Finding Aid to the Eva Scott Fenyes Collection MS.206

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2013
Title: Eva Scott Fenyes Collection
Identifier/Call Number: MS.206
Contributing Institution: Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.5 Linear feet(3 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1904-1951
Abstract: Eva Scott Fenyes (1849-1930) was an artist who spent more than thirty years traveling from San Diego to Sonoma, California to preserve the history and aesthetic beauty of her surroundings through her artwork. She moved to Pasadena, California circa 1896 where assisted with the founding of the Pasadena Emergency League in 1910 and the Pasadena Music and Art Association in 1912. She was also an active member of the Landmarks Club of California and the Southwest Society. This collection consists of Eva Scott Fenyes correspondence as well newspaper articles she collected. The material spans from 1904-1928.
creator: Fenyes, Eva Scott, d. 1930
creator: Picher, Annie Belle
Access
Collection is open for research. Appointments to view materials are required. To make an appointment please visit http://theautry.org/research/research-rules-and-application or contact library staff at rroom@theautry.org.
Processing history
Inventory and initial processing by library staff. Biographical note taken from exhibit curated and written by Autry Curator, Kim Walters, 2011. Finding aid completed by Anna Liza Posas, 2013. Final processing of collection and publication of finding aid made possible by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).
Biographical note
Eva Scott Fenyes (1849-1930)
Eva was born on 1849 November 9 and was the daughter of Leonard Scott, New York publisher, and Rebecca Briggs Scott. Eva was educated at Pelham Priory in Pelham Manor, New York, and then studied art in New York, Europe, and Egypt. In 1877, she also spent time in Fort Marion, Florida, where she asked Henry Pratt to have the artists Howling Wolf (Cheyenne) and Zo Tom (Kiowa) create ledger books for her. This early affiliation with Native American artists and her support for their work continued throughout her life.
In 1878, Eva married Lieutenant William S. Muse, who later became a brigadier general. Their only child, Leonora, was born in 1879. After spending several years as an army wife, Eva began to spend time traveling, painting, and living in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1891, she divorced Muse and traveled extensively in Europe, Egypt, and other Middle Eastern countries. During these travels she met Dr. Adelbert Fenyes, who was a Hungarian nobleman, a doctor of nervous diseases, and an entomologist. They were married in Budapest in 1896 and settled soon thereafter in Pasadena, where Mrs. Fenyes continued to paint.
Although Mrs. Fenyes painted constantly, she did not exhibit her work or consider herself a “professional artist.” She painted a variety of subjects and was also interested in music, archaeology, philanthropy, and history. She assisted with the founding of the Pasadena Emergency League in 1910 and the Pasadena Music and Art Association in 1912. She was an active member of the Landmarks Club of California and the Southwest Society. She also later served on the board of trustees of the Southwest Museum. Her daughter, Leonora Curtin, and her granddaughter, Leonora Curtin Paloheimo, continued to serve on the board through the late 1980s.
Eva was instrumental in the creation of art and literary salons that brought together a wide variety of local artists, writers, and other intellectuals who met in her home in Pasadena. Among the participants in these salons were such well-known California painters as William Keith and Benjamin Brown, who described her as “too accomplished in many phases of art to become proficient in one.”
By the 1890s, Eva was friends with Charles Lummis. In a 1904 letter, Mrs. Fenyes asked Lummis his opinion about documenting the historic adobes, which she had started in 1898. Lummis responded in a letter, “It seems to me it would be a very valuable thing if you could carry out your plan to make accurate watercolor studies of the old buildings in this region. Accuracy is the first requirement; and such a series would have serious historical value. I hope you may be able to realize this plan— and I am inclined to think that if you can undertake it in just the right way, you will find it better for your health than all the doctors. . . .” They continued their friendly contact throughout their lives.
Eva spent more than thirty years traveling from San Diego to Sonoma to preserve the history and aesthetic beauty of her surroundings. She died on 1930 February 3.
Finding Aid to the Eva Scott Fenyes Collection MS.206

Scope and contents
This collection consists of Eva Scott Fenyes correspondence as well newspaper articles she collected. The material spans from 1904-1928. Except for one folder of loose newspaper articles, most of the articles have been assembled by Fenyes into a multivolume set of scrapbooks.

