

Yale University Library  
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

# **Guide to the Dzvinia Orlowsky collection of Franz Wright papers**

**YCAL MSS 1559**



By Elise Riley

April 2026

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
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# Table of Contents

Collection Overview ..... 3  
Requesting Instructions ..... 3  
Administrative Information ..... 3  
    Immediate Source of Acquisition ..... 3  
    Conditions Governing Access ..... 3  
    Conditions Governing Use ..... 4  
    Preferred Citation ..... 4  
    Processing Information ..... 4  
Franz Wright (1953-2015) ..... 4  
Scope and Contents ..... 4  
Arrangement ..... 4  
Collection Contents ..... 5  
Selected Search Terms ..... 8

## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
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beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 1559

**CREATOR:** Wright, Franz, 1953-2015 , author

**TITLE:** Dzvinia Orłowsky collection of Franz Wright papers

**DATES:** 1975–2016

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 2.83 linear feet (7 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Contains manuscripts, correspondence, typescripts, proofs, photographic prints, signed volumes, and other papers created by, or related to, Franz Wright.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.franzwright>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.franzwright>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Dzvinia Orłowsky, 2026.

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### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Box 7 (born digital): Restricted fragile. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Dzvinia Orlowsky collection of Franz Wright papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Dzvinia Orlowsky collection of Franz Wright papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards. For more information, please refer to the Yale Archival Processing Manual.

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## Franz Wright (1953-2015)

Franz Wright was a Pulitzer Prize winning American poet. Son of James Wright, Franz was born in Vienna, Austria and grew up in various areas of the United States including California, the Northwest, and the Midwest. Wright started writing as an adolescent and earned a BA from Oberlin College in 1977 where he met long-time collaborator and friend Dzvinia Orlowsky. He went on to produce award-winning poetry with honors including a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1989, a Whiting Award in 1991, a PEN/Voelcker Award in 1996, and the Pulitzer Prize for *Walking to Martha's Vineyard* in 2004.

Wright married Elizabeth Oehlkers, an American translator and writer, in 1999 and he then converted to Catholicism. Wright taught poetry at the university level and worked in mental health clinics. He also had a life-long interest in Rainer Maria Rilke and published translations of Rilke and other poets' work during his career.

He died in 2015.

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## Scope and Contents

This collection contains manuscripts, correspondence, typescripts, proofs, photographic prints, signed volumes, and other papers created by, or related to, Franz Wright.

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## Arrangement

This collection maintains the order found at time of acquisition.

## Collection Contents

	Franz Wright letters	1975-2016
	This grouping contains letters written by Franz Wright to Dzvinia Orłowsky of the course of their friendship and working partnership. Wright shares openly with Orłowsky about his work, mental health, and artistic process.	
	Materials in this grouping are arranged chronologically.	
b. 1, f. 1	Letters	1975-1978
b. 1, f. 2	Letters	1981-1990
b. 1, f. 3	Letters	1985-1990
b. 1, f. 4	Letters	1991-2016
	Franz Wright emails	1999-2015
	This grouping contains printed copies of emails exchanged between Franz Wright and Dzvinia Orłowsky. Similar to the letters, these emails are a mix of personal and professional correspondence. They also contain manuscripts of many of Wright's published poetry collections including <i>F</i> , <i>Walking to Martha's Vineyard</i> , and <i>Kindertotenwald</i> .	
	Materials in this grouping are arranged chronologically.	
b. 1, f. 5	Emails	1999
	Includes Franz Wright and Elizabeth Oehlker's wedding invitation, photographs, and a draft manuscript for <i>Words to the Still Sad Music</i>	
b. 1, f. 6	Emails	2000
b. 1, f. 7	Emails	2001
b. 1, f. 8	Emails	2002
b. 2, f. 1	Emails	2003
b. 2, f. 2-4	Emails	2004
	Includes September and December draft versions of <i>Prescience</i> .	
b. 2, f. 5	Emails	2005
b. 2, f. 6	Emails	2006
b. 2, f. 7	Emails	2007
b. 2, f. 8-11	Emails	2008
	Includes manuscripts of <i>New Poems</i> and <i>Wheeling Motel</i> .	
b. 3, f. 1-2	Emails	2009
	Includes manuscripts of "Nebraska", "The Forecast", "Leave Me Hidden", "To", and an assortment of other poetry.	

b. 3, f. 3-8b. 4, f. 1	Emails Includes manuscripts of <i>Kindertotenwald, F:Poems, Entries of the Cell</i> , and other poems.	2010
b. 4, f. 2-4	Emails	2011
b. 4, f. 5-7	Emails Includes manuscripts of <i>Delivery</i> and <i>F: Poems</i> .	2012
b. 4, f. 8	Emails	2013
b. 4, f. 9	Emails	2014
b. 4, f. 10	Emails	2015
	Franz Wright chapbooks This grouping contains chapbooks of Franz Wright's poetry and writings collected by Dzvinia Orłowsky. Materials in this grouping are arranged chronologically.	1976–2012
b. 5, f. 1	<i>Jarmila Files</i>	1976
b. 5, f. 2	<i>Tapping the White Cane of Solitude</i>	1976
b. 5, f. 3	<i>No Siege is Absolute</i>	1984
b. 5, f. 4	<i>The Unknown Rilke</i>	1984
b. 5, f. 5	<i>Going North in Winter</i>	1986
b. 5, f. 6	<i>Entry in an Unknown Hand</i>	1987
b. 5, f. 7	<i>Two Monologues</i>	1987
b. 5, f. 8	<i>And Still the Hand Will Sleep in Its Glass Ship</i>	1990
b. 5, f. 9	<i>Midnight Postscript</i>	circa 1990
b. 5, f. 10	<i>Rorschach Test</i>	circa 1991
b. 5, f. 11	<i>The Before</i>	2000
b. 5, f. 12	<i>God While Creating the Birds Sees Adam in His Thoughts</i>	2000
b. 5, f. 13	<i>The Beforelife proof</i>	2001
b. 5, f. 14	<i>Hell &amp; other poems</i>	2001
b. 5, f. 15	<i>Walking to Martha's Vineyard proof</i>	2003
b. 5, f. 16	<i>Address</i>	2007
b. 5, f. 17	<i>The Catfish</i>	2007
b. 5, f. 18	<i>Recurring Awakening</i>	2012
b. 6, f. 1	Franz Wright poems	circa 1986

b. 6, f. 2	Order form for <i>Rorschach Test</i> and <i>Burying Dolls</i>	circa 1991
b. 6, f. 3	Photographs	1994-2016
b. 6, f. 4	Reading from <i>Wheeling Motel</i>	2011 June 30
b. 6, f. 5	Joan Baez "Baptism"	undated
	Computer Media This grouping contains records of a live performance selected poems from <i>Wheeling Motel</i> by Franz Wright and a copy of Joan Baez's album <i>Baptism</i> . Born digital material: Restricted fragile. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	2011, undated
b. 7	Wheeling Motel Restricted fragile. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	2011 June 30
b. 7	Joan Baez / Baptism Restricted fragile. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated

## **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**

American poetry -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Poetry -- 20th Century  
Poetry -- Translations into English  
Poets, American -- 20th Century --  
Correspondence

### **Genres / Formats**

Correspondence

### **Acquired From**

Orlovsky, Dzvinia, donor