

Kay Sage Collection

COLLECTION, M-71

DATE

1915 – 2018

1940 – 1965

CONTRIBUTOR

Mattatuck Museum

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY ELEMENT

Kay Sage was born on June 25, 1898 near Albany, New York to Henry Manning Sage and Anna Wheeler Ward Sage. In 1907 her parents separated and she spent time with her mother traveling abroad to Italy, France, Egypt, and the UK. In the early 1920s she began to study art, first in Washington DC and then later in Italy. She met her first husband, Ranieri di san Faustino, Prince of San Faustino in 1923 while in Rome. In 1933 she met sculptor Heinz Hughes through the poet Ezra Pound and began painting again. However, she began to paint in an abstract style.

Influenced by creatives in her circle, she began to take herself seriously as an artist. Sage left her first husband and moved to Paris to paint. She had her first exhibition in 1938 where she exhibited 6 surrealist compositions. In 1938 she met Yves Tanguy, Andre Breton and other surrealists. Breton would later list her as a member of the surrealist movement, which was extremely high praise from the so-called Pope of Surrealism. In 1939 Sage returned to the United States and in 1940, she and Yves were married. In 1944 the pair purchased an old farmhouse with a guest house barn in Woodbury, CT. During the 1940s and 1950s Sage's career expanded -she had a one-woman show at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York City, the Julien Levy Gallery, and the Catherine Viviano Gallery. Sage's work was also included in several surrealist survey exhibitions and she published several books of poetry during this time period.

Tragically, Yves Tanguy died suddenly in 1955. After his death, Kay worked on her unpublished autobiography *China Eggs* and a catalog *raisonne* of Tanguy's paintings that was edited by Lucy Lippard. Due to failing health, after 1958 she could no longer paint to her standards and focused on creating constructions and objects. In 1963 she committed suicide.

For more information, see Miller, Stephen Robeson, Stephen Robeson Miller, Jessie Sentivan, Mary Ann Caws, and Kay Sage. 2018. *Kay Sage: catalogue raisonne?*.

SCOPE & CONTENT

The Kay Sage Collection contains personal and professional documents during and after Kay Sage's lifetime. As such, this collection is naturally broken into three groupings based on creator.

The first is the Kay Sage Papers – these were documents and materials created by and/or kept by Kay Sage during her lifetime. This series includes notebooks, writings, published books of her poetry, correspondence, exhibition announcements and catalogs, photographs of Sage and her artwork, and articles about her work. Some of these materials were gifted by Kay Sage to Alexandra Darrow who later donated them to the museum. The photographs were shot by Alex Darrow during Sage's lifetime and donated by her to the museum.

The second is Collected Material – these are documents that the Mattatuck Museum and John Monagan collected about Kay Sage after her death. This includes exhibition announcements, catalogs, books, and articles about Kay and her work.

The third grouping is the Estate of Kay Sage. Donated by John Monagan, who was the lawyer representing the estate, and primarily documents the breakup of Sage and Tanguy's collection of artwork, books, and other material items. Of special interest is the short essay describing the burning of Yves Tanguy's last painting.

ARRANGEMENT

Arranged into 3 series. Within each series, alphabetically.

RELATED PEOPLE/INSTITUTIONS

Kay Sage (created by)

Estate of Kay Sage (created by)

Collection Contents

Kay Sage Collection (5 records)

Piove in Giardino
The More I Wonder; Poems
Demain Monsieur Silber
Faut Dire C'Qui Est
Mordicus