



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Marguerite Wildenhain Papers, 1930-1982, in the Archives of American Art

Jean Fitzgerald and Erin Kinhart

July 05, 2011

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	
Administrative Information	1
Biographical Note	2
Scope and Content Note	2
Arrangement	2
Names and Subjects	
Container Listing	
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1943	4
Series 2: Correspondence, 1940-1981	5
Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-1980	7
Series 4: Artwork, circa 1961-1969, 1975	10
Series 5: Scrapbooks, 1934-1963	11
Series 6: Printed Material, circa 1932-1982	12
Series 7: Photographs, 1930-1976	13
Series 8: Audio-Visual Recordings, 1954, circa 1965	15
Series 9: Unprocessed Addition, circa 1950-1980	16

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Marguerite Wildenhain papers
Date:	1930-1982
Identifier:	AAA.wildmarg
Creator:	Wildenhain, Marguerite
Extent:	3.7 Linear feet
Language:	Collection is in English and German.
Summary:	<p>The papers of California ceramicist and educator Marguerite Wildenhain measure 3.7 linear feet and date from 1930 to 1982. Found within the papers are biographical sketches; correspondence with patrons, students, and colleagues, including Eugene Anderson, T. S. Eliot, and Gerhard Marcks; writings by Wildenhain and others; designs for pottery and other artwork; one scrapbook; news clippings, exhibition catalogs, and scattered printed material. Also found are photographs of Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain, Pond Farm, workshops, exhibitions, and artwork, as well as two film reels depicting Wildenhain lecturing and in her studio. There is a 0.3 linear foot unprocessed addition to this collection donated in 2020 that includes photographs and negatives of Wildenhain's works of art, circa 1960-1970, (many in the collection of Forrest L. Merrill or Luther College) taken by David Stone and photographs at Pond Farm, circa 1980. Additional photographs are of Wildenhain and her works of art, circa 1950 (possibly taken by Otto Hagel).</p>

Administrative Information

Provenance

The collection was donated by Marguerite Wildenhain in 1973-1981. Additional material was donated in 2020 by David Stone, a student of Wildenhain.

Related Material

Also found at the Archives of American Art are the Marguerite Wildenhain exhibition records, 1977-1981, donated by the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art; an oral history interview of Marguerite Wildenhain conducted 1982 Mar. 14, by Hazel Bray; and the Frans Wildenhain papers, 1890-1986. Additional Marguerite Wildenhain letters to Gerhard Marcks are located at the Archiv fur Buldende Kunst of the Germanisches Museum, Nurnberg, Germany.

Alternative Forms Available

A portion of the collection is available on 35 mm microfilm reels 5045-5048 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

The collection was fully processed in 1995 by Jean Fitzgerald. The finding aid was written in 2011 by Erin Kinhart. Motion picture film reels were inspected and re-housed in 2016 with funding provided by the Smithsonian Collections Care and Preservation Fund.

Preferred Citation

Marguerite Wildenhain papers, 1930-1982. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

Terms of 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 Note

Marguerite Wildenhain (1896-1985) was a ceramicist and educator in Guerneville, California. Born Marguerite Friedlaender in Lyon, France, Wildenhain received training in sculpture at the Berlin School of Applied Arts. She later worked as a designer for the Royal Berlin Porcelain Factory, leaving in 1919 to apprentice in pottery at the Bauhaus, under Max Krehan and Gerhard Marcks. After receiving her degree as master-potter, she was employed at the Municipal School for Arts and Crafts in Halle Saale, Germany. Fleeing the Nazis in 1933, she and her husband, potter Frans Wildenhain, operated a workshop in Holland before immigrating to the United States in 1940. In 1942 she settled near Guerneville, California, and established an artist colony known as Pond Farm. Following her divorce, she remained at Pond Farm and operated a summer school which lasted until 1980, training approximately 25 students each summer.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of California ceramicist and educator Marguerite Wildenhain measure 3.7 linear feet and date from 1930 to 1982. Found within the papers are biographical sketches; correspondence with patrons, students, and colleagues, including Eugene Anderson, T. S. Eliot, and Gerhard Marcks; writings by Wildenhain and others; designs for pottery and other artwork; one scrapbook; news clippings, exhibition catalogs, and scattered printed material. Also found are photographs of Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain, Pond Farm, workshops, exhibitions, and artwork, as well as two film reels depicting Wildenhain lecturing and in her studio. There is a 0.3 linear foot unprocessed addition to this collection donated in 2020 that includes photographs and negatives of Wildenhain's works of art, circa 1960-1970, (many in the collection of Forrest L. Merrill or Luther College) taken by David Stone and photographs at Pond Farm, circa 1980. Additional photographs are of Wildenhain and her works of art, circa 1950 (possibly taken by Otto Hagel).

