San Francisco Museum of Art Women's Board Records

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San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
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2015
Descriptive Summary

Title: San Francisco Museum of Art Women's Board Records


Collection Number: ARCH.ADM.003

Creator/Collector: San Francisco Museum of Art Women's Board

Extent: 24 linear feet (14 cartons, 1 oversize box, 1 card file box, 1 tube, 30 scrapbooks)

Repository: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

San Francisco, California 94103

Abstract: The Women's Board of the San Francisco Museum of Art was formed in December 1934, just before the 1935 opening of the Museum. Its purpose was to advise the Board of Trustees, raise money, organize and administer social functions, and assist with educational programs. The Women's Board Records document the activities, special projects, and internal administration of the Women's Board and its auxiliaries through correspondence, financial records, press releases and announcements, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, meeting minutes, and other manuscript materials. The collection spans the group's forty-one year history (1934-1975), but the bulk of the records date from 1950-1972.

Language of Material: English

Access

Collection is available for use. Some materials are restricted for confidentiality or condition.

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Preferred Citation

San Francisco Museum of Art Women's Board Records. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Scope and Content of Collection

Pre-dating the opening of the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Women's Board was founded in 1934 and was consistently and increasingly active until its dissolution in 1975, when it combined with the Membership Activities Board to form the Modern Art Council. The Women's Board Records document the activities, special projects, and internal administration of the Women's Board and its auxiliaries through correspondence, financial records, press releases and announcements, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, meeting minutes, and other manuscript materials. Also included are some drawings, blueprints, and small publications. Photographs are housed separately in the Photographs Collection (ARCH.PIC.001). The collection spans the group's forty-one year history, but the bulk of the records date from 1950-1972. The Women's Board Records are divided into seven series: Organizational Files; Administration; Events and Activities; Tour de Décors; Projects; Membership Activities Board; and Scrapbooks. The Organizational Files document the governance and maintenance of the Board itself, including official records such as meeting minutes and by-laws as well as materials related to membership on the Board. Subcommittee records are also included, as they were comprised of special-interest groups within the Women's Board. The Administration series covers the clerical and managerial aspects of the Women's Board, including general correspondence, the Board's working relationship with the Museum, management of volunteers, and training and orientation courses for new Board members. The Events and Activities series is by far the most expansive and comprehensive part of the collection, documenting several different types of parties, educational activities, and special events organized and administered by the Women's Board. Records are divided into twelve subseries which represent distinct types of activities. Since the Women's Board was largely responsible for fundraising activities in the Museum, most of the events documented in the series relate in some way to raising awareness of and money for the Museum. While it topically falls within the Events and Activities series, the Tour de Décors series stands on its own as a unique succession of functions. The four Tour de Décors events - in 1955, 1957, 1960, and 1965 - were multifaceted interactive displays of the decorative arts. Each Tour's decorative arts exhibition in the Museum was supplemented by several social events and educational programs, all aimed at encouraging people to envision art as a part of their daily lives. The final Tour focused exclusively on the art of cooking and dining, and included twice-daily demonstrations in the Museum Rotunda by Julia Child. The Projects series documents some of the special projects organized or taken on by the Women's Board. Projects like the Rental Gallery were long-term and lasted more than a decade, while other projects such as renovations to the Museum's kitchen facility lasted less than a year. The Projects were not considered part of the more regular event planning and educational programming activities of the Board, but were also not a function of its regular administration; they stand alone as distinct from other Women's Board activities. The Membership Activities Board series relates exclusively to the administration and governance of this auxiliary to the Women's Board, along with the records of its precursor group, the Women's Board Auxiliary. The Administration, Membership, and Minutes subseries mimic the arrangement in the Organizational Files and Administration series. The final series, consisting of a set of scrapbooks compiled by Women's
Board members, documents early Museum activities through newspaper clippings and press releases glued to scrapbook pages. Though selected by Women’s Board members and relating primarily to social activities and other events in or around the Museum, the books provide a comprehensive view of how the Museum was represented in the press. Some of the files from the 1970s overlap the dissolution of the Women’s Board and the establishment of the Modern Art Council; records for programs that were begun before 1975 and continued beyond the dissolution are retained with the Women’s Board Records when the physical file contained both earlier and later records. Several Women’s Board programs continued after the 1975 dissolution, with responsibility assumed by the Modern Art Council or by the Museum. These materials can be found with the records of the generating department or organization.

Indexing Terms
Art appreciation—Study and teaching—California—San Francisco
Art, Modern—20th century—Exhibitions
Art museums and community—California—San Francisco
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Art rental and lending services—California—San Francisco
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San Francisco Museum of Art—Archives
San Francisco Museum of Art—Board of Trustees
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