



Someone Else's Spreadsheet

Integrating Object- and Series-Level Description in the Charles James Papers at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

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This document is for internal use only and should not be circulated beyond Metropolitan Museum staff.

Charles James (1906-1978)



- ❖ America's first couturier
- ❖ Designed 1930s-1950s
- ❖ Innovated with materials, methods
- ❖ Clients included socialites, actresses, opera singers



Charles James Papers

- ❖ Papers acquired by the Met in 2013
- ❖ Complemented 2009 acquisition of James garments from Brooklyn Museum
- ❖ Some material used in 2014 gala exhibition *Charles James: Beyond Fashion*
- ❖ Two-year processing project begun in fall 2015



200 LF of correspondence, business and financial documents, photographs, drawings, **sketches**, **patterns**, dress forms



From art collection to archival collection

- ❖ Not in the original plan
- ❖ Transfer from Costume Institute collection to CI Library
 - Patterns
 - Sketches
 - Assorted archival material
 - Dating from 1940s-50s
 - Most acquired with 2009 Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection

Impending move to new storage space

+ Redefinition of CI collecting policy

= “To go to archives!”



Step 1 – Spreadsheet wrangling

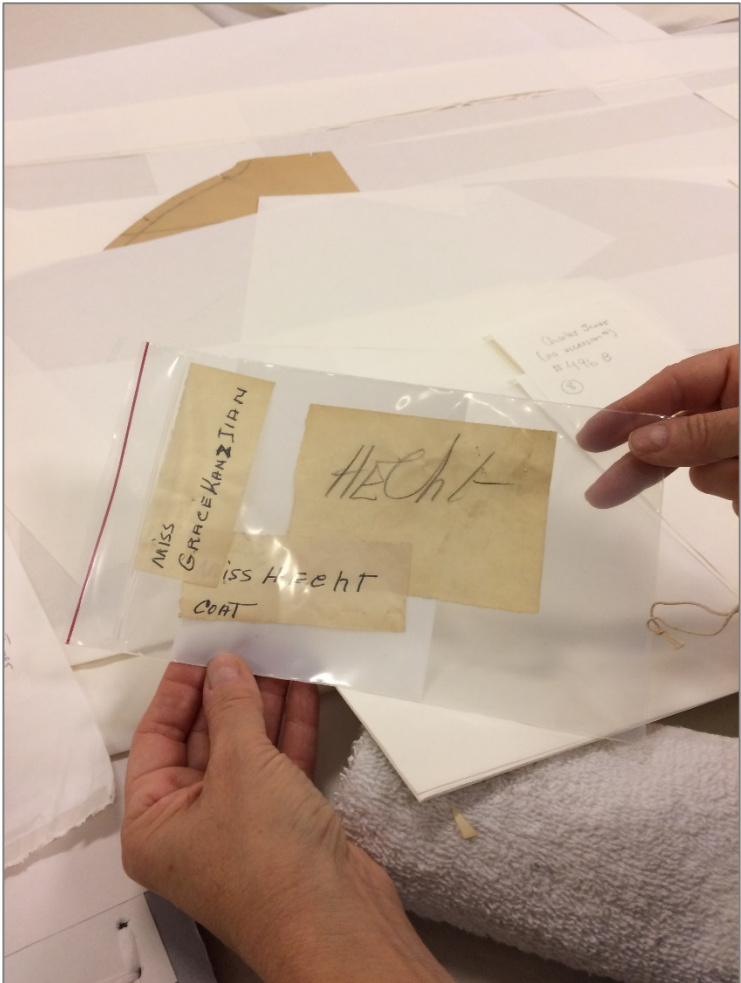
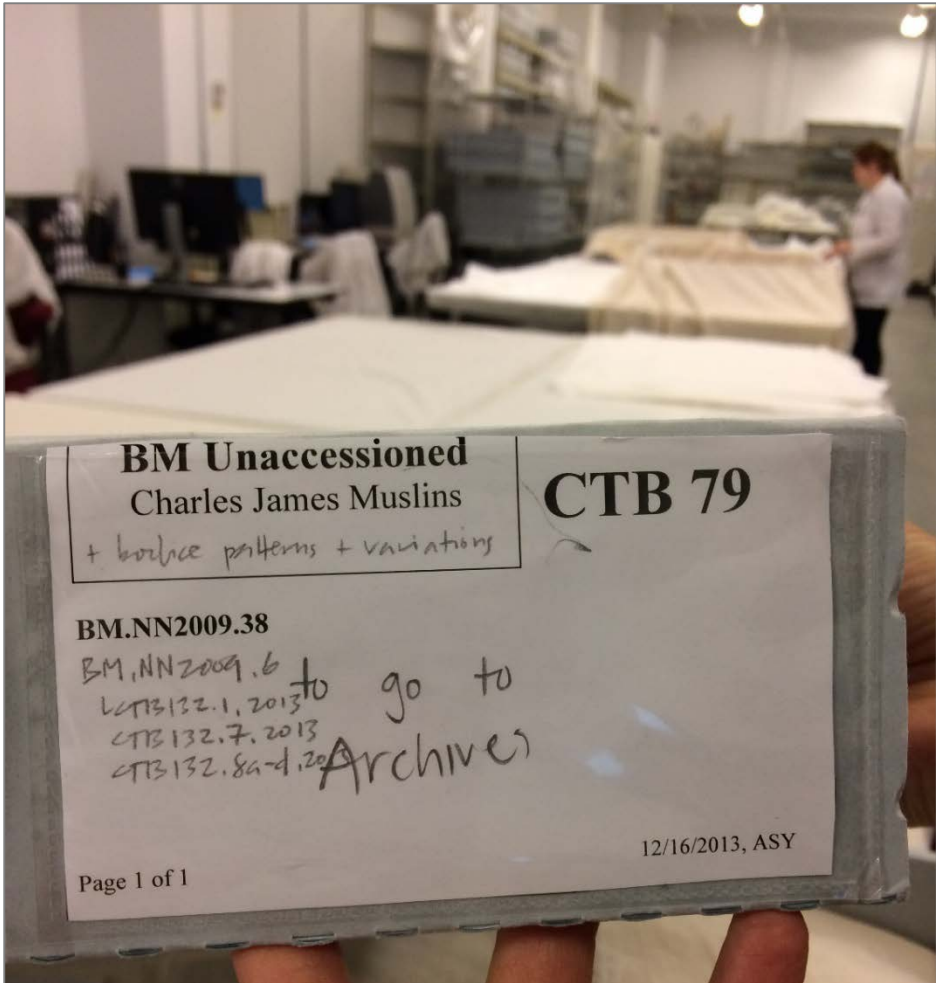
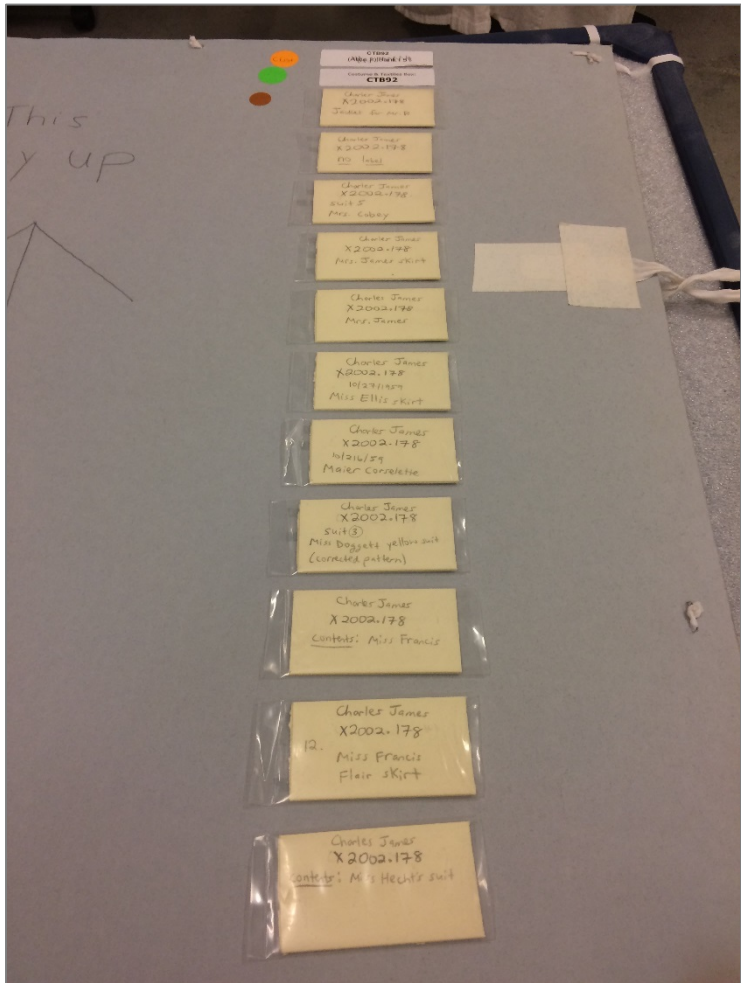
CM James Archives non-acc.xls [Compatibility Mode] - Excel

