



Smithsonian

Institution Archives

Records, 1930-1969

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Historical Note.....	1
Descriptive Entry.....	1
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3
Series 1: ADMINISTRATIVE FILES, 1934-1936, 1942, 1946-1967.....	3
Series 2: SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS, 1930-1969.....	5

Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Records
Date:	1930-1969
Identifier:	Record Unit 280
Creator::	Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration. Department of Exhibitions
Extent:	18 cu. ft. (18 record storage boxes)
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 280, Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration. Department of Exhibitions, Records

Historical Note

The Department of Exhibitions was first organized as the Exhibits Section in 1946. Prior to 1946, persons in charge of exhibitions were Assistants to the Curator of the Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration. Alliene E. Dodge, D. Graeme Keith, James I. Rambo, Everett P. Lesley, Jr., and William R. Osmun were Assistants, Exhibits Section, during the period from 1946 to 1953. The Assistants were under the supervision of the Curator, and later, under the Director.

In 1953 the Exhibits Section was redesignated the Department of Exhibitions, and the title of Assistants was changed to Keepers. Lesley, Osmun, and Christian Rohlfing held the title of Keepers during the period from 1953 to 1958. The title of Keeper, Department of Exhibitions was changed to Curator, Department of Exhibitions in 1958. Rohlfing held the title of Curator, and Edward L. Kallop, who became Associate Keeper in 1957, became Associate Curator. When Rohlfing became Acting Administrator of the Museum in 1963, the position of Curator remained vacant. The Department was discontinued as an administrative unit when the Cooper Union Museum transferred to the Smithsonian Institution in 1968.

The Department of Exhibitions was responsible for the design, preparation, installation, maintenance, and dismantling of "special" or theme exhibitions of museum and non-museum collections for the general public, including exhibitions for other branches of the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Sciences and Arts.

Descriptive Entry

These records document, for the most part, the Department under the administration of Calvin S. Hathaway, Curator, 1946-1951, and Director, 1951-1963. Included is correspondence of Hathaway with members of the exhibition staff and with collectors and institutions concerning the exhibits in the museum; exhibit files,

arranged alphabetically by exhibition titles and including photographs, pamphlets, floor plans, drawings, publicity materials, specimen lists and descriptions, and correspondence; and annual reports.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Art museums
- Decorative arts

Types of Materials:

- Black-and-white photographs
- Floor plans
- Illustrations
- Manuscripts

Names:

- Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration
- Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art
- Cooper-Hewitt Museum. Department of Exhibitions
- Dodge, Alleine E.
- Hathaway, Calvin S.
- Kallop, Edward L.
- Keith, D. Graeme (David Graeme), 1934-
- Lesley, Everett P., Jr.
- Osmun, William R.
- Rambo, James I.
- Rohlfing, H. Christian

Container Listing

Series 1: ADMINISTRATIVE FILES, 1934-1936, 1942, 1946-1967

Box 1

Box 1 of 18	Folders 1-2 American Institute of Interior Designers, 1967. Concerning exhibition shown at benefit ball given for Museum.
Box 1 of 18	Folders 3-16 Annual reports, 1950-1951 to 1962-1963, 1964-1965
Box 1 of 18	Folder 17 Announcements
Box 1 of 18	Folder 18 Antiques magazine booth, 1964. Concerning items loaned to booth at Winter Antiques Show.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 19 Appeal, 1962. Requests for contributions to Museum sent from Exhibitions.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 20 Art Journal article, 1963-1964. Concerning article by Edward Kallop.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 21 Bar Kochba caves, 1962. Concerning possibility of exhibition of archaeological objects.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 22 Budgets, circa 1946-1963
Box 1 of 18	Folder 23 Center Gallery, 1962-1963. Concerning renovation of gallery.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 24 Charleston Foundation, Historic, 1958. Concerning American Association of Museums meeting and decorating of Russell House.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 25 Christmas decoration, 1956
Box 1 of 18	Folder 26 Cooper Union policy, 1962-1963
Box 1 of 18	Folder 27 Current report, 1963-1967. Concerning budget allocations.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 28 Entertainment, 1961. Concerning supplies on hand.
Box 1 of 18	Folders 29-30 Equipment, 1936, 1952, 1958, 1962, 1967
Box 1 of 18	Folder 31 Exhibitions offered, 1963, 1969
Box 1 of 18	Folder 32 Exhibitions proposed, 1962-1963

