

Esther Klotz collection on Miné Okubo

Finding aid prepared by Eric Milenkiewicz, Archives Assistant.

Special Collections & University Archives

The UCR Library

P.O. Box 5900

University of California

Riverside, California 92517-5900

Phone: 951-827-3233

Fax: 951-827-4673

Email: specialcollections@ucr.edu

URL: <http://library.ucr.edu/libraries/special-collections-university-archives>

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Esther Klotz collection on Miné Okubo

Date (inclusive): 1932-2009, undated

Date (bulk): 1970-1979

Collection Number: MS 094

Creator: Klotz, Esther

Extent: 0.44 linear feet(1 box, 1 flat file folder)

Repository: Rivera Library. Special Collections Department.
Riverside, CA 92517-5900

Abstract: This collection is comprised of press clippings, correspondence, artwork, brochures, and other material regarding the personal and professional life of Miné Okubo, a Japanese American artist and author. Includes material on Okubo's book *Citizen 13660* and the art exhibit *Miné Okubo: An American Experience*. Mailings from Okubo to personal contacts that contain correspondence, artwork, exhibit brochures, and original envelopes are also included. Additionally, there is material on Japanese American life in the United States that focuses on the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, Miné Okubo's experiences at war relocation camps during World War II, and the history of Japanese Americans in Riverside, California.

Languages: The collection is in English.



Access

This collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [date if possible]. Esther Klotz collection on Miné Okubo (MS 094). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Esther Klotz, 1974.

Processing History

Processed by Eric Milenkiewicz, Archives Assistant, 2010.

Biographical Note

Miné Okubo was born on June 27, 1912 in Riverside, California. Okubo attended Riverside Junior College and went on to receive both a bachelor's and master's degree in Fine Arts from the University of California, Berkeley. In 1938, Okubo was awarded the Bertha Henicke Taussig Traveling Fellowship to study art in Europe for eighteen months. At the conclusion of her fellowship Okubo returned to the United States and accepted a job as an artist through the federal Works Progress Administration in Northern California. The bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese on December 7, 1941 would forever change the course of Okubo's life. On April 24, 1942 she was forced into a Japanese internment camp and had to relocate to the Tanforan Relocation Camp in San Bruno, California and was later transferred to the Central Utah Relocation Camp in Topaz, Utah. While being held at the relocation camp Okubo completed numerous pen and ink drawings that illustrated daily life for the camp's detainees. She would later publish this collection of drawings and sketches in the acclaimed book *Citizen 13660* that gave the world insight into the treatment of the Japanese at these camps. Okubo eventually moved to New York, New York and continued her career as an artist creating numerous artistic works throughout her career that included illustrations for several publications such as *Fortune*, *Time*, and *Life*. She also served as an active voice of the Japanese American community and even testified before the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation in 1981. Miné Okubo died on February 10, 2001 at the age of 88 in Greenwich Village in New York City.

1912 Miné Okubo was born in Riverside, California on June 12th.

1935 Okubo graduated from UC Berkeley with a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts.

1936 Okubo graduated from UC Berkeley with a master's degree in Fine Arts.

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- 1939-1941 Okubo was commissioned by the Federal Arts Program as an artist on public art projects.
- 1942 Okubo was forced to evacuate under Executive Order #9066 as a result of the bombing of Pearl Harbor in World War II.
- 1946 Okubo's *Citizen #13660* was published by Columbia University Press.
- 1950-1952 Okubo taught art at University of California, Berkeley.
- 1974 Okubo was named Alumna of the Year at Riverside Community College.
An exhibition of Okubo's paintings was held at Riverside Community College.
- 1991 Okubo received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women's Caucus for Art of the College Art Association.
- 2001 Miné Okubo died in New York, New York on February 10th.

Collection Scope and Contents

This collection is comprised of press clippings, correspondence, artwork, brochures, and other material regarding the personal and professional life of Miné Okubo, a Japanese American artist and author. Includes material on Okubo's book *Citizen 13660* and the art exhibit *Miné Okubo: An American Experience*. Mailings from Okubo to personal contacts that contain correspondence, artwork, exhibit brochures, and original envelopes are also included. Additionally, there is material on Japanese American life in the United States that focuses on the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, Miné Okubo's experiences at war relocation camps during World War II, and the history of Japanese Americans in Riverside, California.

Collection Arrangement

This collection is arranged into three series as follows:

- Series 1. Japanese-American life, 1943-1979, undated
- Series 2. Personal correspondence, 1941-1977, undated
- Series 3. Professional career, 1932-2009, undated

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Okubo, Miné
Japanese American artists
Japanese Americans -- Exclusion and incarceration, 1942-1945

Genres and Forms of Materials

Clippings (information artifacts)
Correspondence
Works of art

Series 1. Japanese-American life 1943-1979, undated

Series Scope and Contents

This series contains press clippings, publications, and other material regarding Japanese American life in the United States. Topics include the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, Miné Okubo's experiences at war relocation camps during World War II, and the history of Japanese Americans in Riverside, California.

Series Arrangement

This series is arranged sequentially according to box and folder number.

Box 1, Folder 1

Press clippings, publications, and other material regarding Japanese American life in the United States (includes photocopies). 1943-1978, undated.

Box 1, Folder 2

Thesis titled *Miné Okubo, Artist* by Edna Ikeda from the University of California, Riverside (photocopy). 1979.

Series 2. Personal correspondence 1941-1977, undated

Series Scope and Contents

This series contains correspondence, artwork, and other material sent from Miné Okubo to Clifford Wurfel and Esther and Leo Klotz. Includes material that was mailed with the original correspondence such as artwork and sketches by Okubo and brochures for art exhibits. The original mailing envelopes are also included.

Series Arrangement

This series is arranged sequentially according to box and folder number.

Box 1, Folder 3

Correspondence, artwork, and other material sent from Miné Okubo to Clifford Wurfel. 1976-1977.

Box 1, Folder 4

Correspondence, artwork, and other material sent from Miné Okubo to Esther and Leo Klotz. 1941-1977, undated.

Series 3. Professional career 1932-2009, undated

Series Scope and Contents

This series contains press clippings, artwork, and other material regarding Miné Okubo's professional career as an artist. Includes material related to Okubo's book *Citizen 13660*, the *Miné Okubo: An American Experience* art exhibit, and other aspects of her career. Original artwork by Miné Okubo is also included.

Series Arrangement

This series is arranged sequentially according to box and folder number.

Box 1, Folder 5

Artwork by Miné Okubo. 1976, undated.

Box 1, Folder 6

Exhibit catalog and press clippings regarding the *Miné Okubo: An American Experience* exhibit (includes photocopies). 1972, undated.

Box 1, Folder 7

Press clippings, brochures, and other material regarding Miné Okubo's book *Citizen 13660* (includes photocopies). 1946-1974, undated.

Box 1, Folder 8

Press clippings, brochures, and other material regarding Miné Okubo's involvement with Riverside City College in Riverside, California (includes photocopies). 1932-1974.

Box 1, Folder 9

Press clippings regarding Miné Okubo and her career as an artist (includes photocopies). 1968-2009, undated.

Flat-File-Folder 1

Artwork (oversize) by Miné Okubo. 1948-1966, undated.