Library Guide
The History of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Resource List | 2021

When the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art was founded, the trustees and their advisors created an encyclopedic museum collecting art from different periods of time and cultures from around the world. The history of the museum and the collection has been extensively documented in various sources. This bibliography, presented in conjunction with the exhibition Origins: Collecting to Create the Nelson-Atkins, includes titles that explore the history of the museum including, collection handbooks and catalogs, information about the Western Gallery of Art, William Rockhill Nelson’s collection of art copies and casts, as well as documentation from the museum’s archives.

If you have questions, please contact the reference staff at the Spencer Art Reference Library (telephone 816-751-1216). Library hours and services are listed on the Museum’s website at https://nelson-atkins.org/library/

Selected by: Roberta Wagener | Specialist, Access Services

Western Gallery of Art


Histories of the Museum


Call No: N582 .K3 W66 1993


**Opening of the Museum**

Call No: N582 .K3 W5 1933a  


Call No: Serials

Call No: Reference Desk N582 .K3 T4 1934

**Collection Handbooks**

Call No: N582 .K3 W5 2008

Call No: N582 .K3 W5 1933  
Available Online:  
https://archive.org/details/nama1933handbook

https://nelson-atkins.org/fpc/

Call No: ND205 .A673 2007 v. 1-2

Call No: ND635 .N45 2005

Call No: ND614 .N38 1996

Call No: NE53 .K36 N4 1996


**Other Information about the Collection**


**Archival Collections – Early Museum History**

Selected by: Christain Hartman | Archives Assistant

*Note: All collections in the Museum Archives document the history of the museum in some way. The following are selected highlights from the collection.*


Historical File (including plantings, early acquisitions, cooperative agreement for public use, etc.). Vertical Files. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Archives. Kansas City, Missouri.


Image Captions
From banner image first page:

Mosaic Spandrel of an Arch (33-663) installed at the entrance to the Persian Gallery, from the 1933 handbook.

Postcard, 1940s, Ephemera Collection, RG 70, Museum Archives.

Laurence Sickman in Luoyang, China, 1932, Laurence Sickman Papers, MSS 001, Museum Archives.

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