

ART ASSOCIATION OF INDIANAPOLIS RECORDS, 1957-1964

Collection #
M 613

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Processed by
Charles Latham
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USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 small manuscript box (0.2 linear feet)

COLLECTION DATES: 1957-1964

PROVENANCE: Charles Latham, Jr., Indianapolis IN, 1 March 1992

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ACCESSION NUMBER: 92.0301

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The [Art Association of Indianapolis](#) was founded in 1883, by the same group of people who were interested in sending members of what became the "Hoosier Group"-- T. C. Steele, William Forsyth, J. Ottis Adams, Samuel Richards-- to study in Munich in the same period. The Association had no permanent home until 1900; then, with funds bequeathed by John Herron totalling about \$225,000, the T. C. Steele studio at 16th and Pennsylvania Streets was purchased. A museum building was erected in 1905. An art school developed in connection with the museum. In 1929 a generous patron of the Association, Mrs. James W. Fesler, donated a building for the art school; she also gave more than half the funds for a major reconstruction of the museum building. During its early years, the Art Association subsisted on grants from the City and the School City of Indianapolis, on the income from a limited endowment, on dues paid by a relatively small membership, and on special grants from benefactors.

By 1959, both museum and school had clearly outgrown their buildings. The Association board began to study two important subjects: the organization of the Association itself; and the desirability of various sites in the city for the future location of the museum and the school. Among the alternative sites were the grounds of Butler University (where Clowes Memorial Hall was being built) and the West Mall area near White River north of Washington Street.

The organization of the Association was changed at the suggestion of industrialist Herman C. Krannert, who advocated a board composed exclusively of major donors.

The question of the site took longer. Those who urged staying at 16th Street pointed out that a central location made the museum accessible to people from all parts of the city, and that the museum would continue to function as an "anchor," along with Methodist Hospital and area churches, in a decaying part of town. While the discussion was still in progress, a second building for the art school was erected at the 16th Street site.

Eventually the issue was resolved when the family of J. K. Lilly, Jr., offered a large site at the corner of 38th Street and Michigan Road; this offer was accepted in 1964. The art school was separated from the museum in 1967, becoming affiliated with Indiana University as Herron School of Art. In 1966 the Museum went to the public for the first time with a drive for operating funds. A new building, consisting of several separate "pavilions," was constructed at the Lilly site in 1968-1970. In 1969 the name of both the museum and the Art Association was changed to Indianapolis Museum of Art.

Sources: Materials in collection
Indianapolis Star, 4 January 1970

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, filling one small manuscript box, contains minutes, reports, and other mimeographed material from the period 1957-1964. It is arranged by topic, and chronologically within topic. This is an incomplete collection, coming from the papers of Mrs. Charles Latham, who was for twenty years a board member of the Art Association and was opposed to moving the museum to a new location. The collection is interesting in that it shows how an institution, at a critical stage of its existence, examined the options available concerning its organization and its location.

FOLDER LISTING

FOLDER

- 1 Report by special committee, September 1959
 - 2 Minutes and reports, November 1959
 - 3 Site study at 16th Street by Calvin Hamilton ca 1960
 - 4 Minutes and reports, April-May 1960
 - 5 Protest committee against move, 1962; Choice of new site, 1964
 - 7 Docent's guide, 1957
 - 8 Docent's guide of G. H. A. Clowes Memorial Exhibit, 1959
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CATALOGUING INFORMATION

MAIN ENTRY: Art Association of Indianapolis, Indiana

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Art Association of Indianapolis, Indiana

Art patronage--Indiana--Indianapolis

Art patrons--Indiana--Indianapolis

Associations, institutions, etc.--Indiana--Indianapolis

Art--Indiana--Indianapolis

Museum buildings--Indiana--Indianapolis

Art museums--Indiana--Indianapolis

Museums--Indiana--Indianapolis

Art schools--Indiana--Indianapolis

Indianapolis (Ind.)--Societies and clubs

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