



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Costantino Nivola  
papers, circa 1938-2003, bulk 1950-1980

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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
Names and Subjects .....	3
Container Listing .....	4
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1938-1988.....	4
Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1938-circa 1988.....	5
Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-circa 1988.....	6
Series 4: Professional Activities, 1953-circa 1985.....	7
Series 5: Project Files, 1956-1982.....	8
Series 6: Printed Material, 1953-1978.....	10
Series 7: Photographs, circa 1950-circa 1980.....	11
Series 8: Unprocessed Born Digital Recordings, 1964-2009.....	13

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Costantino Nivola papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.nivocost
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1938-2009 (bulk 1950-1980)
<b>Extent:</b>	2.1 Linear feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Nivola, Costantino, 1911-1988
<b>Language:</b>	Multiple languages  The collection is in English and Italian.
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of sculptor and design teacher Costantino Nivola measure 2.1 linear feet and date from circa 1938 to 2009, bulk 1950 to 1980. The papers document Nivola's career in Italy and New York through biographical material, correspondence, writings, professional activities, project files, printed material, photographs, and audiovisual recordings.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The Costantino Nivola papers were donated to the Archives of American Art in 1979 and 1980 by Costantino Nivola and in 2012 by Claire and Pietro Nivola, Nivola's children.

### Related Materials

Reproductions of a portion of the collection are available at Costantino Nivola Museum, Sardinia, Italy.

### Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reels 4282-4283 at 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 arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

### Processing Information

The collection received a preliminary level of arrangement after donation and was partially microfilmed on reels 4282-4283. The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Rihoko Ueno in 2020.

## Preferred Citation

Costantino Nivola papers, circa 1938-2009. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

Researchers interested in accessing born-digital records or audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact Reference Services for more information.

## Conditions Governing Use

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## Biographical / Historical

Costantino Nivola (1911-1988) was a sculptor and design teacher mostly based in East Hampton, New York, and Sardinia, Italy. Nivola was born in Sardinia and trained at Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche (ISIA) in Monza, Italy. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1939, and was employed as an art director, editor of architecture and design publications, and design instructor at the college level. He taught design at Columbia University, Harvard University, University of California, Berkeley, and elsewhere.

Nivola developed a sandcasting technique which he used extensively for producing sculptural murals in concrete. His commissions include murals, fountains, sculpture, and monuments for public buildings and corporate headquarters.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of sculptor and design teacher Costantino Nivola measure 2.1 linear feet and date from circa 1938 to 2009, bulk 1950 to 1980. The papers document Nivola's career in Italy and New York through biographical material, correspondence, writings, professional activities, project files, printed material, photographs, and audiovisual recordings.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 8 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1938-1988 (3 folders; Box 1)
- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1938-circa 1988 (0.3 linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-circa 1988 (5 folders; Box 1)

- Series 4: Professional Activities, 1953-circa 1985 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 5: Project Files, 1956-1982 (0.6 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 6: Printed Material, 1953-1978 (0.2 linear feet; Box 2, OV 3)
- Series 7: Photographs, circa 1950-circa 1980 (0.3 linear feet; Box 2, OV 3)
- Series 8: Unprocessed Born Digital Recordings, 1964-2009 (0.3 linear feet; Box 2)

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Art, Municipal  
Sand casting

Types of Materials:

Drawings  
Interviews  
Sound recordings  
Video recordings

Occupations:

Educators -- New York (State)  
Sculptors -- Italy  
Sculptors -- New York (State) -- East Hampton

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, 1938-1988

#### *3 Folders (Box 1)*

This series includes biographical summaries and resumes; photocopies of identification documents such as passports, travel certificates, and naturalization papers; and drawings by Nivola in pen and marker.

Box 1, Folder 1            Biographical Summaries and Resumes, circa 1956-circa 1980

Box 1, Folder 2            Drawings in Pen and Marker, circa 1940-circa 1988

Box 1, Folder 3            Identification Documents (Photocopies), 1938-1988

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1938-circa 1988

### *0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)*

Correspondence is with galleries, museums, universities, foundries, colleagues, and friends, and concerns exhibitions, sales, awards, teaching, speaking engagements, and Nivola's professional activities. There is also one folder of correspondence with Antonello Satta, a close friend of Nivola.

Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence (Undated), circa 1938-circa 1988
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1938-1959
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1960-1964
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence, 1965-1966
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence, 1967-1969
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence, 1970-1972
Box 1, Folder 10	Correspondence, 1973-1974
Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence, 1975-1977
Box 1, Folder 12	Correspondence, 1978-1979
Box 1, Folder 13	Correspondence, 1981-1986
Box 1, Folder 14	Correspondence with Foundries, 1963-1976
Box 1, Folder 15	Correspondence with Museums and Universities, 1954-1972
Box 1, Folder 16	Correspondence with Museums and Universities, 1973-1978
Box 1, Folder 17	Satta, Antonello, 1960s-1980s

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-circa 1988

### *5 Folders (Box 1)*

Writings include Nivola's manuscripts about his own life and work, and about other artists. Also included are manuscripts about Nivola by others.

