



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

**A Finding Aid to the Jack Levine Papers,  
1923-1999, in the Archives of American Art**

by Jean Fitzgerald

Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection  
was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art

August 2008

**Contact Information**

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Creator:</b>	Levine, Jack, 1915-2010
<b>Title:</b>	Jack Levine papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1923-1999
<b>Quantity:</b>	3.2 linear feet
<b>Abstract:</b>	The papers of New York social realist painter and printmaker Jack Levine date from 1923-1999, and measure 3.2 linear feet. Levine's career is documented through biographical material, scattered letters, notes and a speech, writings, student drawings, three scrapbooks, printed material and nearly one linear foot of photographs of Levine, his family, and his colleagues.

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Jack Levine donated his papers to the Archives in 1962, 1978, and 1999.

### Available Formats

The bulk of the collection was digitized in 2015 and is available on the Archives of American Art's website.

Materials which have not been scanned include some photographs with copyright restrictions; some photos of works of art; duplicates; blank versos of photographs; exhibition catalogs of other artists; and some publications. In some cases exhibition catalogs and other publications have had their covers, title pages, and relevant pages scanned.

### Processing Information

Accessions were minimally processed upon receipt and portions were microfilmed on reels 4873-4874. Previously microfilmed and unmicrofilmed portions were merged, arranged, and described by Jean Fitzgerald in August 2008.

The collection was prepared for digitization, and the finding aid was updated, by Stephanie Ashley in June 2014 with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

### Preferred Citation

Jack Levine papers, 1923-1999. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment and limited to the Washington, D.C. Reference Center.

### Ownership & Literary Rights

The Jack Levine papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

## Biographical Note

Jack Levine (1915-2010) was born in Boston, Massachusetts and worked as painter and printmaker primarily in New York City. Levine was one of the leading painters and advocates of the Social Realism School of the late 1930s.

Jack Levine was the youngest of the eight children of Lithuanian Jewish parents, Mary Grinker and Samuel Levine. After the family moved from the South End of Boston to Roxbury in 1923, Levine began to study drawing under Harold Zimmerman at the School of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. By 1929, Levine was studying painting under Denman Ross of the Fogg Art Museum.

From 1935-1940, Levine received U.S. government support from the federal Works Progress Administration. His first exhibition of paintings in New York City was at the Museum of Modern Art. In 1937, he painted *The Feast of Pure Reason*, a satire of Boston political power. Together with Ben Shahn, Levine became a leading exponent of the Social Realism School of the late 1930s. His first one-man show was held at the Downtown Gallery in New York City in 1938.

After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, Levine was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1945, and a grant from the American Academy of Arts and Letters the following year. Also in 1946, Levine married painter Ruth Gikow and moved to New York City. Between 1950 and 1951, he was a Fulbright Fellow working in Rome where he was inspired by Old Master paintings. In the 1960s Levine's interest in printmaking intensified and he was instructed in creating intaglio prints by Emiliano Sorini, and was introduced to Abe Lublin who was associated with the New York Graphic Society.

Levine taught at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the American Art School in New York, and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. His work is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Fogg Art Museum. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters from 1956 on.

The D.C. Moore Gallery in New York City currently represents the Estate of Jack Levine.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of New York social realist painter and printmaker Jack Levine date from 1923-1999, and measure 3.2 linear feet. Levine's career is documented through biographical material, scattered letters, notes and a speech, writings, student drawings, three scrapbooks, printed material and nearly one linear foot of photographs of Levine, his family, and his colleagues.

Found within the papers are two driver's licenses and several biographical accounts, and scattered letters from colleagues including one each from John Taylor Arms, Hyman Bloom, Leonard Bocour, René d'Harnoncourt, Lloyd Goodrich, Jacob Lawrence, and Homer Saint-Gaudens discussing various art-related events. There is only one carbon copy of a letter written by Levine. The correspondence includes oversized photographs of the members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Additional photographs of the members are found in the Photograph series.

