

Finding aid for the LaClaire portraits collection Collection 053

Maurice LaClaire author's portraits and the portraiture of Maurice and David B. LaClaire

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

December 07, 2013

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department

December 1987

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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Creator - Photographer	LaClaire, Maurice, 1901-1970
Title	LaClaire portraits collection
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1930-1939
Date [inclusive]	1916-2009
Extent	2.6 Linear feet Two boxes
Language	English
Abstract	<p>Maurice LaClaire (1901-1969) was an internationally known Grand Rapids (Mich.) photographer. The collection contains 29 portrait photographs of leading Grand Rapids authors of the 1930s. The photographs were exhibited at the Grand Rapids Public Library during Book Week in 1942. The collection also contains a copy of Photographic Portraiture, published by by Maurice's son, David B. LaClaire, in 2003. This publication includes images of Grand Rapids individuals, as well as national notables, taken by Maurice or David from 1916 into the 2000s.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

Maurice Carnes LaClaire was born in Big Rapids in 1901. He developed an interest in photography while attending Ferris State. Upon graduation he moved to Grand Rapids and opened a photography studio. LaClaire pioneered direct color portraiture in 1936, and afterward worked with the Kodak-Eastman Company in the testing of several color processes. LaClaire presented one-man shows at the Marshall Fields Galleries in Chicago, at the Smithsonian, and at the Eastman House in Rochester, and won various national and international competitions for his color work. He died in Grand Rapids on October 25, 1970 at the age of 69.

Please See David LaClaire's book *Photographic Portraiture* for additional biographical information.

For published information on the Grand Rapids Public Library exhibit and event honoring the authors depicted in this collection, see: "Local Authors Contribute to the World of Literature" *Grand Rapids Mirror*, May 1942

Scope and Contents note

The collection contains 28 13 x 10 inch photographs mounted in window mats with images of 29 leading writers from Grand Rapids in the 1930s and 1940s. Image #21 contains 2 of the authors photographed together.

An article in the *Grand Rapids Mirror*, May 1942 (see Box 1) suggests that the Grand Rapids Public Library may have been the leader in the selection of these authors, and perhaps in commissioning the photos from LaClaire. A reception and tea was held for those honored in the images, at the Library, during National Books Week in November 1941. The twenty nine individuals represent various types of authors, from scholarly to children's fiction, newspapers to short stories.

The original photographs that initially formed this collection are now supplemented by the book *Photographic Portraiture*, which documents two generations of the LaClaire Studio, and its notable subjects.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department December 1987

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Maurice Carnes LaClaire, 1941; accession numbers 1941.001, P2003.021

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

Personal Name(s)

- LaClaire, David B
- LaClaire, Maurice, 1901-1970

Subject(s)

- Authors, American -- Michigan
- Portrait photography -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids

Portrait Photographs

Collection Inventory

Portrait Photographs		
	Box	Folder
Allen, Roger / Roger Allen.	1	1
Atwell, Willis W. / Willis Atwell	1	2
Beets, Henry / Henry Beets	1	3
Berkhof, Louis / Louis Berkhof	1	4
Campau, Ethel L. / Ethel Campau	1	5
Cheeryman, Myrtle Koon / Myrtle Cheeryman	1	6
Collins, Kreigh / Kreigh Collins	1	7
Dean, Ben / Ben Dean	1	8
DeJong, David / David DeJong	1	9
DeJong, Meindert / Meindert DeJong	1	10
DeVries, Bess / Bess DeVries	1	11

Portrait Photographs

DuMond, Frank L. / Frank DuMond	1	12
Ellis, Miss Grace / Grace Ellis	1	13
Finney, Ethel / Ethel Finney	1	14
Fideler, Raymond B. / Raymond Fideler	1	15
Jewett, Xiora H. / H. Xiora Jewett	1	16
Keck, Miss C. / Christine M. Keck	1	17
Langereis, H.H.D. / Henry H.D. Langereis	1	18
Murphy, George / George Murphy	1	19
Needham, Margaret Masters / Margaret Masters Needham	1	20
Pershbacher, Olga (with Dorothy Wilde) / Olga Pershbacher	1	21
Pierson, Clara / Clara Pierson	1	22
Slootmacher, Wilhelmina / Wilhelmina Slootmacher.	1	23
Sparks, Frank M. / Frank Sparks	1	24
Toole, Mrs. Don P. (H. Barleau, pen name) / Mrs. Don P. Toole	1	25

Portrait Photographs

Voelker, Paul F. / Paul Voelker	1	26
Waterman, Philip F. / Philip Waterman	1	27
Wilde, Dorothy (with Olga Pershbacher) / Dorothy Wilde	1	21
Windoos, Ralph F. / Ralph Windoos	1	28
		Box
Photographic Portraiture / David B. LaClaire 2003		2

Scope and Contents note

Signed by LaClaire, this book is accompanied by the invitation to the book signing, Dec. 6, 2003 at Schuler Books & Music. Local History Book Coll. copy M779.2.L118p Not available, 1/2009