THE MET

Collaboration with Curatorial Staff to Manage Archives at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

James Moske, Managing Archivist

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August 15, 2018

Presentation overview

- **Overview of the Met and recordkeeping 1870-ca.2000**
- **Records and archives at the Met – 21st century initiatives**
- **Case study – Mary Griggs Burke Papers & Asian Art Department**

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Established 1870

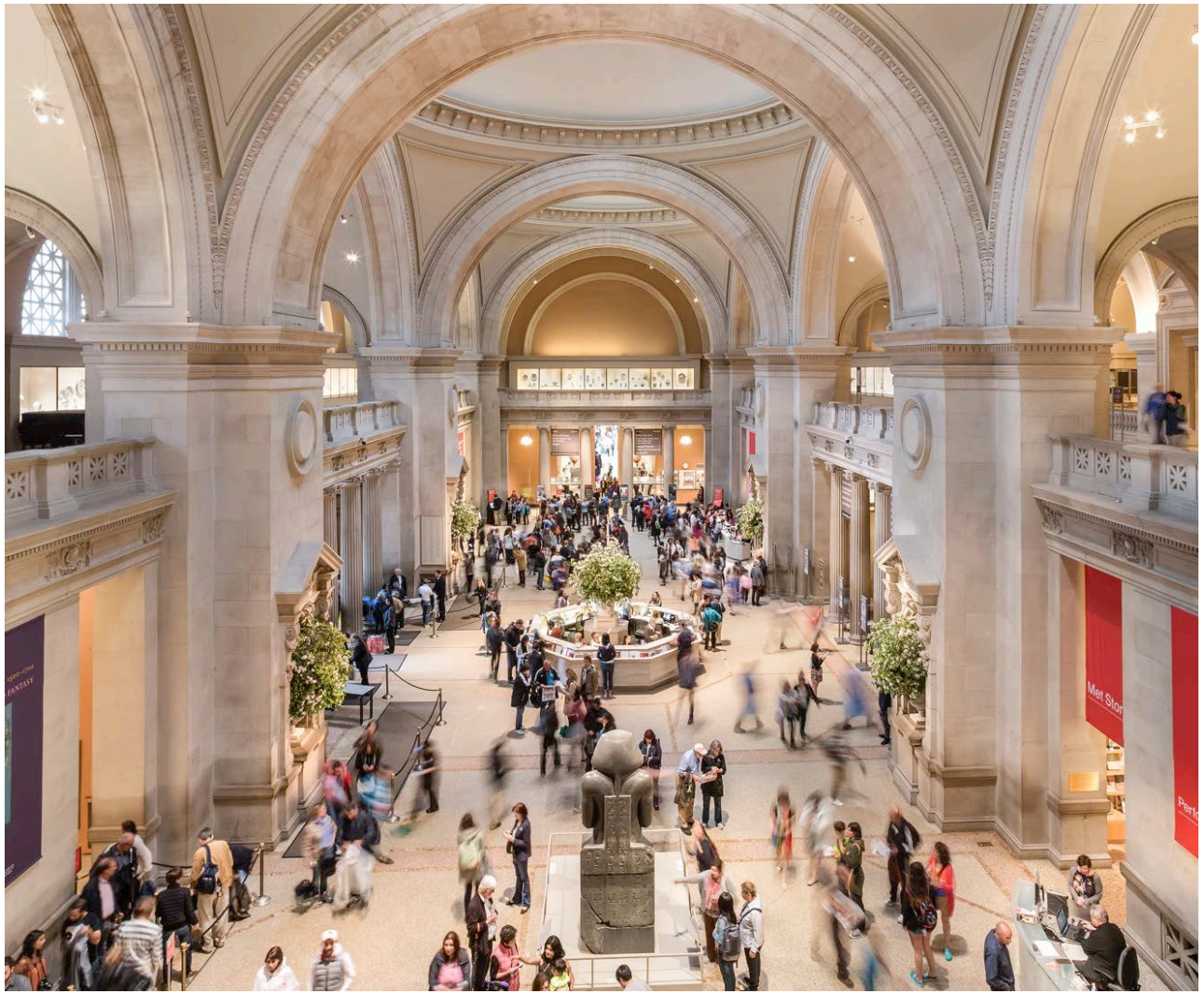
2 million artworks

2 million square feet buildings

7 million in-person visitors per year

2,000 employees

50+ departments



THE MET

17 curatorial departments!