Notes and writings are primarily typescripts about Jack Levine written by others. There is also a transcript of one speech, "Jack Levine Speaks Regarding the Donation of 108 of his Drawings to the Archives" delivered by Levine at the Fogg Art Museum.

Artwork consists entirely of Levine's student drawings including anatomical studies, neighborhood genre scenes, copies of Old Masters, and a series of images of symphony musicians. Some of the drawings display themes that are reflected in his later paintings.

Three scrapbooks contain clippings that document Levine's career and reflect his political interests. Additional printed material consists of a comprehensive collection of clippings and exhibition announcements and catalogs. There is also an announcement for a lecture by Levine, press releases, calendars of events, reproductions of artwork, programs, brochures including one for *Facing East*, a portfolio of Levine's prints, and three books.

Photographs include numerous photographs of Levine throughout his artistic career, including images of his wife, painter Ruth Gikow, their daughter Susanna, and colleagues including Hyman Bloom, Leonard Bocour, Alexander Dobkin, Joachim Probst, and Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Especially notable is a series of photographs of Levine printmaking with Emiliano Sorini and Ruth Gikow.

There are photographs of Levine serving on art juries and panels with Eleanor Coen, Joseph Hirsch, Gabor Peterdi, Studs Terkel, and Max Weber, and attending events with Lawrence Fleischman, Betty Friedan, Edith Halpert, Mauricio Lasansky, Gypsy Rose Lee, Pope Paul VI, and Raphael Soyer. A small album contains photographs of Levine and various buildings in Boston. There are also photographs of miscellaneous exhibition installations including Levine's retrospective at the Jewish Museum, and of artwork by Levine and others.

Group photographs of the members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters are found here, and include Will Barnet, Paul Cadmus, Chuck Close, David Levine, George Tooker, and John Updike. Additional group photographs of the members that were originally enclosed with letters are found in the correspondence series.

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 7 series:

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1953-1955 (Box 1; 1 folder)

Series 2: Letters, 1946-1996 (Boxes 1, 5; 12 folders)

Series 3: Notes and Writings, 1961-1974 (Box 1; 6 folders)

Series 4: Artwork, 1923-1931 (Boxes 1, 5, OV 6; 11 folders)

Series 5: Scrapbooks, 1936-1962 (Boxes 1, 5; 16 folders)

Series 6: Printed Material, 1938-1999 (Boxes 1-3, 5, OV 6; 1.9 linear feet)

Series 7: Photographs, 1940-1998 (Boxes 3-5, OV 6; 52 folders)

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Archives of American Art under the following terms:

### Subjects:

Jewish artists  
Painters--Massachusetts--Boston  
Painters--New York (State)--New York  
Painting, American  
Painting, Modern--20th century--United States  
Printmakers--New York (State)--New York  
Social realism

### Types of Materials:

Drawings  
Photographs  
Scrapbooks  
Student drawings

### Names:

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.  
Arms, John Taylor, 1887-1953  
Barnet, Will, 1911-2012  
Bloom, Hyman, 1913-  
Bocour, Leonard, 1910-1993  
Cadmus, Paul, 1904-1999  
Close, Chuck, 1940-  
Coen, Eleanor, 1916-

D'Harnoncourt, Rene, 1901-1968  
Dobkin, Alexander, 1908-  
Fleischman, Lawrence A. (Lawrence Arthur), 1925-1997  
Friedan, Betty  
Gikow, Ruth, 1915-1982  
Goodrich, Lloyd, 1897-1987  
Halpert, Edith Gregor, 1900-1970  
Hirsch, Joseph, 1910-1981  
Jewish Museum (New York, N.Y.)  
Lasansky, Mauricio, 1914-  
Lawrence, Jacob, 1917-2000  
Lee, Gypsy Rose, 1914-1970  
Levine, David, 1926-2009  
Paul VI, Pope, 1897-1978  
Peterdi, Gabor  
Probst, Joachim  
Saint-Gaudens, Homer, b. 1880  
Simon, Sidney, 1917-  
Sorini, Emiliano  
Soyer, Raphael, 1899-1987  
Terkel, Studs, 1912-2008  
Tooker, George  
Updike, John  
Weber, Max, 1881-1961  
Yevtushenko, Yevgeny Aleksandrovich, 1933-

## Series Descriptions/Container Listing

### 1: Biographical Material, 1953-1955

*1 folder; Box 1*

Biographical material consists of two driver's licenses and several brief biographical accounts.

