



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Tirca Karlis Gallery Records, circa 1920-1980, in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

Funding for the processing of this collection was
provided by the Smithsonian Women's Committee.

2021/05/20

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Tirca Karlis Gallery records
Identifier:	AAA.tirckarl
Date:	circa 1920-1980
Creator:	Tirca Karlis Gallery (Provincetown, Mass.)
Extent:	4.7 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	<p>The records of Provincetown, Massachusetts art gallery Tirca Karlis Gallery measure 4.7 linear feet and date from circa 1920 to 1980. The collection comprises Tirca Karlis's personal papers documenting her dance career, her death, and including photos of family and friends; correspondence with galleries, museums, clients, and artists; artist's files consisting mostly of printed material on George Grosz, David Burliuk, Hugo Robus, Milton Avery, Robert Goodnough, and others; administrative and business records detailing the gallery's activities through sales and inventory records, receipts and invoices, guestbooks, tax ledgers, and consignment records; and printed materials such as exhibition announcements and catalogs for the Tirca Karlis Gallery and other galleries, clippings, press releases, and exhibition schedules.</p>

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Tirca Karlis Gallery records were donated from 1981 to 1982 by Aaron Cohen, son of Tirca Karlis Cohen, and current owner of the Tirca Karlis Gallery. Five additional items were donated in 2014 by Matthew Weseley.

Citation

Tirca Karlis Gallery records, circa 1920-1980. 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.

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Biographical / Historical

The Tirca Karlis Gallery (est. 1958) was a commercial art gallery in Provincetown, Massachusetts.

Tirca Karlis (b. early 1900s-1974) was born in Russia and immigrated to New York in 1930 with her husband Karlis (Charles) Cohen. Having studied dance at the Palucca School of Dance in Dresden, Germany, Karlis began her life in New York teaching dance and holding dance recitals. Her involvement in the arts community allowed Karlis to become acquainted with artists in New York whose art she began collecting. In 1953, Karlis opened her first small gallery in New York. She subsequently opened a summer gallery in Westport, Connecticut, before opening the Provincetown gallery in 1958.

Karlis maintained close relationships with many of the artists the gallery represented including Milton Avery, Raphael Soyer, Robert Goodnough, Leo Manso, George Grosz, David Burliuk, Hugo Robus, and Edward Giobbi.

Karlis died in 1974. Her husband and son, Aaron Cohen, operated the gallery into the early 1980s.

Scope and Contents

The records of Provincetown, Massachusetts art gallery Tirca Karlis Gallery measure 4.7 linear feet and date from circa 1920 to 1980. The collection comprises Tirca Karlis's personal papers documenting her dance career, her death, and including photos of family and friends; correspondence with galleries, museums, clients, and artists; artist's files consisting mostly of printed material on George Grosz, David Burliuk, Hugo Robus, Milton Avery, Robert Goodnough, and others; administrative and business records detailing the gallery's activities through sales and inventory records, receipts and invoices, guestbooks, tax ledgers, and consignment records; and printed materials such as exhibition announcements and catalogs for the Tirca Karlis Gallery and other galleries, clippings, press releases, and exhibition schedules.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as five series.

- Series 1: Tirca Karlis Personal Papers, circa 1920-circa 1975 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1, OV 7)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1929-1980 (0.8 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 3: Artist's Files, 1947-1980 (1.2 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 4: Administrative and Business Records, 1954-1980 (2.2 linear feet; Boxes 2-5)
- Series 5: Printed Materials, 1937-1980 (0.3 linear feet; Boxes 5-6, OV 7)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Women art dealers

Names:

Avery, Milton, 1885-1965
Burliuk, David, 1882-1967
Cohen, Tirca Karlis
Grosz, George, 1893-1959

Robus, Hugo, 1885-

Functions:

Art galleries, Commercial -- Massachusetts

Container Listing

Series 1: Tirca Karlis Personal Papers, circa 1920-circa 1975

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 7)

Scope and Contents: This series houses personal files for Karlis that include an obituary, the guest register book from her memorial service, and an article about her, as well as legal certificates, contracts, and estate documents. Records documenting her dance career include her diploma and identification card from the Palucca School of Dance, dance class teaching records, and dance recital ephemera. Also found here are photographs of Karlis at the gallery and personal photographs of her family and friends.

