Francis Collection on Mary Nimmo Moran

Biography

Marilyn G. Francis was a contributing writer to *Dress*, the journal of the Costume Society of America in the later part of the 20th Century. She was also a volunteer at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the mounting of their Annual Exhibitions. She received her B.F.A. from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art and a B.A. in Art History from Montclair State College. The Alumni Association of Montclair State College gave Francis a grant in 1979 which made possible her research, which constitutes this collection, on Mary Nimmo Moran.

Widely considered to be the foremost American based woman etcher of the nineteenth century, Mary Nimmo Moran (1842-1899), produced a large number of prints that were celebrated for their boldness and originality. She immigrated to the United States from Scotland in 1847 with her brother and father. The family settled in Crescentville, Pennsylvania near Philadelphia, where their neighbors were the family of Thomas Moran, the American landscape painter. At eighteen Mary Nimmo began to study drawing and painting with Moran; two years later they were married and moved to Philadelphia. The couple had two daughters and a son, and in 1872 they relocated to Newark, New Jersey. She sometimes traveled with her husband-to the West, Florida, and Europe-during the early years of their marriage. She came into her own as an artist in 1879, when she was introduced to the technique of etching. Nimmo Moran was the first female member of both the New York Etching Club and the Royal Society of Painters-Etchers in London. Rather than being overshadowed by her spouse, on many occasions when both husband and wife exhibited etchings in the same show, it was Mary's work that was singled out for praise. She also received a prize medallion for her work shown at the *World’s Columbian Exposition* in Chicago in 1893. In 1884 the Morans built a new home on Long Island, the surrounding area of which became the subject of many of Nimmo Moran’s most successful etchings. After nursing her daughter Ruth back to health, Nimmo Moran died in 1899 of typhoid fever.

Chronology

1842 Mary Nimmo is born in Strathaven, Scotland.

1847 Immigrates to the United States with father and brother, settle in Crescentville, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia.

1862 Attends Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
Marries Thomas Moran

1864 Paul Nimmo Moran is born.
1868 Mary Scott Moran is born

1870 Ruth Bedford Moran is born

1877 Nimmo Moran and husband are founding members of the Society of American Artists.

1879 Nimmo Moran’s first etching of a scene of the St. John River in Florida.
Her first plates gained her acceptance into the New York Etching Club and the Royal Society of Painters-Etchers in London.

1884 Moran family moves to Easthampton, Long Island

1881 Exhibition of American Etchings (where?) includes seven by Nimmo Moran.
Nimmo Moran and her husband exhibited their first showing of the Royal Society of Painters and Etchers of Great Britain.

1889 Nimmo Moran and husband have a joint exhibition at the Christian Klackner Gallery in New York City

1893 Nimmo Moran receives prize medallion for work shown in the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago

1888 Exhibits 33 etchings at Work of the Women Etchers of America, Union League Club, New York, N.Y.

1899 Catches typhoid nursing her daughter Ruth back to health and dies September 25, 1899.

Scope and Content

The Marilyn G. Francis Collection consists of the material gathered in the scholarly process of writing the manuscript “Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher, 1842-1899”. Approximately one third of the collection is correspondence, largely by Francis from 1979 to 1984. Manuscripts that she submitted for publication are included, as well as the fine draft for publication in The Woman’s Art Journal. The photographs and their accompanying negatives are all reproductions of late 19th Century photographs or of Nimmo Moran’s etchings.

The collection is divided into three series:

Series I: Correspondence
Series II: Manuscripts
Series III: Clippings
Provenance

Marilyn G. Francis of Peabody, Massachusetts donated the Marilyn G. Francis Collection to the National Museum of Women in the Arts in XYZ 200X.

Series Descriptions

Series I: Correspondence
This series consists largely of correspondence by Marilyn G. Francis from 1979-1984. There are a few items of correspondence which she received reproductions of, including a 1958 letter from Jacob Kainen.

