

**An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers,
Modern Japanese Art Print Contest, 1953-1960**

Repository: University of Northern Colorado, James A. Michener Library, Archival Services

Collection number: SC 1-12 (formerly Small 6. 1953-60. Modern Japanese Art Print Contest, 1953-1960)

Title: An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Modern Japanese Art Print Contest, 1953-1960

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on May 8, 2006, revised 2006 July 30.

Dates: 1953-1962

Creator or Collector:

Size: Less than one linear foot (ca. 38 letters).

Abstract:

Consists primarily of correspondence with Carl Zigrosser from 1953 to 1962 relating to Japanese prints and the Michener sponsored Modern Japanese Print Contest, an appreciation.

Scope and Content Note:

Photocopies of correspondence primarily between James A. Michener and Carl Zigrosser relating to Japanese prints, the Michener sponsored Modern Japanese Print Contest, an appreciation.

Also included in this collection are photocopies of Michener-related articles from this same period.

Biography of James A. Michener:

James Albert Michener was born in 1907 to unknown parents and raised as an orphan in the care of widow Mabel Michener of Doylestown, Pennsylvania. By the time he graduated from high school in 1925, he had visited 45 out of the 48 states. He was given a scholarship to Swarthmore, and after graduating summa cum laude in 1929, he traveled and continued his education at nine universities inside and outside the United States. During this time, he also taught in Pennsylvania, Colorado, and at the Harvard School of Education.

When he was not teaching, Michener worked as a textbook editor in New York, and he joined the British Merchant Marines. During WWII, he joined the Navy, making use of his experience in the British Merchant Marines to climb through the ranks to lieutenant and his knowledge of history to carry out sensitive assignments in the South Pacific. It was this experience that brought about *Tales of the South Pacific* in 1947, which won a Pulitzer Prize. Michener used this novel as the cornerstone of his writing career, publishing almost 50 books in the next 50 years, including *Sayonara*, *Hawaii*, *The Source*, *Iberia*, *Caravans*, *The Covenant*, *Sports in America*, and *Poland*.

In 1977, a four-part public television series called *The World of Michener* covered Israel, Hawaii, Spain, and Poland, just a few of the countries upon which his books have been based. Several other books have been turned into movies or miniseries, and two of his novels have been turned into musicals (most notably *South Pacific*, which won its own Pulitzer Prize).

During the time that he was publishing, however, Michener did not ignore the world around him. He ran for Congress in 1962 and held positions on several committees, including the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention, the U.S. Postal Service stamp committee, and an

advisory position on a council for NASA. He also spoke often at congressional hearings and at functions of those organizations in which he held particular interest.

James A. Michener died at the age of 90 on October 16, 1997 in Texas, three years after his third wife, Mari Yoriko Sabusawa. He had no children.

Biography of Carl Zigrosser:

Carl Zigrosser founded and directed the Weyhe Gallery in New York and served as the first Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use: User must receive permission from the Van Pelt Library for permission to reproduce or publish any information.

Preferred Citation: [Description of Item], James A. Michener papers (SC 1-number), Collection Name, Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Locations of Originals (if applicable): Special Collections, Van Pelt Library, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition Information (if applicable):

Donated by Special Collections, Van Pelt Library, University of Pennsylvania in 1998.

Documentation relating to the acquisition is on file in Archives, RG 13 S1 F11-2.

Subjects:

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997
Zigrosser, Carl, 1891-
Art, Japanese

Inventory:

Original finding aid created by Richard Gibboney on March 14, 2000.

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