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 9 series:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1943 (Box 1; 1 folder)

- Series 2: Correspondence, 1940-1981 (Box 1; 0.4 linear feet)
 - Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-1980 (Box 1-2; 1.0 linear foot)
 - Series 4: Artwork, circa 1961-1969, 1975 (Box 2, OV 5; 4 folders)
 - Series 5: Scrapbooks, 1934-1963 (Box 2; 3 folders)
 - Series 6: Printed Material, circa 1932-1982 (Box 2, OV 5; 0.2 linear feet)
 - Series 7: Photographs, 1930-1976 (Box 2-3, OV 4; 1.2 linear feet)
 - Series 8: Audio-Visual Recordings, 1954, circa 1965 (Box 3, FC 6-7; 0.2 linear feet)
 - Series 9: Unprocessed Addition, circa 1950-1980 (Box 8, OV 9; 0.3 linear feet)
-

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art -- Study and teaching
Women artists
Women ceramicists

Types of Materials:

Motion pictures (visual works)
Scrapbooks
Video recordings

Names:

Anderson, Eugene Newton
Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888-1965
Marcks, Gerhard
Wildenhain, Frans, 1905-1980

Occupations:

Ceramicists -- California

Functions:

Artists' studios -- California

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1943

(Box 1; 1 folder)

Scope and Contents: A folder of biographical material from 1943 consists of four biographical sketches.

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Material, 1943
-----------------	-----------------------------

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Correspondence, 1940-1981

(Box 1; 0.4 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is with patrons, students, and colleagues including Eugene Anderson, T. S. Eliot, and Gerhard Marcks. One letter, Mar. 3, 1980, from Marcks contains a photograph of Wildenhain and other German potters. Sixty-six letters are in German.

Arrangement: Correspondence is arranged chronologically.

Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence, 1940-1959
Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence, 1960-1961
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1962
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1963
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, 1964
Box 1, Folder 8-9	Correspondence, 1965 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 10-11	Correspondence, 1966 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 12-16	Correspondence, 1967 (5 folders)
Box 1, Folder 17	Correspondence, 1968
Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence, 1970-1971
Box 1, Folder 19	Correspondence, 1972-1973
Box 1, Folder 20-21	Correspondence, 1974 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 22-23	Correspondence, 1975 (2 folders)
Box 1, Folder 24-26	Correspondence, 1976 (3 folders)
Box 1, Folder 27	Correspondence, 1977
Box 1, Folder 28-29	Correspondence, 1978

(2 folders)

Box 1, Folder 30	Correspondence, 1979
Box 1, Folder 31	Correspondence, 1980
Box 1, Folder 32	Correspondence, 1981

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-1980

(Box 1-2; 1.0 linear foot)

Scope and Contents: Writings includes notes and lists of museum exhibition and lecture sites, collectors, and students. Also found are essays and lectures by Wildenhain as well as typescripts for her books *Pottery: Form and Expression*, *The Invisible Core*, and ...*That We Look and See: An Admirer Looks at the Indian*. There are also two short essays by others about Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain.

Box 1, Folder 33	Miscellaneous Lists, undated, 1952-1980
Box 1, Folder 34	Miscellaneous Notes, undated
Box 1, Folder 35	"Development of the Pond Farm Pottery and School," undated
Box 1, Folder 36	"Pond Farm Pottery in Guerneville, California," undated
Box 1, Folder 37	"Introduction to Movie on Pond Farm," undated
Box 1, Folder 38	Lecture, "Design and its Relation to Techniques," undated
Box 1, Folder 39	"First Report of the Educational Committee of the Designer-Craftmen of California on Education in the Arts and Crafts," undated
Box 1, Folder 40	Lecture, "The Pursuit of Excellence in Art Education," undated
Box 1, Folder 41	"Elements of Design," undated
Box 1, Folder 42	"?For it is a Continuous Process," undated
Box 1, Folder 43	"To Leonora," undated
Box 1, Folder 44	Lecture, "Philosophy of a Potter," undated
Box 1, Folder 45	"Pottery," undated
Box 1, Folder 46	"Thoughts on Pricing and Selling Pottery," undated
Box 1, Folder 47	Lecture, "History of Pottery-Making," 1940
Box 1, Folder 48	[A School of Art Teaching Ceramics], 1940
Box 1, Folder 49	"Pottery as a Craft in the Machine Age," 1947
Box 1, Folder 50	[To Learn a Craft], 1949
Box 1, Folder 51	Lecture, "Ceramic Design or the Relation of Craftsman to Industry," 1950

