

THERON M. TROMBEAU

COLLECTION

SLEEPY BURRO SCHOOL OF ART

Table of Contents

Biographical Note	iii
Section I - Personal Material	
A. Personal History	1
B. Famous Artists School, Inc.	1
Section II - The Sleepy Burro School of Art	
A. Logo for Sleepy Burro School of Art	4
B. Notices, Announcements, Other Promotional Material	4
C. Brochures: Teaching Material	5
D. Color Theories, Color Perception	6
E. SBSA Bulletins	6
Section III - Techniques, Applications, and Lecture Notes	
A. Techniques	7
B. Applications and Lectures	7
Section IV - The Ole Hee-Haw and Other Publications	
A. The Ole Hee-Haw Bulletins	8
B. Other Publications	8
Section V - Correspondence	9
Section VI - Odds & Ends	12

SECTION I

PERSONAL MATERIAL

A. Personal History

1. Articles. Information On The Sleepy Burro School of Art. By TMT.
Autobiographical notes. 4 pp., typewritten. By TMT.
4 pp., typewritten. 2cc.
Traces lives of TMT and LT, and the establishment and history of SBSA.
Behind A Blue Door. By TMT. 9 pp. Draft. Typewritten.
Autobiographical essay, including the organization and development of SBSA.

B. Famous Artists School, Inc. [FAS]; Famous Artists Course [FAC]; Famous Artists Material, Inc.

This complex, headed by FAS, operated out of Westport, Connecticut. Norman Rockwell, with Stevan Dohanos, Doug Kingman, and others, were the founders. The school was the prototype for TMT's school in La Luz, New Mexico.

TMT enrolled in the Westport correspondence school in 1957, and continued into 1958 and 1959. The material in the Part B Folders of this Section I relates to TMT's lessons at FAS. It includes related correspondence and critiques of his work on his study assignments.

TMT and his wife organized SBSA in 1958.

* * *

2. Correspondence.
Undated: FAC [Edwin Eberman, Director] to "Dear Student."
Welcome letter. Coming under separate cover is entire course of 24 lessons. Letter contains instructions.

- Undated: FAS [Edwin Eberman, Director] to “Dear Student.”
Contains list of former students [viz “Famous Artists”] and the magazines which accepted their art work. Norman Rockwell prominently noted.
- Undated: FAS to “Dear Student.”
Working procedures.
Enclosed: Sheet with “useful tips” from members of Guiding Faculty.
- Undated: FAM [Edwin Eberman, Director] to “Dear Student.”
Offering painting supplies [listed] to aid in school work.
- 12-21-56: FAS [Albert Dorne, President.] to TMT.
Welcome letter.
- 1-23-57: FAC [Leo S. Stoutsenberger, Assoc. Art Director] to “Mr. Trumbo” [sic in all letters]. Lesson 1.
Critique of TMT submissions. [vide TMT sheets in O.B. 5, infra, for material analyzed].
- 2-11-57: FAC [Richard F. Archer, Associates Art Director] to TMT [Trumbo].
Critiques of ass’ts 1- 3. Lesson 2.
- 2-28-57: FAC [Emery Clarke, Associate Art Director] to TMT.
Critiques of ass’ts 1 - 2. Lesson 3. Suggests confusion how the sections of the body fit together... proportions poor.
- 4-12-57: FAC [H. Leavitt Purdy, A.A.D.] to TMT.
Critiques [negative] of ass’ts 1 - 3. Lesson 4.
- 7-17-57: FAC [H.W. Johnson, A.A.D.] to TMT.
Critiques [negative] about body parts. Lesson 5.
- 9-16-57: FAC [Emery Clarke] to TMT.
Critiques of ass’ts 1 - 2. Lesson 6.
- 1-6-58: FAC [Roger Vernam, A.A.D.] to TMT.
Critiques of Lesson 7 on a horse.
- 2-11-58: FAC [Wallace E. Turner, Associate Art Director.] to TMT.
Critiques of various ass’ts on house and furniture. Lesson 8.

7-2-58: FAC [William W. McCracken, A.A.D.] to TMT.
Critique on still life objects. Lesson 9.

3-23-59: FAC [John Hull, Associate Art Director] to TMT.
Critique of ass'ts 1, etc. Lesson 10.

Original art work of TMT.

Done on large sheets and boards, mostly 12 x 14, in execution of assignments critiqued in letters contained in Folder 2, supra. Tissue [stencil] sheets have teacher's suggestions and corrections of drawings; most in pencil or ink; some charcoal; several in water colors.

3. Magazines. Famous Artists Magazine. Vol. 5, No. 2. Winter, 1956.
29 pp.

Articles by successful artists. Caricature sketches of and by school instructors.

Ditto. Vol. 5, No. 3 Spring, 1957. 28 pp.
Same kind of contents.

