Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: SJSU Special Collections & Archives
Title: Friedolin Edward Kessler Art Collection
creator: Kessler, Friedolin Edward, 1913-1995
Identifier/Call Number: MSS.2012.09.28
Physical Description: 1.0 flat file drawers(1 Folder)
Physical Description: 1 Box(2 Linear Feet)
Date (inclusive): 1935-1977
Abstract: Artist Friedolin Kessler (1913-1995) was born in St. Louis, Missouri and studied art at Washington University in St. Louis. Following art school he settled in California, initially working as an artist for the Civil Conservation Corps (CCC). With his wife Carol, he co-founded the San Jose Art League, and he taught art at San Jose State and at Stanford. The Friedolin Kessler Art Collection represents some of the art work he produced over his life-time. The collection consists of 35 10x8 linoleum block prints, 4 12-14, linoleum block prints, a California Mission Greeting Cards book consisting of 21 6x8 linoleum prints of all of the missions in the state, and four exhibit poster boards highlighting the work of the San Jose Art League through Mercury News Clippings dated between 1940-1977. The 10x8 prints document famous landmarks in Santa Clara County, including the famous light tower, Stanford Memorial Chapel, Santa Clara University, Alum Rock Part, Santa Clara Court House, and the California State Capitol Building in San Jose, San Jose Normal School, and the Winchester House. The 12x14 prints relate to the work of the CCC. The California Mission Greeting Cards book describes Kessler’s bicycle journey across California to capture the missions through photography and sketches, which he used to produce the linoleum prints. His forte was linoleum block printing, but he also created mosaics, painted in oil and acrylic, and was talented wood artist. Kessler died in San Jose on Sept. 28, 1995.
Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
Copyright has not been assigned to the San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Director of Special Collections. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the SJSU Special Collections & Archives as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained by the reader. Copyright restrictions also apply to digital reproductions of the original materials. Use of digital files is restricted to research and educational purposes.
Preferred Citation
Friedolin Edward Kessler Art Collection, MSS-2012-09-28, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.
Processing Information
Collection processed by Danelle Moon. Finding aid created in the Archivist Toolkit.
Biographical History
Artist, Friedolin Kessler (1913-1995) was born in St. Louis, Missouri on July 12, 1913, the only son of Czech and German parents. At age 16 he entered art school at Washington University in St. Louis. After he graduated he joined the Missouri Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and in 1936 with his camp he was relocated to California. The camp settled in the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park. As the resident artist of the camp he was hired to document life in the CCC. His forte was linoleum cuts, but he also worked with oil and acrylic, as well as having talent in wood art and mosaics. In 1938 he took a bicycle trip visiting every California Mission in the state, which he sketched and photographed and later produced beautiful linoleum cuts of each mission. The resulting prints were exhibited around California and at the World’s Fair in Treasure Island and the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco.
Kessler spent the majority of his life San Jose and became a well-known artist in the area. In 1938 with his wife Carol, he co-founded the San Jose Art League, and taught art at San Jose State and at Stanford. The combined artwork of the Kessler’s spanned 70 years. The Kessler’s were avid hikers and back-packed up Mt. Whitney with friends Allen and Cindy Perry. The Perry’s helped care for Carol for many years as well as Friedolin, who died of cancer in 1995 at the age of 82. They had no children.
Related Material
Civilian Conservation Corps Collection, MSS-2010-07-29, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.
http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt1t1nd9tb/entire_text/
Scope and Content of Collection
Friedolin Edward Kessler Art Collection consists of 35 10x8 linoleum block prints, 4 12x14, linoleum block prints, a California Mission Cards book consisting of 21 6x8 linoleum prints of all of the missions in the state, and four exhibit panels highlighting the work of the San Jose Art League through Mercury News Clippings dated between 1940-1977. The 10x8 prints document famous landmarks in Santa Clara County, including the famous light tower, Stanford Memorial Chapel, Santa Clara College, Alum Rock Part, Santa Clara Court House, and the California State Capitol Building in San Jose, San Jose Normal School, and the Winchester House. The 12x14 prints relate to the work of the Civil Conservation Core during the Great Depression. The California Mission Greeting Cards book describes Kessler’s bicycle journey across California to capture the missions through photography and sketches, which he used to produce the linoleum prints. Kessler came to California as an artist working for the Civilian Conversation Corps in 1935 and in 1938 he and his wife Carol co-founded the San Jose Art League. He also taught art and San Jose State and at Stanford University. His forte was linoleum block printing, but he also painted in oil and acrylic, and had a talent in mosaics and wood art. Kessler died in San Jose on Sept. 28, 1995.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged by format and ordered alphabetically into three series: Series I: Linoleum Block Prints, 1935-1938; Series II: California Missions Greeting Cards; Series III: San Jose Art League Exhibit Poster Boards.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Art -- California -- San Jose
Linoleum block-printing, American
Kessler, Friedolin Edward, 1913-1995

