

Forever Saroyan, LLC
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A Guide to the David Battan Research Correspondence,
ca. 1938-1984, bulk 1981-1984
DBR000

TITLE

David Battan Research Correspondence

DATE

Ca. 1938-1984, bulk 1981-1984

IDENTIFIER/CALL NUMBER

DBR000

CREATOR

Battan, David

EXTENT

Number of Containers: 1 folder

Number of Items or Digital Files: 32 items (22 unique record numbers; 10 items belong to a single record number)

REPOSITORY

Forever Saroyan, LLC
San Jose, CA

COLLECTION SUMMARY

This collection contains research materials used by author David Battan as he compiled information for a biography of William Saroyan that was never published. The materials include postmarked envelopes, letters to Battan, and miscellaneous documents Battan collected that were written by or related to Saroyan. This is not an exhaustive collection of Battan's materials, which were dispersed among private collectors and various university special collections.

LANGUAGE(S)

English

PROCESSING NOTE

The descriptions in this collection guide were compiled using the best available sources of information. While every effort was made to provide accurate information, in the event that you find any errors in this guide please contact the reference staff.

PROCESSING ARCHIVIST

Mary Alexander, 2016

Finding Aid completed by Dori Myer, 2021

Collection Details

Biographical / Historical Note

David Battan (1938-1987) was a Fresno handwriting expert and a collector and dealer of original manuscripts and autographs. In 1984, he published the book *Handwriting Analysis*, and at his death was writing a biography about William Saroyan that was never completed or published. He was a member of the board of trustees of the International Manuscript Society and was a prominent collector on the West Coast. He also served as the personnel director of the Fresno County Welfare Department. In the 1980s, while the UC Berkeley Bancroft Library processed Saroyan's papers on behalf of the William Saroyan Foundation, all items within the collection were blocked from access. More than five years of this embargo kept Battan from performing research on the many unpublished manuscripts, journals, and correspondences within the Saroyan collection, and he died before access opened. Battan collected individual records relating to Saroyan and befriended Saroyan while they both lived in Fresno.

Collection Description

The bulk of this collection includes correspondences from the 1980s between researcher David Battan and various people associated with author William Saroyan, including Aram Saroyan, Al Hirschfeld, Manuel Tolegian, Herbert Gold, and others. There are also other correspondences, notes, drawings, postmarked envelopes, manuscripts, and galleys collected by Battan. Related letters are available in outside collections, including the Williams College William Saroyan Collection, not affiliated with Forever Saroyan, LLC.

Arrangement Description

Due to the small size of this collection, there is no physical arrangement. Intellectual arrangement contains three series, as follows:

Series 1: Correspondence Envelopes, 1972-1984; Series 2: Letters to David Battan, 1981-1982; Series 3: Research Materials Collected by David Battan, circa 1938-1968

Related Materials

Chuck Nelson Collection - MSS 2018 12 21

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Donated by by Charles Nelson, 2016

Subject Headings

Battan, David, 1938-

Saroyan, William, 1908-1981.

Using the Collection

ACCESS STATEMENT

This collection is open and available for use. Digital scans of all records are available on request.

RIGHTS STATEMENT

Some material may be copyrighted or restricted. It is the researcher's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other case restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in the collections.

PREFERRED CITATION

[Item Title], David Battan Research Correspondence (DBR000), Forever Saroyan, San Jose, CA

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Correspondence Envelopes, 1972-1984

This series includes postmarked envelopes from Aram Saroyan to David Battan and from William Saroyan to Herbert Gold, as well as an article written by Aram Saroyan that was enclosed in one envelope. These are all cataloged together under the record number DBR 001.

- Empty envelope from William Saroyan to Herbert Gold, 1972 October 4
- Empty envelope from William Saroyan to Herbert Gold, 1979 February 2
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1982 August 4
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1981 August 14
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1984 March 2
- Envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1984 May 25; Contains copy of article "Rites of Passage" from DLB Yearbook by Aram Saroyan with handwritten message from Saroyan to Battan across the top.
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1984 May 30
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1984 July 5
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1984 July 16
- Empty envelope from Aram Saroyan to David Battan, 1984 July 25

Series 2: Letters to David Battan, 1981-1982

This series contains letters to David Battan from friends of Saroyan, pertaining to Battan's research for a Saroyan biography he was writing.

- Letter from Al Hirschfeld to David Battan, 1981 August 9 (DBR 002)
- Letter from Warren Chappell to David Battan, 1981 August 14 (DBR 006)
- Letter from Paul Bowles to David Battan, 1981 August 26 (DBR 019)
- Letter from Manuel Tolegian to David Battan, 1981 September 15 (DBR 010)
- Letter from Lydia Freeman to David Battan, 1981 October 5 (DBR 020)
- Letter from Manuel Tolegian to David Battan, 1981 November 19 (DBR 011)
- Letter from Manuel Tolegian to David Battan, 1981 December 11 (DBR 015)
- Letter from Al Hirschfeld to David Battan, 1982 April 18 (DBR 014)
- Letter from Manuel Tolegian to David Battan, 1982 June 8 (DBR 016)
- Letter from Manuel Tolegian to David Battan, 1982 July 23 (DBR 017)
- Letter from Celeste Holm to David Battan with accompanying transcript, 1982 August 25 (DBR 004)
- "About William Saroyan" letter to David Battan reminiscing about meeting William Saroyan, likely from Henry Koener, undated (DBR 007)
- Letter from George Abbott to David Battan, undated (DBR 013)

Series 3: Research Materials Collected by David Battan, ca. 1938-1968

This series contains various Saroyan historical research materials collected by Battan, including letters, an illustration, a manuscript, and an appraisal of a group of Saroyan's letters.

- Short, excerpted note from William Saroyan to unknown correspondent, circa 1938 (DBR 022)
- Letter from Don Freeman to Valenti Angelo, 1961 May 29 (DBR 018)
- Galley/proof of "Being Refined" by William Saroyan with annotations from the author, 1965 February 13 (DBR 021)
- Unpublished manuscript "Ulysses, Where Are You?" by William Saroyan, circa 1967 (DBR 005)
- Letter from Lewy Olfson to William Saroyan, 1968 July 26 (DBR 008)
- Letter from Lewy Olfson to William Saroyan, 1968 August 1 (DBR 009)
- "Aram and Me and the Armenians and the World," Original illustration by Don Freeman, undated (DBR 003)

- Appraisal summary of letters from William Saroyan to Herbert Gold (letters partially transcribed but not included in the collection) from Joseph The Provider bookstore, undated (DBR 012)