Box 1 of 18	Folder 33 Expenditures, 1934-1936
Box 1 of 18	Folder 34 ICOM, 1965
Box 1 of 18	Folder 35 Library Committee, 1962-1963
Box 1 of 18	Folder 36 Lighting, 1953-1956, 1962, 1966. Concerning proposals for exhibition on lighting.
Box 1 of 18	Folder 37 Metalwork Gallery, 1962
Box 1 of 18	Folder 38 National Home Fashions League, 1958
Box 1 of 18	Folder 39 Personnel, 1954, 1958-1959, 1964
Box 1 of 18	Folder 40 Photography
Box 1 of 18	Folder 41 Plans and measurements, 1962
Box 1 of 18	Folder 42 Plants and greenery, 1962
Box 1 of 18	Folder 43 Poster mailing list, 1958
Box 1 of 18	Folder 44 Procedures for inter-museum loans
Box 1 of 18	Folders 45-46 Publicity, 1958, 1963-1965
Box 1 of 18	Folder 47 Reception room. Concerning renovation.
Box 1 of 18	Folders 48-49 Schedule, 1953-1958, 1961-1963
Box 1 of 18	Folder 50 Self-evaluation, 1957
Box 1 of 18	Folder 51 Staff meetings, 1958-1959

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series 2: SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS, 1930-1969.

Box 1

Box 1 of 18	Folder 52 Age of Enlightenment (Life photographic exhibition), 1947
Box 1 of 18	Folder 53 Age of Exploration (Life photographic exhibition), 1949
Box 1 of 18	Folders 54-56 All That Glisters, 1950

Box 2

Box 2 of 18	Folders 1-3 All That Glisters, 1950
Box 2 of 18	Folders 4-11 Alter Ego - Masks, Their Art and Use, 1951
Box 2 of 18	Folder 12 American Drawings, 1954
Box 2 of 18	Folder 13 American Institute of Architects Centennial Show, 1956-1957. Smithsonian traveling exhibition requested but not shown.
Box 2 of 18	Folder 14 Ancient Mexico in Miniature, 1966
Box 2 of 18	Folders 15-16 Architect's Eye, The, 1962
Box 2 of 18	Folders 17-20 Art in the Cooper Union, Parts I & II, 1951-1952
Box 2 of 18	Folders 21-23 Art in the Cooper Union, Part III, 1963

Box 3

Box 3 of 18	Folders 1-2 Art in the Cooper Union, Part III, 1963
Box 3 of 18	Folder 3 Art in Film, 1959
Box 3 of 18	Folders 4-6 Art Sacre, 1952
	Artist-Craftsmen of New York (annual exhibitions), 1959-1963 (Folders 7-15) Summary: Artist-Craftsmen of New York (annual exhibitions), 1959-1963 (Folders 7-15)
Box 3 of 18	Folders 7-8 From Yesterday to Tomorrow, 1959
Box 3 of 18	Folder 9 From Yesterday to Tomorrow - New York Society of Ceramic Arts, 1959
Box 3 of 18	Folder 10 Craftsmen Preview the Sixties, 1960

Box 3 of 18	Folder 11 Current Craft Perspectives, 1961
Box 3 of 18	Folders 12-13 1962 Annual Exhibition, 1962
Box 3 of 18	Folders 14-15 1963 Annual Exhibition, 1963
Box 3 of 18	Folders 16-23 Baked Clay: The Service of Man, 1938-1939
Box 4	
Box 4 of 18	Folders 1-2 Baked Clay: The Service of Man, 1938-1939
Box 4 of 18	Folder 3 Better Handwriting, A, 1955 (traveling exhibition shown at Museum)
Box 4 of 18	Folders 4-5 Birdcages, 1951
Box 4 of 18	Folder 6-8 Buttons, 4001, 1940
Box 4 of 18	Folder 9 China Trade, 1942
Box 4 of 18	Folder 10 Chinoiserie, 1945-1946
Box 4 of 18	Folder 11 Church, Sketches by Frederick Edwin, 1965-1968. Concerning objects loaned to Smithsonian traveling exhibition.
Box 4 of 18	Folders 12-16 Collars and Cuffs, 1941
Box 4 of 18	Folders 17-19 Color II, planned for 1964 but never opened
Box 5	
Box 5 of 18	Folders 1-12 Color II (continued)
Box 5 of 18	Folders 13-16 Color Photography and Reproduction, 1949 (exhibition of American Museum of Photography)
Box 5 of 18	Folders 17-22 Conspicuous Waist, 1952-1953
Box 5 of 18	Folder 23 Contemporary Architecture, 1934
Box 5 of 18	Folders 24-27 Contemporary Book Design, 1949
Box 5 of 18	Folder 28 Contemporary German Drawings, 1948
Box 5 of 18	Folder 29 Cooperana Exhibition, 1949 (exhibition in window of Wanamaker's)

