

Frederick H. Shelton's research files on Adolph Ulrich Wertmuller

MS.032

Finding Aid prepared by Hoang Tran



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY
OF THE FINE ARTS

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Summary Information

Repository	The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Dorothy and Kenneth Woodcock Archives
Creator	Frederick H. Shelton
Title	Frederick H. Shelton's research files on Adolph Ulrich Wertmuller
Date [bulk]	
Date [inclusive]	1935-1951, undated
Extent	1/2 document box
Location note	
Language	
Language of Materials note	English
Abstract	Frederick H. Shelton's research materials including correspondence, notes, reproductions, and transcriptions of Wertmuller related documents. See <i>The First Pose</i> by David Sellin, page 24, for a reproduction of the <i>Danae</i> .

Preferred Citation note

[identification of item], Title of Collection, Collection ID#, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

Historical note

Adolph Ulrich Wertmuller was born in Stockholm, Sweden, and served as Painter to the King. He studied in Paris and was a member of the French and Swedish academies. After working in France and Spain, Wertmuller went to Philadelphia in 1794. He painted portraits for a little more than two years before returning to Europe, to settle his financial affairs. In 1800 Wertmuller returned to the United States, settling near Marcus Hook, Delaware, where he spent the remainder of his life.

Wertmuller caused a sensation in Philadelphia with his painting *Danae and the Shower of Gold*, which he brought with him upon his return from Europe. He exhibited the work in the Academy's annual exhibition of 1811, and works by him were included in several Academy exhibitions after his death. Three portraits by the artist, including a self-portrait, are in the Academy's permanent collection. Also see *Wertmuller – Artist and Immigrant Farmer* by Franklin D. Scott (Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, 1963).

Scope and Contents note

Frederick H. Shelton, the compiler of this collection, is listed in Philadelphia city directories as an engineer. He lectured on Wertmuller's career at the Academy in 1920, and at several other local organizations. Whether Wertmuller was one of his ancestors, or if Shelton's interest began because he owned a painting by the artist, is unclear. He does not seem to have published an article on Wertmuller or any other subject, despite references in the correspondence to such plans.

The collection consists of Shelton's research materials including correspondence, notes, reproductions, and transcriptions of Wertmuller related documents. See *The First Pose* by David Sellin, page 24, for a reproduction of the *Danae*.

This material was not filmed by the Archives of American Art.

Arrangement note

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access note

Collection is open for research.

The archives reserves the right to restrict access to materials of sensitive nature. Please contact the department for further information.

Conditions Governing Use note

The collection is the physical property of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Archives. The Museum holds literary rights only for material created by Museum personnel or given to the Museum with such rights specifically assigned. For all other material, literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. Researchers are responsible for obtaining permission from rights holders for publication and for other purposes where stated.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Provenance note

The provenance of the collection is unknown, but was likely the gift of Mr. Shelton, and is known to have been in the Academy's archives prior to 1955.

Processing Information note

Controlled Access Headings

Person(s)

Corporate Name(s)

Genre(s)

Geographic Name(s)

Subject(s)

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note

Collection Inventory

Folder title	Date	Box	Folder
Biographical and genealogical information collected by Frederick H. Shenton (items 3-99)	circa 1920s	1	1
Biographical and genealogical information collected by Frederick H. Shenton (items 100-200)	circa 1920s	1	2
Biographical and genealogical information collected by Frederick H. Shenton (items 201-309)	circa 1920s	1	3

Items of special interest include:

Frederick H. Shelton's research files on Adolph Ulrich Wertmuller (MS.032)

#9, a list of Wertmuller works, 1780-1801

#22, transcription of a chapter on Hesselius (grandfather of Wertmuller's wife) from Conrad's *History of the State of Delaware*

#46, a copy of Wertmuller's marriage record, Old Swede's Church

#49, a copy of Wertmuller's burial record, Old Swede's Church

#63, notes on properties owned by Wertmuller

#64, a copy of Wertmuller's will

#66, a copy of deed to Wertmuller's property in Delaware

#152, excerpts from Old Swede's Church burial records

#218, a list of subscribers who purchased Wertmuller's portrait of Washington the for Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1874

#298, transcriptions of a letter from Wertmuller to Miss Betsy Henderson of Philadelphia, 1795

#300, transcriptions of letter from Wertmuller to Mr. Chevalier of Baltimore, 1802

#309, a copy of Wertmuller register of paintings (in French), 1772-1802