Ulrich Alexander Middeldorf study photographs of sculpture and minor arts

1925-1980
Descriptive Summary

Title: Ulrich Alexander Middeldorf study photographs of sculpture and minor arts
Dates: 1925-1980
Collection Number: 83.P.3
Creator/Collector:
Extent: 37 linear ft. (ca. 30,000 photoprints, clippings, offprints, and notes in 74 boxes).
Repository: Getty Research Institute. Special Collections
Abstract: The study photographs of Ulrich Alexander Middeldorf, a German-American art historian, provide insight into how his work was conceived and organized. His principal publications concerned Tuscan sculptors of the quattrocento as well as bronzes, medals, and plaquettes. He was director of the Art Institute of Chicago, and, in Florence, served as director and librarian of the Kunsthistorisches Institute and director of the Longhi Institute.
Language of Material: English
Access
Open for use by qualified researchers.
Publication Rights
Contact Library Rights and Reproductions.
Preferred Citation
Ulrich Alexander Middeldorf study photographs of sculpture and minor arts. Getty Research Institute. Special Collections
 Acquisition Information
The collection was purchased from Middeldorf's widow, Gloria, in 1983, at the recommendation of Laurie and Peter Fusco.
Biography/Administrative History
Ulrich Alexander Middeldorf, born in 1901, was a German-American art historian who specialized in the study of sculpture, medals, and the minor and applied arts. He was director of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Longhi Institute, and then served as the director and librarian of the Kunsthistorisches Institute until his death in 1983. In addition to his research specializations, Middeldorf had an abiding interest in Italian art, and a collector's passion for the connection between art and fiction. He assembled a collection of fiction, much of it popular, paperback works, which include characters or plot lines that relate to art (artists, art history, forgery, etc.). This collection of Art in Fiction was acquired by the Getty Research Institute Library in 1984. Middeldorf's correspondence with Sybille Pantazzi about his art in fiction collecting and other interests (1966-1983) may be seen in Special Collections Accession no. 950004.
Scope and Content of Collection
Art historian's photo archive assembled between 1925-1980 with an emphasis on Renaissance sculpture, including bronzes. Italian works dominate the collection, but French and German are also included. These are the working files of a scholar and lend insight into how his work was conceived and organized. His principal publications concerned Tuscan sculptors of the quattrocento as well as bronzes, medals, and plaquettes. Photographs are not dated exactly, and were taken by a multitude of European museums and private collectors. The original order of the photographic files was recorded in a packing list that arrived with the collection. The list is available in the Photo Study Collection's Holdings file. The files were recategorized by the Getty Museum's Sculpture Department to facilitate scholarly access. Folder headings were copied from the headings on the original packing list, and presumably, the original folders. Archival sleeving, fodering, and boxing of the collection took place in July 1992 in the Photo Study Collection. Some rearranging of folders was done to improve consistency and clarity. A box-level inventory of the collection was created and is available in the Holdings file, upon request. The collection is stored off-site and can be retrieved upon request. Sculpture is arranged by known artist; schools and anonymous by region and/or city; further files group various media and types; subject files include iconography, theory, fakes, and special problems. Artists' names represented in the collection have been entered into the ARTISTS database on STAR and can be searched by COL=Middeldorf. See the GRI website for more information about the Photo Study Collection.

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