



Smithsonian  
*Freer Gallery of Art and  
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery*

Volkmar Wentzel Papers

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Local Numbers.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	1
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects .....	2

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Volkmar Wentzel Papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	FSA.A1998.02
<b>Date:</b>	1947-1994
<b>Extent:</b>	59 Items (items (5 linear ft.); 20 x 24 or smaller)
<b>Creator:</b>	Wentzel, Volkmar Kurt, 1915-2006
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Donated by Volkmar Wentzel, 1998

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

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## Biographical / Historical

Volkmar Kurt Wentzel (1915-2006) was an accomplished photographer, particularly in the 1940's. Born in Dresden, Germany, he emigrated to the United States at around the age of 20 and immediately began work as a photojournalist at Underwood and Underwood. He served as an aerial photographer and photo-intelligence officer during World War II. After the war he spent extensive time photographing Ladakh (western Tibet), Nepal, and India. He photographed widely in the United States, Europe, and Africa as well. He wrote and documented photographically cave temples in India as a correspondent for the National Geographic Society between 1946-1946. He received many accolades for his photography and has exhibited his work both in the United States and abroad.

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## Scope and Contents

Papers, 1947-1994, of photographer and author Volkmar Kurt Wentzel, regarding a two year survey conducted for the National Geographic Society during 1946-1947, to visually document caves, temples, and sculpture of India, including: his typescript draft (photocopy), [after 1946], written for the National Geographic Magazine on the Ajanta and Ellora temples; a proof, 1953, of his article entitled "India's Sculptured Temple Caves"; a lecture typescript entitle "A Walter Mitty Fantasy," presented to the Literary Society, 1994, along with a brochure and checklist for his related exhibition of photographs of Indian rock-cut temples and sculptures held at the Cosmos Club, Washington, D.C.; and 54 photographs, silver prints and five cibachromes, 1947, many signed by the photographer, dated, and captioned. Photographs

depict the temples, sculpture, and frescoes of Ellora, Ajanta, Khajuraho, Halebid, Fatehpur Sikri, and Red Fort ,Delhi.

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## Arrangement

Records; Organized in four boxes ; Arranged by form of material: Boxes 1-3: Photographs. Box 4: Typescript, Brochure, Printed Material, Photographs.

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## Local Numbers

FSA A1998.02

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

Cave temples  
Indian art

### Types of Materials:

Papers  
Photographs -- 1940-1950 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin  
Photographs -- 1940-1950 -- Color -- Reproductions  
Typescripts

### Geographic Names:

Ajanta Caves (India)  
Ellora Caves (India)  
Fatehpur Sikri (India)  
Khajuraho (India)  
Lal Qila (Delhi, India)