



# Guide to the Edna Reindel Papers 1926-1979

Archives and Special Collections  
Library and Research Center  
National Museum of Women in the Arts

Re-processed by Patrick Brown  
August 2006  
3 linear feet; 4 containers

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## Biography

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Edna Reindel (1894-1990) was a painter, muralist and illustrator, known for her bold, delineated style. She was active from the late 1920s through the 1960s. She was born February 19, 1894 in Detroit, Michigan. At the Pratt Institute in New York from 1920 to 1923, she developed her skills in drawing and painting. She worked as a freelance artist and book illustrator.

In 1926 and 1932, Reindel received Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Fellowship Awards and participated in her first exhibition at New York's Weyhe Galleries in 1931 and first solo show at Macbeth Gallery in 1934.

In 1943, *LIFE Magazine* commissioned Reindel to paint a series entitled *Women at War*, depicting women welding and riveting for airplane assembly at the Lockheed bomber plant in California. Four of these paintings are part of the National Museum of Women in the Arts permanent collection.

Edna Reindel died at the age of 96 in Santa Monica, CA.

## Chronology

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- 1894**            *February 19.* Edna Reindel is born in Detroit, MI.
- 1918**            Studies watercolor painting at the Detroit School of Design.
- 1919-1922**      Moves to New York and studies drawing and painting in watercolor at the Pratt Institute.
- 1923**            Graduates from Pratt Institute and begins her five-year career as a book illustrator. Does free-lance work for book publishers.
- First commission is from Doubleday for their edition of Booth Tarkington's Women.
- 1926**            Paints first large mural in tempera watercolor for Edna Ferber's Showboat. Mural hangs in Chicago's Marshall Field Department store while the book is on sale there.
- Receives fellowship from the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. During the fellowship, she spends two months at an artists' colony (Mr. Tiffany's estate) in Oyster Bay, Long Island. This fellowship is renewed annually for Reindel through the year 1931.
- November 9-27.* Works done during Reindel's Tiffany Foundation fellowship are shown at the American Art Association-Anderson Galleries.
- 1927**            *November.* Eighth annual exhibition at American Art Association-Anderson Galleries for Tiffany Foundation members.

Produces illustrations for a story by A.A. Milne and the cover for the Christmas issue, both for *Country Life Magazine*.

- 1928** *November 7-24.* Ninth annual exhibition at the American Art Association-Anderson Galleries for Tiffany Foundation members.
- 1929** *November.* Tenth annual exhibition at the American Art Association-Anderson Galleries for Tiffany Foundation members.
- 1931** *April 25.* Annual salon of American paintings at the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo, NY.
- November 12.* Annual exhibition at the American Art Association-Anderson Galleries for Tiffany Foundation members.
- 1932** E. Weyhe, owner of a bookstore and gallery, exhibits and sells one of the Martha's Vineyard/New England Theme series. American editor of the *London Studio Magazine* sees Reindel's work and photographs those same pieces, later to appear in that magazine.
- Portrait of Linda appears on display in Macy's showroom.
- 1933** *May.* Group exhibition at Macbeth Gallery.
- 1933-1934** Is employed by the Works' Progress Administration (WPA) - Public Works of Art Project from December 1933 to May 1934, to paint easel paintings for Government Buildings. One of her paintings is located in the Labor Building in Washington, D.C., and another is at the Pentagon. The location of the other pieces is unknown.
- 1934** *January.* Robert Macbeth, of the Macbeth Gallery in the Annex (New York), organizes Edna Reindel's one-woman show.
- March.* Exhibition of about 15 paintings at Hamilton Street Galleries in Baltimore, MD.
- December.* Reindel is invited to exhibit her work at the Whitney Art Museum's Second Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting. Reindel's piece is an oil painting, Port of Edgartown from her "*New England Theme*."
- Exhibits at the Sartor Gallery in Dallas.
- 1935** *January.* In group show at MacBeth Gallery.
- Receives a commission from the Treasury Relief Art Project (T.R.A.P.) to paint a mural for the Stamford, CT Housing Project- Fairfield Court. The mural consists of four walls within a small reception room.
- Wins best magazine cover design for 1935.
- Is awarded the Art Club Director's medal for the best painting at the National Advertising Show. Rhododendron
- 1936** *January.* Wins 1<sup>st</sup> prize (\$50) at the McCreery Show in New York.
- October.* Reindel is solicited by the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh to show Port of Edgartown in their annual show.

The U.S. government puts on a large exhibition at the Whitney Museum, exhibiting one of Reindel's paintings and a scale model sketch of the mural for Stamford, CT.

**1937**      **April 30 - May 17.** Macbeth Gallery has a large show (31) of the artist's recent mural sketches and paintings from Martha's Vineyard.

**June.** In California with sick brother.

**August.** Returns to New York to finish the Stamford mural. *Life* reproduces the Martha's Vineyard paintings and writes an article about them. The paintings appear in the August 9, 1937 issue.

Exhibition at Fanfare House, Inc. at Brookside Av., Darien- Includes paintings and model of the Conference room in the Public Works Housing project in Stamford, Conn. at which she is presently working on a mural.

Exhibition- American section of the 1937 Carnegie Institute International at Pittsburgh.

Ball State Teacher's College in Indiana purchases one of the Martha's Vineyard series, The Netmenders.

**December.** Has a small exhibition at Macbeth to raise money to move to California. She sells four paintings to the Whitney, and one to the Berkshire Valley Museum.

