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Guide to the William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Original Artwork

YCGL MSS 26



by Christa Sammons

2009

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: YCGL MSS 26

CREATOR: Speck, William A. (William Alfred), 1864-1928 , collector

TITLE: William A. Speck collection of Goetheana : original artwork

DATES: 1785-1916

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1 linear foot (3 boxes)

LANGUAGE: Chiefly in German; some materials in English.

SUMMARY: The William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Original Artwork is an artificial collection comprising original artwork that came to Yale from various sources, mostly during the Speck Collection's early decades. It includes some of the Collection's best-known holdings, including an anonymous silhouette made of Goethe in 1786 as well as original sketches and engravings by Goethe. Other artists represented include Wilhelm von Kaulbach, Georg Melchior Kraus, Johann Heinrich Lips, and Moritz Retzsch.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.speckartwork>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.speckartwork>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Acquired at various times and from various sources.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Original Artwork is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Original Artwork. Yale Collection of German Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Christa Sammons, Curator of the Yale Collection of German Literature, made a preliminary contents list and wrote the description of the collection in 2009. The material was then rehoused and the list standardized into its current form.

Former call number: Uncat Zg MS 25.

Associated Materials

Associated Materials: William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Manuscripts (YCGL MSS 6), William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Music (YCGL MSS 9), and William A. Speck Collection of Prints (YCGL MSS 11), William A. Speck collection of Goetheana: Theater Ephemera (YCGL MSS 24), and William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: General Ephemera (YCGL MSS 27), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

William A. Speck (1864-1928)

William A. Speck, the son of German immigrants, was born in New York City in 1864. A pharmacist by profession, he amassed the largest Goethe collection outside of Germany. In 1913, he and his collection came from Haverstraw, New York to Yale, where he served as curator of the Speck Collection until his death in 1928. For further biographical information on William A. Speck and a general history and description of the Speck Collection, see the finding aid for the William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Manuscripts ([YCGL MSS 6](#)).

Scope and Contents

The Speck Collection of Goetheana: Original Artwork is an artificial collection comprising original artwork that came to Yale from various sources, mostly during the Speck Collection's early decades. It includes some of the Collection's best-known holdings, including an anonymous silhouette made of Goethe in 1786 as well as original sketches and engravings by Goethe. Other artists represented include Wilhelm von Kaulbach, Georg Melchior Kraus, Johann Heinrich Lips, and Moritz Retzsch.

Facsimiles of several of the items listed here were included in *Goetheana: A centenary portfolio of forty-three facsimiles and reproductions of unique or rare items from the William A Speck Collection of Goetheana*, published by the Yale University Press in 1932. These facsimiles are not marked as such and can be difficult to distinguish from the originals. The brochure that accompanied the facsimiles contains

sometimes dated commentary on each item. Three of the items were published in the series *Facsimiles and Reproductions of Unique or Rare Items from the William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana in Yale University Library* (Yale University Press, 1915-32). The existence of facsimiles is indicated in the list of collection contents.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by name of artist.

Collection Contents

William A. Speck Collection of Goetheana: Original Artwork, 1785-1916, undated

1 linear foot (3 boxes)

