



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Photographs and Letters Relating to Mark Tobey Murals, circa 1933-1988, in the Archives of American Art

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Photographs and letters relating to Mark Tobey murals
Date:	circa 1933-1988
Identifier:	AAA.stramich
Creator:	Straight, Michael Whitney
Extent:	13 Items
Language:	English .
Summary:	The photographs and letters relating to Mark Tobey murals consist of nine photographs (ca. 1933) of murals of dancers by Mark Tobey at the Dartington Hall dance center in Devonshire, England; one photograph each of Mark Tobey and dancer Paula Morel; and two letters (1988) from Mary Bride Nicholson, the archivist at Dartington Hall, and donor Michael Straight discussing the murals.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The photographs and letters relating to Mark Tobey murals were donated to the Archives of American Art by Michael Straight, son of Dorothy Whitney Straight who was the founder of Dartington Hall. He found the photographs in the Dartington Hall archives.

Location of Originals

The two letters in the collection are photocopies. The original letters are in the AAA collection file.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reel 4283 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

The collection received a preliminary level of arrangement by Jean Fitzgerald in 1989. The collection was then processed and a finding aid prepared by Rihoko Ueno in 2021.

Preferred Citation

Photographs and Letters Relating to Mark Tobey Murals, circa 1933-1988. 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. Microfilmed materials must be consulted on microfilm. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

The donor, Michael Straight, grew up at Dartington Hall, Devonshire, England, an experimental community founded by his mother, Dorothy Whitney Straight and her second husband Leonard K. Elmhirst. The community included a progressive coeducational boarding school and a cluster of art centers. In the early 1930s, Straight's sister, Beatrice, returned from the Cornish School in Seattle, where she had studied drama, with Mark Tobey. He became an artist-in-residence and, around 1933, was commissioned to paint a series of murals in the Dartington dance center. In the following decade, the murals were damaged beyond repair and the walls were painted over.

Scope and Contents

The photographs and letters relating to Mark Tobey murals consist of nine photographs (ca. 1933) of murals of dancers by Mark Tobey at the Dartington Hall dance center in Devonshire, England; one photograph each of Mark Tobey and dancer Paula Morel; and two letters (1988) from Mary Bride Nicholson, the archivist at Dartington Hall, and donor Michael Straight discussing the murals.

Arrangement

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

- Series 1: Photographs and Letters Relating to Mark Tobey Murals (13 items; Folder 1)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Mural painting and decoration, British

Names:

Dartington Hall (Totnes, England)
Morel, Paula
Tobey, Mark

Occupations:

Muralists -- Washington (State) -- Seattle
Painters -- Washington (State) -- Seattle

Container Listing

Series 1: Photographs and Letters Relating to Mark Tobey Murals, circa 1933-1988

13 Items (Folder 1)

Scope and Contents: The photographs and letters relating to Mark Tobey murals consist of nine photographs (ca. 1933) of murals of dancers by Mark Tobey at the Dartington Hall dance center in Devonshire, England; one photograph each of Mark Tobey and dancer Paula Morel; and two letters (1988) from Mary Bride Nicholson, the archivist at Dartington Hall, and donor Michael Straight discussing the murals.

Folder 1 [Photographs and Letters, circa 1933-1988](#)

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