Box 1, Folder 18	Writings by Costantino Nivola About His Own Work, circa 1940-circa 1988
Box 1, Folder 19	Writings by Costantino Nivola About His Own Work, circa 1940-circa 1988
Box 1, Folder 20	Writings by Costantino Nivola About Other Artists and Subjects, circa 1977-circa 1983
Box 1, Folder 21	Writings by Others About Nivola, circa 1960-circa 1988
Box 1, Folder 22	Writings by Others About Other Subjects, circa 1960-circa 1988

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*



## Series 4: Professional Activities, 1953-circa 1985

### *0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)*

This series includes documentation of Nivola's teaching career in the form of course outlines and descriptions, texts of talks given by Nivola at a symposium, and student essays. There are also art sales records, assorted financial records, and loan and shipping records relating mainly to exhibitions. Also included are files related to a Vietnam Memorial design competition for which Nivola was a juror.

Box 1, Folder 23	Art Sales and Other Financial Records, circa 1970-circa 1985
Box 1, Folder 24	Loan Agreements and Shipping Records, 1958-1964
Box 1, Folder 25	Royal Academy of Art, Holland, 1980-1982
Box 1, Folder 26	Teaching File - Appointment, Contract, Course Catalog, Newsletter, 1953-1970
Box 1, Folder 27	Teaching File - Course Outlines and Descriptions, circa 1969-circa 1979
Box 1, Folder 28	Teaching File - Student Essays and Project Proposals, circa 1956-circa 1970
Box 1, Folder 29	Typescripts of Symposium Talks, circa 1977
Box 1, Folder 30-32	Vietnam Veterans Memorial Design Competition Jury, 1980-1981
Box 1, Folder 33	Yale University, Ezra Stiles College, circa 1984-circa 1985

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 5: Project Files, 1956-1982

### *0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)*

Project files document commissions across the United States, although the commissions are primarily in New York City, and abroad. Noteworthy projects include the archaeological salvage of the Abu Simbel Temple, Egypt; Family and Criminal Courthouse, Bronx, N.Y.; Morse and Stiles College, Yale University; Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, Division of Employment Security Building, Boston, Mass.; and a number of public schools. Folders contain contracts, proposals, drawings, invoices and receipts, and correspondence, mainly with architects Marcel Breuer, Eero Saarinen, and Minoru Yamasaki, among others.

Box 1, Folder 34	Boston, Massachusetts - Provident Institution for Savings, 1972-1973
Box 1, Folder 35	Boston, Massachusetts - Various Projects, 1960s-1980s
Box 1, Folder 36	Bronx, New York - Family and Criminal Courthouse, 1971-1977
Box 1, Folder 37	Bronx, New York - Intermediate School, 1970-1972
Box 1, Folder 38	Chicago, Illinois - Metropolitan Fair and Exposition Co., 1959
Box 1, Folder 39-41	Egypt - Abu Simbel Temple Salvage, 1963-1964
Box 1, Folder 42	Fairfax, Virginia - Mobil Fairfax Building Sculptures, 1981-1982
Box 1, Folder 43	Hartford, Connecticut - Mutual Insurance Co. Sculptured Wall, 1957
Box 1, Folder 44	Janesville, Wisconsin - Janesville Gazette Relief Mural, 1967
Box 1, Folder 45	New Haven, Connecticut - Samuel Morse and Ezra Stiles Dormitories, Yale University, 1959-1962
Box 1, Folder 46	New York - Children's Psychiatric Hospital, Bronx State Hospital, 1968
Box 1, Folder 47	New York - P.S.1, P.S.345, J.H.S.320, Brooklyn, circa 1965-1968
Box 1, Folder 48	New York - South Richmond High School, Staten Island, 1970-1971
Box 1, Folder 49	New York - West Side High School, Manhattan, 1965-1966
Box 1, Folder 50	Puerto Rico - El Monte Recreation Area, 1967
Box 2, Folder 1	Queens, New York - Beach Channel High School, 1973-1977
Box 2, Folder 2	Sardinia, Italy - Poet's Plaza, Sassari Monument, 1960-1968

Box 2, Folder 3	Unknown Location - Christian Theology Seminary, circa 1966
Box 2, Folder 4	Various Projects with Edward Larrabee Barnes, 1966-1967
Box 2, Folder 5	Washington, D.C. - Capitol Park and Federal Office Buildings, 1964-1965
Box 2, Folder 6	Miscellaneous and Unidentified Projects, 1956-1979

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 6: Printed Material, 1953-1978

### *0.2 Linear feet (Box 2, OV 3)*

Printed matter includes press releases, exhibition catalogs, invitations, announcements, dedication programs, news clippings, and magazine articles about or illustrated by Nivola.