Box 1, Folder 52	Lecture, "Craft and Industry," 1950
Box 1, Folder 53	"Pottery as a Creative Craft," 1950
Box 1, Folder 54	Lecture, "Hand Made Pottery in the Machine Age," 1951
Box 1, Folder 55	Lecture, "The Potter in the New World," 1952
Box 1, Folder 56	Lecture, "Open Letter to Bernhard Leach," 1953
Box 1, Folder 57	Lecture, "what Makes a Potter Good," 1953
Box 1, Folder 58	"Color in Ceramics," 1954
Box 1, Folder 59	Lecture, "Form and Technique," 1955
Box 1, Folder 60	Lecture, [Interaction between Client and Craftsman], 1956
Box 1, Folder 61	"Design and its Relation to Techniques," 1957
Box 1, Folder 62	Lecture, "Socio-economic Outlook for the Craftsman Today," 1957
Box 1, Folder 63	Lecture, "Art Education in Our Time," 1958
Box 1, Folder 64	Lecture, "External Pressures on Creativity," 1958
Box 1, Folder 65	Lecture, "Nature as a Source of Inspiration," 1960
Box 1, Folder 66	"Production and Integrity," 1960
Box 1, Folder 67	Lecture, "Shaping the Clay," 1962
Box 1, Folder 68	Lecture: "Vision in Art," 1963
Box 1, Folder 69	"Creative Freedom and Integrity," 1965
Box 1, Folder 70-76	Drafts of Book Pottery: Form and Expression, 1957 (7 folders)
Box 1, Folder 77-79	Drafts of Book The Invisible Core, 1965-1972 (3 folders)
Box 2, Folder 1-8	Drafts of Book The Invisible Core, 1965-1972 (8 folders)
Box 2, Folder 9-12	Drafts of Book ?That We Look and See: An Admirer Looks at the Indian, 1975-1979

(4 folders)

Box 2, Folder 13

Writings by Others regarding Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain, undated

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Artwork, circa 1961-1969, 1975

(Box 2, OV 5; 4 folders)

Scope and Contents: Artwork consists of designs for pottery, a floorplan, and a diagram of a kick wheel. Also found are a folder of drawings which include a 1975 note by Marguerite Wildenhain which reads, "25 drawings that have, more or less, inspired me for pots, tiles or sculptures."

Box 2, Folder 14 Designs for Pottery, undated

Box 2, Folder 15 Drawings of Floorplan and Kickwheel, undated
(Oversized material housed in OV 5)

Box 2, Folder 16 Drawings, 1961-1969, 1975

Oversize 5, Folder Oversize Drawings of Floorplan and Kickwheel, undated
(Oversized material from Box 2, folder 15)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Scrapbooks, 1934-1963

(Box 2; 3 folders)

Scope and Contents: One scrapbook contains clippings, exhibition announcements, and a photograph of art work.

Box 2, Folder 17-19	Scrapbooks, 1934-1963 (3 folders; disbound)
---------------------	--

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Printed Material, circa 1932-1982

(Box 2, OV 5; 0.2 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Printed material includes numerous clippings documenting Wildenhain's career, exhibition announcements and catalogs, a press release, brochures concerning Wildenhain and pottery classes, and books, including ...*That We Look and See: An Admirer Looks at the Indians* by Wildenhain.

