



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Joseph A. Imhof photograph collection

Rachel Menyuk

2020

National Museum of the American Indian
4220 Silver Hill Rd
Suitland, Maryland 20746-2863
nmaiarchives@si.edu
<http://nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/archive/>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Joseph A. Imhof photograph collection
Date:	circa 1894-1964
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.142
Creator:	Imhof, Joseph, 1871-1955 Rinehart, F. A. (Frank A.) (Photographer) Goff, O. S. (Orlando Scott), 1843-1917 (Photographer)
Extent:	89 Glass plate negatives 127 Photographic prints 116 Copy negatives
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection includes glass plate negatives, copy negatives and photographic prints taken and collected by Joseph Imhof, a lithographer and painter known for documenting Pueblo culture in New Mexico. These include images shot by Imhof in Acoma, Isleta, Santa Clara (K'apovi) and Taos Pueblos; glass plate negatives (copies) of Frank Rinehart portraits; original glass plate negatives made by Orlando Scott Goff among the Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) in Montana circa 1894; photographic prints of Imhof artworks; and photographs of Joseph and Sarah Imhof and their home in Taos, New Mexico.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The glass plate negatives were a Gift of Joseph Imhof in 1930. It is still unclear how/when the photographic prints were acquired by the museum, but they were likely donated by Sarah Imhof along with a collection of Imhof artwork in the 1960s.

Separated Materials

The uncataloged photographic prints in Series 2 were originally housed with documents in [Box 255, Folder 7](#) in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation records (NMAI.AC.001). They have been moved to be with the rest of the Joseph Imhof photographic collection.

Related Materials

A large collection of Joseph Imhof artwork and photographs can be found at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico.

The NMAI has a collection of Joseph Imhof artwork and lithographs donated by his wife Sarah in the 1960s.

For a bibliography on Joseph Imhof written by his wife, Sarah Imhof, see [Box 255, Folder 7](#) in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation records (NMAI.AC.001).

Processing Information

Processed by Rachel Menyuk, Processing Archivist, 2020.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Joseph A. Imhof photograph collection, image #, NMAI.AC.142; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Access to NMAI Archives Center collections is by appointment only, Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Please contact the archives to make an appointment (phone: 301-238-1400, email: nmaiarchives@si.edu).

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Joseph Adam Imhof was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1871. After teaching himself lithography, Imhof was hired by Currier and Ives and eventually earned enough money from this job to buy a bookstore. In 1891 he eventually quit his job and sold the bookstore to pursue a formal art education in Europe which led to four years in Paris, Brussels, Antwerp and Munich where he apprenticed with several artists.

During this time, Imhof met Buffalo Bill Cody and was invited to join him in Antwerp to sketch and paint members of his "Wild West Show". Returning to New York, Imhof rented a studio and began to study the Iroquois Indians in New York and Canada. He spent the next ten years painting and improving his lithography, photography and color printing innovations - which financed his early painting career. He also freelanced for Allen and Ginter, painting his Indian Head Series for insertion on cards in boxes of cigarettes.

In 1897 Joseph married Sarah "Sallie" Ann Elizabeth Russell. In 1905 they visited the Southwest for the first time to record the ceremonies of the Pueblo Indians. Joseph built a studio in Albuquerque in 1906, and the Imhofs spent the next few years traveling around the region, though they eventually returned to New York. In 1929, Joseph and Sarah moved to New Mexico permanently and built their new home and studio in Taos Pueblo. There, he would have Native Puebloan models to live in his home for a time before he painted them. He also collected many artifacts and had the first lithography press in Taos. His series of paintings called Kivas and Corn, which he gifted to the University of New Mexico, was his last and most famous work. The Koshare Indian Museum also houses one of the largest collections of his paintings. Joseph Imhof died in 1955 leaving the remainder of his collection in the care of his wife and daughter.

Bibliography: *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Artists of the American West*, by Peggy and Harold Samuels; *Joseph Imhof: Artist of the Pueblos*, by Nancy Hopkins Reily and Lucille Enix, Koshare Indian Museum.

Scope and Contents

Series 1: Glass plate negatives contains 89 glass plate negatives donated by Joseph Imhof to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation in 1930. This includes—copies of Frank Rinehart portraits; Joseph

Imhof photographs made in Acoma Pueblo and Isleta Pueblo in 1912; Orlando Scott Goff Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) photographs from Montana; and Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) photographs from Vancouver Island, British Columbia (photographer unknown). The majority of the Rinehart glass plate negatives include two portraits side by side on one 8x10 plate, though copy negatives were made of the individual portraits. The copy negatives were created by the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation (NMAI's predecessor museum) during a photo conservation project in the 1960s.

