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Guide to the Francis Steegmuller Collection of Jacques Villon

GEN MSS 388



by Kathryn Rawdon

August 1998

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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
JACQUES VILLON, 1875-1963	4
Scope and Contents	4
Collection Contents	6
Series I: Correspondence, 1927-1968	6
LETTERS TO FRANCIS AND BEATRICE STEEGMULLER	6
OTHER CORRESPONDENCE	7
Letters by Jacques Villon	7
Other Letters	7
Series II: Photographs, 1936-1958	8
WORKS BY VILLON	8
OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS	8
Villon, Gaby	8
Villon, Jacques	8
Photographs of Others	8
Series III: Additional Materials, 1933	9
ARTWORK BY BEATRICE STEIN STEEGMULLER	9
OTHER MATERIALS	9
Oversize, n.d.	10
Restricted Fragile	11
Selected Search Terms	12

Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 388

CREATOR: Steegmuller, Francis, 1906-1994

TITLE: Francis Steegmuller collection of Jacques Villon

DATES: 1927-1968

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.9 linear feet (3 boxes + 2 broadside folders, 1 portfolio)

LANGUAGE: Materials in French and English.

SUMMARY: Collection contains letters by Louis Carré, Marcel Duchamp, Walter Pach, Gaby Villon, Jacques Villon, and others to Francis Steegmuller and his wife, Beatrice Stein Steegmuller, generally concerning Jacques Villon. Also included is a typescript about Villon by Lionello Venturi, several photographs of Jacques and Gaby Villon and others, and drawings done by Beatrice Stein when she was a student of Villon.

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

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.steeg>.

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.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Francis Steegmuller, 1969 and 1973.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Box 3 and portfolio folders 78-87: Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

Conditions Governing Use

The Francis Steegmuller Collection of Jacques Villon 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.

Preferred Citation

Francis Steegmuller Collection of Jacques Villon. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

JACQUES VILLON, 1875-1963

Jacques Villon was born Gaston Duchamp in Eure, France, on July 31, 1875. The oldest of seven children, his siblings included the artists Marcel Duchamp and Raymond Duchamp-Villon. Early in his career, he learned the art of engraving from his grandfather, Emile-Frédéric Nicolle, a noted amateur artist. In 1894 Villon was sent to Paris to study law, but soon devoted most of his time to art, contributing engravings and drawings to various newspapers, while also working on more serious paintings and prints. It was at this time that he took the name Jacques Villon, soon copied by his brother Raymond, who added the name Villon to his birth name of Duchamp. Villon exhibited his work in the early Cubist shows in Paris, and was one of the early members of the Salon d'Automne, which sponsored exhibitions of modern art each Fall. He was also one of the organizers of the Section d'Or, a group of Cubist artists including Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Juan Gris, and Fernand Léger.

In 1906 he moved to Puteaux, a suburb of Paris which had begun to attract like-minded artists, where he would live the rest of his life. In 1913, he married Gabrielle (Gaby) Charlotte Marie Boeuf. After serving in the infantry and in a camouflage unit during World War I, he continued to live outside of Paris, concentrating on his work, while remaining active in modern art circles. In the early 1930's, Villon took a student named Beatrice Stein, beginning a friendship with her and her husband, the writer and critic Francis Steegmuller, which would last until Villon's death.

After 1945, Villon began to achieve the widespread recognition that had previously eluded him. During this period, he was awarded first prize at the Carnegie International in 1950, Grand Prize for painting at the Venice Biennale in 1956, and the Grand Prize for painting at the Exposition Internationale in Brussels in 1958. In 1963 he was elected Grand Officer of the Légion d'Honneur in France. He died that year in Puteaux.

Scope and Contents

The Francis Steegmuller Collection of Jacques Villon consists of correspondence, photographs and other materials collected by Francis Steegmuller, which document the life and work of Jacques Villon. The collection has been arranged into three series: *Correspondence*, *Photographs*, and *Additional Materials*.