- The American Wing
- Ancient Near Eastern Art
- Arms and Armor
- Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas
- Asian Art
- The Costume Institute
- Drawings and Prints
- Egyptian Art
- European Paintings
- European Sculpture and Decorative Arts
- Greek and Roman Art
- Islamic Art
- The Robert Lehman Collection
- Medieval Art and The Cloisters
- Modern and Contemporary Art
- Musical Instruments
- Photographs

Curatorial Departments

Seventeen curatorial departments study, exhibit, and care for the objects in The Met collection.

The American Wing

Ever since its establishment in 1870 the Museum has acquired important examples of American Art. A separate "American Wing" building to display the domestic arts of the 17th–early 19th centuries opened in 1924.

Ancient Near Eastern Art

The Met's collection of ancient Near Eastern art includes more than 7,000 works ranging in date from the eighth millennium B.C. through the centuries just beyond the time of the Arab conquests of the seventh century A.D.

Museum Archives origins – 1870 Met Constitution

CONSTITUTION

OF

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

ARTICLE V.

The President, and in his absence, the Senior Vice-President present, shall preside at all the meetings of the Museum. The Recording Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Trustees, of the Executive Committee, and of the Auditing Committee, and shall preserve the seal, archives, and correspondence of the Museum, shall issue notices for all meetings of the Trustees, and attend the same. The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Museum, be present and participate in all meetings of the Trustees and Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall

Museum Archives Collections

- Board of Trustees records
- Senior staff office files – Director, President
- Office of the Secretary Records

  Legal and business activity including artwork acquisitions, special exhibitions, building construction, fundraising
- Architectural plans
- Gallery & dealer archives

