



## **Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis Collection (S0092)**

**Collection Number:** S0092

**Collection Title:** Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis Collection

**Dates:** 1946-1972

**Creator:** Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis

**Abstract:** The Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis Collection consists of pamphlets chronicling the group's mission to foster public interest in art in St. Louis by sponsoring art exhibitions featuring local artists.

**Collection Size:** 0.25 cubic foot  
(1 folder)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org).

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis Collection* (S0092); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Nancy Kuppinger on April 21, 1971 (Accession No. SA0033).

**Processed by:** Processed by AJ Medlock and Remy Cognac, September 2023

### **Historical Note:**

The Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis traces its history to the St. Louis Artists No-Jury Exhibit Society. Founded on March 24, 1930, by Emily Grant Hutching, who edited the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat's* art column, and Ed Trask, who bought art for Scruggs-Vandervoort and

Barney's art department, the group modeled the No-Jury Exhibition after similar exhibitions in Europe, which held annual exhibitions to showcase local artists, including paintings and sculptures. The first exhibition opened in Scruggs-Vandervoort and Barney's art galleries on May 19, 1930, featuring 275 paintings and 30 sculptures by local artists.

Despite the exhibition's success, the group disbanded. However, St. Louisans interested in continuing the No-Jury Exhibition met at local artist Tanasko Milovich's studio on February 13, 1931, to form the Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis. The Society aimed to foster interest in the arts by holding exhibitions featuring local artists' works. Throughout its history, the society continued hosting the annual No-Jury Exhibition, in addition to other exhibitions hosted at various venues in the St. Louis Metropolitan region, including at the St. Louis Art Museum and Kiel Auditorium. The Society also hosted social gatherings for members and the public. One of the Society's most enduring events was its annual costume ball. During World War II, members initially conceived the ball as a fundraising mechanism for the Red Cross and soldiers. After the war, the costume ball transitioned to celebrating the Society's anniversary, featuring dancing, picture auctions, and prizes for best costume. The Society continued hosting the ball as late as 1971.

The Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis continued hosting art exhibitions into the 1980s. The group has remained largely inactive since the 1990s.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged chronologically into one folder.

**Scope and Content:**

The Society of Independent Artists in St. Louis consists of annual pamphlets issued to members chronicling the previous year's activities, including descriptions of past art exhibitions and competitions sponsored by the organization. The pamphlets contain summaries of monthly meetings and lists identifying newly installed board officers and new members. Also included in the pamphlets are news items about the organization's members, including professional endeavors outside the Society, such as marriages, deaths, and social gatherings held for members. The materials in this collection are arranged chronologically, dating from 1946 to 1972, with a gap between 1960-1961.

**Container List:**

f. 1                      Society of Independent Artists of St. Louis Collection, 1946-1972

**Index:**

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