The news articles relate to Los Angeles history and society, early California families, California missions and adobes, and Native American arts and culture. Clippings also relate to the Southwest Museum, the building of the Casa de Adobe, and Charles Lummis.

This collection also includes one portfolio of correspondence with letters from Hector Alliot, J.P. Gaylord, J.M. Guinn, Theo Hittell, Frederick Webb Hodge, George P. Ide, L.H. Ingersoll, and Charles Fletcher Lummis written from 1904-1916.

One folder consists of material added by the Southwest Museum staff after 1934 and are not original items from the personal collections of Eva Scott Fenyes. This folder includes listings, booklets, documents, and clippings from 1901-1951 and primarily is about the Fenyes paintings held at the Southwest Museum.

Preferred citation
Eva Scott Fenyes Collection, 1904-1951, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.206.

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Custodial history
This collection primarily consists of correspondence belonging to Eva Scott Fenyes and scrapbooks assembled by Fenyes. The Eva Scott Fenyes Collection was given as a gift from the daughter of Fenyes, Mrs. Leonora (Thomas) E. Curtain, 1934 April 3. There is one folder that consists of material added by the Southwest Museum staff after 1934 that are not originally from the personal collections of Eva Scott Fenyes.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Alliot, Hector, 1862-1919
Gaylord, J. P.
Guinn, J. M. (James Miller), 1834-1918
Hittell, Theodore Henry, 1830-1917
Hodge, Frederick Webb, 1864-1956
Ide, George P.
Ingersoll, L. H.
Lummis, Charles Fletcher, 1859-1928.
Southwest Museum (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Adobe houses -- California
Articles
California -- History
Casa de Adobe (Southwest Museum, Los Angeles, Calif.)
Clippings
Correspondence
Historic buildings -- California
Indian art
Indian arts
Legends del Camino Real: San Gabriel Mission Bells
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History
Missions -- California
Pasadena (Calif.) -- History
Santa Barbara Mission
Scrapbooks
Warner's Ranch (Calif.)
Watercolors
Women artists

Box 1
Annie Belle Picher letter to Eva Fenyes 1913 October 18

Box 1
Correspondence 1904-1916

Scope and contents
Correspondence is pasted in folio and includes letters from Hector, Alliot, J.P. Gaylord, J.M. Guinn, Theo Hittell, Frederick Webb Hodge, George P. Ide, L.H. Ingersoll, and Charles Fletcher Lummis.

Box 1
Image of priest at the Mission Santa Barbara, California undated

Box 1
Index to Fenyes scrapbooks circa 1928

Scope and contents
This index was created by Fenyes and pertains to scrapbooks S1-S5 in this collection.

Box 1
List of autographed letters purchased from Robert Cowen undated

Scope and contents
This is a handwritten document by Fenyes and consists of a list of autographed letters purchased from bookseller Robert Cowen. Fenyes also notes that the letters go with William Heath Davis's book Sixty Years in California, published in 1889.

Box 1
Newspaper clippings on California early 20th Century

Scrapbooks 1904-1928

Scope and contents
This group includes seven bound scrapbooks of newspaper clippings related to Los Angeles history and society, early California families, California missions and adobes, and Native American arts and culture. Clippings also relate to the Southwest Museum, the building of the Casa de Adobe, and Charles Lummis.

Correspondence from the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles Public Library, and others are interfiled in scrapbooks as well. Scrapbook S4, page 30, includes a letter from Lummis and images he sent her of the Southwest Museum groundbreaking. Images are dated 1913 December 6.

Box 1, Folder S1
Scrapbook, volume 1

Box 1, Folder S2
Scrapbook, volume 2

Box 2, Folder S3
Scrapbook, volume 3, part 1

Box 3, Folder S5
Scrapbook, volume 4

Box 3, Folder S6
Scrapbook, volume 5

Box 2, Folder S4
Scrapbook, volume 3, part 2

Box 3, Folder S7
Scrapbook, volume 6
Box 1

Material about Fenyes collection 1901-1951

Scope and contents

This folder consists of material added by the Southwest Museum staff after 1934 and are not original items from the personal collections of Eva Scott Fenyes. The folder includes listings, booklets, documents, and clippings about the Fenyes paintings held at the Southwest Museum.

The folder also includes copies of newspaper clippings on Dr. Adalbert Fenyes and a 1901 image clipped from the Los Angeles Times of the Fenyes Pasadena home before constructions.