4. TMT Sketch book.

5. Ditto.

SECTION II

THE SLEEPY BURRO SCHOOL OF ART

A. Logo for SBSA

1. Drawing. Logo of SBSA. $6\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{5}$.
On oaktag sheet. Of sleeping Mexican mounted on drooping burro between two cactus plants. Designed by TMT.
2. Business card. $2 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$, as top-folded. 5cc.
Front: SBSA logo. Back: "Trombeau de La Luz." Inside folded card: "Theron M. Trombeau. Art with A Southwestern Accent." Address of SBSA with phone number.

B. Notices, Announcements, Other SBSA Promotional Material

3. Flyer. SBSA, High Rolls, New Mexico. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 10$. * N.d.
Announces evening classes for adult beginners in oils, charcoal, and pastels.
4. Announcement. SBSA, High Rolls, New Mexico. 2cc. N.d.
Details on elementary course on oil painting. Lists topics, fees, etc.
5. Announcement. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. c. 1959. 2 cc.
Details on formation of two new classes for young folks teaching sketching and oil painting.
6. Announcement. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. c. 1959.
Formation of class for adult beginners.
7. Announcement. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. October 1960. cc.
Class in silk screen painting of original Christmas card.
8. Announcement. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. 2cc. c. February 1961.
Announcing that TMT will paint a "complete picture" in oils with running commentary.
9. Questionnaire. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. 2cc. c. May 1961.
New class in Soft Pastels, 8 weeks; then class in Oil Pastels, 8 weeks.
Inquires whether these classes have general interest.

* All Material in this Section II is on this size paper unless otherwise specified.

10. Announcement. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. 2cc. N.d.
Festival of the Arts show sponsored by Alamogordo Art Ass'n and SBSA, being fifth [sic] annual exhibit of student work.
Notice traces background of TMT and SBSA.
11. Course of Study for General Art Students. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico.
Layout of planned leaflet.
Lists various projects for students at different levels.
12. Oil painting course. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico. N.d. 2cc.
Lists 10 lessons and subject matters.
13. Anniversary and Christmas announcements. SBSA, La Luz, New Mexico.
All signed by TMT and LT; last one also signed by "Judy Trumbo."
14. Folder. Labeled "General Publicity."
Contains assorted material assembled by TMT promoting SBSA.
Also some related correspondence. [Some items duplicate notices in previous folders.]

C. SBSA Brochures

15. Brochures. [Some missing.]
Each one explains a different technique and approach.
Thus--

Brochure One:	<i>What Makes A Good Picture?</i>
Brochure Two:	<i>Broken Color.</i> Sets forth definitions and history. [See also Part D, <u>infra.</u>]
Brochure Two:	[so numbered]: <i>Chart:36 Broken Color Combinations.</i> [See also Part D. <u>Infra.</u>]
Brochure Three:	<i>Skies.</i> With diagrams.
Brochure Four:	<i>Some Effective Color Mixes.</i>
Brochure Five:	<i>Sketching.</i>
Brochure Seven:	<i>Laws of Oriental Art.</i>
Brochure Eight:	<i>Magic of Color.</i> With color chart.
Project 3:	<i>Developing Light and Dark in A Picture.</i>
Project 4:	<i>Use of Limited Palette.</i>

D. Color Theories & Perception

16. Book, loose-leaf. *Colors, Harmonies, Dimensions: The Archetypal World of Color*. By Fritz Faiss. 1970 Typewritten, Gestetner mimeograph. 90 pp., including Supplements. Color wheel prefixed.
Transcriptions of lectures on selected subjects relating to color in art.
17. Broken color chart. [Pointillism]. 8½ x10½. On pressed fiber board. 36 differently colored painted squares.
18. Leaflet. 5 pp., with hand-made paper wrap-around cover. *Color Unlimited*. Harmonious color schemes for use by artists, craftsmen and interior decorators. By TMT.
Color wheel attached to cover.
19. *Fun With Color*. By Dan Smith. Tear-sheet. 1 pg. 1961.
Games to demonstrate the visual phenomena of color perception.

E. SBSA Bulletins

The Trombeua family sent bulletins to SBSA students each year. The first few were Christmas bulletins under the heading of SBSA. The rest of the bulletins bore the heading of a house publication called The Ole Hee-Haw. The latter are found in Section IV, Part A, infra.