[Series I, Correspondence](#), contains twenty-seven folders of letters to Francis Steegmuller and his wife, Beatrice Stein Steegmuller, from Jacques and Gaby Villon. Both the Villons often wrote long notes to the Steegmullers on each other's letters. These letters have been filed under the principal author of the letter. Also included are letters from Louis Carré, Marcel Duchamp, Walter Pach and others. The correspondence with Louis Carré includes a typescript article about Villon by Lionello Venturi. The letters discuss Villon's life and work, exhibitions of art by Villon and others, the Villons' experiences in France during World War II, and the lives of friends of the Villons and the Steegmullers, including Jean and Jeanne Bailhache, Louis Carré, Cleve Gray, Charlotte Mare, Mary Reynolds, and Villon's siblings. This series also contains several letters written by Villon to members of the Stein family, and one letter to Roger Vieillard.

[Series II, *Photographs*](#), contains photographs of Jacques and Gaby Villon, Beatrice Stein Steegmuller and others, as well as photographs of works by Villon. Several photographs can also be found in Series I.

[Series III, *Additional Materials*](#), contains sketches and paintings done by Beatrice Stein Steegmuller while she was a student of Jacques Villon. Also included are notes about Villon, probably in the hand of Francis Steegmuller, and two pocket chess sets, used by Villon during his service in World War I.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1927-1968

0.6 linear feet (1.5 boxes)

LETTERS TO FRANCIS AND BEATRICE STEEGMULLER

b. 1, f. 1	Bailhache, Jeanne Includes: Photograph of Jeanne and Jean Bailhache	1941, 1949
b. 1, f. 2-3	Carré, Louis Includes: Letters from Lionello Venturi to Francis Steegmuller Includes: Copies of letters from Steegmuller to Carré and Venturi Includes: "Jacques Villon," typescript article by Venturi	1955-63, n.d.
b. 1, f. 4	Cassou, Jean	1950 Dec 22
b. 1, f. 5	Central Hanover Bank and Trust Company (New York, N.Y.)	1940-41
b. 1, f. 6	Dubos[?], A.	[1941?], 1942
b. 1, f. 7	Duchamp, Alexina ("Teeny")	1968 Dec 11
b. 1, f. 8	Duchamp, Marcel	1941-42, n.d.
b. 1, f. 9	Ginestet, Colette de Includes: Postcard also signed by Gaby Villon, Jacques Villon, and unidentified Includes: Printed card illustrated by Christian d'Espic	1948-54
b. 1, f. 10	Hamilton, George Heard Includes: Clipping of review of Hamilton's book <i>Painting and Sculpture in Europe, 1880-1940</i>	1967 Oct 30
b. 1, f. 11	Kahn, Max	1956 Jun 25
b. 1, f. 12	Mare, Charlotte	1940, 1951, n.d.
b. 1, f. 13	Maubert, Simonne	1945[?], n.d.
b. 1, f. 14	[Mellquist?], Jerome	1949
b. 1, f. 15	Ottoz, Guy[?]	1939 Dec 20
b. 1, f. 16	Pach, Walter	1927-33
b. 1, f. 17	République Française (New York World's Fair)	1940 Nov 27
b. 1, f. 18	Stein, Hall & Company, Inc.	1941 Mar 26
b. 1, f. 19	Tomkins, Calvin	1967
b. 1, f. 20	Venturi, Lionello Includes: Note from "Ada"	1952 Sep 26