Museum Archives holdings - curatorial records

- Cc: correspondence and reports in Office of the Secretary Records

- Office files of selected 20th century curators

- ***Files of one curatorial department, 1940s-2008 – Costume Institute***

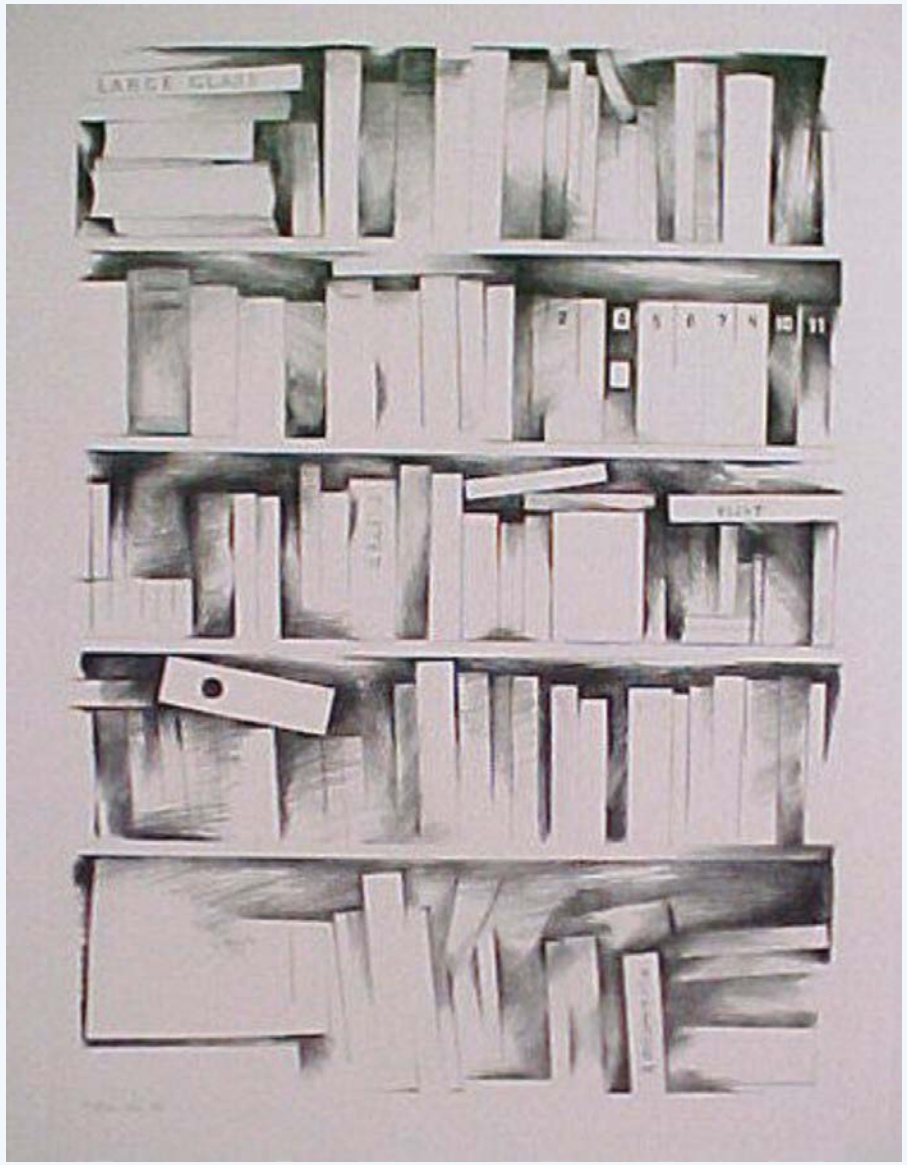
The Costume Institute

The Costume Institute's collection of more than 35,000 costumes and accessories represents five continents and seven centuries of fashionable dress, regional costumes, and accessories for men, women, and children, from the fifteenth century to the present.

The redesigned Costume Institute space reopened in May 2014, after a two-year renovation as the Anna Wintour Costume Center with the exhibition ***Charles James: Beyond Fashion***. The complex includes the Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Gallery, the main showcase space with a flexible design that lends itself to frequent transformation with the latest video, sound, and wireless technology. The Center also includes the Carl and Iris Barrel Apfel Gallery to orient visitors to The Costume Institute's exhibitions. Behind the scenes is a state-of-the-art

Curatorial Department records at the Met – the past

- No institutional mandate to transfer records to Museum Archives
- Proprietary attitudes towards scholarship & access
- Important role of art collection managers and librarians



Richard Hamilton, **“Archive II”** (1981)
Purchase, Reba and Dave Williams Gift, 2000

Curatorial Department records at the Met – evolving views

Mathais Füssli the Youngest, **“Allegory of Art and Knowledge”** (1694)
Purchase, Jean A. Bonna Gift, 2007

- Positive views about open access & transparency
- Benefits of centralized collection management
- Concern about digital records
- Space and staff constraints

Curatorial Department records at The Met – new directions

2005

- Records management survey and retention scheduling

2010

- Transfer of Costume Institute records to Museum Archives

2012

- Institution-wide procedures for acquisition of archival material

2015

- Survey of archival collections in curatorial & conservation departments

2005: Records management survey & retention scheduling

- Legal/archives staff survey of all Museum departments
- Focus on Met institutional records
- Created schedules for each department
- Framework for ongoing advisement on retention, destruction

2010: Transfer of Costume Institute records

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Met Gala 2018

Colloquially and affectionately referred to as "fashion's biggest night out," the Met Gala 2018 is a pinnacle of iconic style. A fundraising benefit for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the event welcomes celebrity stars, young creatives, and industry paragons alike. And the excitement doesn't stop there—the gala also signifies the highly anticipated grand opening of the Costume Institute's annual fashion exhibition: "Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination" opening on May 10, 2018.