Series 2: Photographic Prints includes 89 cataloged and 38 uncatalogued photographic prints from 1900-1964. This includes Joseph Imhof photographs made in K'apovi (Santa Clara) Pueblo; images of Imhof's drawings, sketches and paintings; photographs in Taos of the Imhof home and studio; and portraits of Sarah and Joseph Imhof.

The negatives have catalog numbers N19283-N19371. The prints have catalog numbers P19480-P19484, P19532-P19591.

Arrangement

Arranged in two series by photographic type. **Series 1: Glass plate Negatives**, circa 1894, 1898, 1912, undated and **Series 2: Photographic Prints**, 1900-1964. Within the series they are arranged by catalog number with the uncatalogued prints at the end of Series 2.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Acoma Pueblo
- Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)
- Artists -- New Mexico -- Taos
- Isleta Pueblo
- K'apovi (Santa Clara Pueblo)
- Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl)
- Taos Pueblo

Cultures:

- Acoma Pueblo
- Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)
- Isleta Pueblo
- K'apovi (Santa Clara Pueblo)
- Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl)
- Taos Pueblo

Types of Materials:

- Glass plate negatives
- Photographic prints

Places:

- Montana
- New Mexico
- Vancouver Island (B.C.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Glass Plate Negatives, approximately 1894, 1898, 1912, undated

89 Glass plate negatives

116 Copy negatives

Scope and Contents: **Series 1: Glass plate negatives** contains 89 glass plate negatives donated by Joseph Imhof to the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation in 1930. This includes —copies of Frank Rinehart portraits; Joseph Imhof photographs made in Acoma Pueblo and Isleta Pueblo in 1912; Orlando Scott Goff Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) photographs from Montana; and Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) photographs from Vancouver Island, British Columbia (photographer unknown). The majority of the Rinehart glass plate negatives include two portraits side by side on one 8x10 plate, though copy negatives were made of the individual portraits. The copy negatives were created by the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation (NMAI's predecessor museum) during a photo conservation project in the 1960s.

Culture: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)
Acoma Pueblo
Isleta Pueblo

1.1: Copies of Frank A. Rinehart photographs, 1898, undated

28 Glass plate negatives (8x10)

55 Copy negatives

Box B28 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)

Box 40-2 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)

Box 41-2 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)

Box 42-2 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)

Photographer: Rinehart, F. A. (Frank A.)
Collector: Imhof, Joseph, 1871-1955
Scope and Contents: N19283-N19310

The Frank A. Rinehart images include portraits of American Indian delegates at the U.S. Indian Congress of the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition held in Omaha, Nebraska, between June 1 and October 31, 1898. During the Congress, Frank A. Rinehart (ca. 1862-1928) and/or his assistant Adolph F. Muhr (ca. 1858-1913) photographed more than 500 delegates and groups representing the estimated thirty-five tribes represented at the Exposition.

The majority of the negatives in this collection were made by photographing two Rinehart prints side by side on 8x10 glass plate negatives. It is unclear when these negatives were made, though they were presented to the Museum of the American Indian by Imhof in 1930. The Museum later made copy negatives (acetate) of the individual images rather than the full glass plate. In these cases, the negatives were given "A" and "B" numbers.

Related Materials: For additional Rinehart photographs in the NMAI Archives see:
[NMAI.AC.118: U.S. Indian Congress of the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition photograph album](#)
[NMAI.AC.119: Byron Harvey, III Collection of Exposition and Portrait photographs](#)

[NMAI.AC.289: Frank A. Rinehart and Roland W. Reed photograph collection](#)Collector: Imhof, Joseph, 1871-1955

1.2: Joseph Imhof: Pueblo photographs, 1910, 1912*17 Glass plate negatives**17 Copy negatives**Box 46-2 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box 15 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box 16 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)*

Photographer: Imhof, Joseph, 1871-1955

Scope and N19311-N19320 (8x10), N19331, N19343-N19346 (5x7)

Contents:

This subseries includes 17 glass plate negatives Joseph Imhof made in 1910 and 1912 in Albuquerque, Acoma Pueblo and Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico. The photographs made in Acoma are comprised of scenic views of the Pueblo whereas the photographs made in Isleta include portraits, a church service and a Christmas dance. There is also an image of the Imhofs home in Albuquerque, built in 1906.

