



Lillias Mitchell collection (1923-1987)

National Gallery of Ireland: Yeats Archive

IE/NGI/Y29

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1. Identity statement area

Reference Code: IE/NGI/Y29

Title: Lillias Mitchell collection

Dates of Creation: 1923-1987

Level of Description: Fonds.

Extent and Medium: 2 folders & 4 items

2. Context area

Name of creators: Lillias Mitchell, 1915-2000.

Biographical note:

Lillias Mitchell was born in Dublin in 1915. While a teenager she studied painting and sculpture with Elizabeth Corbet Yeats, Lilian Davidson, and others. Mitchell was an exhibiting member of the Watercolour Society from 1940. In 1943 she moved to North Wales to teach clay modelling where in addition she was required to teach weaving under the direction of Ella McLeod. In 1946 Mitchell returned to Dublin and set up a school of weaving called the Golden Fleece with Morfudd Roberts. In 1949 Morfudd Roberts left Ireland to take up a teaching post in England, and Lillias, realising that she could not manage the school on her own, was encouraged to approach the Department of Education. There in 1950 she met the then Minister of Education who invited her to set up a weaving department in the National College of Art. Lillias then went to Sweden to extend her weaving knowledge by attending a summer school and to purchase looms. In 1951 she returned with the looms to set up the Weaving Department in two rooms in the National College of Art. As the Weaving Department expanded it was moved into two prefabricated huts in the garden of Dail Eireann and there Lillias taught weaving spinning and dyeing until she retired in 1979.

In 1975 Lillias Mitchell founded the Irish Guild of Weavers Spinners and Dyers and took a great interest in its development. When the Jesse Mitchell Trust closed in 1994, Lillias sponsored the Lillias Mitchell Prize in the Royal Dublin Society's National Craft Competition. After her retirement Lillias focused on painting. In 1979 she was elected to membership of the Royal Hibernian Academy and exhibited several times during the 1980s and 90s. Mitchell was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1995 and an Honorary Life Member of the Royal Dublin Society in 1993. Lillias Mitchell died 10 January 2000.¹

¹ The Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners, and Dyers: History. <http://www.weavers.ie/history3.html>. Accessed, 25 May 2012.

Archival history: Items created or retained by Mitchell during her lifetime and deposited with NGI library in 1985 and 1987, transferred to the Yeats Archive, 2000.

Immediate source of acquisition:

Majority of material donated by Lillias Mitchell, 1985-1987. Also includes three works donated by David Lee, per the wishes of Lillias Mitchell, in 2000.

3. Content and structure area

Scope and content:

Includes four series of material. 1. Letters from Elizabeth Corbet Yeats to Mrs Mitchell: includes four manuscript letters from Yeats to Mitchell discussing arrangements for children's art classes and participation of Lillias Mitchell, in Yeats's Brush work classes. 2. Lillias Mitchell works completed under tuition of Elizabeth Corbet Yeats: includes a sketchbook of watercolour studies (donated by Lillias Mitchell] and three framed watercolour studies of flowers (donated by David Lee). 3. Lillias Mitchell works completed under tuition of Lilian Davidson: includes watercolour still life drawings, ink silhouettes of figures, and a graphite sketch of a coastal landscape. 4. Miscellaneous items from Lillias Mitchell collection: includes examination certificates awarded to Lillias Mitchell by the Royal Drawing Society, Cuala industries pricelists, and a circular for William Butler Yeats books published by Macmillan.

Appraisal, destruction, and scheduling information

All records have been retained.

Accruals

None expected.

System of arrangement: Material has been arranged in four chronological series, according to type/theme, for ease of access and use.

4. Conditions of access and use

Conditions governing access

Access by appointment and in accordance with NGI Library and Archive access policy.

Conditions governing reproduction

Material may only be reproduced, in accordance with NGI Library and Archives access policy, with permission of the archivist, and in accordance with relevant copyright legislation.

Language/scripts of material: English.

Physical characteristics and technical requirements:

Paper textual and artistic works on paper. No special requirements.

Finding aids: Y29 descriptive list.

5. Allied materials area

Publication note:

The following publications were used in the compilation of this finding aid:

The Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners, and Dyers: History.

<http://www.weavers.ie/history3.html>. Accessed, 25 May 2012.

6. Description control area

Archivists Note: Catalogue compiled by Pauline Swords, May 2012.

Conventions:

ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description. 2nd edition. Ottawa: International Council on Archives, 1000.

1. Letters from Elizabeth Corbet Yeats to Mrs Mitchell.

Series

20 October 1923-[?1980]

2 files & 2 items

Includes four manuscript letters from Yeats to Mitchell discussing arrangements for children's art classes and to participation of Mitchell's daughter, Lillias Mitchell, in Yeats's Brush work classes.

Y29/1/1 [20 October 1923]
1 item, 4pp

Letter from Elizabeth Corbet Yeats, Cuala industries, 82 Merrion square, Dublin to Mrs Mitchell.

Manuscript. Relates to Mitchell's role in assembling a class of approximately ten children to be taught painting by Yeats at Mrs Macaulay's. States fees of 2 guineas, per child, per 12 week term, based on a class of 10 pupils, and discusses materials and other related matters.

Y29/1/2 21 October 1923
1 item, 4pp

Letter from Elizabeth Corbet Yeats, Gurteen Dhas, Dundrum to Mrs. Mitchell.