b. 1, f. 1	Anna Amalia, Duchess of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, 1739-1807. Two etchings, "Schloss Ettersburg" and untitled (houses on a river or lake) and signed "A" in the plate. (Portfolio XXV, Ettersburg) 2 plates, 13 x 19 cm.	undated
b. 2, f. 14	Dürer, Albrecht, 1471-1528. "Melancholia," reproduction of the engraving, Stamped: "Facsimile-Reproduction der Reichsdruckerei Berlin." 24 x 19 cm.	undated
b. 2, f. 15	Friedrich, Woldemar, 1846-1910. 3 preliminary pencil sketches for his book Goethes Leben in Bildern (Munich, 1885). "Goethe's Arbeitszimmer," "Weinstock, Goethe-Haus in Weimar," "Altmeister" 20 x 27 cm; 20 x 16 cm.; 20 x 13 cm.	undated
b. 1, f. 2	Fromann (also Frommann), Alwine. Goethe and Textor family coats of arms, two watercolors 2 items, 28 x 22 cm.	undated
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 1749-1832		
b. 1, f. 3	Coat of arms, ink sketch 13 x 10 cm. On mount: "Original Federzeichnung von Goethe. Aus dem Nachlaß des Malers Carl W. Lieber in Weimar."	undated
b. 2, f. 16	Landscape, ink and wash drawing 21-27 cm. On verso, manuscript authentication dated 1891, by Carl Ruland (1834-1907), director of the Weimar Goethe museum and president of the Goethe Gesellschaft; from the papers of the painter Carl W. Lieber. (Speck facsimile series, 3) Corpus der Goethe-Zeichnungen, vol. 6B, item 23.	1891
b. 3, f. 29	Two ink sketches 2 items, 19 x 23 cm. each. The drawings may have been made during Goethe's association with the brothers F. H. and J. G. Jacobi in the early 1770s. (Portfolio XVIII, Speck facsimile series, 6 as "Two supposedly lost drawings.") Corpus der Goethe-Zeichnungen, vol. 6B, item 261.	undated
b. 1, f. 4	"Schlossruine," engraving by W. S. Löwe (Berlin, 1819) after a sketch. 19 x 24 cm. (plate). Corpus der Goethe Zeichnungen, vol. 6B, item 147, dates the sketch ca. 1810, citing the original in the Leipzig University Library.	circa 1810
b. 2, f. 17	Two engravings after paintings by Alexander Thiele (1685-1752). With dedications in the plates to Goethe's father and to his Leipzig student friend and later mayor of Leipzig, Christian Gottfried Herrmann (1743-1813).	undated
b. 1, f. 5	Gore, Charles, 1729-1807. Two seated figures and a dog, silver pencil drawing, signed 16 x 20 cm.	1785

b. 1, f. 6	Hackert, Philipp, 1737-1807. Rural landscape, ink and wash drawing, signed Ph. Hackert pinx. <i>19 x 24 cm.</i>	undated
Kaulbach, Wilhelm von, 1805-74.		
b. 2, f. 18	Lotte cutting bread, surrounded by her siblings, sepia drawing, matted. Reproduced in his Goethe's Frauengestalten of 1871. <i>19 x 13 cm.</i>	undated
b. 1, f. 7	Kaulbach, Wilhelm von, 1805-74. 9 sepia drawings for Schiller's Sämmtliche Werke in einem Bande. Prachtausgabe mit 13 Stahlstichen nach Zeichnungen von Kaulbach (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1840), Marcuse 25a. Bound together.	undated
Kraus, Georg Melchior, 1733-1806.		
b. 2, f. 19	"Am Stern bey Weimar," engraving, "Beÿ Weimar, nach Natur gezeichnet," pencil and wash drawing (Portfolio XXVI), "Wilhelmsthal. Herzogl: Weimar: Jagdschloss bey Eisenach," watercolor <i>19 x 24.5 cm. (plate), 17 x 23 cm., 18 x 28 cm.</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 20	Three scenes of Weimar and vicinity, handcolored engravings. "II. Ansicht der Sternbrücke"; "III. Ansicht der Bogenbrücke auf den Wiesen"; "IV. Ansicht der Fähre nach dem Sterne." With an uncolored copy of III. <i>3 items, each 19 x 25 cm.</i>	1793
b. 1, f. 8	Langlois, François, called Ciartres, 1589-1647, publisher. Engraved portrait of the historical Doctor Faustus, after Rembrandt, number 36 from a series of as many portraits. (Portfolio XXXVI) <i>21 x 19 cm.</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 21	Lieber, Carl Wilhelm. "Ehringsdorf bei Oberweimar," watercolor. <i>15 x 19 cm.</i>	undated
b. 1, f. 9	Lips, Johann Heinrich, 1758-1817. Portrait of Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), colored engraving in oval border. (Portfolio XIX) <i>11 x 9 cm.</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 22	Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 1807-82. "H.W.L. 'in the clouds' at Göttingen!" ink sketch. Self-portrait as a student in Germany, reading Goethe. (Portfolio, XXXIII) <i>22 x 17 cm.</i>	1829 April 2
b. 2, f. 23	Naeke (also Näke), Gustav, 1786-1835. Pencil sketches preliminary to his oil painting of Faust und Gretchen (1811), sketches on both sides, matted. With a lithographic reproduction of the finished painting. (Portfolio XLI) <i>20 x 31 cm.</i>	undated
b. 1, f. 10	Neureuther, Eugen Napoleon, 1806-82. Pencil and ink sketch (border with female figure resembling a ship's figurehead). <i>27 x 18 cm.</i> Similar in style to the borders found in his page decorations for Randzeichnungen zu Goethe's Balladen und Romanzen, 1829-39.	undated
b. 1, f. 11	Northampton Bank, Lehigh County, PA. Note for "Zehn Thaler." <i>8 x 17 cm.</i> Includes portraits of Goethe, Klopstock, Haydn, and Friedrich Wilhelm Herschel (1738-1822), the German-born composer, astronomer, and discoverer of the planet Uranus, who changed his name to William after moving to England early in life.	1836 January 27