Box 2, Folder 7	Exhibition Catalogs, Announcements and Invitations, Dedication Programs, 1955-1965
Box 2, Folder 8	Exhibition Catalogs, Announcements and Invitations, 1966-1977
Box 2, Folder 9	Magazine Articles Illustrated by Nivola, Miscellaneous Items, circa 1953-circa 1966
Box 2, Folder 10	News Clippings and Magazine Articles About Nivola (Undated), circa 1955-circa 1978
Box 2, Folder 11	News Clippings and Magazine Articles About Nivola, 1955-1978 Oversized item housed in OV 3, Folder 1.
Oversize 3, Folder 1	News Clippings and Magazine Articles About Nivola, 1956-1976
Box 2, Folder 12	News Clippings and Magazine Articles About Nivola in Italian, 1957-1976 Oversized clipping housed in OV 3, Folder 2.
Oversize 3, Folder 2	News Clippings and Magazine Articles About Nivola in Italian, 1963
Box 2, Folder 13	Press Releases, 1955-1967

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 7: Photographs, circa 1950-circa 1980

### 0.3 Linear feet (Box 2, OV 3)

Photographs are of Nivola and include views of him at work and demonstrating his sandcasting technique. The majority of photographs document commissions such as Olivetti Showroom, New York, N.Y.; McCormick Place Exposition Hall, Chicago, Ill.; and Sassi Monument, Poet's Plaza, Sardinia, Italy. Other photographs document small scale works and a 1958 solo exhibition held in Sardinia, Italy.

Box 2, Folder 14	Nivola Receiving Municipal Art Society Award, 1962
Box 2, Folder 15	Nivola at Work, Demonstrating Techniques, circa 1950-circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 16	Bridgeport, Connecticut - Post Publishing Co. Murals, circa 1966
Box 2, Folder 17	Cambridge, Massachusetts - Mural for Harvard Law School, 1958
Box 2, Folder 18	Cambridge, Massachusetts - Quincy House, Harvard University, 1959
Box 2, Folder 19	Chicago, Illinois - McCormick Place Exposition Hall, 1960
Box 2, Folder 20	Falls Church, Virginia - Memorial to the Four Chaplains, 1955
Box 2, Folder 21	Hartford, Connecticut - Mutual Insurance Co. Facade, 1957
Box 2, Folder 22	Janesville, Wisconsin - Relief Mural for Janesville Gazette, 1970
Box 2, Folder 23	Kansas City, Missouri - Federal Office Building Mural, circa 1960-circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 24	New Haven, Connecticut - Morse and Ezra Stiles Dormitories, Yale University, 1962
Box 2, Folder 25	New York City - Mural for Apartment House (1025 Fifth Avenue?), 1955
Box 2, Folder 26	New York City - Olivetti Showroom, 1953 Oversized material housed in OV 3, Folder 3.
Oversize 3, Folder 3	New York City - Olivetti Showroom, 1953
Box 2, Folder 27	New York City - P. S. 48, circa 1965-circa 1968
Box 2, Folder 28	New York City - Stephen Wise Recreation Area, 1967 Oversized material housed in OV 3, Folder 4.
Oversize 3, Folder 4	New York City - Stephen Wise Recreation Area, 1967

Box 2, Folder 29	Queens, New York - Beach Channel High School, 1977
Box 2, Folder 30	San Francisco, California - Town Hall Plaza Competition Study, circa 1960-circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 31	Sardinia, Italy - Poet's Plaza, Sassari Monument, 1967
Box 2, Folder 32	St. Louis, Missouri - Mural for Hospital, 1960
Box 2, Folder 33	White Plains, New York - White Plains Plaza Fountain, circa 1965-circa 1980
Box 2, Folder 34	Projects for Schools and Miscellaneous, circa 1960-circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 35	Exhibition in Sardinia, Italy, 1958
Box 2, Folder 36	Miscellaneous Terra Cotta Sculptures, circa 1962-circa 1978
Box 2, Folder 37	Unidentified Artwork, circa 1950-circa 1975 Oversized items housed in OV 3, Folder 5.
Oversize 3, Folder 5	Unidentified Artwork, circa 1950-circa 1960

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 8: Unprocessed Born Digital Recordings, 1964-2009

### *0.3 Linear feet (Box 2)*

Sound and video recordings are of Egypt when Nivola was the adviser for the Abu Simbel Temple salvage project and of his Long Island house and garden; interviews and television programs with Nivola conducted by Elaine Benson and Fred Licht; panel discussions of artists, including Ruth Nivola, talking about the New York School art movement mediated by Thomas Herskovic; a recording of an exhibition featuring artwork by Ruth Nivola, Nivola's wife; and event recordings including a recording of the June 1995 inauguration of the Museo Novola in Orani, Sardinia.

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*