Series II: Manuscripts
The seven manuscripts for the article “Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899” are included in this series in various stages of completion and with annotation by the author and others. This series also contains research notes and cards.

Series III: Clippings
The clippings in this series span over a century (1881-1984) and are news articles or obituaries of Mary Nimmo Moran or Thomas Moran, and later 20th Century articles on the artists of East Hampton.

Series IV: Printed Matter
This series contains three catalogues from late 19th Century exhibits in which Nimmo Moran displayed work. There are also multiple publications from the 20th Century about East Hampton and etching.

Series V: Reproductions
This series contains approximately five dozen photocopied reproductions of etchings by Mary Nimmo Moran created by Marilyn G. Francis during her research. There are also a number of photocopied reproductions of some of the photographs from Series VII. Many of the reproductions are annotated.

Series VI: Financial Information
This series contains information relating to the grant that Marilyn G. Francis applied for and received for funding the research on Mary Nimmo Moran, as well as the documentation regarding her expenditures in completing her research.

Series VII: Thomas Moran
The material in this series is either about Mary Nimmo Moran’s husband Thomas Moran or had been organized by Marilyn G. Francis in a file on Thomas Moran.

**Series VIII: Photographs**

This series contains photographic reproductions of photographs of Mary Nimmo Moran and her family and a dozen and a half photographic reproductions of her etchings. Approximately half of the photographs were organized in envelopes within a scrapbook and the order has been maintained, although excessive duplicates were removed.

**Processing**

The collection is contained in two archival boxes, located in the Library and Research Center. The collection was processed and a finding aid written in 2006. The material was separated into eight series (Correspondence, Manuscripts, Clippings, Printed Matter, Reproductions, Financial Information, Thomas Moran, and Photographs) and re-housed in acid-free folders. Photocopies of newsprint were made, and the newsprint originals and the photographs and negatives were placed in mylar housing. Staples and paperclips were removed and papers were unfolded and flattened.

**Related Materials**

There is a vertical file held at the National Museum of Women in the Arts on Mary Nimmo Moran which contains information that would be useful to a researcher working on this topic. The Museum also holds in their permanent collection the following works by Mary Nimmo Moran:

- *Gardiner's Bay, Long Island, Seen From Fresh Pond*, 1881
- *The Goose Pond, East Hampton*, 1881
- *'Tween the Gloaming and the Mirk, When the Kye Come Hame*, 1883
- *The Edge of Georgica Pond, East Hampton*, 1885
- *Interior of a California Forest (after Thomas Moran)*, 1888

