



**NEW INTERACTIVE PLATFORM LAUNCHES,  
DOCUMENTING AMERICAN ART ARCHIVES IN CHICAGO**

**Created by the Smithsonian’s Archives of American Art  
With Major Support from the Terra Foundation for American Art,  
The Online Collection Also Includes 10 New Oral Histories  
With Major Chicago Arts Leaders**

**Washington, D.C.—April 26, 2017**—The Smithsonian’s Archives of American Art and the Terra Foundation for American Art today announced the launch of a new online guide to American art-related archival collections in the Chicago area. A \$413,000 grant from the Chicago-based Terra Foundation supported a comprehensive survey of art-related archives in more than 75 Chicago-area institutions. [This new resource](#) has been published on an interactive platform on the Archives’ newly redesigned website. Complementing the survey are ten new [oral history interviews](#) with influential art world figures in Chicago, as well as extensive documentation of the Archives’ holdings of Chicago-related materials, also funded under the grant. This project is part of the Terra Foundation’s [Art Design Chicago](#) initiative, an exploration of Chicago’s art and design history and legacy taking place in 2018.

“The project aligns both with the Archives’ mission to collect, preserve, and make available primary source material documenting the visual arts in the United States and with the Terra Foundation’s aim to foster innovative approaches to American art scholarship,” said Kate Haw, director of the Archives of American Art. “Our ongoing partnership with the Terra Foundation allows us to provide new web-based technologies that are transforming online research and vastly improving the discovery and dissemination of archival resources.”

“Providing access to the highest-quality primary source documents is an integral part of our efforts to make the historical art of the United States widely available to audiences across the

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globe,” explained Terra Foundation President and CEO Elizabeth Glassman. “By collaborating with the Archives on this initiative, we will draw worldwide attention to a robust repository of material on American art located in Chicago, much of which showcases the vibrant artistic legacy of the city where the Terra Foundation was established and is headquartered. We are also delighted to add ten new spirited voices to the Archives’ oral history collection—Chicago luminaries who have contributed meaningfully to the art world.”

To improve access to art-related archival material in the Chicago area, the Archives engaged art historian Wendy Greenhouse to survey Chicago-area repositories and their holdings, to update the Archives’ guide *Art-Related Archival Materials in the Chicago Area*, originally compiled by Betty Blum. Published in 1991, the guide was the culmination of the Archives’ Chicago Documentation Project, launched in 1985. Listings were updated and expanded and collections in newer public repositories were added.

“Much has changed in the quarter-century since the Archives published its guide in 1991,” stated Greenhouse. “New organizations and institutions with art-related archives have emerged—the National Museum of Mexican Art and Media Burn Independent Video Archive among them—and established collections have added such freestanding units as the Women and Leadership Archives at Loyola University Chicago and the Roger Brown Study Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. This new resource will be an invaluable tool for anyone conducting Chicago-related research.” Available on the Archives’ website, additional digitized materials will be added when available. The platform is designed to accommodate future geographically based surveys, collection descriptions, oral history interviews, and links with open source and open data initiatives among other archives, museums, libraries, and other cultural heritage institutions.

“Among the survey’s most rewarding discoveries were nuggets of art-related material embedded in collections and repositories that on their face have nothing to do with art,”

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added Greenhouse. “These testify to myriad historical connections, some as fascinating as they are improbable. For example, the papers of composer John Alden Carpenter (Newberry Library), whose wife, designer Rue Winterbotham Carpenter, was co-founder in 1916 of the Arts Club of Chicago, contain correspondence with the likes of Marcel Duchamp, Gerald Murphy, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and John Singer Sargent.”

Another highlight of the project is the production of oral history interviews with ten influential Chicago artists, curators, and gallerists for the Archives’ renowned oral history program. Providing a window onto Chicago’s art scene over decades, the interviews yield a richness of detail, spontaneous reflections, and a sense of character not available in written records. Interviewees include **Dennis Adrian** (b. 1937); **William Conger** (b. 1937); **Art Green** (b. 1941); **Theodore Halkin** (b. 1924); **Rhona Hoffman** (b.1934); **Ken Josephson** (b. 1932); **Vera Klement** (b. 1929); **Suellen Rocca** (b. 1943); **Franz Schulze** (b. 1927); and **Evelyn Statsinger** (1927–2016).

The Terra Foundation has recently announced *Art Design Chicago*, a wide-ranging initiative to explore the breadth of Chicago’s role as a catalyst and incubator for innovations in art and design. Spearheaded and funded by the Terra Foundation, with significant support from The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, Art Design Chicago was developed in partnership with more than 40 cultural organizations to celebrate Chicago’s artists, designers, and creative producers. Focusing in particular on the period between the 1871 Great Chicago Fire and the turn of the 21st century, the initiative reveals little-known narratives of ingenuity and perseverance and provides new insights on Chicago’s enduring influence on fine and decorative arts, graphic and commercial design, product development, and film. Art Design Chicago will feature more than 25 exhibitions and hundreds of public programs, presented throughout 2018, as well as the creation of several scholarly publications and a four-part documentary.



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### **About the Archives of American Art**

Founded in 1954, the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art fosters advanced research through the accumulation and dissemination of primary sources, unequalled in historical depth and breadth, that document more than 200 years of the nation's artists and art communities. The Archives provides access to these materials through its exhibitions and publications, including the *Archives of American Art Journal*, the longest-running scholarly journal in the field of American art. An international leader in the digitizing of archival collections, the Archives also makes more than 2 million digital images freely available online. The oral history collection includes more than 2,200 audio interviews, the largest accumulation of in-depth, first-person accounts of the American art world.

### **About Terra Foundation for American Art**

Established in 1978, the Terra Foundation for American Art is dedicated to fostering the exploration, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts of the United States. With financial resources of more than \$350 million, an exceptional collection of American art from the colonial period to 1945 and an expansive grant program, it is one of the leading foundations focused on American art, supporting exhibitions, academic programs, publications, and research worldwide. Since 2005, the Terra Foundation has provided more than \$80 million for nearly 800 exhibitions and education and scholarly programs in more than 30 countries, including Brazil, China, Israel, Russia, South Korea, Sweden and the United Kingdom. For more information please visit [terraamericanart.org](http://terraamericanart.org).

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