

RECORDS OF A. EVERETT AUSTIN, DIRECTOR OF THE JOHN AND MABLE RINGLING
MUSEUM OF ART, 1946 – 1957

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Overview

Repository	The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art Archives
Creator	A[rthur] Everett “Chick” Austin, Jr., 1900 - 1957
Title	Records of A. Everett Austin, Director of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art
Date span	1946-1957
Language of material	English
Extent	1.5 linear feet
Arrangement	Alphabetical order by subject
Summary	A. Everett Austin’s records document the initial development of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art as a public museum. The records reflect Austin’s tremendous impact on the Museum which includes: initiating an art conservation program; establishing a vigorous acquisition policy; renovating of the art galleries; ground-breaking exhibitions; purchasing and installation of the Asolo Theater; hosting professional theatrical and operatic productions; conducting educational programs featuring internationally known scholars; establishing the

first museum dedicated to the history of the circus; and opening to visitors the Ca'd'Zan, the residence of John and Mabel Ringling. Correspondence documents the wide range of Austin's interests. Of special notice in are his director reports and those of the State Board of Control.

Administrative Information

Provenance	The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art
Information about access	The Records of A. Everett Austin may be viewed by appointment. Use of certain materials is restricted by statute, by the office of origin, or by the donor. For the protection of its collections, the Archives also reserves the right to restrict access to records which are not arranged, are being processed, or are exceptionally valuable or fragile. In some cases, copies may be substituted for the originals.
Ownership and Copyright	Copyright is held by Florida State University. It is provided here for scholarship, research, and private study. For use regarding commercial and non-commercial publication, or copying outside of Fair Use, contact lib-specialcollections@fsu.edu .
Cite As	Credit must be given for any use of materials. The credit line should read: The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Florida State University, Records of A. Everett Austin, Director of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art and should include the box and folder listing.
Processing Note	Processed by H. Connor May 2015, update July 2020.

Historical Note

Austin was appointed as the museum's first Director by J. Thomas Gurney, Chair of the Florida State Board of Control, following the transfer of the Museum to the State in 1946. Austin had previously been the Director of the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford, Connecticut, for eighteen years. Austin remained as the Museum Director of The Ringling until his death in 1957.

Chick Austin was born in Brookline, Massachusetts. He attended the Noble and Greenough School and Phillips Academy. Before entering Harvard

Austin was on the cutting edge of the art world in the 1930s. He arranged three major exhibitions to the American audience for the first time: a Picasso a Surrealist art exhibition and a comprehensive Italian Baroque painting exhibition. His interest in the arts extended into the performing arts. He was instrumental in choreographer George Balachine's immigration to the United States and subsequent development of Ballanchine's School of American Ballet.

Scope and Content Note

Subject Headings

Contents of the Collection

Box no. Folder no. Title

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|---|---|
| 1 | Correspondence and desk files of Director A. Everett Austin |
| 1 | Acquisitions, gifts 1952-1956. |
| 2 | Acquisition offers: 1946- 1949. |
| 3 | Acquisition offers: 1950- 1954. |
| 4 | Art Museum – repairs needed, 1954. |
| 5 | Asolo Theatre correspondence, 1950 – 1951. |
| 6 | Asolo Theatre performance agreement, 1951. |
| 7 | Asolo Theatre performance correspondence, 1952. |

