



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the George Fedoroff Papers,
1939-1980, in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art
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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Arrangement.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Container Listing	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1939-1980.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, 1945-1979.....	5
Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1946-1973.....	7
Series 4: Professional Files, 1947-1976.....	8
Series 5: Printed Material, 1944-1977.....	9
Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-circa 1960.....	10

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	George Fedoroff papers
Identifier:	AAA.fedogeor
Date:	1939-1980
Extent:	2 Linear Feet
Creator:	Fedoroff, George
Language:	English
Summary:	The papers of craftsman and administrator George Fedoroff measure 2.0 linear feet and date from 1939-1980. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, writings and notes, professional files, printed materials, and photographs. Many of the documents concern Fedoroff's work with the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

George Fedoroff donated his papers to the Archives of American Art in 1980 and 1981.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with George Fedoroff conducted by Robert F. Brown, 1980 July 8-1981 January 21.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reels 3958-3959, 1813 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of material described in the container inventory does not reflect the order of the material on microfilm.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2019.

Preferred Citation

George Fedoroff papers, 1939-1980. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center.

Biographical / Historical

George Fedoroff (1907-2001) was a Russian-American craftsman and arts administrator who worked with the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs in Alaska.

Born to an upper-middle class family in Gatchina, Russia in 1907, George Fedoroff enjoyed a comfortable childhood. In 1917, he and his family fled Russia during the revolution through Siberia to China. He settled in Paris where he studied the decorative arts at L'Ecole des Arts Appliques a L'Industrie. He left for the United States in 1928 without the financial support of his wealthy relatives and worked as a stage designer for the University Players in Falmouth, Massachusetts.

After serving in the United States Army during World War II, Fedoroff became a naturalized citizen and worked for the Department of the Interior as an arts administrator for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He served in Sitka, Alaska and started an arts and crafts school at the Mt. Edgecumbe School. Additionally, he served on the Indian Arts and Crafts Board of Alaska. Later in life Fedoroff concentrated on his own craft and sculpted.

George Fedoroff married Margaret Beard with whom he had two children. He retired to the east coast where he died in 2001.

Scope and Contents

The papers of craftsman and administrator George Fedoroff measure 2.0 linear feet and date from 1939-1980. Found are biographical materials, correspondence, writings and notes, professional files, printed materials, and photographs. Many of the documents concern Fedoroff's work with the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Biographical materials include an autobiographical sketch detailing Fedoroff's childhood, escape from Russia during the revolution, and settlement in the United States. Correspondence is with family, friends, the United States government, institutions, museums, and galleries. Earlier correspondence concerns Fedoroff's work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the U.S. Department of the Interior while later correspondence details his own work as a craftsman and the exhibition and sale of his works. Writings are by Fedoroff and others including Katherine Kuh, Jean Chretien, and George Elliot. Professional files are scattered and include a list of courses, conference and meeting materials, and reports. Photographs are of Fedoroff, others, Alaska Native craftsmen, and of works of art.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 6 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1939-1980 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1945-1979 (Box 1; 0.8 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1946-1973 (Box 1; 6 folders)

- Series 4: Professional Files, 1947-1976 (Box 1-2; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1944-1977 (Box 2; 0.5 linear feet)
- Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-circa 1960 (0.2 linear feet; Box 2)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1939-1980

4 folders (Box 1)

Found is an autobiographical sketch in which Fedoroff details his childhood, escape during the Russian Revolution, arrival in Paris and the United States, and his career. A sketchbook depicts stage design ideas and dates from 1939. Also found are scattered personal business records and materials regarding Fedoroff's memberships.

Box 1, Folder 1	Autobiographical Sketch, 1980
Box 1, Folder 2	Membership Material, 1960s
Box 1, Folder 3	Personal Business Records, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 4	Sketchbook, Stage Design, 1939

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: Correspondence, 1945-1979

0.8 Linear Feet (Box 1)

George Fedoroff's correspondence contains letters from friend and family members. The bulk of the letters are professional in nature and concern Alaska Native craftsmen and artwork. Many letters are from the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs in the 1940s and early 1950s. Later correspondence concerns Fedoroff's own artwork and carvings.

Correspondents include Robert O. Bentley, the Henry Gallery, Katherine Kuh, Lee Nordness, Stuart Art Gallery, Patricia and George Strauss, William Tatsuda, United States Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, and Bretagne Windust. Letters from family members include a letter from Fedoroff's father and his wife and children.

Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1945
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1946
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, 1947
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence, 1948
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence, 1949
Box 1, Folder 10	Correspondence, 1950
Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence, 1951
Box 1, Folder 12	Correspondence, 1952
Box 1, Folder 13	Correspondence, 1953
Box 1, Folder 14	Correspondence, 1954
Box 1, Folder 15	Correspondence, 1955
Box 1, Folder 16	Correspondence, 1956
Box 1, Folder 17	Correspondence, 1957
Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence, 1958
Box 1, Folder 19	Correspondence, 1959
Box 1, Folder 20	Correspondence, 1960
Box 1, Folder 21	Correspondence, 1961
Box 1, Folder 22	Correspondence, 1962
Box 1, Folder 23	Correspondence, 1963
Box 1, Folder 24	Correspondence, 1964

Box 1, Folder 25	Correspondence, 1965
Box 1, Folder 26	Correspondence, 1966
Box 1, Folder 27	Correspondence, 1967
Box 1, Folder 28	Correspondence, 1968
Box 1, Folder 29	Correspondence, 1969
Box 1, Folder 30	Correspondence, 1970
Box 1, Folder 31	Correspondence, 1971
Box 1, Folder 32	Correspondence, 1972
Box 1, Folder 33	Correspondence, 1973
Box 1, Folder 34	Correspondence, 1974
Box 1, Folder 35	Correspondence, 1975
Box 1, Folder 36	Correspondence, 1976
Box 1, Folder 37	Correspondence, 1977
Box 1, Folder 38	Correspondence, 1978
Box 1, Folder 39	Correspondence, 1979
Box 1, Folder 40	Correspondence, circa 1945-circa 1979

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1946-1973

6 folders (Box 1)

Scattered writings are by Fedoroff and others including Jean Chretien, George Elliot, and Katherine Kuh. A piece by Fedoroff entitled "Arts and Crafts as a Profession" is a defense of the Mt. Edgumbe School in Edgumbe, Alaska for the support of Alaska Native craftsmen.

Box 1, Folder 41	"Arts and Crafts as a Profession," by George Fedoroff, 1947
Box 1, Folder 42	Lists, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 43	Notes and Empty Envelopes, circa 1960s-circa 1970s
Box 1, Folder 44	"Preservation of Indian Art in Southeastern Alaska," by Katherine Kuh, 1946
Box 1, Folder 45	Address, by Jean Chretien to the Conference on the Fine Arts of the Arctic, 1973 May 18
Box 1, Folder 46	Forward, Eskimo Masterworks Exhibition Catalog, by George Elliot, circa 1960

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 4: Professional Files, 1947-1976

0.1 Linear Feet (Box 1-2)

This series contains meeting minutes, conference materials, proposals, and drafts of reports from various organizations and programs with which George Fedoroff worked. A teaching file contains course lists for the Mt. Edgcumbe School's arts and crafts classes.

Box 1, Folder 47	Teaching File, 1947
Box 1, Folder 48	Conference Materials, 1973
Box 2, Folder 1	Meetings, Minutes, 1976
Box 2, Folder 2-5	Proposals, 1970-1973
Box 2, Folder 6-8	Report, 1949-circa 1970s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 5: Printed Material, 1944-1977

0.5 Linear Feet (Box 2)

The bulk of printed materials concern art, crafts, and Alaska and include brochures, clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, newsletters, and circulars. Found are copies of *Smoke Signals*, the circular published by the United States Department of the Interior, Indian Arts and Crafts Board.

Box 2, Folder 9-10	on Alaska, 1955-1961
Box 2, Folder 11	on Art, 1970a
Box 2, Folder 12	Brochures, 1960s
Box 2, Folder 13-14	Clippings, 1940s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 15-18	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, 1940s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 19	Newsletters and Bulletins, 1949-1977
Box 2, Folder 20	Press Releases, 1960-1973
Box 2, Folder 21	Smoke Signals Circular, 1954-1966
Box 2, Folder 22	on Wood Preservation, 1944

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 6: Photographs, circa 1940-circa 1960

0.2 Linear Feet (Box 2)

Fedoroff's personal photographs include portraits, snapshots of Fedoroff with others including Senator Ted Stevens, his workshop, and his homes. Also found are photographs of Alaska Native craftsmen at work carving totems and other pieces at the Mt. Edgecumbe School, Edgecumbe, Alaska; Sitka, Alaska, and Mekoryuk Village, on Nunivak Island, Alaska.

Box 2, Folder 23	George Fedoroff Personal Photographs, 1940s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 24	Alaska Native Artists and Craftsmen, 1940s-1950s
Box 2, Folder 25-29	Works of Art, 1940s-1960s
Box 2, Folder 30	Slides, circa 1960s

[Return to Table of Contents](#)