Culture: Acoma Pueblo

Isleta Pueblo

1.3: Orlando Scott (O.S.) Goff: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) photographs, approximately 1894*41 Glass plate negatives**41 Copy negatives**Box 54-2 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box 15 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box 16 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box 17 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box B2 (glass plate negatives) (negatives)**Box B13 (negatives)*

Photographer: Goff, O. S. (Orlando Scott), 1843-1917

Scope and N19321-N19330, N19332-N19342, N19347-N19366

Contents:

These negatives were originally cataloged as "Blackfoot" but it has since been determined that the photographs were shot among the Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) community. Further research has led to the likelihood that the negatives were made by Orlando Scott (O. S.) Goff around 1894. Goff, a prominent Western photographer in his time traveled between Forts Custer and Assiniboine in Montana during the late 1880s and 1890s. In 1894 Goff accompanied the 10th Cavalry, stationed at Fort Custer, on a camping trip that took them through the Crow Reservation.

The photographs in this subseries include images of Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) encampments and horses along the Bighorn river; portraits of Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke) men, women and children including Chiefs Medicine Crow, Plenty Coups and Bell Rock; and a series of photographs at a dance outdoors, possibly a 4th of July celebration. There is also a photograph of an officer of the 10th cavalry, likely shot at Fort Custer.

Related Materials: There are photographic prints in the [Bud Lake and Randy Brewer Crow Indian Photograph Collection \(Lot 035\)](#) at the Montana Historical Society that appear to have been made by O.S. Goff at the same time. These were part of a scrapbook labeled "taken on a camping trip of 10th Cav. from Ft. Custer, Montana, 1894-95," and kept by William Henry Hay.

Culture: Apsáalooke (Crow/Absaroke)

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Series 2: Photographic prints, 1900-1964

127 Photographic prints

Scope and Contents: This series includes 89 cataloged and 38 uncatalogued photographic prints from 1900-1964. This includes Joseph Imhof photographs made in K'apovi (Santa Clara) Pueblo; images of Imhof's drawings, sketches and paintings; photographs in Taos of the Imhof home and studio; and portraits of Sarah and Joseph Imhof.

Culture: K'apovi (Santa Clara Pueblo)
Taos Pueblo

2.1: Joseph Imhof: K'apovi (Santa Clara Pueblo) photographs, approximately 1920

5 Photographic prints

Photo-folder 1

Scope and Contents: P19480-P19484

This subseries includes five photographic prints made by Imhof around 1920 at the K'apovi (Santa Clara) Pueblo. This includes K'apovi (Santa Clara) men and women performing a social dance, women performing the Basket Dance, a woman with a baby, a woman with a bowl and a profile portrait of a man. None of the people photographed have been identified.

Culture: K'apovi (Santa Clara Pueblo)

2.2: Photographs of Joseph Imhof's Artwork, undated

39 Photographic prints

Photo-folder 2 (photographs)

Photo-folder 3 (photographs)

Photo-folder 4 (photographs)

Photo-folder 5 (photographs)

Photo-folder 6 (photographs)

Photo-folder 7 (photographs)

Photo-folder 8 (photographs)

Photo-folder 9 (photographs)

Scope and Contents: P19532-P19570

This subseries includes photographic prints of drawings, sketches and paintings made by Joseph Imhof throughout his career as an artist. Many of the prints have prices listed on the back and may have been used to sell his artwork. Many of these are from Imhof's "Kivas and Corn" series.

2.3: Joseph Imhof: Taos Pueblo, approximately 1930

20 Photographic prints

Photo-folder 10 (photographs)

Photo-folder 11 (photographs)

Photo-folder 12 (photographs)

Photo-folder 13 (photographs)

Scope and Contents: P19572-P19591

Contents:

This subseries includes snapshots and portraits made near the Imhof home in Toas Pueblo, New Mexico around 1930. These include images of ovens being plastered at the Imhof home, views of Joe "Sunhawk" Sandoval raising an Apache tipi for the sunset dance in front of the Imhof home, and portraits of Pedro and Pascal Abeita in Toas Pueblo.

Culture: Taos Pueblo

2.4: Joseph Imhof: Personal Photographs, 1900-1964

38 *Photographic prints*

1 *Tintype*

Photo-folder 14 (photographs)

Photo-folder 15 (photographs)

Photo-folder 16 (photographs)

Photo-folder 17 (photographs)

Photo-folder 18 (photographs)

Photo-folder 19 (photographs)

Photo-folder 20 (photographs)

Scope and Contents: This subseries of uncatalogued prints includes portraits of Joseph and his wife Sarah (Sallie) Imhof as well as snapshots of their home Toas Pueblo. The prints include studio portraits of Joseph and Sarah from 1900 as well as a tintype of Joseph Imhof from around that same time. Many of the later portraits were made in and around their home in Taos, New Mexico, with the bulk being from the 1940s. The last portrait of Sarah was taken in 1964, after Joseph's death. There are also images of their home and studio being built in Toas in 1929 and then additional views of the home between 1929 and 1945.

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