Box 1, Folder 1	Affidavit Between Charles Cohen, Abraham Friedman, and Edward Goldberg, 1930
Box 1, Folder 2	Clippings on Karlis, 1974 Notes: Includes Karlis's obituary.
Box 1, Folder 3	Death Certificate and Estate Court Documents, 1974
Box 1, Folder 4	Guest Register at Karlis's Memorial Service, 1974
Box 1, Folder 5	Karlis's Dance Records, circa 1930
Oversize 7	Marriage Contract (Ketubah), 1930
Box 1, Folder 6	Photographs of Karlis at Gallery, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 7	Photographs, Personal, circa 1920-circa 1975
Box 1, Folder 8	Trade Name Certificate, 1954
Box 1, Folder 9	U.S. Citizenship Certificate, 1933

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1929-1980

0.8 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is with galleries, museums, clients, and artists regarding pricing, sales, exhibitions, and other business related to the gallery. While the bulk of the correspondence is professional, there are also scattered personal letters between Karlis and artists.

Box 1, Folder 10	General, 1929-1959
Box 1, Folder 11	General, 1960-1965
Box 1, Folder 12	General, 1965-1969
Box 1, Folder 13	General, 1970-1975
Box 1, Folder 14	General, 1976-1980
Box 1, Folder 15	General, undated

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Series 3: Artist's Files, 1947-1980

1.2 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Series consists of exhibition catalogs, announcements, clippings, and other printed materials relating to the artists documented here. Some files also contain photographs of artwork, correspondence, and biographical information for George Grosz, David Burliuk, Hugo Robus, Milton Avery, and Robert Goodnough, among others.

Box 1, Folder 16	Albert, Calvin, 1960-1970
Box 1, Folder 17	Andrews, Benny, 1970-1977
Box 1, Folder 18-21	Avery, Milton, 1947-1979
Box 1, Folder 22	Baizerman, Saul, 1967-1970
Box 1, Folder 23	Bearden, Romare, circa 1970
Box 1, Folder 24	Beauchamp, Robert, 1968-1972
Box 1, Folder 25	Botkin, Henry, 1957-1972
Box 1, Folder 26	Brigadier, Anne, circa 1974
Box 1, Folder 27	Burliuk, David, 1951-1965
Box 1, Folder 28	Clerk, Pierre, circa 1971
Box 1, Folder 29	Constant, George, 1965
Box 1, Folder 30	Daphnis, Nassos, 1969-1972
Box 1, Folder 31	de Creeft, José, 1964-1966
Box 1, Folder 32	Drexler, Sherman, circa 1965
Box 1, Folder 33	Evergood, Philip, 1955-1972
Box 1, Folder 34	Frank, Mary, 1973
Box 1, Folder 35	Fromboluti, Sideo, circa 1973
Box 1, Folder 36	Giobbi, Edward, 1963-1978
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Goodnough, Robert, 1960-1980
Box 2, Folder 3	Goulet, Lorrie, 1961-1968

Box 2, Folder 4	Gross, Chaim, 1947-1977
Box 2, Folder 5	Grosz, George, 1957-1974
Box 2, Folder 6	Grosz, Peter Regarding George Grosz Estate, 1960-1971
Box 2, Folder 7	Henderson, James S., circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 8	Hopkins, Budd, 1963-1973
Box 2, Folder 9	Johnson, Lester, 1963-1971
Box 2, Folder 10	Manacher, Frances, 1950-circa 1965
Box 2, Folder 11	Manso, Leo, 1961-1971
Box 2, Folder 12	Motherwell, Robert, circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 13	Sigel, Barry, 1977
Box 2, Folder 14	Soyer, Raphael, 1962-1966
Box 2, Folder 15	Stuart, Michelle, circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 16	Various Artist's Biographical Information, circa 1960s

