

SFMOMA Library & Archives
151 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

Finding Aid to the Film Department Records, 1944-1965

Collection Number: ARCH.ADM.008

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Finding Aid written by: Dayna Holz

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Collection Summary	p. 2
Information for Researchers	p. 3
Administrative Information	p. 4
Scope and Content Note	p. 5-6
Container List	p. 7-8
Series 1: Film Library, 1953-1965	p. 7-8
Series 2: Art in Cinema, 1944-1965	p. 8

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Collection Title

San Francisco Museum of Art, Film Department records, 1944-1965

Collection number

ARCH.ADM.008

Creator

San Francisco Museum of Art

Extent

1.7 linear feet (2 cartons, 2 card file boxes)

Repository

SFMOMA Library & Archives
151 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

Abstract

Contains records related to film program activities in the San Francisco Museum of Art before the formal establishment of the Film Department. Records are divided into two series reflecting the two main educational functions of the film program from the 1940s through the 1960s: the Film Library, a film rental and distribution program, and Art in Cinema, a curated art-related film series founded by Frank Stauffacher.

Language

Records are in English.

Physical location

Collection is housed in the SFMOMA Archives

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Access and use restrictions

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

Publication information

All requests for permission to publish should be directed to the SFMOMA Archivist.

Preferred citation

[Identification of item], [box year and folder title], Film Department, 1944-1965, Administrative Records, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Archives.

Access points

Topical Subjects

Art appreciation--Study and teaching--California--San Francisco
Art museums and community--California--San Francisco
Art museums--Educational aspects
Museums and motion pictures

Corporate and Personal Names

Art in Cinema Society
Art in Cinema Society--History--Sources
San Francisco Museum of Art
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
San Francisco Museum of Art--Archives
San Francisco Museum of Art--History--Sources
San Francisco Museum of Art--Records and correspondence

Stauffacher, Frank, 1916-
Stauffacher, Frank, 1916- --Correspondence

Related materials

SFMOMA Archives Office of the Director Records, 1935-1958
SFMOMA Archives Office of the Director Records, 1959-1965
SFMOMA Archives Exhibition Records
SFMOMA Archives Photographs Collection

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition

Institutional records generated by SFMA or collected by SFMA staff in the performance of work duties.

Level of description

Records are described at the carton level. Some records are described at the folder or item level.

Processed by

Dayna Holz, 2007-2008.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Film Department collection records pre-date the official establishment of the Film Department of the San Francisco Museum of Art, but reflect Museum film activities that directly preceded the founding of the Department. The pre-Department activities are distinguishable by two main educational functions and are divided into two series: *Film Library, 1953-1965*, and *Art in Cinema, 1944-1962*.

The Film Library was a film rental and distribution service operated out of the Museum, which complemented the Museum's own film program that had been showing films in the Museum since its opening in 1935. The Film Library expanded in 1953-1954 with the signing of a contract with the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York to act as their official West Coast distribution center. The Film Library series primarily documents this relationship.

Film Library records include files related to arranging loans of films under the auspices of the Western center for the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) Film Library, and fielding inquiries about films and their availability. Includes contract negotiations and revisions with MoMA, and the final settlement of accounts when the contract ended in 1964. Film Library records date from 1953-1965, and contain primarily correspondence and reports.

The Film Library materials are generally divisible into two categories: those that deal with the Film Library's relationship with MoMA and their Film Library Circulation Director, Margareta Akermark, and those that deal with the internal operations of the film rental program at SFMA. Also includes original construction of and revisions to the film rental catalogue. See also *Office of the Director Records, 1935-1958* (ARCH.ADM.001) "Film Library: Museum of Modern Art, New York" files.

The Art in Cinema Society was started in 1946 by Frank Stauffacher in collaboration with the Museum. Programs with films about art, art films, and select curated film series were shown annually or semi-annually in the Museum until Stauffacher's death in 1955. The name Art in Cinema resurfaced in the Museum occasionally over the subsequent ten to fifteen years with attempts to revive the series, none of which were successful. The Art in Cinema records appear to be a small component of what was likely a much larger set of documents about the management and development of the series.

The Art in Cinema series contains a small collection of records related to the Art in Cinema Society and the film programs the society administered at the SFMA. In addition to the film showings in the Museum, the Art in Cinema Society maintained a library of experimental films which they rented to other organizations. Correspondence with film makers, organizations who rented films, and about the general operation of the program can be found in the "Film Rental Correspondence" files. Correspondence with the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, from which the Art in Cinema Society rented films for Art in Cinema programs at the SFMA, can be found in the "Correspondence with MoMA Film Library" file.

