



AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM ARCHIVES

In-Person Access Policy

Updated 4 February 2025

The American Folk Art Museum Archives is a resource for the study of the institutional history of the American Folk Art Museum (AFAM) and the history of folk art, self-taught art, and art brut.

By appointment only, Tuesday and Thursday, 11 am - 4 pm EST

The American Folk Art Museum Archives

47-29 32nd Place

Long Island City, NY 11101

archives@folkartmuseum.org

(212) 595-9533, ext. 108

Researchers must contact the Archives to seek consultation, schedule an on-site appointment, and/or request copies of materials. An archivist can offer insights into the scope of the archival holdings and advise researchers on how to access the Archives to pursue their research needs. All appointments must be scheduled at least one week in advance.

[Registration](#) is required for researcher appointments and duplication requests. Please email the Archivist at the address above to register. Researchers must demonstrate a specific research purpose to access the AFAM Archives. Currently, the AFAM Archives cannot accommodate casual viewings of the collection in the context of a research appointment or duplication request.

[Online Registration Form](#)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Entering our facility at the address above requires climbing two sets of stairs. Please inform the Archivist if you need an accessible entrance. We are happy to accommodate you with an alternative entrance.

Reading Room Rules

The following rules are in place for the safety of people and collections. Registering for an appointment, signifies you will adhere to our policies. Thank you in advance.

- Personal belongings such as coats, purses, briefcases, and bags must be placed in the locker area designated by AFAM staff. Researchers may return to their belongings throughout the visit.
- Archival material must be consulted at the researcher's assigned workstation and may not be removed at any time. If you need assistance, please check in with AFAM staff.

- Only note-taking materials (computers, mobile devices, provided notepaper, pencils) may be taken to the workstation. Pens, markers, highlighters, personal notebooks, and Post-it notes are prohibited. These can damage materials and workstations. Please use an erasable pencil only. AFAM staff will have pencils and notepaper available if needed.
- Food and drink, including gum, are prohibited in the Archives. These attract pests, which can damage collections. Researchers may have water in a lidded container or bottle in the locker area.
- AFAM staff will be in the Archives to supervise all research visits. Please note that there are security cameras throughout the building.
- COVID-19 Protocols: Masks are highly encouraged, but optional. Researchers may request that archives staff wear a mask when near them.

Handling Archival Materials

- All materials must be handled with great care. Improper handling of material may result in the termination of the research appointment. AFAM staff will instruct on proper handling and, in some cases, may personally handle material depending on its condition, size, and type.
- Researchers will be provided with one document box at a time and should look through only one folder at a time. Keep the folder flat on the table when flipping through it.
- Researchers must use an out card when they remove a folder from the box. This works both as a placeholder and also makes putting the folder back in the box easier.
- Do not fold, mark, erase, tear, or trace any material, or rest other books or objects on top of the material. Do not place notepaper on top of archival materials while taking notes.
- Please preserve the existing arrangement of the material within folders and boxes. If anything appears to be out-of-order, the researcher should not attempt to move the item but rather inform the Archivist of a potential misfiling.

Photographing and Photocopying Archives

- The use of flash photography and tripods is not allowed.
- Cell phones and digital cameras may be used to take photos of unrestricted materials for reference purposes only.
- Researchers are requested to record or include in their image, the collection name, box, and folder of the item. AFAM staff can assist researchers with this process and citation if needed.
- There is no self-service photocopying. Researchers may not use personal scanners. Duplication services are available upon request and for a fee. See “Digital Reproductions and Duplication Requests”

Terms of Use

Researchers agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Museum—its officers, employees, and agents—from and against any damages, liabilities, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees actually incurred, arising out of or in connection with the examination of such records.

Restrictions

AFAM staff reserves the right to restrict access to materials for any reason. Among the factors that will be considered when deciding whether to permit access to collections are the condition of the archival materials requested; the number of materials requested; and the sensitivity of the material. Researchers may encounter records that contain private and sensitive information about individuals, communities, or organizations. Please be mindful and respectful, particularly if conveying this information publicly. Consult the Archivist if you have any questions or concerns.

Copyright Notice

Permission to examine any unpublished manuscript or other record, if granted, does not include permission to reproduce, publish, or distribute contents of the unpublished records or any excerpt thereof at any time.

AFAM makes no representation that it holds any copyright interest in the unpublished records. Permission to reproduce, publish, or distribute may require the express permission of the copyright owner. While AFAM may be able to assist in identifying the copyright holder, it is the researcher's responsibility to secure copyright permissions from the proper authorities.

Citation and Acknowledgement of AFAM Archives

All published references (including books, exhibition catalogs, press releases, journal articles, research papers, and dissertations) to material in the Archives should be cited according to the standard outlined in the finding aid. The general citation format is as follows:

“[item description], [date], [collection name], [collection number] [box numbers], [folder numbers], American Folk Art Museum Archives, New York.”

For example:

Blue Label brand stencil, undated, The Historical Society of Early American Decoration Collection, Box: 2, Folder: 7, American Folk Art Museum Archives, New York.