



ST. MARY'S  
UNIVERSITY

Digital Commons at St. Mary's University

---

Finding Aids

Special Collections

---

2018

# Hugo David Pohl Triptych

Hugo David Pohl

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.stmarytx.edu/findingaids>

---

## Recommended Citation

Pohl, Hugo David, "Hugo David Pohl Triptych" (2018). *Finding Aids*. 10.  
<https://commons.stmarytx.edu/findingaids/10>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections at Digital Commons at St. Mary's University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Finding Aids by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at St. Mary's University. For more information, please contact [jllloyd@stmarytx.edu](mailto:jllloyd@stmarytx.edu).

# Hugo David Pohl Triptych

Collection Number SC 31  
Blume Library Special Collections

StMU

Saint Mary's University of San Antonio  
One Camino Santa Maria  
San Antonio TX 78228-8530 USA  
Phone: 210-436-3011  
[www.stmarytx.edu](http://www.stmarytx.edu)

## Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Hugo David Pohl (1878-1960)  
**Donor:** Unknown; Donor number 1900.8  
**Extent:** Three oil on canvas paintings with a common wooden frame  
**Date:** 1934  
**Language:** English language inscription on central panel  
**Formats:** Oil on canvas paintings joined in a triptych  
**Alternative Forms:**  
**Restrictions:**

**Description:** The work consists of four elements. There are three paintings (oil on canvas) that are held in alignment by a wooden frame. The frame, made of milled wood painted gold, is the fourth element. On the reverse of each canvas is written its title, the artist's name and the year 1934. The left panel titled "Mockery," depicts a smirking demon with slaughtered human corpses in the background surrounded by arrows, swords and axes. The central panel titled "His Last Appeal," depicts the crucified Christ looking up to Heaven with the inscription "Father Forgive Them." The panel on the right entitled "Ignorance," depicts Mars collecting the severed heads of those fallen on a battlefield as the Grim Reaper points to those to be decapitated. The common frame holding the three paintings together appears to be original with the three paintings.

**Location:** Special Collections workroom

**Chain of Custody:** The chain of custody might be the following based on the recall of long-term employees. The triptych was transferred to Blume Library during the tenure of John Moder as president (1988-1999). The library staff put it in a storeroom on the first floor. Around 2016 the storeroom was emptied and the Pohl triptych was sent to Special Collections. When the University obtained the triptych and from whom is not known.

**Biographical Note:** Hugo David Pohl (1878-1960) is known for landscapes and historical paintings, murals and illustration. He was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1878. He studied art at the Detroit Museum of Art, New York City and in Paris at the Academy Julian. Pohl opened a studio in Chicago in 1908 and painted murals for the International Harvester Company that depicted harvests in various countries. In 1918, Pohl built a traveling studio in his car and toured the West buying a ranch in Colorado in 1919. His works during the 1920s were landscapes of California, Colorado and New Mexico and of American Indians in Arizona and New Mexico

which he painted using his mobile studio. He settled in San Antonio in 1924 establishing a studio in Brackenridge Park. He married Minette Teichmueller (1871-1970) a Texas native, and the couple settled in Berne. Pohl's subjects included the missions, scenes in Brackenridge Park and other historical landmarks. Between 1926 and 1927 he completed twenty-nine paintings of the Texas missions. In 1936 he painted a seven-panel series depicting the story of creation in *Genesis* entitled *The First Seven Days*. The series has hand-calligraphed wooden placards explaining each panel and is mounted in a wooden frame carved by Pohl. The figures in the series were in the classical style similar to those in the triptych at Saint Mary's. Pohl became president and director of the San Antonio Academy of Art. He died in San Antonio in 1960.

**Subject Headings:**

**“Mockery”**

The left panel titled “Mockery,” depicts a smirking demon looking in the direction of the central panel as if mocking the crucified Christ. In the background are slaughtered human corpses surrounded by arrows, swords and axes scattered on the ground.

**“His Last Appeal”**

The central panel titled “His Last Appeal,” depicts the crucified Christ looking up to Heaven as if in petition. There is the inscription “Father Forgive Them.”

**“Ignorance”**

The panel on the right entitled “Ignorance,” depicts a nude male wearing a crested helmet. In one hand he holds a short sword, and in the other severed heads hanging by their hair. The Grim Reaper points to those to be decapitated.

**Frame**

The common frame holding the three paintings together is made of carved wood painted with gold paint. It appears to be original with the three paintings.