20. SBSA Bulletins.
Christmas 1959.
Christmas 1960.
Christmas 1961 [?].

SECTION III

TECHNIQUES , APPLICATIONS & LECTURE NOTES

Techniques

1. Pamphlet. *The Technique of the Oil Sketch*. By TMT. 4 pp. 1968. 2cc.
Described by TMT as the product of “several years in experimentation.”
Lists materials needed; subjects; surface preparation; sketching methods,
etc. [Not an in-depth study.]
2. The Sketch. Draft by TMT, possibly for lecture purposes. 3 pp. in ink.
Illustrations in ink sketches with notes on techniques.
3. Steps in metallic version. Draft notes of TMT, possibly for lecture purposes. 4
pp. in ink.
Notes describe steps and surface preparation.
4. Tools for Variations. Draft by TMT, possibly for lecture purposes. 2 pp. in ink.

B. Applications & Lectures

5. *Designs For Southwest Weaving*. By TMT. Prepared for book publishing by
SBSA. N.d.
Series of black and white designs [one in color]. Approximately 25 in
number. Done on graph paper [squares], planned on a scale of one inch
per square. Mostly designed from Aztec symbols.
6. Stencils.
Las Cruces and others (5).
Cactus (4) with stenciled sheets (2).
9. Tracings, 2 sheets (tissue). Mayan figures.
One sheet: Textile patterns.
One sheet: Mayan god.
10. Drawings. By TMT.
The Mansion. Watercolor, black and white.
Slave Owner’s Tomb. Watercolor, black and white.
Old Slave Quarters. Watercolor, black and white.
Tombstone. Watercolor, black and white.
Young Woman. Watercolor, in greens and yellows.
11. Loose-leaf book. TMT lectures and lecture notes.

SECTION IV

THE OLE HEE-HAW & OTHER PUBLICATIONS

A. The Ole Hee-Haw

1. Monthly bulletins bearing the heading, The Ole Hee-Haw [many apparently missing]:

Vol. I, Number 1, February 1960 to Number 3, April 1960.

Vol. I, Number 4, May - June 1960.

Vol. I, Number 5, July 1960 to Number 8, October 1963.

Vol. I, Number 9, November - December 1960.

Vol. II, Number 1, March - April 1961.

Vol. II, Number 2, May, June, July 1961.

Vol. III, Number 1, January 1962.

Vol. III, Number 2, December 1962.

Vol. IV, Number 1, December 1963.

2. Lists of subscribers. 1970 - 1978.

Vol.V, Number 1, December 1964.

Christmas, 1965 - 1970.

[The 1968 edition reports that TMT and LT were divorced on November 20, 1967, and she remarried on November 25. (Mrs D. Abernathy, Truth and Consequences.)]

B. Other Publications

3. Way Out Yonder. No. 41, January 25, 1958. High Rolls, New Mexico. Fifteenth year. 1pg. bulletin.
Signed by TMT, LT, and Judy.
4. Sleepy Burro Syndicate. Las Cruces, New Mexico. Mimeograph; N.d.
Introductory issue (column) describing topics covered. To be published weekly by TMT, "a member of the Las Cruces Writers Club and the New Mexcian Folklore Society." Sample copy of Wind in the West enclosed.
Bear logo of SBSA.

SECTION V

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence has been left unsorted - as found - except for its arrangement in chronological order. Letters of special significance are duly noted. Those of no consequence are left without comment.

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1949

1. 1949: Escuela Universitaria de Bellas Artes [Alfred Campanella, Director]. Guana- juato, Mexico offers art courses.

2-21-49: Escuela Libre de Artes Plasticas de Chihuahua to TMT.
Reviewing its art courses, in response to TMT's inquiry.

1960 - 1969

2. 10-21-60: New Mexico Department of Development [Fred W. Phelps, Director] to TMT. 2 pp. Seeks article on SBSA. Written by J. Walker Flynn, Editor of New Mexico Magazine, on D.O.D. letterhead.

10-25-60: TMT to J. Walker Flynn.
Will write article.

10-28-60: Flynn to TMT.

11-16-60: Ramon Froman, Dallas, Texas to TMT.
Describes his school of art.

11-28-60: TMT to J. Walker Flynn.
Enclosing draft of article.

1-12-61: TMT to New Mexico Magazine.

1-14-61: New Mexico Magazine to TMT.

1-27-61: New Mexico Magazine to TMT.

11-67:

Witte
Memorial
Museum
[Wm.
A.
Burns,
Director] to
“Dear
Sir.”

Soliciting art for the Fifth Annual Western Art Show.

12-67: [Same parties.]
Working on Fifth Annual Show.

1-10-68: National Park Service, White Sand National Monument] to TMT.

2-11-68: Alamo Kiwanis Club Charities, Inc. to R.O. Wilson.
Bill of Sale. *A Trail to Wander* by TMT.

7-7-68: TMT to Witte Memorial Museum.

11-68: Witte Memorial Museum.
Soliciting art for Sixth Annual Western Show. 2 pp.

12-68: Witte Memorial Museum.
Direction for submissions.

4-8-69: SBSA [TMT] to El Paso Times.

5-19-69: TMT to New Mexico Arts Commission.

