

Rodman Noka Artwork Collection

Overview of the Collection

Repository: South County History Center 2636 Kingstown Road Kingston, Rhode Island 02881
Tel: 401.783.1328, website: southcountyhistorycenter.org

Title: Rodman Noka Artwork Collection

Dates: 1920 - 1970

Media: Decorative Objects; Digital Photographs; Drawings; Paintings; Ephemera

Quantity: 4 boxes (1 oversized), 4 linear feet

Identification: 1970.018.0001, 2007.501.0011, 2009.054, 2015.013.0001-.0047, 2016.005.0010, 2018.006.0011, 2022.010.0001-.0004, 2023.001.0001, 2023.501.0001-.0003

Language: English

Biographical Note

Christopher Rodman “Rod” Noka (1894-1970) was a life-long resident of South Kingstown, Rhode Island. The son of Christopher and Mary (Congdon) Noka, he was a member of the Narragansett Indian Tribe and a direct descendant of Sachem Ninigret. He married Vivian P. Stephanie Deane in 1917, and the couple had one daughter, Rosalind Grace (Noka) Shumate.

Noka was a sign painter by trade and achieved local recognition as an artist. He began drawing and painting at an early age and planned to attend the Rhode Island School of Design. When health issues prevented his enrollment at RISD, he instead was tutored by Frank Convers Mathewson, a Rhode Island painter who specialized in oil and watercolors. After working as a carriage painter, Noka started his own sign painting business in 1928 and also kept an art studio on Meadow Avenue in Wakefield.

Noka’s artwork depicted many South County locations and landscapes. He used a variety of mediums including oils, pastels, watercolors, charcoal, and pen and ink. Noka was a charter member of the East Greenwich Art Association as well as a member of the Wickford Art and South County Art Associations.

Scope and Content

The Rodman Noka Artwork Collection includes decorative objects, digital photographs, drawings, paintings and papers. The materials were created by Noka in a period between 1920 and 1970. Records fall into two distinct series, artwork and papers. The series are organized as follows:

Series I: Artwork

Subseries I: Completed Works

Subseries II: Sketches and Drawings

Subseries III: Prints

Series II: Papers

Administrative Information

Access: Any qualified person doing personal or scholarly research is permitted to utilize materials in the South County History Center collections.

Preferred Citation: [item], Folder [number], Box [number], Rodman Noka Collection, South County History Center

Provenance: The collection is an accumulation of several acquisitions, including a large purchase made by the Center in 2015.

Processed by: Caleb Goodhouse, with generous support of Susan and James Bowers, Jeffrey Greene, Graham and Jacqui Nye, and Deanna Wright.

Copyrights: Copyright information for each item can be found in the Center's collections database.

Subject Terms

Noka, Christopher Rodman 1894-1970; Washington County (R.I.) -- Pictorial works; South Kingstown (R.I.)—Pictorial works.

Related Materials

Researchers interested in this collection may also wish to consult the following sources in the South County History Center holdings:

Archival Collections – South County Art Association Records

Photograph Collection – Many of the places and buildings depicted by Noka also appear in photographs.

Object Collections – Artwork Collection

Research Library – Noka Family Subject File

Contents Listing

Series I: Artwork

This series consists of a wooden sign, paintings, sketches, drawings and prints created by Rodman Noka. Much of the artwork is undated. This series also includes one small painting by Noka's tutor, Frank Convers Mathewson.

Subseries I: Paintings

Box	Folder	Object ID	Description	Date
1	-	2007.501.0011	"Peace Dale Railroad Station", oil on canvas	1965
1	1	2015.013.0001	"Self Portrait" – oil on canvas	n.d.
1	2	2015.013.0002	#81 – watercolor	n.d.
1	2	2015.013.0003	#83 – watercolor	n.d.
1	2	2015.013.0004	#85 – watercolor	n.d.
1	3	2015.013.0005	#84 – watercolor	n.d.
1	3	2015.013.0006	#82 – watercolor	n.d.
1	3	2015.013.0007	#1 – watercolor	n.d.
1	4	2009.054	Untitled – oil on canvas	n.d.
3	5	2015.013.0046	"Trees at Perch Cove Matunuck." By Frank C. Mathewson	n.d.
3	6	2023.001.0001	Untitled - pastel of farm in winter	n.d.
Object Storage		1970.018.0001	Wooden sign	n.d.
Framed Artwork Storage		2018.006.0011	Untitled – pastel and watercolor landscape	n.d.
		2022.010.0001	"Tilting" – pastel	n.d.
iMac		2022.010.0002	Digital photograph of "Owls Head" painting	1964
iMac		2022.010.0003	Digital photograph of "Tilting"	n.d.
iMac		2022.010.0004	Digital photograph of untitled painting	n.d.

