



# Smithsonian

*National Air and Space Museum*

## Nose Art Photography Collection [Serotkin]

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2020

National Air and Space Museum Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Air and Space Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Nose Art Photography Collection [Serotkin]
<b>Date:</b>	1942-1945
<b>Identifier:</b>	NASM.2000.0046
<b>Creator:</b>	Serotkin, Robert, 1911-1986
<b>Extent:</b>	0.05 Cubic feet (1 folder; 32 photographs)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	This collection consists of 32 black and white photographs relating to artist and photographer Robert Isadore Serotkin (1911-1986) and includes examples of the aircraft nose art which he painted while serving with the US Army Air Forces during World War II.
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Image(s): SI-2000-4753: SSgt Robert Serotkin painting nose art on Boeing F-13A "Margie's Mad Greek III," 1945.</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Rita Serotkin, gift, 2000, NASM.2000.0046

### Processing Information

Described by Patti Williams, 2000; arranged, revised and encoded by Melissa A. N. Keiser, 2022.

### Preferred Citation

Nose Art Photography Collection [Serotkin], Acc. NASM.2000.0046, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

No restrictions on access

### Conditions Governing Use

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## Biographical / Historical

Robert Isadore Serotkin was born May 23, 1911, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He attended the Pennsylvania School of Industrial Art in Philadelphia from 1937-1938, and by 1941 was self-employed as a commercial photographer. Serotkin entered service with the US Army on February 12, 1942, and after basic training in Biloxi, Mississippi, was sent to the Army Air Forces (AAF) Technical School at Lowry Field,

Colorado, from July-September 1942 for training as an aerial photographer. At the conclusion of his training, Serotkin was promoted to Staff Sergeant and assigned to the newly-redesignated 1st Photographic Mapping Squadron. Aerial mapping duties took Serotkin to posts in Africa at Accra (British Gold Coast), Morocco, and Egypt before being sent back to the United States for additional training in Boeing F-13A aircraft (the reconnaissance version of the B-29 Superfortress) at Smoky Hill Army Air Field in Salinas, Kansas. In September 1945, the squadron, now redesignated as 1st Photo Reconnaissance Squadron (Very Heavy), was posted to Okinawa. Throughout his military career, Serotkin put his skills as a commercial artist to good use by painting nose art (aircraft personal art) on various aircraft when the weather was too bad to fly mapping missions. Serotkin was discharged from the USAAF on January 20, 1946; he died in Boca Raton, Florida, on December 26, 1986.

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## Scope and Contents

This collection consists of 32 black and white photographs relating to Robert Serotkin and examples of the aircraft nose art which he painted during World War II. Seven images were copied by the museum from original negatives loaned by the Serotkin family; the remaining 25 images are original print photographs. The collection includes informal portrait photographs of Serotkin including one with his wife, Rose Shirley (Hymowitz) Serotkin; snapshots of Serotkin and fellow servicemen; and detail views of aircraft nose art. Aircraft pictured include the Boeing B-29 Superfortresses "Lady in Waiting" (s/n 44-84068), "R. S. M. Dragon" (s/n 44-83966), and "Slave Girl" (s/n 44-27307); Boeing F-9 "Margie's Mad Greek II" (s/n 42-30253) and Boeing F-9B Flying Fortress "Golden Hind" (s/n 42-6187); Boeing F-13A (R-13A, RB-29A) reconnaissance aircraft "Margie's Mad Greek III" (s/n 44-61843) and "Over Exposed" (s/n 44-61813); Consolidated B-24 Liberators "Lucky Strike" (believed to be s/n 44-41976), "Luvablass", and "Over Loaded"; and Douglas C-47 Skytrain "Cheri." Also included are three views of the wreck of the Martin (Glenn L.) PBM-5 Mariner "Cloud Hopper" on a beach in Okinawa in late 1945.

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## Arrangement

The photographs are grouped by subject.

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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:

- Aeronautics
- Aeronautics, Military
- Airplanes, Military -- Decoration
- Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress Family
- Boeing B-29 Superfortress
- Consolidated B-24 Liberator Family
- Martin (Glenn L.) PBM Mariner Family
- World War, 1939-1945

### Types of Materials:

- Photographs

### Names:

- Serotkin, Robert, 1911-1986

United States. Army Air Forces. 1st Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron

Occupations:

Commercial artists -- United States

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## Container Listing

Serotkin Portrait Photographs

Serotkin Drawings

Boeing F-9B Flying Fortress "Golden Hind" (s/n 42-6187)

Boeing F-9 "Margie's Mad Greek II" (s/n 42-30253)

Boeing F-13A "Margie's Mad Greek III" (s/n 44-61843)

Boeing B-29 Superfortress and Boeing F-13A (R-13A, RB-29A)

Consolidated B-24 Liberator, Douglas C-47 Skytrain

Okinawa, Miscellaneous