2012: Institution-wide archival acquisition procedures

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

REPORT OF A GIFT, PROMISED GIFT, BEQUEST OR PURCHASE OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

Department:

Title:

Medium: Archival material

Date span:

Extent:

Receipt Date:

Donor/Vendor:
Address:

Gift Record/Price:

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____
Curator Signature

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Department Head Signature

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____
Managing Archivist Signature

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____
Chief Librarian Signature

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Associate Director for Collections and Administration Signature

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Director Signature

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Chairman of the Acquisitions Committee Signature
(Required for purchases if price is between $75,000 and $150,000)

REPORT OF A GIFT, BEQUEST OR PURCHASE OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

Department:
Title:
Medium: Archival material
Date span:
Extent:

I. *Provide a brief description of the archival material.*

II. *State any issues of physical condition that should be taken into account prior to the archival material's acquisition.*

III. *State the importance of the archival material in relation to the existing collections.*

IV. *Give a resume of your reasons for recommending the archival material for acquisition.*

V. *Plans for processing, housing and providing research access to the archival material.*

VI. *Other comments.*

2015: Survey of archival collections

Francis William Edmonds, **“Taking the Census”** (1854)
Gift of Diane, Daniel, and Mathew Wolf, in honor of John K. Howat and Lewis I. Sharp, 2006

- Included non-institutional records
- Identified 234 collections (4,000 linear feet)
- Ongoing discussions about storage, processing, digitization

2015: Survey of archival collections – resulting projects

1918 design from Worth sketch collection.
The Irene Lewisohn Costume Reference Library at The Costume Institute, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Installation view, “World War I and the Visual Arts”
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017-18

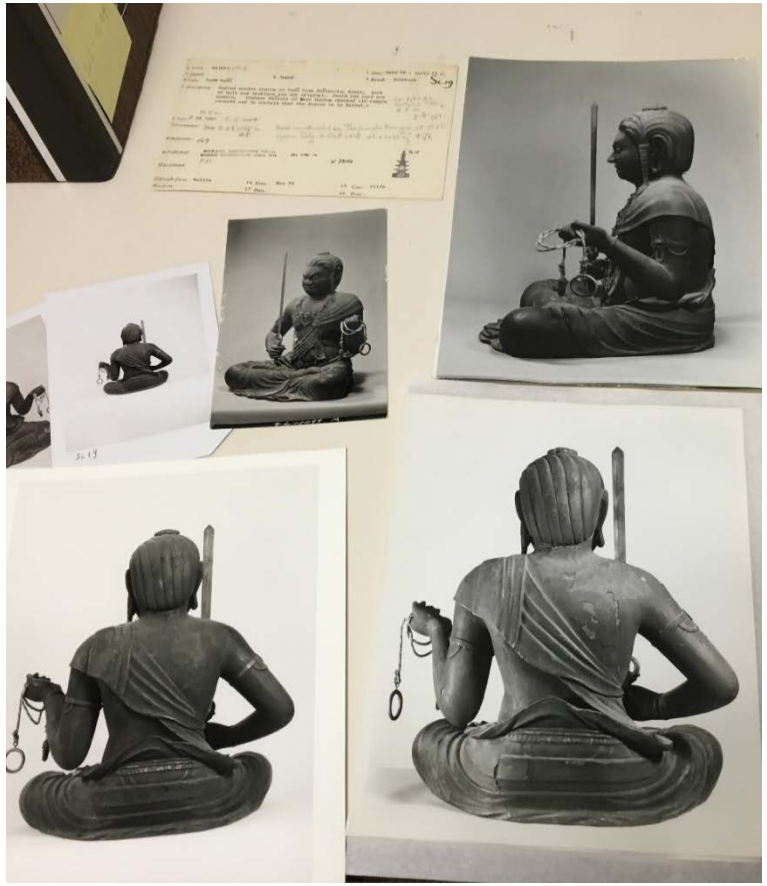
Mary Griggs Burke papers, Department of Asian Art