1970 -1976

3. 1-13-70: New Mexico Arts Commission [Mickey Lavey, Ch.] to
TMT.

1-19-70: SBSA [TMT] to State Legislative.

To support New Mexico Arts Commission.

- 1-21-70: New Mexico House of Representatives to TMT.
- 1-22-70: New Mexico State Senate to TMT.
- 1-22-70: New Mexico State Senate to TMT.
- 1-26-70: New Mexico House of Representatives to TMT.
- 11-27-70: TMT to Roswell Museum.
- 11-27-70: TMT to Ramona Duncan [Desert Aire Restaurant, Alamogordo, NM.

12-11-70: TMT to Mary Moheit.

3-29-71: TMT to Echo.

4-15-71: Lucy Cabral to TMT.
Discusses painting she purchased, *Casa in Atotonilco* by TMT.

4-28-71: TMT to Jeane L. Maznicki.

11-6-71: Jamie Vandergriff to TMT.

5-1-72: Paula Temple to Paula Temple [sic].

6-1-72: G. Timothy Cockram to SBSA.

10-5-73: TMT to The Gallery, La Luz, New Mexico
Resigning gallery membership due to “extenuating circumstances.”

6-27-74: TMT to Kathy and John.
Terminating their association with SBSA.

7-29-74: TMT to The Gallery.

3-19-75: TMT to El Greco Restaurant, Alamogordo, New Mexico.

6-15-76: New Mexico Highway Department to SBSA.
Requires removal of sign on U.S. Highway.

6-21-76: TMT to Highway Department.
Sign previously removed.

6-23-76: Highway Department to TMT.
Apologies.

6-24-76: Ditto.

N.d.: TMT to “Dear Friend.”

N.d.: Sleepy Burro Arts & Crafts.
Christmas greetings.

SECTION VI

ODDS & ENDS

1. Information Sheet. Alamogordo Art Association.
2. Fabric Painting. 7 x 9¾. Las Cruces, New Mexico.
3. Sketch, paint and watercolor. 5½ x 7.
Same scene as in Env. 2, supra.
4. Greeting cards. Paper. Watercolor.
Greetings from Las Cruces. 4 x 5½.
Same scene as Env. 2, Supra.
5. Sheets (2). Sleepy Burro Craft Shop. 17 x 22.
Watercolored splashes. Wrapping paper.
6. Sketches. Store fronts. Pencil. 8½ x 11. By TMT. 1948.
7. Pattern. Easter basket. 8½ x 11.
Steps depicted in making Easter basket. With photo, 4 x 5¼, black and white, of finished basket. [Two other photos missing.]
8. Leaflet. Southwestern Sun Carnival Ass'n., El Paso, Texas.
Fine Art Exhibit. December 28 - January 2, 1950.
Lists Theron M. Trombo. 2 pictures at \$50. and \$15. respectively.

Biographical Note

Theron M. (Marcos) Trombeau (hereafter TMT), often identified as "Trombo," was born in 1911, a native of Kansas. His wife, Louise De Forest Trombeau (hereafter LT) was born in 1921, and was raised in Michigan.

TMT was largely a self-taught artist whose only semi-formal training came from correspondence courses he took in 1957 at Famous Artists Schools, Inc. located in Westport, Connecticut. LT never considered herself an artist, although she did some painting and assisted her husband with parts of the art instruction at the School he eventually established, as noted below.

The couple moved from Michigan to Las Cruces, New Mexico in 1942, where he took employment as a bookkeeper and pursued art only as a hobby. Ten years later he accepted a job (the nature of which is not known) in Alamogordo, and the couple bought a home in nearby High Rolls.

In 1954, his work as an artist attracted local notice, and he organized a class of four students to teach them art.

In 1955, TMT organized Sleepy Burro School of Art (hereafter SBSA), in High Rolls, New Mexico. TMT's wife LT ran his art supply store and framing department, and aided her husband in certain aspects of the teaching.

In 1958, he moved the school to La Luz, New Mexico, where he occupied a century-old adobe house.

More detailed statements of the background of the couple can be found in the autobiographical statements in Section I, Folder A. 1., infra.

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This Collection contains drawings, paintings and notes of TMT; curricula of SBSA; instructional materials; bulletins; news letters; and correspondence pertaining to the school activities. It also contains training exercises of TMT during his enrollment at Famous Artists School (Section II, infra), and critiques of his art work in response to the assignments given to him at that school.

TMT BOXES

- 45. Section I, Personal Material of TMT.
Section II, Sleepy Burro School of Art.
- 46. Section II, Sleepy Burro School of Art.
Section III, Techniques, Applications, Lecture Notes.
- 47. Section IV, The Ole Hee-Haw & Others.
Section V, Correspondence.
Section VI, Odds & Ends
- O.B.5 Section I.