Plastic Club

- Oldest art organization for women in the United States, founded in 1897
- Promoted women’s artwork, held exhibitions, offered art classes and hosted social events
- Also hosted current events classes and lectures led by women leaders, such as suffragists
- Let in men as of 1991, but continues its work, including offering a membership award for art college grads

Primary Sources

*The Plastic Club Records (1888-2007)*
Contains administrative records, membership lists, annual reports, calendars, exhibition catalogs, scrapbooks, photographs, member records, original artwork and catalogs from Philadelphia and New York galleries. The collection primarily documents club activities and contains little information on individual members.
Collection #3106

Plastic Club of Philadelphia
Five photoprints from 1934-1940. Portray members of the Plastic Club dressed for the annual Rabbit masquerade party. Includes a view of the club's courtyard and a view of Camac Street behind the club.
by Philadelphia Record
Call number: V7:3179

Annual Reports (1903-1904, 1906-1911, 1913-1914)
by Plastic Club of Philadelphia
Call number: Wm*.683

Catalogue of pictures by Elizabeth Wentworth's Roberts exhibited at Lindsay's Galleries March 4 to 18, 1901, March 9 to 23, 1903 : at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, April 3 to 29, 1905 and at The Plastic Club, March 31 to April 21, 1911.
Call number: Wn*.69, Vol. 4
Catalogue of exhibitions held…
Call number: Wn*.683

Various exhibition advertisements
HSP Digital Archives
http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Search/Index?search=plastic+club

Secondary Sources

God-gifted girls: women illustrators, gender, class and commerce in American visual culture, 1885-1925
This dissertation examines the careers and cultural significance of Philadelphia women illustrators between 1885--1925, including Bertha Corson Day, Elizabeth Shippen Green, Charlotte Harding, Violet Oakley, Jessie Willcox Smith, Alice Barber Stephens, and others. "God-gifted girls," a moniker coined by writer William Dean Howells, hints at their unusual status in the highly competitive and contested art world of that time.
by Patricia Smith Scanlan, published 2010
Call number: NC 960 .S33 2010 v.1-2