



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Erna Weill Papers, 1934-1983, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

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

2023/03/06

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Erna Weill papers
Date:	1934-1983
Identifier:	AAA.weilerna
Creator:	Weill, Erna, 1904-1996
Extent:	0.4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of New Jersey sculptor Erna Weill measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1934 to 1983. The bulk of the papers concern Weill's portrait busts of prominent political and social figures. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, photographs, printed material, and writings. Of note are letters between Weill and Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 1983 by Erna Weill.

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

Erna Weill papers, 1934-1983. 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

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Biographical / Historical

Born in Germany, Erna Weill (1904-1996) was a sculptor and educator in Teaneck, New Jersey. She was known for her portrait busts of notable figures in the Civil Rights Movement.

Scope and Contents

The papers of New Jersey sculptor Erna Weill measure 0.4 linear feet and date from 1934 to 1983. The bulk of the papers concern Weill's portrait busts of prominent political and social figures. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, photographs, printed material, and writings. Of note are letters between Weill and Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

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 educators
Women sculptors

Names:

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968

Occupations:

Educators -- New Jersey -- Teaneck
Sculptors -- New Jersey -- Teaneck

Container Listing

Series 1: Erna Weill Papers, 1934-1983

0.4 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Biographical materials include a resume, a New Jersey Senate resolution honoring Weill, and a photocopy of a certificate of appreciation from the Teaneck Township Council. Correspondence is with American Friends of the Hebrew University, Leonard Bernstein, philosopher Martin Buber, Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King, Fiorello H. La Guardia, Golda Meir, National Portrait Gallery, Linus Pauling, Kalman Yaron of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and others. The bulk of the letters are between Weill and potential subjects for sculpture.

Photographs depict Weill in her studio, and Martin Buber, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rudolph Serkin, and Elie Wiesel. Also found are photos of her portrait busts of Rabbi Leo Baeck, Leonard Bernstein, Martin Buber, Abraham Heschel, Fiorello H. La Guardia, King, Golda Meir, Linus Pauling, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wiesel and others, and figural, architectural and ceremonial sculpture. Printed materials include clippings, exhibition announcements, and catalogs. Writings consist of a handwritten draft of Weill's speech given at a 1983 reception in her honor, and lists of Weill's sculpture and the collectors who own her works.

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Material, 1983
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence, 1934-1983
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographs, of Erna Weill and Subjects, 1954-1968
Box 1, Folder 4	Photographs, of Works of Art, 1960s
Box 1, Folder 5	Photographs, of Works of Art, 1960s
Box 1, Folder 6	Printed Material, circa 1950-1983
Box 1, Folder 7	Writings and Notes, 1983

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