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Series 4: Administrative and Business Records, 1954-1980

2.2 Linear feet (Boxes 2-5)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of consignment records; 22 inventory books that include artist names, artwork and descriptions, and may include sales and pricing information; purchase invoices and receipts; 3 sales ledgers and receipts that include buyer information; 9 tax ledgers; and return receipts. Also included are 4 guestbooks; an address book; price lists; a file for the gallery's publicity; photographs, slides, and a transparency of works of art; and a couple of general files containing a mixture of receipts and invoices, prices lists, and other business papers.

Box 2, Folder 17	Address Book, circa 1960s
Box 2, Folder 18	Consignments, Multiple Artist Groups, 1962-1974
Box 2, Folder 19	Consignments, Single Artists, 1963-1974
Box 2, Folder 20-22	Consignment Receipts, A-Y, 1961-1974 Notes: The records are arranged alphabetically by artist name.
Box 2, Folder 23-24	General, 1954-1980
Box 2, Folder 25-28	Guestbooks, 1959-1969 Notes: 4 books
Box 3, Folder 1-19	Inventory Books, 1959-1973 Notes: Box 3 contains a total of 19 books. The book in folder 15 also includes to-do lists, contacts, exhibition schedules, as well as inventory records.
Box 4, Folder 1	Inventory Book, 1972
Box 4, Folder 2	Inventory Book, 1974 Notes: The book includes inventories of consigned artwork.
Box 4, Folder 3	Inventory Book, circa 1975 Notes: Includes records on Milton Avery's Estate.
Box 4, Folder 4	Notes and Lists, circa 1960s Notes: Includes an empty ledger book with notes on the inside back cover.
Box 4, Folder 5	Price Lists, circa 1973
Box 4, Folder 6	Publicity, 1954-1977
Box 4, Folder 7	Purchase Invoices, Artwork, 1966-1969
Box 4, Folder 8	Purchase Receipts, Artwork, 1954-1971

Box 4, Folder 9	Purchase Receipts, Artwork and Business Expenses, 1953-1972
Box 4, Folder 10	Return Receipts, Artwork, 1963-1974
Box 4, Folder 11-13	Sales Ledgers, 1960-1963 Notes: 3 books
Box 4, Folder 14-22	Sales Receipts, 1962-1972
Box 4, Folder 23-28	Tax Ledgers, 1963-1973 Notes: The folders contain 8 ledgers in total. The ledgers record business expenses, payments to artists, commission payments, and other tax related information.
Box 5, Folder 1	Tax Ledger, 1979
Box 5, Folder 2	Works of Art, Photographs of, circa 1970
Box 5, Folder 3	Works of Art, Slides and Transparency of, circa 1979

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Series 6: Printed Materials, 1937-1980

0.3 Linear feet (Boxes 5-6, OV 7)

Scope and Contents: The series contains booklets and pamphlets, clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs for the Tirca Karlis Gallery and other galleries, exhibition schedules, flyers, newsletters, and press releases.

Box 5, Folder 4	Booklets and Pamphlets, 1953-1977
Box 5, Folder 5	Clippings, circa 1970
Box 5, Folder 6	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Tirca Karlis Gallery, 1954-1977
Box 5, Folder 7-9	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Other Galleries, 1937-1978
Box 6, Folder 1-2	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Other Galleries, 1937-1978
Oversize 7	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Other Galleries, 1960
Oversize 7	Exhibition Poster, Other Galleries, circa 1960s
Box 6, Folder 3	Exhibition Schedules, 1972-1980 Notes: The schedules are for the Tirca Karlis Gallery, with one schedule for The Swansborough Gallery.
Box 6, Folder 4	Flyers, circa 1960s
Box 6, Folder 5	Newsletters, 1976-1978
Box 6, Folder 6	Press Releases, 1955-circa 1977

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