



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Maltby Sykes papers

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

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

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Maltby Sykes papers
Date:	1936-1992
Identifier:	AAA.sykewill
Creator:	Sykes, Maltby
Extent:	5.1 Linear feet
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Material on reel 3667 donated 1985 by Maltby Sykes. Unmicrofilmed material donated 1993 and 1995 by Sykes's widow, Marjorie Sykes.

Other Finding Aids

Finding aid for unmicrofilmed papers is available at Archives of American Art offices.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reel 3667 available 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

Maltby Sykes (1911-1992) was a painter, draftsman, lithographer, engraver, and teacher from Auburn, Alabama. Full name William Maltby Sykes. Sykes apprenticed with Diego Rivera in 1936, and later studied with George C. Miller, John Sloan and Fernand Leger. He was a combat artist in World War II and became a Professor in Art at Auburn University in 1954. He has exhibited at the American Color Print Society, the American Institute of Graphic Artists, and the Pennsylvania Academy.

Scope and Contents

Correspondence, writings, speeches, notes, teaching material, price lists, financial and legal information, press releases, printed material, and photographs relating to Sykes' career as an portrait painter and printmaker, his tenure as Professor of Art at Auburn University, and his 1936 assistantship to muralist Diego Rivera on murals for the Hotel Reforma in Mexico City.

Scope and Contents

Correspondence, 1940-1990 (1.4 ft.), with sitters, colleagues, galleries, associations and organizations, universities, and others, among them Albert Christ-Janer, Fritz Eichenberg, George C. Miller, and the National Endowment for the Arts; writings, including "Multimetal Lithography for Artists", 1967, written as a result of a grant from the NEA, and containing original prints; lectures delivered at various universities and exhibitions describing his printmaking and portraiture work; notes; teaching material, 1973-1976, relating to Sykes' tenure as Professor of Art at Auburn University; price lists of artwork and other exhibition records; financial records, 1944-1985, mainly receipts for printmaking materials; press releases, 1966-1989, mainly concerning Sykes' award from the NEA and various exhibitions; printed material, ca.1940-ca.1990 (1 ft.), including exhibition announcements and invitations, a dismantled scrapbook containing newspaper clippings, and newsletters from Auburn University and various clubs and organizations; original artwork (0.5 ft.), including sketchbooks and loose sketches and drawings; and photographs (1 ft.), mainly of works of art by Sykes.

Scope and Contents

Unmicrofilmed documentation relating to Sykes' 1936 assistantship to Diego Rivera is documented by printed material, photographs, many depicting Rivera at work on the mural, and writings, including a manuscript by Sykes "Diego Rivera Remembered: An Account of the Hotel Reforma Mural Project," 1985.

Scope and Contents

REEL 3667: Sykes' notes on the Hotel Reforma mural project; two letters from Diego Rivera (in Spanish with accompanying translations by Sykes), one providing proof of Sykes' status as a student of fresco painting and the other granting Sykes permission to make sketches and copies of Rivera's paintings; records of supplies; plastering schedules, including diagrams of four fresco panels showing time schedules for plastering; 10 drawings by Sykes of the frescoes; clippings, including a typescript and translation of a newspaper article from "Excelsior" describing the controversy surrounding the murals and Rivera's involvement with Mexican labor unions; and photographs and negatives of the preparation of the walls, Rivera and assistants at work on the murals, and Rivera's studies and finished panels.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Latino and Latin American artists
- Lithography
- Mural painting and decoration -- Mexico -- Mexico City
- Prints -- Technique

Types of Materials:

- Drawings
- Scrapbooks

Names:

- Christ-Janer, Albert, 1910-1973

Eichenberg, Fritz, 1901-1990
Miller, George Charles, b. 1894
Rivera, Diego, 1886-1957

Occupations:

Painters -- Alabama -- Auburn
Painters -- United States
Portrait painters -- United States
Printmakers -- Alabama -- Auburn