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## **Finding aid for the Franz Roh papers, 1911-1965**

Finding aid prepared by Carl Wuellner.

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## Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Franz Roh papers

**Date (inclusive):** 1911-1965

**Number:** 850120

**Creator/Collector:** Roh, Franz, 1890-1965

**Physical Description:** 3.5 linear feet(7 boxes)

### Repository:

The Getty Research Institute

Special Collections

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100

Los Angeles, California, 90049-1688

(310) 440-7390

**Abstract:** German art historian and pioneering critic of the 20th-century avant-garde who took an interest in the study and development of photography as an art form. Collection consists primarily of letters received from more than 1,000 correspondents, ca. 1911-1965. The correspondence is of a personal, intellectual, and business nature, between Roh and colleagues and fellow students, critics, editors, gallery owners, and curators throughout Germany, France, and the United States. Letters express thanks and complaints concerning Roh's criticism, and contain requests for reviews, catalog statements, photographs, introductions, and articles.

**Request Materials:** To access physical materials on site, go to the [library catalog record](#) for this collection and click "Request an Item." Click here for [access policy](#) .

**Language:** Collection material is in German

### Biographical/Historical Note

Franz Roh (1890-1965) was a noted art historian, photographer, and critic of the early twentieth-century avant-garde. He began his career working for *Cicerone*, *Kunstblatt*, and other journals publishing on art topics. In 1925, with the encouragement of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, he published *Nachexpressionismus-Magischer Realismus*. Through this he gained prominence in the artistic circles of the avant-garde, which led to his co-publication of *Foto-Auge* with Jan Tschichold in 1929. The progressivism of his work led to *Foto-Auge* being sequestered and confiscated, and eventually led Roh to a brief imprisonment when he was forbidden to write by government censors in 1933. He was, however, awarded a professorship in modern art at the University of Munich in 1946, a position he held for the remainder of his life. He continued to promote contemporary art in the years after the war and became president of AICA (International Association of Art Critics) in 1951. He died in Munich in 1965.

### Access

Open for use by qualified researchers.

### Publication Rights

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### Preferred Citation

Franz Roh papers, 1911-1965, Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Accession no. 850120.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa850120>

### Acquisition Information

Acquired in 1985.

### Scope and Content of Collection

The Franz Roh Papers consist of letters, postcard, telegrams and other pieces of personal and professional correspondence and a small collection of other writings and manuscripts from the estate of Franz Roh (1890-1965). Roh was an important critic of the early twentieth-century avant-garde, as well as an artist and teacher.

Correspondence in the collection was written to and from Roh between 1911 and 1965. Correspondents primarily are artists, art historians, writers, poets, art dealers and publishing houses. Included within the correspondence are exhibition opening announcements, prints and other works on paper sent as gifts or seasonal greeting cards by artist friends, and occasional personal photographs included with letters. There is a large number of photocopied letters from Roh to Wilhelm Flitner, dating from 1911-1965.

The archive also holds a collection of manuscript writings by Roh and others. These include a typed, partial transcript of Roh's diary written while he was a field soldier during World War I, and a collection of ephemeral items from Roh's personal

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papers. There are notable collections of letters and manuscripts by Raoul Hausmann and J.A. Baader. These include a seventy-four page typed draft for part of Hausmann's *Hyle*, an assortment of essays on art and philosophy and other personal papers, as well as a collection of letters written by him to Roh dating from 1946-1965. There are also writings on art by Baader, letters from him to Roh, and a handwritten, manuscript draft copy of Baader's *Der Stern Erde*.

**Arrangement note**

The archive is organized in the following series and sub-series: Series I. Correspondence, 1911-1965; Series II. Raoul Hausmann letters and writings, 1918-1961, undated; Series III. J.A. Baader letters and writings, 1946; Series IV. War diary and ephemera, 1915, undated.

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Series I. **Correspondence, 1911-1965**

**Physical Description:** 33.0 folder(s)

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters received and sent by Roh, primarily from and to artists, art historians, writers, dealers and publishers. Arranged in 3 subseries: letters received, letters sent, and unidentified letters and fragments.

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Series I.A. **Letters received by Roh, 1911-1965**

**Physical Description:** 28.0 folder(s)

**Scope and Content Note**

Correspondents primarily are artists, art historians, writers, poets, art dealers and publishing houses. Included within the correspondence are exhibition opening announcements, prints and other works on paper sent as gifts or seasonal greeting cards by artist friends, and occasional personal photographs included with letters. Arranged alphabetically.

Box 1, Folder 1-7  
Box 1, Folder 1

**Letters received A - F**

**Achalme through Athenäum Verlag**

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes correspondence from Jean Arp.

Box 1, Folder 2

**Baerwind through Bertelsmann Verlag**

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes letters from Herbert von Bayer.

Box 1, Folder 3  
Box 1, Folder 4

**Biaseh through Busch**

**Camaro through Czapski-Holzmann**

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes collection of letters from Heinrich Campendonk.

Box 1, Folder 5  
Box 1, Folder 6  
Box 1, Folder 7  
Box 2, Folder 1-4  
Box 2, Folder 1

**Däbritz through Dussler**

**Eaton through Flemming**

**Wilhelm Flitner**

**Letters received F - H**

**Flora through Fuchs**

**Scope and Content Note**

With letters from Paul Frankl.