Mary Griggs Burke, 1985

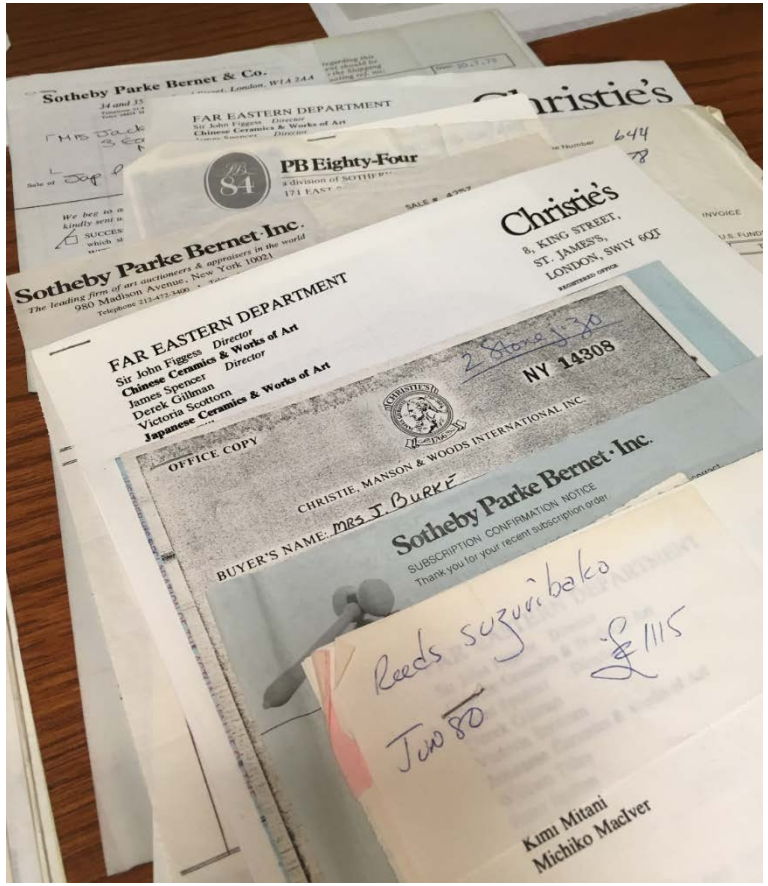
Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015

