painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Bettina Steinke Papers, 1936-1998

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1, OVs 2-3)

Scope and Contents: Two buttons feature Steinke's portraits of Dwight Eisenhower and Franklin D. Roosevelt. One portrait of Steinke depicts her painting. Also found are photos of Steinke's studio and photos of others at events, portrait unveilings, and at workshops. Others depicted include Amanda Blake, John Connolly, Bob Lougheed, Tom Lovell, Joel McCrea, Will Penny, and Barbara Stanwyck. Photographs of works of art are portraits by Bettina Steinke of members of the Circus Saints and Sinners Club of America (CSSCA) and military figures. Also found are clippings and one exhibition catalog.

Box 1, Folder 1	Buttons, circa 1942
Box 1, Folder 2	Photographs, of Bettina Steinke and Others, 1944-1998
Box 1, Folder 3-4	Photographs, Portraits of CSSCA Members, 1936-1944
Box 1, Folder 5	Photographs, Portraits of Military Members, 1938-circa 1942
Oversize 2	Photographs, Portraits, Oversized, circa 1940
Box 1, Folder 6	Printed Material, 1939-1944
Oversize 3	Printed Material, Oversized, circa 1940

[Return to Table of Contents](#)