



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Hans Burkhardt Christmas
cards to Fannie and Alan Leslie

Archives of American Art
750 9th Street, NW
Victor Building, Suite 2200
Washington, D.C. 20001
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Hans Burkhardt Christmas cards to Fannie and Alan Leslie
Date:	1977-1992
Identifier:	AAA.leslalan
Creator:	Leslie, Alan
Extent:	16 Items
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated 2001 by Alan and Fannie Leslie.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center. Contact Reference Services for more information.

Biographical / Historical

Painter, printmaker. Artist Hans Burkhardt (1904-1994) was a painter, and printmaker. Artist Hans Burkhardt (1904-1994) was born in Basel, Switzerland, and moved in 1924 to New York to join his father who had established himself there as cabinetmaker/foreman at Schmieg & Co. Burkhardt worked there from 1925 for about ten years, moving to Los Angeles in 1937 where he found work as a furniture finisher. While in New York Burkhardt studied painting on the side with Arshile Gorky, with whom he collaborated on two compositions, *The Circus* (1936) and *Abstraction* (1936-37). When Gorky suffered financial difficulties, Burkhardt brought food to the studio and provided support by purchasing about thirty paintings. He also met Willem de Kooning at Gorky's studio. In Los Angeles, where he remained until his death, Burkhardt met artists such as Lorser Feitelson, Man Ray, Eugene Berman, and Knud Merrild, whose abstractions reinforced Burkhardt's natural tendency in that direction. He has been described as the West Coast's first true abstract expressionist, but over the years figurative elements--notably nudes--played an important part in his numerous pastels and prints. Burkhardt worked as a prop painter at MGM and taught at UCLA, Chouinard Art Institute, and later at California State University (formerly College), Northridge. Upon his death, a large gift of paintings was made to the CSUN art gallery. In 1947 he met Thordis Haaversen Westhassel (1913-1993) whom he married in 1955. They lived together in the house and studio he built off Laurel Canyon Blvd. in the Hollywood Hills. Among his artist neighbors was Ed Kienholz. Alan and Fannie Leslie collected his work as well as that of Stanton Macdonald-Wright, both of whom were personal friends.

Scope and Contents

Sixteen original linoleum print (signed, dated and numbered) Christmas cards from Hans Burkhardt to Fannie and Alan Leslie spanning the years 1977-1992. Some cards have personal greetings to the Leslies from Thordis and Hans Burkhardt.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Names:

Burkhardt, Hans Gustav, 1904-1994
Leslie, Fannie