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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Yale Center for British Art, Institutional Archives
Institutional Archives
1080 Chapel Street
P. O. Box 208280
New Haven, CT 06520-8280
ycba.institutionalarchives@yale.edu

CALL NUMBER: S008

CREATOR: Mellon, Paul

TITLE: Paul and Rachel Mellon Dealer files

DATES: 1933–1997

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 25 linear feet (25 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The Dealer files contain records relating to the purchase of books and artwork, including prints, drawings, sculpture, and paintings, by the Paul Mellon family. The records are composed of correspondence and invoices between various dealers and Paul Mellon. Many files include detailed provenance, biographical and conservation information as well as photocopied exhibition catalogs. There are records pertaining to artwork found at the Yale Center for British Art, the National Gallery of Art and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, among other institutions.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/ycba.ia.S008

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/ycba.ia.S008.

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is unprocessed and may not be available for immediate access.

Biographical / Historical

Mellon attended Cambridge after graduating from Yale, and while there, he began collecting books, particularly English color-plate books and books on racing and hunting. He went on to purchase his first paintings, including English painter George Stubbs’ Pumpkin with a Stable-lad (1774). After World War II, Mellon and his second wife Rachel (called Bunny) moved to Richmond and began collecting French Impressionist paintings, additional sporting paintings and English books, particularly those by William
Blake. During the remainder of Mellon’s collecting career, he created strong collections of English literature, paintings, prints, and drawings, as well as French paintings. Most of these collections now reside at the Yale Center for British Art, the National Gallery or the Virginia Museum of Fine Art.

Mellon was interested in genre paintings, sporting art, landscapes, marine paintings, urban views, conversation pieces, and informal portraits. Most of these were medium or small-scale pictures, but Mellon also collected some larger scale artworks. His sculpture purchases were mostly portrait busts, and most of his British collections were from the eighteenth century.

Mellon maintained good relationships with his dealers. As he became known as a collector, most of his purchase transactions were started by dealers contacting him about artwork or books they thought would interest him.

**Scope and Contents**

The Dealer files contain records relating to the purchase of books and artwork, including prints, drawings, sculpture, and paintings, by the Paul Mellon family. The records are composed of correspondence and invoices between various dealers and Paul Mellon. Many files include detailed provenance, biographical and conservation information as well as photocopied exhibition catalogs. There are records pertaining to artwork found at the Yale Center for British Art, the National Gallery of Art and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, among other institutions.
Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library’s online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

**Subjects**
Art -- Collectors and collecting

**Occupations**
Art dealers

**Genres / Formats**
Correspondence

**Names**
Mellon, Rachel Lambert
Taylor, Basil