Series is scanned in entirety.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	1	Biographical Material, 1953-1955, undated

### 2: Letters, 1946-1996

*12 folders; Boxes 1 and 5*

Scattered letters are primarily from colleagues including John Taylor Arms, Hyman Bloom, Leonard Bocour, René d'Harnoncourt, Lloyd Goodrich, Jacob Lawrence, and Homer Saint-Gaudens.

Series is scanned in entirety.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	2	Letters, undated
1	3	Letters, 1946-1958
1	4	Letters, 1960 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 1
1	5	Letters, 1965-1968
1	6	Letters, 1970-1974
1	7	Letters, 1975-1977
1	8	Letters, 1978-1979
1	9	Letters, 1980-1985
1	10	Letters, 1990
1	11	Letters, 1992-1994 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 1
1	12	Letters, 1996 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 1

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
5	1	Oversized Letters scanned with Box 1, Folder 4
5	1	Oversized Letters scanned with Box 1, Folder 11
5	1	Oversized Letters scanned with Box 1, Folder 12

### 3: Notes and Writings, 1961-1974

6 folders; Box 1

Notes and writings primarily consist of typescript theses about Jack Levine. There is also a transcript of a speech given by Levine at the Fogg Art Museum, and miscellaneous notes and writings.

Series is scanned in entirety.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	13	Miscellaneous, 1961-1962, undated
1	14	Typescript of Speech at Fogg Art Museum: "Jack Levine Speaks Regarding the Donation of 108 of his Drawings to the Archives," undated
1	15	Thesis Typescript "The WPA Paintings of Jack Levine" by Henry Arnold Freedman, 1967
1	16	Typescript "Jack Levine and the Aesthetics of Discontent" by Aaron Miller, 1967
1	17	Thesis Typescript "Jack Levine: Career of an American Artist" by Patricia Allen Robbins, 1969
1	18	Dissertation Typescript "Jack Levine: Painter and Protester" by Henry Freedman, 1974

### 4: Artwork, 1923-1931

11 folders; Boxes 1, 5, OV 6

Artwork consists of Levine's student drawings including anatomical studies, neighborhood genre scenes, and copies of Old Masters.

Series is scanned in entirety.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	19	Drawings, undated Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 2
1	20	Drawings, 1923 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 2
1	21	Drawings, 1924
1	22	Drawings, 1925 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 2
1	23	Drawings, 1926
1	24	Drawings, 1928-1929 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 2 and OV 6
1	25	Drawings, 1930 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 3
1	26	Drawings, 1931 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 3
1	27	Drawings of Symphony Musicians, 1930-1931 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 3

**Box**      **Folder**



5	2	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 19
5	2	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 20
5	2	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 22
5	2	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 23
5	2	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 24
5	3	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 25
5	3	Oversized Drawings scanned with Box 1, Folder 26
5	3	Oversized Drawings of Symphony Musicians scanned with Box 1, Folder 27

**Box**

OV 6                      Oversized Drawing scanned with Box 1, Folder 24

## 5: Scrapbooks, 1936-1962

*16 folders; Boxes 1, 5*

Three scrapbooks include clippings that document Levine's career and reflect his political interests, as well as photographs of Levine and photographs of artwork, exhibitions and announcements.