- 8 Asolo Theatre construction documents, 1954-1955.
 - 9 Asolo Theatre construction correspondence, 1954-1956.
 - 10 Children's art classes, 1951.
 - 11 Circus Museum, Barlow correspondence, 1947.
 - 12 Conservation – general correspondence, 1949.
 - 13 Conservation, list of works conserved, 1950 – 1952.
 - 14 Conservators – Diorio, Caesar R., 1946 – 1949.
 - 15 Conservators, Diorio, Caesar R. 1953 report in response to Report of the Survey of the Operation, Content, and Future Planning of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, January 12, 1953.
 - 16 Conservators – Fogg Museum, Edward Forbes and Richard Buck, 1946 – 1948.
 - 17 Conservators – Korany, Edward O.
 - 18 Conservators – Weitzner, Julius H.
 - 19 Correspondence – general, no date (in Complete).
 - 20 Correspondence – general, 1946.
 - 21 Correspondence – general, 1948.
 - 22 Correspondence – general, 1949.
 - 23 Correspondence – general, 1950 – 1951, 1953.
 - 24 Correspondence – general, 1956.
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- 2 Correspondence and desk files
 - 1 Correspondence – postcards, 1950, 1954.
 - 2 Correspondence – Bickel, Karl A.
 - 3 Correspondence – Loewi, Adolph, 1948, 1953-1954.
 - 4 Correspondence – Steinmetz, Joseph J., 1946 – 1947.
 - 5 Correspondence – Schirr, John, 1946 – organ repair.
 - 6 Correspondence – Suida, William, 1946 – 1949.

- 7 Directives, position descriptions, organizational chart, no date and ca 1955.
 - 8 Exhibitions – general, no date.
 - 9 Exhibition – War’s Toll of Italian Art, 1946 – 1947.
 - 10 Exhibition- Sir Francis Rose, 1952-1953.
 - 11 Facilities – maintenance, 1946-1947.
 - 12 Inventory and Appraisal of Sundry Furnishings and Objects in the North Basement ..., 1955.
 - 13 Insurance – Brown & Stokes, 1946 – 1947.
 - 14 Invitation list for the Ca’d’Zan opening, 1946.
 - 15 Loan requests, 1946- 1947, 1949.
 - 16 Metropolitan Museum of Art
 - 17 Mausoleum Florida bill, 1955.
 - 18 Performances – general.
 - 19 Performances – E. Power Biggs, 1947.
 - 20 Performances – opera expenses, 1952.
 - 21 Suida catalog draft, ca. 1948, nos. 1-290.
 - 22 Suida catalog draft, ca. 1948, nos. 291-460.
 - 23 Suida catalog – location of paintings.
 - 24 Tampa Tribune – response to articles on the museum, 1956.
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- 3 Correspondence and desk files
 - 1 Report – Assistant Director (Marian Murray), August 1948.
 - 2 Report – Biennium July 1, 1952 – June 30, 1954.

- 3 Report – confidential from Julius Bohler to Austin and J. Thomas Gurney, State Board of Control, 1948.
- 4 Report – Budget narrative – Joint Appropriations Committee, 1951-1953.
- 5 Report on fire protection, 1946.
- 6 Report, Director, 1946-1948.
- 7 Report, Director, 1949-1950.
- 8 Report, Director, annual, 1949-1950.
- 9 Report, Director, 1951-1952.
- 10 Report, Director, 1953.
- 11 Report, Director, activities at the Ringling Museums, 1948-1952.
- 12 Sarasota Summer Festival of the Arts, 1952-1953.
- 13 Sarasota Summer Festival of the Arts, minutes and reports, 1953.
- 14 Sarasota Summer Festival of the Arts, promotional material.
- 15 Southern Art Museum Director’s Association, 1952-1957.
- 16 State of Florida Board of Commissioners of State Institutions, correspondence, 1946.
- 17 State of Florida Board of Control correspondence, 1947.
- 18 State of Florida Board of Control correspondence, 1952.
- 19 State of Florida Board of Control, 1953-1954.
- 20 State of Florida Board of Control, 1955.
- 21 State of Florida Board of Control correspondence, 1956-1957.
- 22 State of Florida Board of Control, the opinions of the Attorney General, 1948 and 1949.

- 23 Taylor report Sarasota Summer Festival of the Arts a survey of the operations, contents, and future planning of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, January 12, 1953.
- 24 Taylor report – “The Situation as I found it.”
- 25 Taylor report- newspaper articles.
- 26 Minutes and notes of the Executive Committee October 2, 1953 – August 24, 1954.

Related materials

Records of the Governing Boards

Correspondence of Karl Bickel