Manuscript. Yeats writes to correct her statement of fees at 2 guineas, per child, per 12 week term to 1 guinea, per child, per term, based on a class of 12 pupils. Suggests a possible collaboration with a Miss Sweeney who runs [Temple] school in [Palmerstown], Dublin.

Y29/1/3 21 March 1928
2 items, 6pp

Letter with envelope from Elizabeth Corbet Yeats to Mrs Mitchell. Manuscript. Yeats writes to relate details of a lamp shade painting project which she has set for her painting pupils, which include Lillias Mitchell. Yeats relates where the shade may be purchased, costs, and expected time investment. Yeats compliments Lillias Mitchell's talent.

Y29/1/4 27 March 1928-[?1980]
2 items, 7pp

Letter from Elizabeth Corbet Yeats, 133 lower Baggot street, Dublin, to Mrs Mitchell.

Manuscript. Yeats discusses her pleasure in teaching painting to Lillias Mitchell and makes recommendations for the development of Lillias's painting skill. Also refers to the death of her aunt [Alice Pollexfen Jackson] and convey sympathy in relation to Mitchell's recent loss. File also includes a holograph typescript copy of the letter.

1.1 Correspondence between Homan Potterton and Lillias Mitchell relating to deposit of Elizabeth Corbet Yeats letters.

Subseries

2 February 1985-13 January 1986

1 file

Y29/1/1/1 2 February 1985-13 January 1986
Subseries, 1 file, 7 items

Correspondence between Homan Potterton and Lillias Mitchell relating to deposit of Elizabeth Corbet Yeats letters.

2. Lillias Mitchell works completed under tuition of Elizabeth Corbet Yeats

Series

1926-[?1927]

4 items

Includes a sketchbook of watercolour studies (donated by Lillias Mitchell) and three framed watercolour studies of flowers (donated by David Lee).

Y29/2/1 1926-1927
1 item, 23pp

Lillias Mitchell sketchbook completed under tuition of Elizabeth Corbet Yeats

Includes twenty three watercolour paintings of flowers, bowls, figures, and a house in a rural landscape. Includes occasional manuscript comments by Elizabeth Corbet Yeats.

*Outsize item.

Y29/2/2 [?1927]
1 item

Snowdrops by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 29 x 34 cm (framed).
Deposited by David Lee, 2008.
*Outsize item.

Y29/2/3 [?1927]
1 item

Pernetia by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 35 x 33 cm (framed).
Deposited by David Lee, 2008.
*Outsize item.

Y29/2/4 [?1927]
1 item

Jonquils by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 44 x 48 cm (framed).
Deposited by David Lee, 2008.
*Outsize item.

3. Lillias Mitchell works completed under tuition of Lilian Davidson.

Series

[c.1930]

7 items

Includes watercolour still life drawings, ink silhouettes of figures, and a graphite sketch of a coastal landscape, completed by Mitchell while studying under Davidson at the Belgrave school, Rathmines, Dublin.

Y29/3/1 [c.1930]
1 item

[Cut rhubarb in a garden basket] by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 24 x 31 cm.

- Y29/3/2** [c.1930]
1 item
- [A funnel] by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 30 x 25 cm.
- Y29/3/3** [c.1930]
1 item
- [A coffee pot] by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour and graphite on paper. 30 x 25 cm. Graphite studies of a bag and figures on reverse.
- Y29/3/4** [c.1930]
1 item
- [An open book] by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 30 x 25 cm.
- Y29/3/5** [c.1930]
1 item
- [Silhouette of boy and dog] by Lillias Mitchell.
Ink on paper. 30 x 25 cm.
- Y29/3/6** [c.1930]
1 item
- [Pottery jar] by Lillias Mitchell.
Watercolour on paper. 30 x 25 cm. Graphite sketch of boats in a coastal landscape on reverse.
- Y29/3/7** [c.1930]
1 item
- [Silhouette of a girl swinging from a branch] by Lillias Mitchell.
Ink on paper. 26 x 20 cm.

3.1 Associated items.

Subseries

[c.1930]-1987

2 items

Includes a Lilian Davidson greeting card and correspondence between Lillias Mitchell and Homan Potterton, National Gallery of Ireland, relating to deposit of the Davidson material.

Y29/3/1/1 [c.1930]
1 item

Lilian Davidson greeting card from to Lillias Mitchell.
Includes monochrome design with cow and calf.

Y29/3/1/2 25-28 July 1987
File, 2 items

Letter and reply between Lillias Mitchell and Homan Potterton,
director, National Gallery of Ireland.
Relates to deposit of Lilian Davidson material.

4. Miscellaneous items from Lillias Mitchell collection.

Series

1927-[c.1935]

2 files & 1 item

Includes examination certificates awarded to Lillias Mitchell by the Royal Drawing Society, Cuala industries pricelists for embroideries, painted wood, books, and prints, and a circular for William Butler Yeats books published by Macmillan.

Y29/4/1 1927-1930
File, 3 items

Examination certificates awarded to Lillias Mitchell by the Royal
Drawing Society, 18 Queen Anne's gate, Westminster, London.

Y29/4/2 [c.1935]
File, 5 items

Cuala industries pricelists.
Includes pricelists for embroideries, painted wood, books, and prints.

Y29/4/3

[c.1930]

1 item

Advertisement circular for works by William Butler Yeats, published by Macmillan, London.