Box 2, Folder 20	Clippings, undated
Box 2, Folder 21	Clippings, 1932
Box 2, Folder 22	Clippings, 1940-1949
Box 2, Folder 23	Clippings, 1953-1959
Box 2, Folder 24	Clippings, 1960-1968
Box 2, Folder 25	Clippings, 1971-1977
Box 2, Folder 26	Clippings, 1981
Box 2, Folder 27	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, undated
Box 2, Folder 28	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1968-1982
Box 2, Folder 29	Press Release, 1955
Box 2, Folder 30	Brochures regarding Marguerite Wildenhain, 1951-1971
Box 2, Folder 31	Brochures regarding Pottery Classes and Seminars, 1953-1965
Box 2, Folder 32	Miscellaneous Brochures, 1952-1978
Box 2, Folder 33	Book, <i>Kleine Bauhaus-Fibel</i> by Hans Wingler, 1974
Box 2, Folder 34	Book, ? <i>That We Look and See: An Admirer Looks at the Indian</i> by Wildenhain, 1979
Box 2, Folder 35	Miscellaneous, undated

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 7: Photographs, 1930-1976

(Box 2-3, OV 4; 1.2 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Photographs are of Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain, Marguerite Wildenhain in her home and studio at Pond Farm, art works, and exhibition installations. Also found is a family photograph album which includes photographs from France, Germany, and Holland.

Box 2, Folder 36	Marguerite Wildenhain, 1940-1973 (Oversized material housed in Box 4)
Box 2, Folder 37	Family Album, 1933-1935
Box 2, Folder 38	Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain, 1930-1938
Box 2, Folder 39	Slides, Marguerite and Frans Wildenhain, undated
Box 3, Folder 1	Marguerite Wildenhain conducting her Pond Farm Workshop, 1980
Box 3, Folder 2	Pond Farm, undated
Box 3, Folder 3	Slides, Pond Farm and Workshop, 1942-1960
Box 3, Folder 4	Slides, Wildenhain Demonstrating Pot-throwing, undated
Box 3, Folder 5	Art Work Produced in Germany 1926-1933, undated
Box 3, Folder 6	Album, Art Works (Disbound), undated
Box 3, Folder 7	Album, Art Works (Disbound), undated
Box 3, Folder 8	Album, Art Works (Disbound), undated
Box 3, Folder 9-18	Art Works Executed 1952-1972 [photos by David Stone], undated (10 folders)
Box 3, Folder 19	Art Works Marked with Plate Numbers, undated
Box 3, Folder 20-26	Art Works, undated (7 folders)
Box 3, Folder 27-29	Slides of Art Works, 1965-1969 (3 folders)
Box 3, Folder 30	Art Work, T.S. Eliot Vase "Murder in the Cathedral", 1951
Box 3, Folder 31	Art Works, 1962

Box 3, Folder 32	Slides, Miscellaneous Art Work, 1965-1969
Box 3, Folder 33	Slides, Works in the Smithsonian Collection, undated, 1976
Box 3, Folder 34	Slides, Works from Collection of Carol McFarlan, Petaluma, Cal., 1976
Box 3, Folder 35	Exhibition Installation, College of Education, Great Falls, Montana, 1948
Box 3, Folder 36	Exhibition Installation, San Francisco Museum of Art, 1954
Box 3, Folder 37	Exhibition Installation, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1962
Box 3, Folder 38	Miscellaneous Exhibition Installations, undated
Oversize 4	Oversize Photographs of Marguerite Wildenhain, 1940-1973 (Oversized material from Box 2, Folder 36)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 8: Audio-Visual Recordings, 1954, circa 1965

(Box 3, FC 6-7; 0.2 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: The audio-visual material consists of 16 mm film reels entitled "From a Lump of Clay" (called "Pond Farm" on the duplicate VHS videocassette), showing Wildenhain at work, and "Scripps College," showing a lecture by Wildenhain. Both films have been transferred onto one VHS videocassette.

Box 3, Folder 39	"Scripps College Lecture" and "From a Lump of Clay/Pond Farm", 1954 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
	Notes: The audio-visual material consists of 16 mm film reels entitled "From a Lump of Clay" (called "Pond Farm" on the duplicate VHS videocassette), showing Wildenhain at work, and "Scripps College," showing a lecture by Wildenhain. Both films have been transferred onto one VHS videocassette.
Item FC 6	"Scripps College Lecture", 1954 1 Motion picture film (16mm) Notes: color, silent; original film can label reads "Lecture: Scripps College; Movie taken in +/- 1945 or so at Scripps College when I gave my first seminar. The S.C. Bulletin printed my 1st lecture there."
Item FC 7	"From a Lump of Clay", circa 1965 1 Film reel (16 mm)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 9: Unprocessed Addition, circa 1950-1980

0.3 Linear feet

Box 8	Unprocessed Papers
-------	--------------------

Oversize 9	Unprocessed Papers
------------	--------------------

[Return to Table of Contents](#)