

GEORGE JO MESS

SCRAPBOOK, ca. 1938-1962

Collection #:
OM 372

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Processed by
Chris Harter
23 December 1997

USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 oversized folder

COLLECTION DATES: ca. 1938-1962

PROVENANCE: Almagre Books, 4615 Cranbrook Road, Bloomington, IN 47401, 13 November 1997

RESTRICTIONS: None

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 330, Indiana Artists Club, Inc. Records; M 466, Blanche Stillson Papers; DuBois, June. *Indiana Artists George Jo and Evelynne Bernloehr Mess: A Story of Devotion* (N 6537.M48 D8 1985)

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 1998.0067

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

George Jo Mess (1898-1962) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, to Joseph J. Mess (1871-1933) and Anna (Gleis) Mess

(1875-1960). He had two brothers, Arthur G. (fl. 1899-1909) and Gordon B. (1900-1959). The Mess family moved to Indianapolis in 1899.

George Mess attended Manual Training High School and Butler and Columbia Universities. He received scholarships to study art at the John Herron Art School, where his teachers included Otto Stark (1859-1926, see also: Visual Collections for Stark drawing) and William Forsyth (1854-1935, see also: M 691, William Forsyth Papers), and at the Louis Tiffany Foundation in New York City. Mess also studied at the Modern School of Design in Chicago and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in France.

In 1920, George and Gordon rented a studio in downtown Indianapolis and began the Circle Art Company, a commercial art business. Five years later, George married Evelynne Bernloehr (b. 1903), who had also been a student at Herron. Together they founded and taught at the Circle Art Academy (1927-1932). After the academy closed, George joined Gordon in organizing the Circle Engraving Company and headed the commercial art department there for five years. In 1937, George and Evelynne moved to Chicago, where George served on the staff of *Esquire*, *Coronet*, and *Apparel Arts* magazines. Due to George's ill health, they returned to Indianapolis in 1940 and devoted their time to teaching and their creative talents. George was a professor at Indiana University's Downtown Center from 1949 until his death in 1962. He also taught at Herron, his Brown County studio, and the Indianapolis Art League.

The art of George and Evelynne Mess was very much a combined effort; both acted as teacher and student to the other. They worked in a variety of media, but are best known for their printmaking. The Messes were members of many art-related organizations at the local, state, and national levels. George took part in national and international exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and Chicago Art Institute, as well as expositions in Paris, Rome, and Stockholm. After his death, Evelynne married Edward R. Daily (d. 1975) and continued to make a living as an artist.

Sources: DuBois, June. *Indiana Artists George Jo and Evelynne Bernloehr Mess: A Story of Devotion*. passim. *Indianapolis Star* (June 25, 1962). p. 1

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of a scrapbook (8 leaves) containing several mechanical reproductions (and two photographic reproductions) of George Mess' artwork. It also contains two newspaper clippings about Mess, as well as a signed letter (November 16, 1938) from Mess to a Mr. Milkman concerning the inclusion of Mess' work in a book by Milkman.

CATALOGUING INFORMATION

MAIN ENTRY: Mess, George Joseph, 1898-1962

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Mess, George Joseph, 1898-1962

Artists--Indiana--Indianapolis

Prints--20th Century--Indiana

END