

CMA/CWRU Joint Program in Art History & Museum Studies

Ingalls Library Orientation

A Suggested Methodology for Answering your Question

How many of the Abstract Expressionists studied with Hans Hofmann? How many were members of the American Abstract Artists Group? Who were they?

1. Search *Bénézit's Dictionary of Artists* for the Hans Hofmann entry.

Entries in *Bénézit* include biographical information, as well as bibliography, auction records, and if available a signature. Read about Hofmann's art school and look for any key names mentioned as American Abstract Expressionists. Search the bibliography.

2. Search Oxford Art Online, also known as *Grove's Dictionary of Art*, for American Abstract Artists, Hans Hofmann, Abstract Expressionism, Hans Hofmann School of Fine Art.

Compare the results between this and *Bénézit*. Entries here will begin to mention names of founding members of AAA, including George Cavallon, Helen Frankenthaler, Balcomb Greene and more. Search bibliography.

3. Search the library catalog for **Hans Hoffman**. Use various keywords and gleaned bibliography.

Find the Larson dissertation mentioned in the Oxford bibliography; *The American Abstract Artists Group: A history and evaluation of its impact upon American Art*, N6512.5 .A2 L37 1975, and Nichols *American Abstract Artists of the 1930's and 1940's*, ND212.5 .A2 A43 1998. Both contain lists of artists associated with the Hans Hofmann School and American Abstract Artists Group. Compare those who studied with Hofman against the list of the AAA.

4. Search Art Bibliographies Modern.

Find 26 hits for American Abstraction. Find "American Abstraction" by D. Rosenthal in *Arts Magazine*, v.54, n.2, Oct. 1979. The volume is not in JSTOR, but is available in the library collection, A20 A78d.

5. Search JStor for relevant articles.

Begin with a Basic Search for Hans Hofmann. While the results are somewhat overwhelming in number, the third article, "*Space and Pictorial Life*" *Hans Hofmann's "Smaragd Red and Germinating Yellow"* is by CWRU professor Ellen Landau. Select this article for review.

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6. Search ArtStor for images of the group.

Search for the phrase **American Abstract Artists**. In library catalogs, certain words are unintentional stop words, words which are not useful search terms and often return poor results. This search in ArtStor is a good example of this.

7. Return to JStor and perform a caption search.

Utilizing the pull down menu in the Advanced Search tab, search for the terms **American Abstract Artists**. In doing so, you will be searching photograph and illustration captions. This can be a good strategy for finding images not available in other image catalogs. The results include an image of an AAA flier from the article, *The American Abstract Artists: A Documentary History 1936-1941*, by Larsen, author of the dissertation cited above. Select this article for review.

8. Search the library catalog for clipping files, using artist names.

Library clipping files are exceptionally useful sources, containing ephemera, newspaper clippings, etc. Find the article about the founders of AAA by Hilton Kramer from the New York Times: *Art: Two who paint by their own lights*. Find Hofmann obituary.