LETTERS TO FRANCIS AND BEATRICE STEEGMULLER (continued)

b. 1, f. 21-32	Villon, Gaby Letter of July 7, 1952 includes photograph of Jacques Villon's studio, Puteaux (France). Letter of Sept. 19, 1956 includes a photograph of Jacques and Gaby Villon. Letter of Dec. 31, 1960 includes photograph of Jacques	1938-61, n.d.
b. 2, f. 33-47	Villon, Jacques Letter of Dec. 21, 1950 includes draft of reply to the letter from Jean Cassou (Box 1, folder 4)	1927-61, n.d.
b. 2, f. 48	----, Anita	1955-56
b. 2, f. 49	----, Jacques	1952, 1953
b. 2, f. 50	----, Lucien	1955 Sep 15
b. 2, f. 51	Unidentified	1939-58, n.d.
b. 2, f. 52	Miscellaneous envelopes without letters	1935-54

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

Letters by Jacques Villon

b. 2, f. 53	Stein, Edwin Stein, Gretchen	1950 Dec 18
b. 2, f. 54	Stein, G.	1952 Jun 6
b. 2, f. 55	Vieillard, Roger	1955 Sep 27

Other Letters

b. 2, f. 56	Steegmuller, Francis. Drafts of 2[?] letters to Jacques Villon	n.d.
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Series II: Photographs, 1936-1958*0.1 linear feet (.25 box)*

WORKS BY VILLON

b. 2, f. 57	"Cheval de course"	n.d.
b. 2, f. 58	"Le Sagittaire et le Capricorne"	n.d.
b. 2, f. 59	"Le Taureau et les Gémeaux"	n.d.
b. 2, f. 60	Unidentified drawing of a woman	n.d.
b. 2, f. 61	Unidentified painting	n.d.

OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS

Villon, Gaby

b. 2, f. 62	In Chatou (France)	1948 Jul
b. 2, f. 63	With Beatrice Steegmuller, Chatou (France)	1948 Jul

Villon, Jacques

b. 2, f. 64	"En route to NY"	1936
b. 2, f. 65	In Chatou (France)	1948 Jul
	Portrait by Florence Henri Stored in: Oversize, bsd, folder 76	n.d.
b. 2, f. 66	With Gaby Villon and Beatrice Steegmuller, Chatou (France)	1948 Jul
b. 2, f. 67	With Gaby Villon[?] and unidentified woman	n.d.

Photographs of Others

b. 2, f. 68	Philippon, André	1958
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Series III: Additional Materials, 1933*0.1 linear feet (.25 box)*

ARTWORK BY BEATRICE STEIN STEEGMULLER

b. 2, f. 69	Notebook with notes, drawings, and paintings	[1933]
b. 2, f. 70	Notebook with sketches	[1933]
b. 2, f. 71	Ink and pencil sketches Also stored in: Oversize, bsd, folder 78	[1933]
b. 2, f. 72	Ink and pencil designs on tracing paper	[1933]

OTHER MATERIALS

b. 2, f. 73	Notes regarding Jacques Villon, in the hand of Francis Steegmuller	n.d.
b. 2, f. 74	Blue pocket chess set	n.d.
b. 2, f. 75	Brown pocket chess set	n.d.

Oversize, n.d.

b. bsd, folder 76	Jacques Villon by Florence Henri (in Series II)	n.d.
b. bsd, folder 77	Ink and pencil sketches (in Series III)	[1933]

Restricted Fragile

Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

b. port, f. 78	Box 1, folder 2
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b. port, f. 79	Box 1, folder 10
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b. port, f. 80	Box 1, folder 28
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b. port, f. 81	Box 2, folder 72
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b. 3, f. 82	Box 2, folder 74
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b. 3, f. 83	Box 2, folder 75
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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, Modern -- 20th Century
Artists, French -- 20th Century
Painters -- France -- 20th Century

Genres / Formats

Drawings (visual works)
Photographic prints

Occupations

Artists
Painters

Names

Carré, Louis
Duchamp, Marcel, 1887-1968
Pach, Walter, 1883-1958
Steegmuller, Beatrice Stein
Steegmuller, Francis, 1906-1994
Venturi, Lionello, 1885-1961
Villon, Gaby
Villon, Jacques, 1875-1963