Box 2, Folder 2  
Box 2, Folder 3  
Box 2, Folder 4  
Box 3, Folder 1-6

**Fuhr through Götz**

**Grabul through Hansen**

**Hansen-Löve through Henningsen**

**Letters received H - M**

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Box 3, Folder 1	<b>Henschel through Imkamp</b> <b>Scope and Content Note</b> Includes letters from Hans Hofmann.
Box 3, Folder 2	<b>Jackson through Kanoldt</b>
Box 3, Folder 3	<b>Kästner through Klinkhardt &amp; Biermann Verlag</b>
Box 3, Folder 4	<b>Knappe through Kurth</b>
Box 3, Folder 5	<b>Lang through Luft</b>
Box 3, Folder 6	<b>Mabermehl through Meyer-Mengede</b> <b>Scope and Content Note</b> With letters from Carlo Mense.
Box 4, Folder 1-4	<b>Letters received M - R</b>
Box 4, Folder 1	<b>Mikl through le Noci</b> <b>Scope and Content Note</b> With correspondence from Laszlo, Lucia and Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, and Gabriele Munter-Kandinsky.
Box 4, Folder 2	<b>Nohl through Peters</b>
Box 4, Folder 3	<b>Pfehler through Redslob</b>
Box 4, Folder 4	<b>Reich through Rusche</b> <b>Scope and Content Note</b> Includes letters from Hans Richter.
Box 5, Folder 1-6	<b>Letters received S - W</b>
Box 5, Folder 1	<b>Saar Verlag through Schirmer</b>
Box 5, Folder 2	<b>Schischkoff through Scholz</b>
Box 5, Folder 3	<b>Schöndube through Schwedeles</b>
Box 5, Folder 4	<b>Secker through Thwaites</b>
Box 5, Folder 5	<b>Tietze through Vordemberge-Gildewart</b>
Box 5, Folder 6	<b>Voss through Wessel</b> <b>Scope and Content Note</b> With letters from Wilhelm Waetzhold.
Box 6, Folder 1	<b>Letters received W - Z</b>
Box 6, Folder 1	<b>Westheim through Zimmerman</b> <b>Scope and Content Note</b> Includes letters from Heinrich Wölfflin.

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Series I.B. **Letters From Roh, 1910-1965, n.d.**

**Physical Description:** 4.0 folder(s)

**Scope and Content Note**

Arranged chronologically, followed by copies of letters to Wilhelm Flitner.

Box 6, Folder 2	<b>Letters from Roh, 1913-1958, undated</b>
Box 6, Folder 3	<b>Letters from Roh to Wilhelm Flitner (photocopies), 1910-1918</b>
Box 6, Folder 4	<b>Letters from Roh to Wilhelm Flitner (photocopies), 1919-1926</b>
Box 6, Folder 5	<b>Letters from Roh to Wilhelm Flitner (photocopies), 1927-1965, undated</b>

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Series I.C. **Unidentified and incomplete letters to Roh, between 1911-1965**

**Physical Description:** 1.0 folder(s)

**Scope and Content Note**

Unidentified correspondents, letter fragments, sent to Roh. Includes a few manuscript and ephemera items.

Box 7

Box 7, Folder 1

**Letters, manuscripts and ephemera**

**Letters to Roh from unidentified correspondents and fragmentary letters**

Series II. **Raoul Hausmann letters and writings, 1918-1961, undated**

**Physical Description:** 3.0 folder(s)

**Scope and Content Note**

Letters and manuscripts by Raoul Hausmann, including a 74 page typed draft for part of Hausmann's *Hyle*, an assortment of essays on art and philosophy and other personal papers, as well as a collection of letters written by him to Roh dating from 1946-1965.

Box 7, Folder 2

**Letters from Hausmann to Roh, 1921, 1953-1961, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Arranged chronologically. Includes one reply postcard from Roh to Hausmann, undated. Letters in which Hausmann attempts to re-establish contact with Roh after a period of twenty years, and recount his whereabouts and activities in art and writing (especially for *Hyle*) during that time.

Box 7, Folder 3

**Hausmann writings: *Hyle*, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Seventy-four page typescript for parts of *Hyle I* and/or *Hyle II*.

Box 7, Folder 4

**Hausmann writings, 1918, 1921, 1947**

**Scope and Content Note**

Assorted writings and poems by Hausmann, including a Curriculum Vitae dated 1957; a typescript labeled *Hyle II*, dated 1947; an essay titled "Notizheft" dated 1921, in which he describes the evolution of modern art as being one toward a "decentralized" form of expression; an essay ("Wir sind nicht die Photographen") in which he argues that eyesight is not merely "mechanical" in nature; an essay from 1918 describing the various artistic movements of the beginning of the century.

Series III. **J. A. Baader letters and writings, 1946**

**Physical Description:** 8.0 items

**Scope and Content Note**

Series contains writings on art by Baader, letters from him to Roh, and a handwritten, manuscript draft copy of Baader's *Der Stern Erde*.

Box 7, Folder 5

**Letter to Roh and manuscripts, 1946**

**Scope and Content Note**

Typescript of chapter "Der Geist als Organisator" from *Der Sterne Erde*; six-page handwritten copy of *Der Sterne Erde* dated 1946 mailed to Hans Jantzen, with accompanying letter in which Baader explains the circumstances of his work during the war; fragment of a note with the heading "Ober-Dadaismus und Über-Realismus," dated 1946.

Series IV. **War Diary and ephemera, 1915, undated**

**Physical Description:** 2.0 folder(s)

**Scope and Content Note**

Series includes a typed, partial transcript of Roh's diary written while he was a field soldier during World War I, and a collection of ephemeral items from Roh's personal papers.

Box 7, Folder 6  
Box 7, Folder 7

**Typewritten extract from Roh's World War I diary, 1915  
Ephemera, undated**