**Box Inventory**

**Box 1**

**SERIES I: CORRESPONDENCE**

The American Art Journal, 1980
Van Norman Turano, Jane
Kuchna, Jayne A.
Amon Carter Museum, 1980
Clark, Carol
Ashmolean Museum, 1980
Taylor
The Athenaeum, 1980
Magee, Eileen M.
Baigell, Matthew, 1980
British Museum, 1980
    Gere, J.A.
Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1982
    Elston, Elizabeth
Drisler, Debbie, 1979
Drisler, Emily Field, 1979
East Hampton Free Library, 1979-1984
    King, Dorothy
    Doms, Keith
    Looney, Robert F.
Fryxell, Fritiof M., 1980-1984
Garzoli, John H., 1979-1980
The Graduate School and University Center, 1980
    Gerdts, William H.
Guild Hall, 1979-1980
    Ferren, Rae
    Najdzionek, Christine
    Wolfe, Judith
Kean, Thomas, 1983-1984
Kennedy Galleries, 1982
Lafayette College: Skillman Library, 1979
    Robbins, Ronald E.
    Pierce, Constance
The Mariners Museum, 1979
    Royer, Joyce A.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980
    Howat, John
Miller, Jo, 1981-1982
Mobley, William Frost, 1979-1980
Ms., n.d.
    Nelson, Martha
Museum of Fine Arts, 1979-1980
    Lampert, Margaret
    Ackley, Clifford
National Park Service: Jefferson Memorial, 1979-1980
    Bugnitz, Pat
    Messinger, Norman G.
Newark Museum, 1981
    Thurlow, Fearn C.
New Jersey State Museum, 1979
    Buki, Zoltan
The Parrish Art Museum, 1979
    Henry, Penelope Wright
    Pisano, Ron
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1979-1980
   Foster, Kathleen A.
   Friedman, Ann
Permissions, 1980-1983
   Guild Hall Museum
   Jane Vorhees Zimmerli Art Museum – Rutgers University
   The Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art
Petteys, Chris, 1980-1983
Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1980
   McNulty, Kneeland
Princeton University, 1979
   Ross, Barbara
   The Art Museum
   Princeton University Library
   Finlay, Nancy
Queens College: English Department, 1980
   Wilkins, Thurman
Radcliffe College: Schlesinger Library, 1979
   King, Patricia
The Rosenbach Museum and Library, 1980
   Segal, Arline
   Driver, Clive E.
Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, 1982
   Spender, Michael
The Ruskin Galleries: Bembridge School, 1980
Rutgers University: University Art Gallery, 1980-1984
   Pruce/Gatrai, Marilyn J.
   Wechsler, Jeffrey
   Schneider, Anne
Sabine, Julia, 1980
Smith College Museum of Art, 1979
   Swenson, Inga Christine
   Chetham, Charles
Smithsonian Institute, 1922-1981
   Kainen, Jacob
   Harris, Elizabeth
   Andrews, Martha Shipman
   National Collection of Fine Arts
   McNulty, Kneeland
   Pennsylvania Museum of Art
   Gerdts, Abigail Booth
   Allen, Rachel M.
   Russell, Martha
   Vacek, Carolyn
   Archives of American Art
   Field, Virginia
SERIES II: MANUSCRIPTS
Mary Nimmo, Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
The American Art Journal Manuscript
Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
Draft with notes from husband Edward Francis
Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
Rough Draft
Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
Woman’s Art Journal Manuscript – with photo insert notations
Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
Woman’s Art Journal Manuscript – duplicate
Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
Woman’s Art Journal Manuscript – Handwritten end-notes
Mary Nimmo Moran, Painter-Etcher 1842-1899
Woman’s Art Journal Manuscript – edited fine copy
Box 2

SERIES III: CLIPPINGS

*Should the dates come before the clippings with titles?*

1881
1882
1899
1924
1950
1976
1980
1981
1982
1984
n.d.
*Biographical Sketches of American Artists*
“Explorer in Search of Beauty”
*Home-Thoughts From Afar: Letters of Thomas Moran to Mary Nimmo Moran*, 1967
“The Moran Family”, *The Quarterly Illustrator*, 1893
*Notable American Women*
*Thomas Moran: Artist of the Mountains*, by Thurman Wilkins
“Wisconsin at the Centennial” by Louise Phelps Kellogg

SERIES IV: PRINTED MATTER

*Artists and East Hampton*, 1976
East Hampton Free Library Newsletter
“The Union League Club: Exhibition Catalogue of the Work of the Women Etchers of America”, 1888
“In memory of Mary Nimmo Moran 1842-1899”
*The New York Etching Club 1877-1894: An Exhibition at the Montclair Art Museum*, 1979
New York Public Library Special Collections Rules for Use

SERIES V: REPRODUCTIONS

Etching Reproductions

SERIES VI: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Correspondence with Montclair State College Alumni Association
Expenditures
Grants

**SERIES VII: THOMAS MORAN**

Biographical Art Collection
Correspondence, n.d.
   - Baltimore and Ohio R.R. Museum
   *The Drawings and Watercolors of Thomas Moran (1837-1926)*, by Thomas S. Fern, 1976
Newark, New Jersey Property
Newspaper Clippings, 1872-1926
Research Notes
*Thomas Moran (1837-1926)* by William H. Gerdts, 1963

**SERIES VIII: PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photograph Scrapbook
Photograph Reproductions