



Richard P. Wunder male physique and nude photographs, 1940s-1980s : MS.Coll.67

Finding aid prepared by John F. Anderies on April 15, 2019

PDF produced on January 23, 2020

John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center
1315 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
archives@waygay.org

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	4
Administrative Information	5
Related Materials	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Collection Inventory	6

Summary Information

Repository:	John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center
Creator:	Wunder, Richard P.
Title:	Richard P. Wunder male physique and nude photographs
ID:	MS.Coll.67
Date [inclusive]:	1940s-1980s
Physical Description:	.42 Linear feet 1 document box
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Richard Paul Wunder (1923-2002) was a museum curator and collector. The Richard P. Wunder male physique and nude photographs, 1940s-1980s, consist primarily of photographic prints of men in physique poses, candid nude shots, and sexually explicit scenes, collected by Wunder over the course of his life.

Preferred Citation

Richard P. Wunder male physique and nude photographs, 1940s-1980s, Ms. Coll. 67, John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center, Philadelphia, PA.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Richard Paul Wunder (1923-2002) was a museum curator and collector. He was born May 31, 1923 in Yeadon, Delaware County, Pennsylvania to Clarence Edmund Wunder and Elizabeth Iona Geissel. His siblings were Clarence E. Wunder, Jr. and Katherine E. Wunder-Salmoiraghi. He grew up in Gladwyn, Pennsylvania, and attended the Westminster School in Simsbury, Connecticut. Wunder enrolled at Harvard College in September 1942 (class of 1946) and enlisted in the Army the following February, serving in the North African campaign during World War II. Returning to Harvard after a brief tour through Italy, Wunder completed his Bachelors degree in 1949. He was a member of the Glee Club and the Hasty Pudding Institute of 1770, and worked as assistant to the director at the Fogg Art Museum while in school. He interrupted his studies at Harvard University a second time when he was stationed

in the U.S., 1950-1952, during the Korean War. Ultimately he went on to receive a Masters in 1951 and Ph.D. in 1955, writing a dissertation on Italian baroque painter Giovanni Paolo Panini.

Richard Wunder served as curator of drawings and prints at the Cooper Union Museum (New York), 1955-1964; curator and assistant director of the National Museum of American Art (today's Smithsonian American Art Museum) (Washington, DC), 1964-1969; founding director of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design (today's Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum) (New York), 1969-1970; and president of appraisals for Christie, Manson, & Woods International (today's Christie's) (New York). He also served as the John Hamilton Fulton lecturer at Middlebury College (Middlebury, Vermont), 1967-1975.

Wunder was named Knight of the Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem, 1987; received the Smithsonian Institution's Charles Eldredge Prize, 1992; and was given an honorary Doctorate of Letters from Hope College, 1999. He is the author of *Extravagant Drawings of the Eighteenth Century From the Collection of the Cooper Union Museum* (1962); *Frederick Edwin Church* (1966); *Seventeenth and Eighteenth European Drawings* (1966); and *Hiram Powers: Vermont Sculptor, 1805-1873* (1991).

He retired to La Jolla, California in 1990, and passed away August 2, 2002.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

The Richard P. Wunder male physique and nude photographs, 1940s-1980s, consist primarily of photographic prints of men in physique poses, candid nude shots, and sexually explicit scenes, collected by Wunder over the course of his life. According to Wunder's nephew Robert Taylor, Wunder was gay and collected and distributed physique and nude male images from his dorm room as a student at Harvard College in the 1940s. Wunder is said to have used a so-called "positive-negative machine" to reproduce male physique and nude photographs which he distributed to other men around the east coast. Evidence in the collection of Wunder's technique of image reproduction and distribution include examples of paper contact negatives and multiple positive reproductions, as well as one example of a hand-crafted booklet with individual positive reproductions pasted in. Additionally, there are numerous examples of black and white silver gelatin photographic prints produced by photography studios or taken as amateur candid shots. Some of the nude physique photographs show evidence that false posing straps were painted over the models' genitals but have since been partially scratched or worn off. A small number of the photos contain identifying information about the models, the studios (including Athletic Model Guild, Western Photography Guild, Directory Services, Inc., and Centaur's Domain), or the catalog numbers of the prints. Of note are several early prints by the German photographer Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden, who was known for his classical photographs of male youth in Taormina, Sicily between 1890 and 1910. The collection also contains a photographic volume published in 1977 about von Gloeden's photographs and a matted pen and ink with pencil drawing of male sexual activity.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center

1315 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
archives@waygay.org

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright restrictions may exist. It is the responsibility of the user to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives of the William Way LGBT Community Center.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift, Robert M. Taylor, 2019

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Related Materials

At John J. Wilcox, Jr. Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center:

Small photograph collections, 1959-2006, undated, Ms. Coll. 43 (contains several collections of male physique and nude photographs)

William Way LGBT Community Center periodicals collection, 1940-present, Ms. Coll. 37 (contains several male physique magazine titles)

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Collectors and collecting
- Gay erotic photography
- Gay men
- Gay pornography
- Male nude in art
- Paper negatives
- Photographs
- Photography of men
- Pornography -- Circulation
- Gloeden, Wilhelm von, Baron, 1856-1931
- Wunder, Richard P.

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Handcrafted booklet (4 in. x 5 in.) of 17 caucasian male physique and nude black and white photographic images (approximately 3 1/2 in. x 4 1/2 in.) produced by paper contact negatives, undated	Box 1	Folder 1
Caucasian male physique and nude black and white photographic paper contact negatives and positive prints (approximately 4 in. x 5 in.), undated	Box 1	Folder 2-4
Caucasian male physique and nude black and white photographic paper contact negatives and positive prints (approximately 8 in. x 5 in.), undated	Box 1	Folder 5
Caucasian male physique and nude black and white photographic paper contact negatives and positive prints (approximately 10 in. x 8 in.), undated	Box 1	Folder 6
Black and white photographs and postcards (various sizes) of male nude artworks, undated	Box 1	Folder 7
Caucasian and African American male physique and nude black and white photographs (mostly 4 in. x 5 in. and 5 in. x 8 in.), undated	Box 1	Folder 8
Caucasian and African American male nude black and white candid photographs (mostly 4 in. x 5 in.), undated	Box 1	Folder 9
Caucasian and African American male nude black and white candid photographs (various sizes smaller than 4 in. x 5 in.), (undated)	Box 1	Folder 10
Black and white candid photographs (4 in. x 5 in.) of caucasian male nude couple engaged in sexual activity on beach, undated	Box 1	Folder 11

African American male nude color studio photographs (3 1/2 in. x 5 in.) from Centaur Domain, San Francisco, California (SPP2 and PP7A Jim), undated	Box 1	Folder 12
Caucasian male physique and nude black and white photographs (8 in. x 10 in.), undated	Box 1	Folder 13
Caucasian male nude black and white photographs (mostly 7 in. x 9 1/2 in.) by Baron Wilhem von Gloeden by Studio Fotografico Vittorio Malambri', Taormina, Italy, undated	Box 1	Folder 14
Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden, <i>Photographs of the Classical Male Nude</i> , preface by Jean-Claude Lemagny (New York: Camera/Graphic Press), 1977	Box 1	Folder 15
Matted pen and ink with pencil drawing (6 1/2 in. x 4 3/4 in.) of two caucasian males engaged in oral sexual activity on a dormitory bed with a "Harvard" pennant on the wall, signed "h", undated	Box 1	Folder 16