b. 2, f. 24	Preller, Friedrich, 1804-1878. Goethe on his deathbed, pencil copy by the artist of his original. <i>17 x 13 cm.</i> The copy was made in 1873 for Bayard Taylor and later given by his widow to Speck (Portfolio IV).	1873
b. 1, f. 12	Retzsch, Moritz, 1779-1857. Faust and Gretchen, pencil drawing <i>14 x 10 cm.</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 25	Scheffler, Rudolf, 1884-1973. Portrait of the German literary scholar Oskar Walzel (1864-1944), pencil drawing, signed and dated 5.11.16 <i>33 x 25 cm., matted.</i>	1916 May 11
b. 2, f. 26	Smirke, Robert, 1752-1845. Scene from Werther, showing Werther, Lotte, and Albert in a garden, pencil and sepia wash drawing <i>11.5 x 7.5 cm., matted.</i> Purchased on the E. J. Beinecke Fund, late 1960s or early 1970s.	undated
b. 2, f. 27	[Speck, William A. (?), subject], Silhouette <i>12 cm., mounted on sheet, 33 x 25 cm.</i>	undated
b. 1, f. 13	[Werther] "Goethe und Lotte, die Beiden in Werters Freuden 1775," ink silhouette, octagon in oval mount <i>20 x 16.5 cm.</i>	undated
b. 2, f. 28	"Goethe im J. 1786." Anonymous silhouette. <i>13 x 10 cm.</i> On verso: "le Conseillez privé de Weÿmar. Goethe. Carlsbad. 1786." (Portfolio I; Speck facsimile series, 1; Speck Collection bookplate)	undated

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Artists -- Germany
Authors, German
German literature -- 18th century
German literature -- 19th century

Genres / Formats

Drawings (visual works)
Engravings (prints)
Etchings (prints)
Silhouettes
Sketches

Names

Anna Amalia, Duchess of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, 1739-1807
Friedrich, W. (Woldemar), 1846-1910
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 1749-1832
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 1749-1832 --
Portraits
Gore, Charles, 1729-1807
Hackert, Philipp, 1737-1807
Kaulbach, Wilhelm von, 1804-1874
Kraus, Georg Melchior, 1737-1806
Lips, Johann Heinrich, 1758-1817
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 1807-1882
Neureuther, Eugen, 1806-1882
Preller, Friedrich, 1804-1878
Retzsch, Moritz, 1779-1857
Schiller, Friedrich, 1759-1805
Smirke, Robert, 1752-1845
Speck, William A. (William Alfred), 1864-1928

Contributors

Speck, William A. (William Alfred), 1864-1928 ,
collector
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 1749-1832