FILE HOME INSERT PAGE LAYOUT FORMULAS DATA REVIEW VIEW										Clipboard Font Alignment Number Styles Cells Editing									
N70 For dinner dress, 53.172.9.1 (13 pieces); marked in lead pencil with grain and seam lines, pattern piece and model number																			
KEY: Yellow = entered in AT Red = "return to archives" materials, not yet entered																			
Object Number Date Constituents (Creator; Donor) Group Information Title Description Current Location																			
SWAN																			
BM.53.266.1.2 1949 Designer: Charles James, American, born Great Britain, 1906-1978 Donor: Caroline Burke Like object 2009.300.849, Charles James, Ball gown: "Swan", 1953 (1975.246.9a, b; 2009.300.785; 2009.300.3509a-mm; 2009.300.8523; 2009.300.8545; BM.53.266.1.2; BM.CP100) Like object 2009.300.8545, Charles James, Evening dress: Swan, 1954 (1975.246.9a, b; 2009.300.785; 2009.300.3509a-mm; 2009.300.8523; BM.53.266.1.2; BM.CP100) Like object 2009.300.850, Charles James, Ball gown: "Swan", 1951 (1975.246.9a, b; 2009.300.785; 2009.300.849; 2009.300.1942-2009.300.1943; 2009.300.3509a-mm; 2009.300.8523; 2009.300.8545; BM.53.266.1.2; BM.57.218.7d; BM.CP100; C.158.32.1) Like object C.158.32.1, Charles James, Ball gown: Ball gown, fall/winter 1951-52 (1975.246.9a, b; 2009.300.785; 2009.300.849; 2009.300.3509a-mm; 2009.300.8523; 2009.300.8545; BM.53.266.1.2; BM.CP100; C.158.32.1) Like object 1990.258.1, Charles James, Evening dress: Evening dress, 1950 (1975.246.9a, b; 2009.300.785; 2009.300.849-2009.300.850; 2009.300.3509a-mm; 2009.300.8523; 2009.300.8545; BM.53.266.1.2; BM.CP100; C.158.32.1) For ball gown 53.171 (39 pieces); marked in lead pencil with grain and seam lines, pattern piece and model number Pattern pieces are numbered as follows: (Underbodice) 1. Back 2. Back yoke 3. Side back 4. Side front 5. Front 6. Top front (Petticoat) 1. Top, back and front 2. Flair 3. Back pleats (Pads) 1. Foundation 2. Top shell 3. Top 4. Ruffles (Outer bodice) 1. Back 2. Side 3. Front (Bodice drape) 1. Back and front 2. Top front 3. Top foundation (Peplum) 1. Back 2. Side back 3. Side 4. Side BM.53.266.1.2: Cl. American Wing (Aisle 02), Bank, B, 03, CTB80, (11/16/2015)																			
FOUR LEAF CLOVER																			
BM.53.266.2.2 1953 Designer: Charles James, American, born Great Britain, 1906-1978 Donor: Caroline Burke Main Object 2009.300.786, Charles James, Muslin: Muslin, 1953 (BM.53.266.2.2-BM.53.266.2.3) See Also BM.CP73, Charles James, Evening dress: "Clover Leaf", 1953 (2009.300.780; 2009.300.786; 2009.300.1945-2009.300.1946; BM.53.169.3-BM.53.169.4; BM.53.266.2.2-BM.53.266.2.3; BM.57.218.12a; BM.CP74; C.J.0016; C.J.0057; C.J.0059; C.J.0235; C.J.0269; C.J.0276; C.J.0322; C.J.0351; C.J.0353; C.J.0524; C.J.0607; C.J.0701) For evening dress (27 pieces); marked in lead pencil with grain and seam lines, pattern piece and model number Pattern pieces are numbered as follows: (Underbodice) 1. CB 2. CF 3. Lower side back 4. Side 5. Front 6. Lower front 7. Front 8. Top front BM.53.266.2.2: Cl. American Wing (Aisle 02), Bank, B, 03, CTB80, (11/16/2015)																			