Mary Griggs Burke papers: Processing, 2016-2017

Letters between Mrs. Burke and her husband, 1965



Object condition photographs



Receipts for purchases from auction houses

Processing: *Visible and Available*

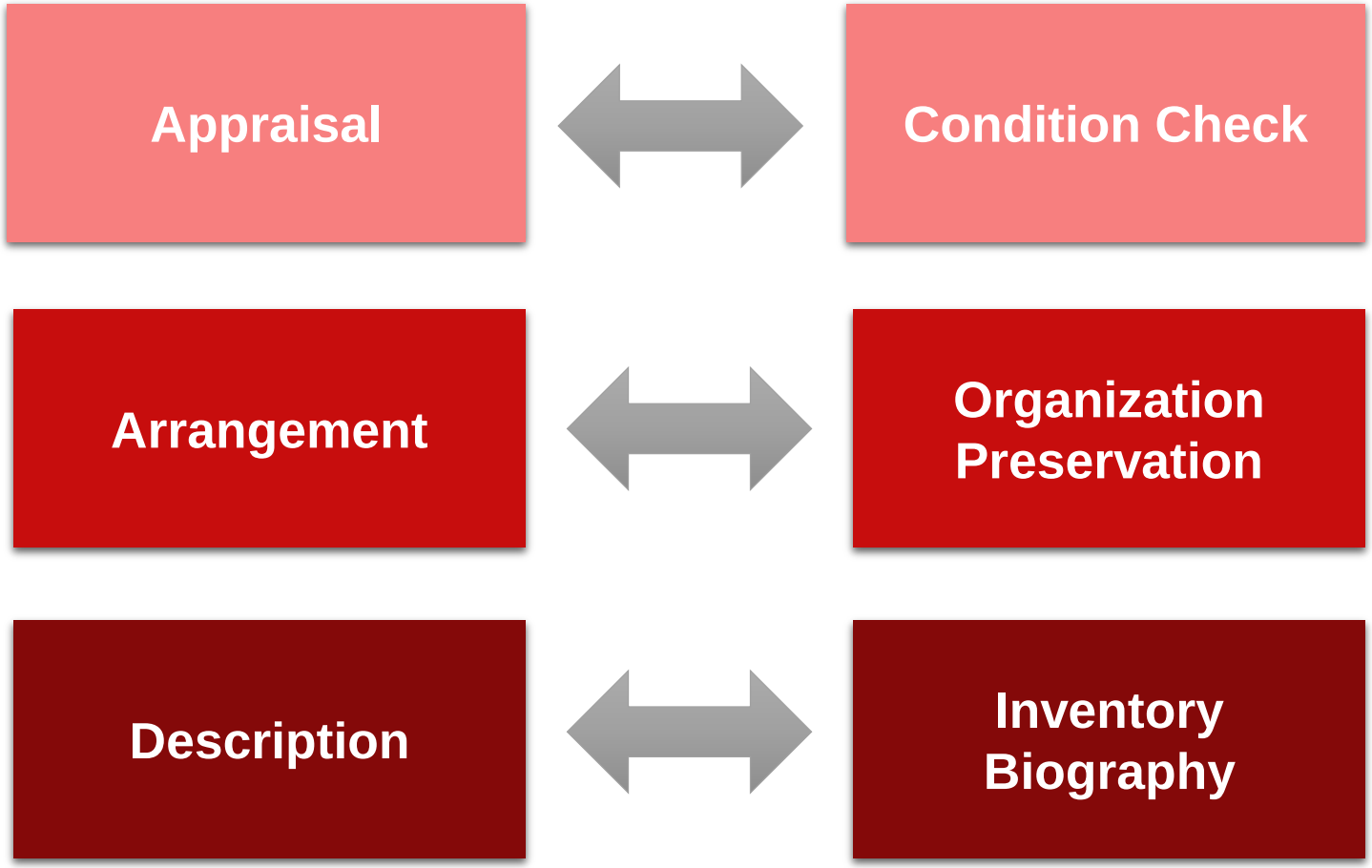
- Transparency
- Scale of work, before-and-after
- Reference and process questions
- Specialized staff support

