



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the James Milford Zornes Papers, 1929-1954, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

The digitization of this collection received Federal support from the
Smithsonian Collections Information System (CIS) IRM Pool Fund

2025/01/09

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	James Milford Zornes papers
Date:	1929-1954
Identifier:	AAA.zornjame
Creator:	Zornes, James Milford, 1908-2008
Extent:	2 Microfilm reels
Language:	English .
Summary:	The papers of educator and watercolorist James Milford Zornes date from 1929 to 1954. Focusing on Zornes's career as a painter and an educator at Pomona College, and his participation with the Treasury Department Public Works of Art Project, the papers contain two mixed-media scrapbooks, printed material, correspondence, and scattered biographical material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The papers were lent for microfilming in 1965 by James Milford Zornes and returned after filming.

Location of Originals

Originals returned to James Milford Zornes after microfilming.

Available Formats

The collection has been microfilmed on reels LA09 and LA10. The microfilm has been digitized and is available on the Archives of American Art website.

Processing Information

The collection was microfilmed on Reels LA09 and LA10 and was returned to James Milford Zornes after filming. The microfilm was described in a finding aid by Jayna Josefson in 2025 and the microfilm was digitized in 2024 with funding provided by the Smithsonian Collections Information System (CIS) IRM Pool Fund.

Preferred Citation

James Milford Zornes papers, 1929-1954. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

The Archives of American art does not own the original papers. Use is limited to the microfilm copy.

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Biographical / Historical

James Milford Zornes (1908-2008) was an educator, painter, and watercolorist in California. Known as Milford Zornes, he was born in Oklahoma and moved to California as a teenager. He studied at the Otis Art Institute and Pomona College, and took classes with Millard Sheets at Scripps College. Zornes was active in the California Water Color Society.

Scope and Contents

The papers of educator and watercolorist James Milford Zornes date from 1929 to 1954. Focusing on Zornes's career as a painter and an educator at Pomona College, and his participation with the Treasury Department Public Works of Art Project, the papers contain two mixed-media scrapbooks, printed material, correspondence, and scattered biographical material.

Arrangement

Due to the pre-existing microfilm arrangement, the collection is arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Scrapbooks

Names:

Treasury Relief Art Project

Occupations:

Educators -- California

Painters -- California

Watercolorists -- California

Container Listing

Series 1: James Milford Zornes Papers, 1929-1954

Scope and Contents: Two mixed-media scrapbooks contain biographical materials, correspondence, clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, and scattered photographs of Zornes and works of art. The scrapbooks focus on Zornes's career as a painter and the exhibition of his paintings throughout California and the United States including the California Water Color Society, Denver Art Museum, Pomona College, Seattle Art Museum, and others.

Additional material concerns Zornes's work with various Depression-era art projects, including the Treasury Department Public Works of Art Project and murals at the Claremont, California post office. Found is correspondence regarding the purchase of Zornes's watercolors for the PWAP, purchase orders, and printed material. Also found is a photo of the post office mural, and rules for executing the murals distributed to artists.

Reel LA09.zornes,
Frame 844-849

[General Material on Zornes, 1930s](#)

Reel LA09.zornes,
Frame 850-956

[Treasury Department Public Works of Art Project, 1936-1939](#)

Reel LA09.zornes,
Frame 957-988

[Post Office Mural, Claremont, California, 1930s](#)

Reel LA09.zornes,
Frame 989-1114

[Scrapbook 1, 1929-1952](#)

Reel LA10.zornes,
Frame 1-98

[Scrapbook 2, 1929-1952](#)

Reel LA10.zornes,
Frame 120-181

[Scrapbook 2, 1929-1952](#)

Reel LA10.zornes,
Frame 99-119

[Printed Material, 1930-1952](#)

Reel LA10.zornes,
Frame 182-214

[Printed Material, 1930-1952](#)

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