Subseries II: Sketches and Drawings

Box	Folder	Object ID	Description	Date
2	-	2015.013.0013	Charcoal drawing of unidentified man	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0014	Charcoal drawing of "Mrs. Wrigley"	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0015	Charcoal drawing of Delavigne	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0016	Charcoal drawing of a dinghy	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0017	Charcoal drawing of a fishing boat	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0020	Charcoal drawing of Carol Bootwell	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0023	Charcoal drawing of wooden shed	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0025	Charcoal drawing of unidentified street	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0028	Pencil drawing of dock	n.d.
2	-	2015.013.0041	Pencil drawing of pitcher, clock, and bowl	n.d.
3	7	2015.013.0008	Pen and ink drawing of house in snow	n.d.
3	7	2015.013.0009	Pen and ink drawing of church	n.d.
3	7	2015.013.0010	Pen and ink drawing of church with steeple	n.d.
3	7	2015.013.0011	Pen and ink drawing of Block Island Lighthouse	1952
3	8	2015.013.0012	Pen and ink drawing of houses by a dock	n.d.
3	9	2015.013.0018	Pencil drawing of building on a hill	n.d.
3	9	2015.013.0019	Pencil drawing of "Mrs. Walker"	n.d.
3	9	2015.013.0022	Charcoal drawing, possibly of Carol Bootwell	n.d.

3	10	2015.013.0021	Charcoal or soft pencil drawing of a seated woman	n.d.
3	10	2015.013.0024	Charcoal drawing of a street view	n.d.
3	10	2015.013.0026	Charcoal drawing of a landscape	n.d.
3	10	2015.013.0027	Charcoal sketches of building and shed	n.d.
3	11	2015.013.0029	Pastel or crayon drawing of house by the water	n.d.
3	11	2015.013.0030	Pastel or crayon landscape drawing of river	n.d.
3	11	2015.013.0031	Charcoal sketch of woman sitting in a chair	1961
3	11	2015.013.0032	Pen and watercolor sketch of woman sitting in a chair	n.d.
3	12	2015.013.0033	Sketch of a vase with flowers	n.d.
3	12	2015.013.0034	Pencil drawing of basket with flowers	n.d.
3	13	2015.013.0035	Pencil sketch of wooden building	1961
3	13	2015.013.0036	Pencil sketch of hills against a cloudy sky	n.d.
3	13	2015.013.0037	Charcoal profile sketch of unidentified individual	n.d.
3	13	2015.013.0038	Pencil sketch of woman sitting in chair reading	1961
3	14	2015.013.0039	Pencil drawing of woman sitting on a bench	n.d.
3	14	2015.013.0040	Pencil drawing of landscape and farmhouse	n.d.
3	14	2015.013.0044	Pencil drawing of a church	1961
3	15	2015.013.0042	Pencil sketch of boats at dock	n.d.
3	15	2015.013.0043	Pencil sketch of boats at dock	n.d.
3	15	2015.013.0045	Pencil sketch of road work	n.d.

Subseries III: Prints

Box	Folder	Object ID	Description	Date
4	16	2023.501.0001	Wakefield Printing Company Calendars	1951-1961
4	17	2023.501.0001	Wakefield Printing Company Calendars	1962-1970
4	18	2023.501.0002	Various Prints	n.d.
4	19	2023.501.0003	Christmas Cards	n.d.

Series II: Papers

This series consists of paper records related to Rodman Noka. It includes a signed agreement between Noka and the Kay Dee Designs company. It also includes a compilation of biographical resources that provide information on Noka's life.

Subseries I:

Box	Folder	Object ID	Description	Date
4	1	2015.013.0047	Kay Dee Sales Agreement	1952
4	2	-	Biographical Resources	n.d.