Box 5 of 18	Folders 30-34 Creative Arts in Denmark Today, 1962
	Box 6
Box 6 of 18	Folder 1 Creative Arts in Denmark Today (continued)
Box 6 of 18	Folders 2-3 Decorated Book Papers, 1954-1955
Box 6 of 18	Folder 4 De Groot Collection, 1945
Box 6 of 18	Folder 5 Design and Decoration: World Fairs of Yesterday, 1964
Box 6 of 18	Folders 6-9 Design by the Yard, 1956
Box 6 of 18	Folders 10-14 Design by the Yard (continued)
Box 6 of 18	Folder 15 Design Center, 1958 (exhibition at Design Center including Museum objects)
Box 6 of 18	Folder 16 Design in Germany Today, 1960
Box 6 of 18	Folder 17 Designed for the Theatre, 1965
Box 6 of 18	Folder 18 Designers' Repertoire, 1967
Box 6 of 18	Folder 19 Designs for Interiors, 1958-1959
Box 6 of 18	Folder 20 Designs Today, scheduled for 1942 but postponed
Box 6 of 18	Folder 21 Dumas, Mary, 1962. Concerning proposed exhibition.
Box 6 of 18	Folder 22 East River Savings Bank, 1957 (Cooper Union windows)
Box 6 of 18	Folder 23 Ecclesiastical Exhibition, 1931
Box 6 of 18	Folder 24 Electronic abstractions, 1955
	Box 7
Box 7 of 18	Folders 1-5 Elements of Design (traveling exhibition prepared for American Federation of Arts), 1957-1964
Box 7 of 18	Folders 6-10 Enamel, 1954
Box 7 of 18	Folder 11 Ends and Beginnings, 1956
Box 7 of 18	Folders 12-13 Ends and Beginnings (continued)

Box 7 of 18	Folders 14-15 Fans and Fan Designs, 1953
Box 7 of 18	Folder 16 Five Centuries of Drawings (traveling exhibition organized by Museum), 1959-1961
Box 7 of 18	Folder 17 Flower Paintings, 1948
Box 7 of 18	Folder 18 Flower Show, 39th International, 1956
Box 7 of 18	Folder 19 Forum, Cooper Union, 1946-1947
Box 7 of 18	Folder 20 Founder's Day Celebration, 1953
Box 7 of 18	Folder 21 Fountains, 1952
Box 7 of 18	Folder 22-24 Four Continents, The, 1961
Box 7 of 18	Folders 25-26 French Silver, 1934
Box 8	
Box 8 of 18	Folders 1-2 French Silver, 1934
Box 8 of 18	Folders 3-4 Fulbright Scholarships and Prix de Rome Awards, 1956
Box 8 of 18	Folder 5 Gazebos, Garden Ornaments, and Grottoes, 1955
Box 8 of 18	Folder 6 German Expressionist Prints, 1951
Box 8 of 18	Folders 7-15 Glass, 2500 F: The Art and Technique of Modern, 1948
Box 8 of 18	Folder 16 Greenleaf Bequest, 1964
Box 8 of 18	Folder 17 Halftone, Diamond Jubilee of, 1958
Box 8 of 18	Folder 18 Hammer Creek Press, 1962
Box 8 of 18	Folder 19 Handweavers, 1963
Box 8 of 18	Folder 20 Handweavers, 1967
Box 8 of 18	Folder 21 Haseltine, W. S., Drawings, 1958
Box 8 of 18	Folders 22-26 Hispano-American Fabrics, 1942
Box 9	
Box 9 of 18	Folders 1-4 Hispano-American Fabrics (continued)