Scrapbooks have been scanned in entirety.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	28-33	Scrapbook 1, 1936-1949 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 4
1	34-38	Scrapbook 2, 1950-1960 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 5
1	39-40	Scrapbook 3, 1960-1962 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 6

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
5	4	Oversized Pages from Scrapbook 1 scanned with Box 1, Folders 28-33
5	5	Oversized Pages from Scrapbook 2 scanned with Box 1, Folders 34-38
5	6	Oversized Pages from Scrapbook 3 scanned with Box 1, Folders 39-40

## 6: Printed Material, 1938-1999

*1.9 linear feet; Boxes 1-3, 5*

Printed material includes clippings, primarily of articles about Levine, exhibition announcements and catalogs, an announcement for a lecture by Levine, press releases, calendars of events, reproductions of artwork, programs, brochures, and books.

The bulk of this series has been scanned. For most publications and exhibition catalogs of artists other than Levine, only the covers, title pages, and relevant pages have been scanned.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	41	Clippings, undated

Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 7

1	42	Clippings, 1938-1941
1	43	Clippings, 1943-1945
1	44	Clippings, 1946
1	45-46	Clippings, 1947
1	47	Clippings, 1948-1949
1	48	Clippings, 1950-1953
1	49	Clippings, 1954-1955
1	50	Clippings, 1956
1	51	Clippings, 1957-1958
1	52	Clippings, 1959
1	53	Clippings, 1960 January-May
1	54	Clippings, 1960 July
1	55	Clippings, 1990 September-December
1	56	Clippings, 1961
1	57	Clippings, 1962
1	58	Clippings, 1963
1	59-60	Clippings, 1964
1	61	Clippings, 1965
1	62	Clippings, 1966
1	63	Clippings, 1967
1	64-66	Clippings, 1968
1	67-68	Clippings, 1969
1	69	Clippings, 1970
1	70	Clippings, 1971-1972
1	71	Clippings, 1972
1	72	Clippings, 1973-1976
1	73	Clippings, 1977
1	74	Clippings, 1978
1	75-76	Clippings, 1979

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
2	1	Clippings, 1980-1985
2	2-3	Clippings, 1986
		Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 7
2	4-5	Clippings, 1987
2	6	Clippings, 1988-1989
2	7	Clippings, 1990-1994

2	8	Clippings, 1995-1996
2	9	Clippings, 1997-1998
2	10	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, undated
2	11	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1939
2	12	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1945
2	13	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1947
2	14-15	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1948
2	16	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1949
2	17-18	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1950
2	19	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1951-1952
2	20-22	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1955
2	23	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1956
2	24	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1957
2	25-26	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1959
2	27	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1960-1961
2	28	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1962
2	29-30	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1963
2	31-32	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1964
2	33	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1965
2	34	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1966
2	35-36	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1967
2	37-38	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1968
2	39	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1969
2	40	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1972

**Box Folder**

3	1	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1977-1979
3	2	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1983-1987
3	3	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1990-1992
3	4	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1993
3	5	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1995-1998
3	6	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs for Others, 1960-1980
3	7	Lecture Announcement, 1962 Oversized material housed in OV 6
3	8	Press Releases, 1960-1979
3	9	Calendars of Events, 1968-1999
3	10	Reproductions of Artwork, undated Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 8

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
3	11	Programs, 1966-1999
3	12	Brochures for <i>Facing East</i> Portfolio of Levine's Prints, 1972 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 8
3	13-14	Miscellaneous Brochures, 1959-1972, undated
3	15	Book <i>Americans 1942</i> Published by the Museum of Modern Art, 1942
3	16	Book <i>Painting and Sculpture in the Museum of Modern Art</i> , 1942
3	17	Book <i>The Jew: Quest 2</i> , 1964

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
5	7	Oversized Clippings scanned with Box 1, Folder 41
5	7	Oversized Clippings scanned with Box 2, Folder 3
5	8	Oversized Reproductions of Artwork scanned with Box 3, Folder 10
5	8	Oversized Brochure for <i>Facing East</i> Portfolio of Levine's Prints scanned with Box 3, Folder 12

<b>Box</b> OV 6		Oversized Announcement for Lecture by Levine scanned with Box 3, Folder 7
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## 7: Photographs, 1940-1998