Series I: Linoleum Block Prints, 1935-1938

Physical Description: 1.0 flat file drawers
Scope and Content of Series
This series consists of forty-seven linoleum block prints (thirty-five 10x8, four 12x14). The 10x8 prints document famous landmarks in Santa Clara County, including the famous light tower, Stanford Memorial Chapel, Santa Clara University, Alum Rock Part, Santa Clara Court House, and the California State Capitol Building in San Jose, San Jose Normal School, and the Winchester House. The 12x14 prints depict Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers, including that of a CCC boy, a fire-line, forest conservation and youth conservation workers. Kessler joined the CCC in Missouri and his unit was transferred to California, settling in the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park. He became the resident camp artist and the CCC images represent the forcefullness of New Deal art.

Arrangement
This series is arranged by title.

Box 1, Folder 1 Early Automobile in San Jose 1938
Box 1, Folder 2 Auzerais House 1938
Box 1, Folder 3 Alum Rock Park 1938
Box 1, Folder 4 California's First State Capitol, San Jose 1938
Box 1, Folder 5 Electric Tower - San Jose 1938
Box 1, Folder 6 Horse Car on the Alameda 1938
Box 1, Folder 7 Lick Observatory 1938
Box 1, Folder 8 Mission San Francisco de Asis, Delores 1938
Box 1, Folder 9 Santa Clara College 1938
Box 1, Folder 10 Santa Clara County Court House 1938
Box 1, Folder 11 San Jose State Normal School 1938
Box 1, Folder 12 Stanford Memorial Chapel 1938
Box 1, Folder 13 YWCA - San Jose 1938
Box 1, Folder 14 Winchester Mystery House 1938
Box 1, Folder 15 "CCC Boy," 12x14 1935
Box 1, Folder 16 "The Fireline" 12x14 1935
Box 1, Folder 17 "Forest Conservation," 12x14 1935
Box 1, Folder 18 "Youth Conservation," 12x14 1935
Box 1

**Series II: California Missions Greeting Cards Book, 1938**

Scope and Content of Series

This series consists of a scrapbook containing prints of sketches that Kessler made of California missions. In 1938, Kessler made a bicycle journey during which he sketched and photographed every mission from Sonoma to San Diego. He spent a full year creating linoleum cuts of each mission. Each of the missions are represented in a hard-bound wood sample book entitled “The California Missions Greeting Cards Book,” and the resulting prints were exhibited in California and at the World’s Fair in Treasure Island, and the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. The book consists of 22 pages and each linoleum cut includes the name of the mission.

Page 1, Mission Santa Clara de Asis 1938  
Page 2, Mission San Carlos de Berrmeo Carmel 1938  
Page 3, Mission San Jose 1938  
Page 4, Mission San Miguel Arcangel 1938  
Page 5, Mission San Juan Bautista  
Page 6, Mission San Buenaventura 1938  
Page 7, Mission Santa Barbara 1938  
Page 8, Mission San Fernando Rey 1938  
Page 9, Mission San Louis Rey 1938  
Page 10, Mission La Purisima Concepcion 1938  
Page 11, Mission Santa Cruz 1938  
Page 12, Mission Santa Inez 1938  
Page 13, Mission San Diego de Alcala 1938  
Page 14, Mission San Juan Capistrano 1938  
Page 15, Mission San Francisco de Asis, Delores 1938  
Page 16, Mission Asistencia San Antonio de Pala  
Page 17, Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa 1938  
Page 18, Mission San Gabriel Arcangel 1938  
Page 19, Mission San Antonio de Padua 1938  
Page 20, Royal Presidio Chapel, Monterey 1938  
Page 21, Mission Soledad 1938  
Page 22, Mission San Francisco Solona 1938

**Series III: San Jose Art League Exhibit Poster Boards, 1940-1977**

Scope and Content of Series

This final series consists of four exhibit posters highlighting the work of the San Jose Art League through Mercury News clippings dated between the years 1940-1977.