Box 9 of 18	Folders 5-7 Humanities exhibitions, 1938, 1941-1951, 1962. Exhibitions mounted in conjunction with Humanities classes of Cooper Union.
Box 9 of 18	Folders 8-17 Humanities exhibitions (continued)
Box 9 of 18	Folder 18 Ikebana International Display, 1964
Box 9 of 18	Folders 19-20 International Textile Industries Exposition, 1948
Box 9 of 18	Folder 21 Irish Architecture of the Georgian Period, 1961-1962
Box 9 of 18	Folders 22-24 Italian Drawings for Jewelry, 1940
Box 9 of 18	Folder 25 Italian Figure Drawings, 1941
Box 9 of 18	Folder 26 Japan Seminar Program, 1962-1963
Box 10	
Box 10 of 18	Folder 1 Japanese Ceramics, Contemporary, 1951
Box 10 of 18	Folders 2-3 Japanese Sword and Its Fittings, The, 1966
Box 10 of 18	Folders 4-5 Kredel-Zapf: Woodcuts, Calligraphy, Illustration and Type Design, 1951
Box 10 of 18	Folder 6 Lace and Embroidery, 1943-1944. Suggestions for Winslow Homer room.
Box 10 of 18	Folders 7-12 Lacquer, 1951-1952
Box 10 of 18	Folders 13-14 Leather in the Decorative Arts, 1950-1951
Box 10 of 18	Folders 15-22 Leather in the Decorative Arts (continued)
Box 10 of 18	Folders 23-24 LENA (Lower Eastside Neighborhood Association) Photography Exhibition, 1959-1960. Includes photographs of Eleanor Roosevelt viewing the exhibition.
Box 10 of 18	Folder 25 Life Photographic exhibitions, 1947-1949
Box 10 of 18	Folder 26 Life and Times of Peter Cooper (traveling exhibition), 1950-1961
Box 11	
Box 11 of 18	Folders 1-3 Lighting - proposed exhibitions, 1958-1966
Box 11 of 18	Folder 4 Lincoln Exhibit, 1946

Box 11 of 18	Folder 5 Lions to Lapdogs, 1958
Box 11 of 18	Folders 6-7 Made in New York, 1940
Box 11 of 18	Folder 8 Mendelssohn Sketches, Eric, 1963 (Smithsonian traveling exhibition suggested for but not shown at Museum)
Box 11 of 18	Folder 9 Modern Decorative Arts of Sweden, 1935
Box 11 of 18	Folder 10 Modern Paintings, 1934
Box 11 of 18	Folders 11-17 Modern Toys, 1948
Box 11 of 18	Folder 18 Morris Society, William, proposed, 1959-1960
Box 11 of 18	Folders 19-23 National Home Furnishings Show, 1950-1952
Box 11 of 18	Folders 24-29 National Trust Preservation: the Heritage of Progress and Method and Style in Restoration, 1961
Box 12	
Box 12 of 18	Folders 1-2 National Trust (continued)
Box 12 of 18	Folder 3 New Landscape in Art and Science, 1959
Box 12 of 18	Folders 4-10 New York Guild of Handweavers, 1956-1960, 1964-1965
Box 12 of 18	Folder 11 New York Society of Ceramic Arts, 1955
Box 12 of 18	Folders 12-14 New York Society of Ceramic Arts, 1956-1957
	New York State Council on the Arts (traveling exhibition prepared by the Museum), 1962-1964 (Folders 15-18) Summary: New York State Council on the Arts (traveling exhibition prepared by the Museum), 1962-1964 (Folders 15-18)
Box 12 of 18	Folder 15 The Art of the Loom
Box 12 of 18	Folder 16 Color
Box 12 of 18	Folder 17 Graphic Arts, the Making of Prints
Box 12 of 18	Folder 18 The Marbling of Book Papers
Box 12 of 18	Folder 19 New York State Courthouse, 1962
Box 12 of 18	Folders 20-25 New York World's Fair, 1964-1965

Box 12 of 18 Folders 26-27 Nine and Fifty Ways to Do a Room, 1958

Box 12 of 18 Folders 28-29 Nine Lives - The Tale of the Cat in History and Art, 1949

Box 13

Box 13 of 18 Folders 1-8 Nine Lives - The Tale of the Cat in History and Art, 1949

Box 13 of 18 Folders 9-11 Nineteenth Century Jewelry, 1955

Box 13 of 18 Folders 12-14 Package Designers' Council Award Competition, 1956

Box 13 of 18 Folder 15 Paris in New York, 1954

Box 13 of 18 Folder 16 Paris in the Spring, 1947

Box 13 of 18 Folder 17 Peep Show and Toy Theatres, 1954

Box 13 of 18 Folder 18 Perkin Centennial, 1956

Box 13 of 18 Folders 19-23 Picasso, Ceramics by, 1958

Box 13 of 18 Folder 24 Plane Geometry and Fancy Figures, 1959

Box 14

Box 14 of 18 Folders 1-6 Plane Geometry (continued)