*52 folders; Boxes 3-5, OV 6*

Photographs are of Levine, his wife Ruth Gikow, their daughter Susanna, and colleagues and friends including Hyman Bloom, Leonard Bocour, Eleanor Coen, Alexander Dobkin, Lawrence Fleischman, Betty Friedan, Edith Halpert, Joseph Hirsch, Mauricio Lasansky, Gypsy Rose Lee, Gabor Peterdi, Pope Paul VI, Joachim Probst, Sidney Simon, Raphael Soyer, Studs Terkel, John Updike, and Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko. There is a series of photographs of Levine printmaking with Emiliano Sorini and Ruth Gikow. Photographs of members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters include Will Barnet, Paul Cadmus, Chuck Close, David Levine, and George Tooker. Additional group photographs of the members that were originally enclosed with letters are found in the correspondence series. An album contains photographs of Levine and various buildings in Boston. There are also photographs of exhibition installations and of artwork by Levine and others.

The bulk of this series has been scanned. Items which have not been scanned include photographs with copyright restrictions; blank versos of photos; some photos of works of art; and duplicates.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
3	18	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1940-1947, undated Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 9

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
3	19	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1948-1949, undated
3	20	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1950-1952, undated
3	21	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1953
3	22	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1958

		Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 9
3	23	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1959
3	24	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1960-1967 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 9
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
4	1	Photographs of Jack Levine, 1968-1969
4	2	Photographs of Jack Levine, 1971
4	3	Photographs of Jack Levine, circa 1972-1979
4	4	Photographs of Jack Levine, 1982
4	5	Photographs of Jack Levine, 1985
4	6	Photographs of Jack Levine, 1986
4	7	Photograph Album, circa 1986
4	8-9	Photographs of Family Members, 1955-1982, undated
4	10	Photographs of Ruth Gikow, circa 1940-1966 Photographs with Colleagues
4	11	Hyman Bloom and Stella Bloom, circa 1970s Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 10
4	12	Alexander Dobkin, circa 1940s
4	13	Joachim Probst, 1966
4	14-17	Levine Printmaking with Emiliano Sorini, circa 1960s
4	18	Yevgeny Yevtushenko, undated
4	19	Levine on a Panel with Studs Turkel, Max Kahn, and Eleanor Coen, circa 1980s
4	20	Levine on Miscellaneous Art Juries, circa 1950s-circa 1960s
4	21	Seminar <i>The Influence of Spiritual Inspiration in American Art</i> Sponsored by the Vatican Museums and the Smithsonian Institution, 1977
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
4	22	Filming of <i>Jack Levine: Feast of Pure Reason</i> by David Sutherland, 1985
4	23	Party with Leonard Bocour and Sidney Simon, 1985
4	24	Members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, circa 1992-1998 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 10 and OV 6
4	25	Members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, circa 1992-1998 Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 10 and OV 6
4	26-31	Miscellaneous Colleagues including Leonard Bocour, Betty Friedan, Edith Halpert, Gypsy Rose Lee, Sidney Simon, and Raphael Soyer, 1945-1994, undated
4	32	Photographs of Exhibition Installations at Carnegie Institute, 1945-1950
4	33-34	Photographs of Retrospective Exhibition Installation at the Jewish Museum, 1978
4	35	Photographs of Miscellaneous Exhibition Installations, undated
4	36-39	Photographs of Artwork: Paintings, undated

4	40	Photographs of Artwork: Drawings, undated
4	41	Photographs of Artwork: Prints, undated
4	42	Photographs of Artwork by Others, undated
4	43	Miscellaneous Photographs, 1982, undated

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
5	9	Oversized Photographs of Jack Levine scanned with Box 3, Folder 18
5	9	Oversized Photographs of Jack Levine scanned with Box 3, Folder 22
5	9	Oversized Photographs of Jack Levine scanned with Box 3, folder 24
5	10	Oversized Photographs with Colleagues: Hyman Bloom scanned with Box 4, Folder 11
5	10	Oversized Photographs with Colleagues: Members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters scanned with Box 4, Folders 24-25