



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Don Seiler Papers, circa 1930-2020, in the Archives of American Art

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Don Seiler papers
Date:	circa 1930-2020
Identifier:	AAA.seiledon
Creator:	Seiler, Don, 1928-2000
Extent:	3 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of Don Seiler measure 3.0 linear feet and date from circa 1930 to 2020. The papers document Seiler's career as an artist through correspondence with family and friends; diaries containing recollections of his early life and time serving during World War II, and some recollections of Seiler by family and friends in the years following his death; and artwork consisting of sketches and sketchbooks.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated in 2021 by Maria Seiler, Don Seiler's daughter-in-law.

Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Ricky Gomez in 2022.

Preferred Citation

Don Seiler papers, circa 1930-2020. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

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Biographical / Historical

Don Seiler (1928-2000) was a sculptor and painter in Miami and Ona, Florida. Seiler was born in Miami Beach, Florida in 1928. He began his studies at the Art Students League in 1945 before taking a hiatus to enlist in the Army's 11th Airborn Division that same year. Following World War II he completed his studies at the Art Students League, and he returned to Miami to open his studio. Seiler died in 2000.

Scope and Contents

The papers of Don Seiler measure 3.0 linear feet and date from circa 1930 to 2020. The papers document Seiler's career as an artist through correspondence with family and friends; diaries containing recollections of his early life and time serving during World War II, and some recollections of Seiler by family and friends in the years following his death; and artwork consisting of sketches and sketchbooks.

Correspondence consists primarily of letters to family and friends, including Maria Seiler and Lance Seiler. Also included are letters to Ralph Knutsen and letters related to a book on OnaLand. Scattered among the correspondence are some photographs of sculptures and some sketches.

Diaries consist of some loose leaf diary entries and two diaries primarily written by Seiler but also including some recollections from friends and family. Some of the diaries contain entries in which Seiler reminisces on his time serving during World War II. Also included among the diaries is a biographical binder consisting of some correspondence, photographs of Seiler's artwork, documents related to Seiler's death, and some recollections on his life by friends.

Artwork consists of sketches and sketchbooks documenting Seiler's distinctive visual language for depicting human and animal figures. Included are preparatory sketches for significant public art projects including his statue of former NFL quarterback Y.A. Tittle sited at Atlantic High School in Port Orange, Florida and the statue of a swimmer commissioned by the International Swimming Hall of Fame to stand outside its Florida headquarters.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into three series.

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1971-2001 (1.1 linear feet; Box 1, 4)
- Series 2: Diaries, 1974-2020 (0.4 linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 3: Artwork, circa 1930-1996 (1.5 linear feet; Boxes 3-7, OV 8-9)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

World War, 1939-1945

Types of Materials:

Diaries
Drawings
Sketchbooks

Occupations:

Painters -- Florida
Sculptors -- Florida

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1971-2001

1.1 Linear feet (Box 1, 4)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence consists primarily of letters to family and friends, including Maria Seiler and Lance Seiler. Also included are letters to Ralph Knutsen and letters related to the book on OnaLand. Scattered among the correspondence are some photographs of sculptures and some sketches.

Arrangement: Correspondence was housed in a number of binders with general range dates and remains filed in original order. Correspondence with Marie and Lance Seiler can be found in separate named folders, but also within the chronological folders.

Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence, 1971-1974
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence, circa 1976-1983
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence, 1977-1979
Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence, 1980-1984
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1982-2000
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1983-1988
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, 1985-1986
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence, 1988-1994
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence, 1989
Box 1, Folder 10	Correspondence, 1987-1989
Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence, 1989-2000
Box 1, Folder 12	Correspondence, 1990
Box 1, Folder 13	Correspondence, circa 1990-1997
Box 1, Folder 14	Correspondence, 1991
Box 1, Folder 15	Correspondence, 1992
Box 1, Folder 16	Correspondence, 1993
Box 1, Folder 17	Correspondence, 1994-1996

Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence, 1995-1998
Box 1, Folder 19	Correspondence, 1997-1999
Box 1, Folder 20	Correspondence, 1997-1999
Box 1, Folder 21-22	Ralph Knutsen, 1986-1987
Box 1, Folder 23	Lance Seiler, 1986-1989
Box 1, Folder 24	Maria Seiler, 1995-2001
Box 1, Folder 25	OnaLand Letters, 1985-1992
Box 4, Folder 1	OnaLand Letters, circa 1990
Box 1, Folder 26	Miscellaneous, undated

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Series 2: Diaries, 1974-2020

0.4 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Diaries consist of some loose leaf diary entries and two diaries primarily written by Seiler but also including some recollections from friends and family. Some of the diaries contain entries in which Seiler reminisces on his time serving during World War II. Also included among the diaries is a biographical binder consisting of some correspondence, photographs of Seiler's artwork, documents related to Seiler's death, and some recollections on his life by friends.

Box 2, Folder 1	Diary Entries, 1975-1978, 2008-2020
Box 2, Folder 2	Diary, 1980-1982
Box 2, Folder 3	Diary, 1994-1995
Box 2, Folder 4-6	Biographical Binder, 1974-2016

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Series 3: Artwork, circa 1930-1996

1.5 Linear feet (Boxes 3-7, OV 8-9)

Scope and Contents: Artwork consists of sketches and sketchbooks documenting Seiler's distinctive visual language for depicting human and animal figures. Included are preparatory sketches for significant public art projects including his statue of former NFL quarterback Y.A. Tittle sited at Atlantic High School in Port Orange, Florida and the statue of a swimmer commissioned by the International Swimming Hall of Fame to stand outside its Florida headquarters.

Box 4, Folder 2	Sketches, circa 1968-1992
Oversize 8	Sketches, 1978-1992
Box 5, Folder 1-2	Sketches, 1978-1994
Box 6, Folder 1	Sketches, 1980-1996
Box 6, Folder 2	Sketches, 1981-1996
Box 5, Folder 3	Sketches, circa 1982
Box 6, Folder 3	Sketches, 1982-1995
Box 6, Folder 4-5	Sketches, 1986-1995
Box 6, Folder 6	Sketches, 1992-1995
Oversize 9	Sketches, circa 1993
Box 3, Folder 1	Sketches, circa 1995-1996
Box 7, Folder 1	Sketchbook, circa 1976
Box 5, Folder 4	Sketchbook, circa 1979
Box 5, Folder 5	Sketchbook, 1981
Box 4, Folder 4	Sketchbook, 1981
Box 7, Folder 4	Sketchbook, 1981-1991
Box 7, Folder 3	Sketchbook, circa 1983
Box 4, Folder 5	Sketchbook, 1985-1986
Box 7, Folder 2	Sketchbook, 1986

Box 3, Folder 2	Sketchbook, 1986
Box 7, Folder 5	Sketchbook, undated
Box 7, Folder 6	Sketchbook, undated
Box 7, Folder 7	Sketchbook, undated
Box 3, Folder 3	Sketchbooks, circa 1930
Box 3, Folder 4	Sketchbooks, circa 1940
Box 4, Folder 3	Sketchbooks, 1981-1989

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