Other miscellaneous correspondence and related documents dating from 1946 through 1949 can be found in the "Correspondence, Announcements, Questionnaires, Notes" files. These materials were housed loose in a box with no apparent order. Correspondence is generally addressed to or from Art in Cinema Society staff members Frank Stauffacher, Richard Foster, or Martha Bullitt (secretary).

The "Other Film Societies" files contain programs and announcements from contemporary film groups, primarily from the period 1949 through 1953. The "Reprints of Articles About the Early History of the Motion Picture Industry" file contains several typed articles, copied from publications

in the 1930s about innovations in and arguments surrounding the film industry. These articles were housed loose in a box and are not dated, nor do they definitively belong with the Art in Cinema materials.

See also *Office of the Director Records, 1935-1958* (ARCH.ADM.001) "Art in Cinema" files.

CONTAINER LIST

SERIES 1: FILM LIBRARY, 1953-1965

Container	Folder	Contents	Date
Card File Box 1		Address Index	ca. 1964
Card File Box 2		Address Index	ca. 1961
Carton 1	1	Agreements - SFMA and MoMA	1960-1961
Carton 1	2	Agreements - SFMA and MoMA	1960-1962
Carton 1	3	Bank Loan	1953-1963
Carton 1	4	Black-Listed for Film Rentals	1958-1961
Carton 1	5	Bookings and Income	1963-1965
Carton 1	6	Catalogue	1954, 1963
Carton 1	7	Correspondence - Chronological	1961
Carton 1	8	Correspondence - Larry Jordan [and Others]	1959-1962
Carton 1	9	Correspondence - Promotional Letters	1960-1962
Carton 1	10-11	Correspondence and Inquiries	1956-1958
Carton 1	12-13	Correspondence and Inquiries	1956-1960
Carton 1	14-15	Correspondence and Inquiries	1958-1960
Carton 1	16-18	Correspondence and Inquiries	1961-1962
Carton 1	19	Correspondence and Inquiries	1962-1963
Carton 1	20	Correspondence and Inquiries	1963-1964
Carton 1	21	Correspondence with MoMA	1954-1961
Carton 1	22-23	Correspondence with MoMA/Margareta Akermark	1953-1957
Carton 1	24-25	Correspondence with MoMA/Margareta Akermark	1957-1964
Carton 1	26	Customs	1955-1962
Carton 1	27	Customs - Canadian	1961-1962
Carton 1	28	Film Distributors in USA	1955-1962
Carton 1	29	Film Notes	1961-1962
Carton 1	30	Film Programs - Other Organizations	1959-1961
Carton 1	31	Film Rental Schedules	1958-1959
Carton 1	32	Film Rental Schedules	1960
Carton 1	33	Film Rental Schedules	1961
Carton 1	34	Film Rental Schedules	1962
Card File Box 1		Film Rental Schedule - Advance Bookings	1964-1965
Carton 1	35	Films Available	1961-1962
Carton 1	36	General Information	1954-1962
Carton 1	29	Independent Film Makers	1961-1962
Carton 1	37	Insurance Records	1959-1962
Carton 1	38	Inventory	1954-1961
Carton 1	39	Inventory	1961
Carton 1	40	MoMA Film Library Rental Contracts	1961-1963
Carton 1	41	Museum Showing of Films	1955-1956
Carton 1	42	Museum Showing of Films	1961-1963
Carton 1	43-44	Quarterly Reports	1954-1964
Carton 1	45	Railway Express Records	1957-1962
Carton 1	46	Report - Record of Activity of Film Library	1958
Carton 1	47	Reports to MoMA	1962-1963

Container	Folder	Contents	Date
Carton 1	48	Requests Referred to MoMA	1956-1959
Carton 1	29	Stills	1959-1960
Carton 1	39	Supplies	1963

SERIES 2: ART IN CINEMA, 1944-1962

Carton 2	1-2	Correspondence, Announcements, Questionnaires, Notes	1946-1949
Carton 2	3	Correspondence with MoMA Film Library	1944-1947
Carton 2	4	Film Rental Correspondence	1947
Carton 2	5	Film Rental Correspondence	1950-1951
Carton 2	6	Mailing List	1960-1962
Carton 2	7-9	Other Film Societies	1949-1957
Carton 2	10-11	Reprints of Articles About the Early History of the Motion Picture Industry	[ca. 1950]