Master Patterns - in AT Sketches - in AT

READY 84%

Step 2 – Ensure physical accuracy



Step 3 – Integrate description

Object Number	Date	Constituents	Title	Dimensions	Description	Current Location
SWAN 2009.300.3509a-mm	ca. 1951	Designer: Charles James, American, born Great Britain, 1906–1978 Donor: Brooklyn Museum Donor: Donor to Brooklyn Museum Caroline Burke Former owner: Brooklyn Museum	"Swan"	Storage: 50 x 61 in. (50 in., 154.9 cm)	Pattern, Paper (Model No. 187): For ball gown 53.171, 39 pieces (a-mm); brown card stock marked and annotated in lead pencil and ink pen with grain lines, model and pattern numbers and stamped "No Seams Allowed" and "Charles James." Pattern pieces numbered as follows: (Drape) 1. Front drape; 2. Bodice drape; 3. Front drape foundation; 4. Skirt drape; 5. Skirt drape; Flounce: Eight pieces, numbered 1 through 8; Flair: Four pieces, numbered 1 through 4; Peplum: six pieces, numbered 1 through 6; Pad: Four pieces, 1 through 4; Petticoat: Three pieces, numbered 1 through 3; Outer bodice: Three pieces, numbered 1 through 3; Underbodice: Six pieces, numbered 1 through 6	2009.300.3509a-mm: Cl, American Wing (Aisle 02), Bank, B, 05, CT

- ❖ Object-level description, with a twist
- ❖ Re-grouped items according to “group information” field (via TMS’s “sets”)

- ❖ Culled relevant metadata
 - title of garment
 - accession numbers
 - donor information
 - volume of patterns/sketches
 - former object identifiers, for internal crosswalk

Resources Record 4 of 4

Title: Charles James papers Resource Identifier: Costume.James.1

Basic Description | Names & Subjects | Notes Etc.

Type	Title	Content
General note		Object ID 2009.300.3509a-mm.
General note		Note: Thirty-nine pieces. Donated to the B...

Resources Record 2 of 2

☐ Internal Only ☐ Multi-part Persistent ID ref35'

Type: General note

Note Label:

Note Content: *Note*: Thirty-nine pieces. Donated to the Brooklyn Museum by Caroline Burke.

Wrap in tag...

First Previous Next Last Cancel OK

Created: Jan 13, 2017 by Caitlin | Modified: Jan 31, 2017 by Caitlin | Record Number: 14310012

Created: Dec 4, 2015 by Caitlin | Modified: Jul 11, 2017 by Celia | Record Number: 110

Result – FA featuring CI metadata; links to collection records

		Charles James papers
Subseries III.A.5. Patterns		
-	-	Ball gown. Muslin. Pattern envelope. [1940s] CTB 80 BM 53.170.3 <i>Note:</i> Red and white ball gown, #175. 23 pieces. <i>Note:</i> Pattern envelope removed from box, folder.
-	-	Ball gown. Four Leaf Clover. Muslin. (1 of 2) 1953 CTB 74 <i>Note:</i> Fifty-nine pieces; see accession number 2009.300.779 . See also accession numbers C.I.53.73 and 2009.300.784 . <i>Note:</i> Pattern envelope has been removed to box 80A, folder. Object ID BM.53.169.3.
-	-	Ball gown. Four Leaf Clover. Muslin. (1 of 2). Pattern envelope. [1940s] CTB 80A 53.169.3 <i>Note:</i> #1104. 37 pieces. <i>Note:</i> Pattern envelope removed from box, folder.
-	-	Ball gown. Four Leaf Clover. Muslin. (2 of 2) 1953 CTB 725 BF Object ID BM.53.169.4
-	-	Ball gown. Four Leaf Clover. Muslin. (1 of 2) 1953 CTB 75 <i>Note:</i> Fifty-four pieces; see accession number 2009.300.786 . See also accession numbers C.I.53.73 , 2009.300.784 , and 2009.300.779 . Donated to the Brooklyn Museum by Caroline Burke. <i>Note:</i> Pattern envelope has been removed to box 80A, folder.

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"Clover Leaf"

Designer:

Charles James (American, born Great Britain, 1906–1978)

Date:

1953

Culture:

American

Questions/comments:

Caitlin.McCarthy@metmuseum.org

For more on the James project:

<http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/in-circulation/2016/charles-james-intro>

Google “Met Museum Charles James blog”