Processing: *Opportunity*

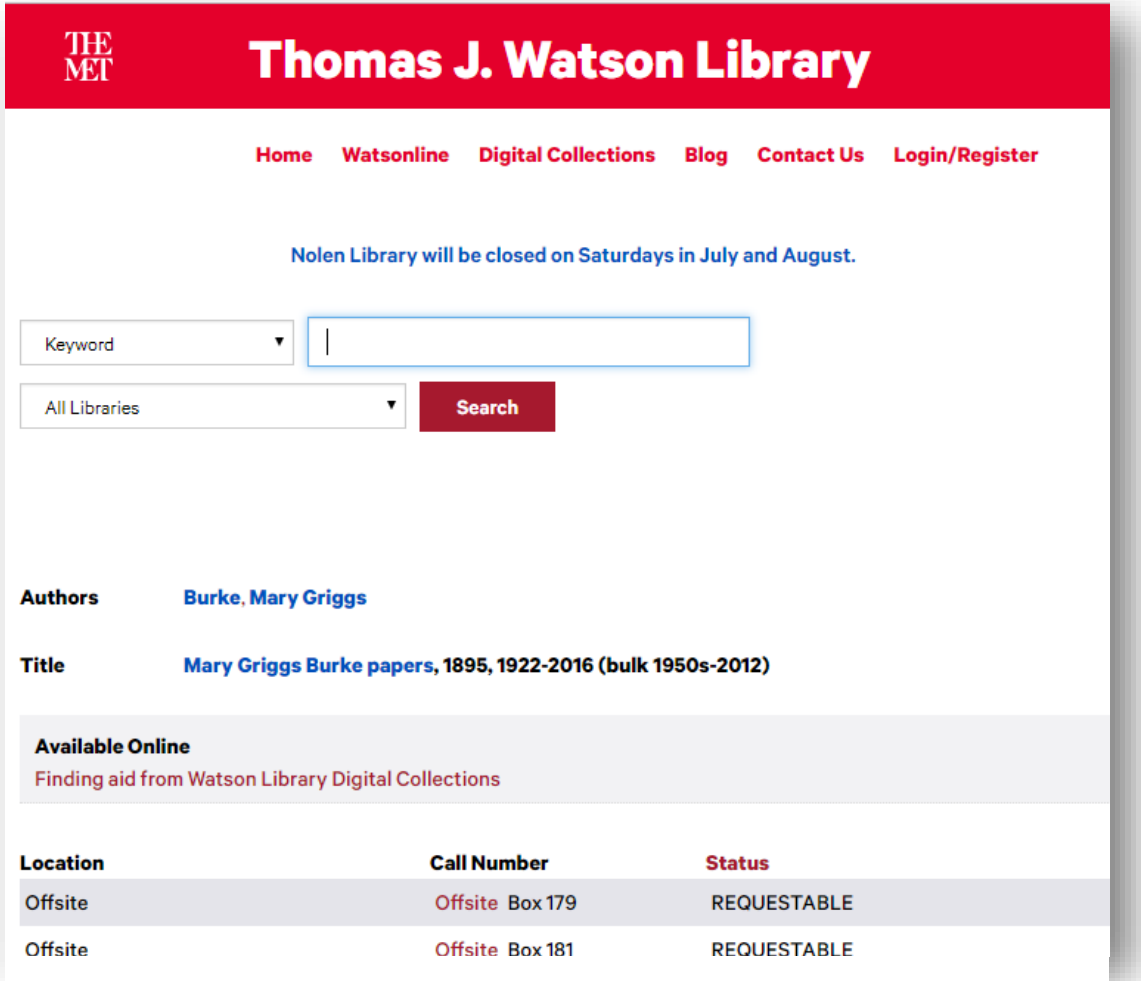
Katsura Imperial Palace, Japan, August 28, 1954

"Why not just scan everything?"

Talk like a Curator: Collections management crosswalk



Mary Griggs Burke papers: Collection open, late 2017



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Thomas J. Watson Library

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Nolen Library will be closed on Saturdays in July and August.

Keyword

All Libraries

Search

Authors Burke, Mary Griggs

Title Mary Griggs Burke papers, 1895, 1922-2016 (bulk 1950s-2012)

Available Online
Finding aid from Watson Library Digital Collections

Location	Call Number	Status
Offsite	Offsite Box 179	REQUESTABLE
Offsite	Offsite Box 181	REQUESTABLE

September 20, 2017

Mary Griggs Burke papers: Stewardship, Contents, & Use

- Where did t
- What is insi
- How are the
- How can the
  - Requestin
  - Answerin

September 20, 2017

Mary Griggs Burke papers: Intellectual Organization

I. Object Files
II. Purchases & C
III. Exhibitions
IV. Collection Mar
V. Mini Museum
VI. Research, Writ
VII. Institutional/Ph
VIII. Personal & Mi

