

Mary Cassatt papers

MS.013

Finding Aid prepared by Hoang Tran



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY
OF THE FINE ARTS

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
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Updated by Hoang Tran, May 2016

Summary Information

Repository	The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Archives, Dorothy and Kenneth Woodcock Archives
Creator	Mary Cassatt (1844-1926)
Title	Mary Cassatt papers
Date [bulk]	
Date [inclusive]	1861-1874, 1907
Extent	½ document box
Location note	Archives
Language	
Language of Materials note	English
Abstract	This collection includes correspondence, and a few photographs, the majority of which date from the early years of her career, roughly 1860 to 1874. The Mary Cassatt papers include fourteen letters from Cassatt to Emily Sartain, a draft letter from Emily Sartain to Cassatt, 1872-74, and the often-reproduced <i>carte-de-visite</i> photograph of Mary Cassatt from about 1872.

Preferred Citation note

[identification of item], Title of Collection, Collection ID#, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Dorothy and Kenneth Woodcock Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

Historical note

See the exhibition catalogue *Mary Cassatt, Modern Woman* (Chicago Art Institute, 1998). The chronology at the back of the volume gives detailed information on Mary Cassatt's studies at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Scope and Contents note

This collection includes correspondence, and a few photographs, the majority of which date from the early years of her career, roughly 1860 to 1874. The Mary Cassatt papers include fourteen letters from Cassatt to Emily Sartain, a draft letter from Emily Sartain to Cassatt, 1872-74, and the often-reproduced *carte-de-visite* photograph of Mary Cassatt from about 1872. There are also two undated (probably 1907) letters from Cassatt to Julie Manet.

The bulk of this material was acquired in 1959, and although most of the correspondence is from Cassatt to Sartain, the material was designated the Mary Cassatt collection, instead of the Sartain collection. It remains thus designated because so many publications have appeared referencing it as the Cassatt papers.

Also see the Eliza Haldeman collection for the following items: letters from Haldeman to her family, 1860-68, several of which mention Cassatt, and three letters from Cassatt to Haldeman, 1863. Two photographs in which Cassatt appears are also part of the Haldeman collection. See the separate finding aid for the Haldeman papers for details.

The often-quoted letter from Cassatt to the PAFA, declining an award and explaining her reasons for doing so, is not preserved in its original form in the PAFA Archives. It is transcribed in its entirety into the minutes of the PAFA board for March 14, 1904. The letter, as transcribed, is dated March 2, 1904.

Many of the items described above are included in *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, by Nancy Mowll Mathews (Abbeville Press, 1984). Dates added to the letters in pencil, probably by Frances Lichten, a PAFA staff member in the 1950s, are questionable according to Ms. Mathews.

Other resources

Lecture (2004)

Three Academy Women Artists: [Mary Cassatt](#), Cecilia Beaux, and Violet Oakley

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We all know that a great number of women artists have been trained at, have exhibited at, or have taught at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts over the course of its long history - a history, by the way, that we will celebrate in 2005 with the 200th Anniversary events.

In this talk I'm going to consider three of the most famous women artists in our history, namely Mary Cassatt, Cecilia Beaux, and Violet Oakley. Rather than attempt a traditional career overview of these three very well known artists – something one would need three lectures to do anyway -, I'm going to concentrate on how and when they were affiliated with the Academy and describe the materials we have regarding them.

All three women studied here for a while, exhibited regularly at the Academy exhibitions, and all three received the Academy's most prestigious award, the Gold Medal of Honor. Two of them taught here. All three are well represented in our permanent collection, and for two of them there are significant holdings in the archives. All three women never married, lived very long lives totally dedicated to their chosen profession, and each achieved the highest level of recognition and respect in the art world of their day.

Arrangement note

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access note

Collection is open for research.

The archives reserves the right to restrict access to materials of sensitive nature. Please contact the department for further information.

Conditions Governing Use note

The collection is the physical property of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Archives. The Museum holds literary rights only for material created by Museum personnel or given to the Museum with such rights specifically assigned. For all other material, literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. Researchers are responsible for obtaining permission from rights holders for publication and for other purposes where stated.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Provenance note

The Sartain-Cassatt correspondence was a gift of the estate of Harriet Sartain in 1959.

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In 2001, Bill Scott, an Academy faculty member and researcher, presented the two letters from Cassatt to Julie Manet, daughter of Berthe Morisot and Eugene Manet. Both letters had been available via photocopies since 1973. The letters were found, in March of 1973, in a house purchased by Eugene Manet in 1891 in Mesnil, France. The house was owned by their grandson, C. Rouart, who gave the letters to Bill Scott. In 2001, full transcriptions and translations of each were prepared.

The original letters from the 1959 gift and photocopies of the two given in 2001 are microfilmed by the Archives of American Art on reel 3658:1011-1055. The Haldeman gift is microfilmed on reel 3658:1056-1133. None of the photographs are filmed.

Processing Information note

Processed by Cheryl Leibold.

Controlled Access Headings

Person(s)

Corporate Name(s)

Genre(s)

Geographic Name(s)

Subject(s)

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note

Collection Inventory

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder
letters from Cassatt to Emily Sartain, n.d., and 1872-74 (15 items) DIGITIZED	1872-1874	1	1
draft letter from Emily Sartain to Cassatt	undated	1	2
letters from Cassatt to Julie Manet, ca. 1907 (2 items) DIGITIZED	Circa 1907	1	3
<i>Carte-de-visite</i> photograph of Mary Cassatt, ca. 1872, inscribed <i>"alla distinta pittrice Emilia Sartain."</i>	Circa 1872	1	4
Commemorative U.S. postage stamp, 1988, full sheet (first day issue ceremony held at PAFA, Nov. 4, 1988)	1988	1	5

