



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

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

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Costantino Nivola papers
Date:	circa 1938-2009 (bulk 1950-1980)
Identifier:	AAA.nivocost
Creator:	Nivola, Costantino, 1911-1988
Extent:	2.1 Linear feet 12.18 Gigabytes
Language:	The collection is in English and Italian.
Summary:	The papers of sculptor and design teacher Costantino Nivola measure 2.1 linear feet and 12.18 GB 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 audio-visual recordings in digital format.

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. Born-digital materials were processed by Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner in 2020 with funding provided by Smithsonian Collection Care and Preservation Fund.

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.

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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.

Scope and Contents

The papers of sculptor and design teacher Costantino Nivola measure 2.1 linear feet and 12.18 GB 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 audio-visual recordings in digital format.

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, 0.912 GB; ER01)
- 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: Digital Recordings, 1950s-2009 (11.27 GB; ER02-ER14)

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

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1938-1988

3 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: 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

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Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1938-circa 1988

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: 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

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Series 3: Writings, circa 1940-circa 1988

5 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: 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

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Series 4: Professional Activities, 1953-circa 1985

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: 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

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Series 5: Project Files, 1956-2014

0.6 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

0.912 Gigabytes (ER01)

Scope and Contents: 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
Folder ER01	Egypt, Film Footage (1964), Digital Video Recordings, 2014 0.912 Gigabytes (Four computer files)
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

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Series 6: Printed Material, 1953-1978

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2, OV 3)

Scope and Contents: 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 Notes: 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 Notes: 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

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Series 7: Photographs, circa 1950-circa 1980

0.3 Linear feet (Box 2, OV 3)

Scope and Contents: 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 Notes: 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 Notes: 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 Notes: Oversized items housed in OV 3, Folder 5.
Oversize 3, Folder 5	Unidentified Artwork, circa 1950-circa 1960

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Series 8: Digital Audio-Visual Recordings, 1964-2014

11.27 Gigabytes (ER02-ER14)

Scope and Contents: Video recordings consist of documentaries, a TV program, films relating to gallery exhibitions, and travels and family. Audio recordings include interviews, conversations, and events.

Folder ER02	Long Island House and Garden, Film Footage (circa 1950), Digital Video Recordings, 2014 0.557 Gigabytes (Three computer files)
Folder ER03	Sardinia, Film Footage (circa 1952), Digital Video Recording, 2014 1.03 Gigabytes (One computer file)
Folder ER04	Constantino Nivola in Springs (1960s-1970s), Film by Micaela Martegani, Digital Video Recording, 2014 1.47 Gigabytes (One computer file) Notes: Film presented in conjunction with exhibition at Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, NY (2003 August 10-October 12).
Folder ER05	Unidentified Reel to Reel Audio Recordings (1960s-1970s), Digital Audio Recordings, 2014 1.13 Gigabytes (Four computer files)
Folder ER06	Visti da fuori, RAI TV Sardinia (1970s), Digital Video Recording, 2014 1.05 Gigabytes (One computer file)
Folder ER07	Constantino Nivola, Ruth Nivola, Ethel Stein and Richard Stein at the Springs (1974 July 5), Digital Audio Recording, 2014 0.509 Gigabytes (Two computer files)
Folder ER08	Constantino Nivola Interview, Studio in East Hampton, NY (1976 July 13), Digital Audio Recording, 2014 0.345 Gigabytes (One computer file)
Folder ER09	Publication of Un piazza per un poeta, Book by Salvatore Naitza (1987), Digital Audio Recording, 2014 0.21 Gigabytes (Two computer files)
Folder ER10	An Afternoon with New York School of Artists (1992 November 8), Digital Video Recording, 2014 0.999 Gigabytes (One computer file) Notes: Panel discussion including Ruth Nivola.
Folder ER11	Artists of the 9th St Show Reminisce: American Abstract Expressionism, Film by Thomas Herskovic (1992), Digital Video Recording, 2014 0.769 Gigabytes (One computer file)
Folder ER12	Artist of the 9th St Show: Nivola, Film by Thomas Herskovic (1993), Digital Video Recording, 2014

0.604 Gigabytes (One computer file)

Notes: Includes interview of Fred Licht, curator of the Peggy Guggenheim Museum of Art, Venice, Italy.

Folder ER13

Inauguration of Museo Nivola, Orani, Italy (1995), Digital Audio Recordings, 2014
1.79 Gigabytes (Four computer files)

Folder ER14

Crossing the Threshold, Steinbaum-Krauss Gallery Exhibit (1997 December 6-1998 January 3), Digital Video Recording, 2014
0.797 Gigabytes (One computer file)

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