Box 14 of 18 Folders 7-8 Please Be Seated, 1969

Box 14 of 18 Folder 9 President's Installation, 1962

Box 14 of 18 Folders 10-17 Prince Regent's Style, The, 1953

Box 14 of 18 Folders 18-19 Printed Textiles by Four Artists, 1947

Box 15

Box 15 of 18 Folders 1-14 Proposed exhibitions, circa 1934-1963

Box 15 of 18 Folders 15-25 Recent Accessions, 1940-1942, 1946, 1948-1950, 1962, 1966

Box 16

Box 16 of 18 Folder 1 Recent French Posters, 1953

Box 16 of 18 Folder 2 Recent Gifts, 1967

Box 16 of 18 Folders 3-8 Red, Yellow, and Blue, 1943

Box 16 of 18 Folder 9 Rembrandt Van Rijn Etchings, 1956

Box 16 of 18 Folder 10 Residence Lighting Forum, 1957

Box 16 of 18 Folder 11 Roman Letter, The, 1954

Box 16 of 18 Folders 12-17 Santos from Puerto Rico, 1953

Box 16 of 18 Folders 18-19 Schaefer Tankards, 1955

Box 16 of 18 Folders 20-26 Shells and Decoration, 1940

Box 16 of 18 Folders 27-28 Small Theatres, 1935

Box 17

Box 17 of 18 Folders 1-2 Small Theatres, 1935

Box 17 of 18 Folders 3-4 Small Wonders, 1949

Box 17 of 18 Folders 5-9 Small Wonders (continued)

Box 17 of 18 Folder 10 Sources of Design, 1963

Box 17 of 18 Folder 11 Spring Exhibition, 1936

Box 17 of 18 Folder 12 Stained Glass Panels, 1949

Box 17 of 18 Folders 13-17 Stitches in Time, 1947

Box 17 of 18 Folders 18-22 Street Window, circa 1942-1964

Box 17 of 18 Folder 23 Summer Exhibition, 1941

Box 18

Box 18 of 18 Folder 1 Suspense of Time, 1957

Box 18 of 18 Folder 2 Tassels, Fringes, and Galloons, 1942

Box 18 of 18 Folder 3 Textiles from Egyptian Tombs, 1948

Box 18 of 18 Folder 4 Thanks to Collectors, 1965

Box 18 of 18 Folder 5 Theatre Exhibition, 1942

Box 18 of 18	Folder 6 Thorne Miniature Room, 1943. Proposed plans.
Box 18 of 18	Folders 7-9 Threads of History, 1966-1967
Box 18 of 18	Folder 10 Tiles and Faince Stones, 1933
Box 18 of 18	Folder 11 Toiles de Juoy, 1934
Box 18 of 18	Folders 12-13 Toys - European and American, 1936-1937
Box 18 of 18	Folder 14 Trademarks and Graphic Symbols, 1958
Box 18 of 18	Folder 15 Treasures from the Cooper Union, 1967
Box 18 of 18	Folders 16-17 Treasury of Design, 1968
Box 18 of 18	Folder 18 Typography USA, proposed
Box 18 of 18	Folder 19 Venetian Villas, 1956
Box 18 of 18	Folder 20 Wallerstein Collection, 1951
Box 18 of 18	Folder 21 Wallpaper Council, 1958
Box 18 of 18	Folders 22-24 Wallpaper Design and Production, 1939
Box 18 of 18	Folders 25-26 Wallpaper Design and Production (continued)
Box 18 of 18	Folder 27 Wallpaper exhibits, 1930
Box 18 of 18	Folder 28 Wallpaper exhibits for public schools museums program, 1956
Box 18 of 18	Folder 29 Wallpaper Shadow Boxes, 1930
Box 18 of 18	Folder 30 Weaving Books, circa 1956-1957
Box 18 of 18	Folders 31-34 With Hammer and Tongs, 1941
Box 18 of 18	Folder 35 Woodcuts and Engravings, 1961
Box 18 of 18	Folder 36 Wonders of Thread, The, 1964-1965
Box 18 of 18	Folder 37 Woven Textiles, proposed, 1957

[Return to Table of Contents](#)