September 20, 2017

Contents: The Finding Aid

Mary Griggs Burke papers

Finding aid prepared by Angela Salisbury

Processing of this collection was funded by a generous grant from the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation

This finding aid was generated using Archivists' Toolkit on September 08, 2017

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives
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archives@metmuseum.org

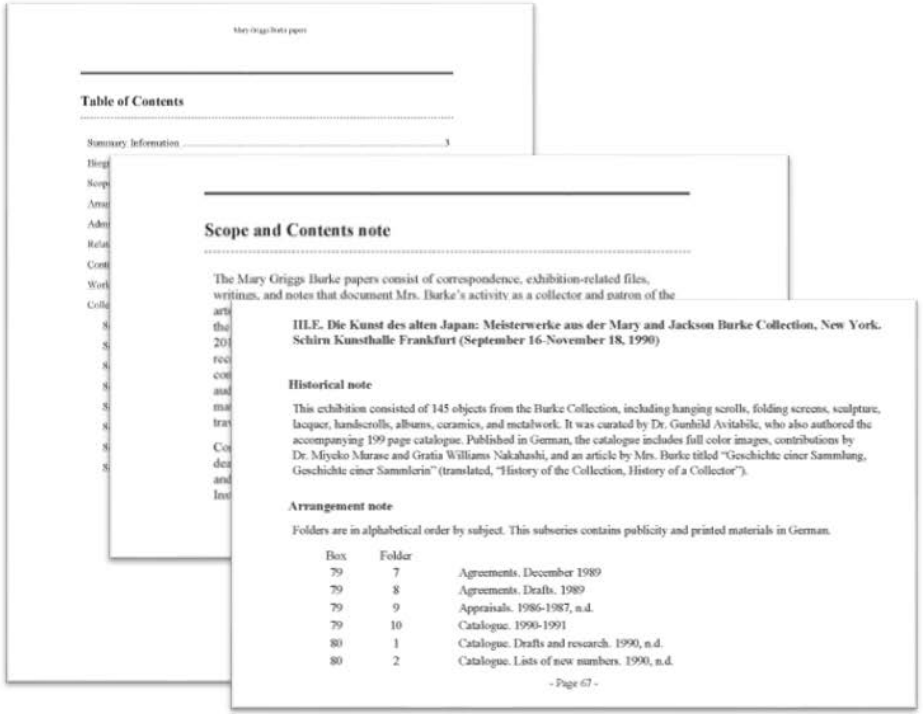

Table of Contents

Scope and Contents note

The Mary Griggs Burke papers consist of correspondence, exhibition-related files, writings, and notes that document Mrs. Burke's activity as a collector and patron of the

IIIL. Die Kunst des alten Japan: Meisterwerke aus der Mary and Jackson Burke Collection, New York. Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (September 16-November 18, 1990)

Historical note

This exhibition consisted of 145 objects from the Burke Collection, including hanging scrolls, folding screens, sculpture, lacquer, handscrolls, albums, ceramics, and metalwork. It was curated by Dr. Gunhild Avitabile, who also authored the accompanying 199 page catalogue. Published in German, the catalogue includes full color images, contributions by Dr. Miyeko Murase and Gratia Williams Nakahashi, and an article by Mrs. Burke titled "Geschichte einer Sammlung, Geschichte einer Sammlerin" (translated, "History of the Collection, History of a Collector").

Arrangement note

Folders are in alphabetical order by subject. This subseries contains publicity and printed materials in German.

Box	Folder	
79	7	Agreements. December 1989
79	8	Agreements. Drafts. 1989
79	9	Appraisals. 1986-1987, n.d.
79	10	Catalogue. 1990-1991
80	1	Catalogue. Drafts and research. 1990, n.d.
80	2	Catalogue. Lists of new numbers. 1990, n.d.

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Thank you!

Ogata Kōrin (Japanese, 1658–1716), “**Hotei**” (Edo period)
Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, 2015

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