

Finding Aid for the Erwin O. Christensen Papers, 1937–1968

Summary Information

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| Repository | National Gallery of Art Archives Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20565 archives@nga.gov |
| Title | Erwin O. Christensen Papers |
| Identifier | SC.007 |
| Creator | Christensen, Erwin O. (Erwin Ottomar), 1890-1976 |
| Date | 1937–1968 |
| Extent | 0.5 cubic feet (1 box) |
| Abstract | This collection consists of lectures, essays, correspondence, and other material related to Erwin O. Christensen's professional activities in the areas of folk art and museum development. |

Biographical Note

Erwin O. Christensen was born in St. Louis, MO in 1890. He received bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from the University of Illinois and Harvard University, respectively. In 1946, he became the curator of the Index of American Design at the National Gallery of Art and served until his retirement in 1960. He taught art history at several higher education institutions, including Syracuse University, before joining the National Gallery. He published several titles during his career including the first comprehensive publication on the Index of American Design in 1950.

Scope and Content

This collection is arranged in three groups: lectures and essays; material related to a US State Department-sponsored lecture tour to Pakistan; and correspondence. The lectures and essays make up the bulk of the records. The Pakistan files consist of correspondence, news clippings, receipts, travel vouchers, and other items. The correspondence files relate to Christensen's professional activities.

Arrangement

The lectures and essays are arranged in chronological order. The Pakistan material is arranged by subject. The correspondence is arranged in alphabetical order, by major correspondent or subject.

Administrative Information

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| Conditions Governing Access | This collection is open for research by appointment under the conditions of the National Gallery of Art Archives Access Policy. For all inquiries or to schedule an appointment, please contact archives@nga.gov . |
| Preferred Citation | National Gallery of Art Archives. Erwin O. Christensen Papers. |
| Rights Status | In copyright |
| Language | English |
| Processing Information | Processed by archives staff in 1988. |
| Acquisition | Gift of James Christensen, 1984. |
| Related Archival Materials | National Gallery of Art Archives. Index of American Design Records. |

Erwin O. Christensen Papers

Box 1

- 1-1 Lectures and Essays - *Beauty Begins At Home*, 1940
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- 1-2 Lectures and Essays - *The Place of Art Museums in a Democracy and Art Museums for a Democracy*, 1940
-
- 1-3 Lectures and Essays - Boxing and prizefights - general research, 1944
-
- 1-4 Lectures and Essays - American Provincial Furniture and Accessories, 1947
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- 1-5 Lectures and Essays - American Glass Before 1900, 1948
-
- 1-6 Lectures and Essays - Good Taste in Everyday Art, October 1949
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- 1-7 Lectures and Essays - A Page from the Sketchbook of Marten Van Heems Kerck, 1949
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- 1-8 Lectures and Essays - Introduction to Folk Sculpture in the United States, 1949
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- 1-9 Lectures and Essays - American Folk Art: Woodcarving, 4 June 1950
Revision of Introduction to Folk Sculpture in the United States, 1949.
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- 1-10 Lectures and Essays - Patriotic Themes in Folk Art, 1950
-
- 1-11 Lectures and Essays - Weathervanes - *Antiques* article, 1950-1951
-
- 1-12 Lectures and Essays - Woodworking Projects, 1950
-
- 1-13 Lectures and Essays - Chinese Porcelains - National Gallery of Art, 7 January 1951
-
- 1-14 Lectures and Essays - Early American Wood Carving lecture - Williamsburg, 1 February 1952
-
- 1-15 Lectures and Essays - Walstrom's Course, 21 September 1954
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- 1-16 Lectures and Essays - Short essays, 31 October 1955
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Box 2

- 2-1 Lectures and Essays - Early American Crafts - Index of American Design, December 1955

- 2-2 Lectures and Essays - Pennsylvania German Folk Art - Index of American Design, 20 April 1956

- 2-3 Lectures and Essays - Shaker Crafts - Index of American Design, 20 April 1956

- 2-4 Lectures and Essays - Crafts of the Spanish Southwest - Index to American Design, 20 April 1956

- 2-5 Lectures and Essays - American Folk Art - Index of American Design, 20 April 1956

- 2-6 Lectures and Essays - Pottery In The United States, 14 February 1956

- 2-7 Lectures and Essays - American Folk Art, September 1956

- 2-8 Lectures and Essays - Index of American Design lecture, 4 September 1956

- 2-9 Lectures and Essays - North American Indian Lecture, 1956

- 2-10 Lectures and Essays - Negro African Sculpture - Howard University, 12 February 1957

- 2-11 Lectures and Essays - Illumination by Erwin O. Christensen, November 1957

- 2-12 Lectures and Essays - The Arts of Life In Early America, February 1959

- 2-13 Lectures and Essays - Manuscript for Index of American Design by Erwin O. Christensen (folder 1 of 2)

- 2-14 Lectures and Essays - Manuscript for Index of American Design by Erwin O. Christensen (folder 2 of 2)

Box 3

- 3-1 Pakistan - correspondence, April 1957–July 1959

- 3-2 Pakistan - correspondence, August–December 1959

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- 3-3 Pakistan - correspondence, January 1960–March 1961
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- 3-4 Pakistan - miscellaneous
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- 3-5 Pakistan - newspaper clippings
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- 3-6 Pakistan - receipts
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- 3-7 Pakistan - travel vouchers and grant authorization
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- 3-8 Professional Activities - correspondence
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- 3-9 Professional Activities - American Federation of Government Employees
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- 3-10 Professional Activities - Irina Antonova
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- 3-11 Professional Activities - Guggenheim Foundation
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- 3-12 Professional Activities - Nancy T. Leech (assistant to Erwin Christensen), 1949–1951
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- 3-13 Professional Activities - Arthur T. Lougee (Ford Motor Company)
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- 3-14 Professional Activities - Sallie MacLennan
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- 3-15 Professional Activities - Office of the Registrar, 1940–1944
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- 3-16 Professional Activities - Walker-Finley in-house correspondence and curatorial staff, 1943
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- 3-17 Professional Activities - miscellaneous, 1937–1960
Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.
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- 3-18 Professional Activities - reports and proposals
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- 3-19 Professional Activities - books given to NGA Library, 10 November 1958
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- 3-20 Professional Activities - historian application, 6 March 1960
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