**1938**      **January 15.** Reindel moves to San Fernando, CA.

**May 1.** Exhibition- Solo exhibition (22 paintings) at the Stendahl Galleries in Los Angeles.

**May.** Receives a letter from Mr. Wehle, the curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, who purchases her painting, Contemplation (a piece that shows annually at the Carnegie shows).

**July.** Exhibition of oils and watercolors at Stendahl Gallery.

She receives a commission to illustrate a book for Appleton Publishers.

Acquires a government commission to paint a mural for the post office building in Swainsboro, GA. The subject is Eli Whitney Experimenting with the Cotton-Gin.

A mural for the Jockey Club in Las Vegas, NV is commissioned.

**November - December 1.** Second solo exhibition (38 works) at Stendahl Gallery.

**1939**      **July.** Georgia post office mural is completed.

Wins 1<sup>st</sup> place at Beverly Hills Arts Festival.

Exhibition at Stendahl Galleries.

**1940**      Begins work on her portrait of Susie Tracy, Spencer Tracy's daughter.

Exhibition of 14 paintings at the Stendahl Galleries runs until February 27, then moves on to New York.

**March 12 – 30.** Exhibition at MacBeth Gallery- Results in the sale of Café Girl, to the Canajoharie Gallery in New York.

**November 1-30.** Solo exhibition at Los Angeles County Museum.

**December.** Edna's brother dies.

**1941**

Moves to Hollywood.

Completes a commissioned pencil drawing of the Maharajah of Indore.

Receives a government commission to paint a mural with undersea theme for the Governor's House, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands- is completed in 1942.

**June 2.** The Francis Gallery in Beverly Hills closes an exhibition of Reindel's work.

**1942-1943**

Moves to Santa Monica.

The Fisher Gallery in Southern California invites Reindel to have a one-woman show.

Receives commission from *Life* magazine to paint a series Reindel names Women at War (four of these paintings are owned by NMWA). She goes to Lockheed Air Craft Factory in Los Angeles, where she studies and sketches the women at work in the plants. Reindel completes nine paintings from these sketches that are then reproduced in color in the June 6, 1944 issue of *Life*.

**1943**

**April.** Exhibits at Stendahl Galleries and Francis Taylor Galleries.

**1944**

**June.** Exhibition of the nine paintings commissioned by *Life* magazine are shown at the Macbeth Galleries.

**1945**

**November 10 - December 15.** An exhibition of Reindel's work is shown at the Francis Taylor Gallery.

**1946**

Receives commission to work on a series of flower paintings for a lithographing firm.

**1947**

She begins a series of drawings in pen and ink, and watercolor on the subject of "The Effect of War on People."

**October 9 – December 7.** Dept. of Fine Arts-Carnegie Institute solicits Reindel's, Angels Weep at Los Alamos for their annual exhibition "Painting in the United States 1947."

**1948**

**November 6, 1948 - January 11, 1949.** Hiroshima from "The Effects of War on People" series is exhibited at the Chicago Art Institute's 58<sup>th</sup> annual exhibition of Abstract and Surrealist Art.

A large show at MacBeth's includes "The Effects of War on People" series and portraits of Ronald Coleman and Susie Tracy.

**1949**

Hiroshima also appears at the Whitney Annual exhibit in 1949.

**1950**

Completes a number of portraits of actor Gregory Peck's three sons and wife Greta.

Experiments with materials such as cesium, acrylic and metal (sculpture).

- 1953** Doris Duke asks Reindel to restore Persian miniature books, paintings and murals in her home. (Reindel had previously studied restoration).
- May 18 - June 11.* Exhibition at the James Vigeveno Galleries in Los Angeles called, "Circus Ballet Carnival."
- 1959** Returns to New York for five months.
- Is asked by Ernest Watson, editor of *The American Artist*, to write a book on flower painting.
- 1960** Receives fellowship from the Huntington Hartford Foundation.
- Spends four months producing the book on flowers, and how to paint other subjects.
- 1962** Moves to Los Angeles.
- Reindel begins to experiment with techniques such as painting with flat black and enamel and water-based latex paint. She completes a series in these mediums.
- She also is experimenting with collages, a practice she actually began in 1959, but it is first documented during this year.
- Finishes a group of metal sculptures.
- 1965** *May - August.* Takes three-month trip to Europe.
- Returns to Los Angeles and completes Doris Duke's restorations.
- Visits her family's home in Detroit several times through the year due to the illnesses of her two sisters.
- 1973** Buys a home in Southfield, MI to be close to her sisters.
- 1978** *December 5, 1978 - January 7, 1979.* Exhibition at the Rental Gallery at the Detroit Institute of the Arts, "Paintings, Drawings and Prints."
- 1990** Edna Reindel dies at the age of 96 in Santa Monica, CA.

## Scope and Content

The materials in this collection span the 1920s through the end of 1970s. The Edna Reindel Papers, although small, consists of a large variety of materials. The first series in the collection is Biographical Writings, including timelines, biographic sketches, and short essays (by Reindel, but also one contemporary, scholarly writing by Robert Henkes). There are also newspaper clippings, magazine articles, and other ephemera documenting Reindel's exhibitions and her career has a magazine illustrator.

The collection includes an unpublished book on painting by Reindel. There are two copies of the manuscript – one clean copy and the other contains corrections and comments.

The largest series in the collection is Photographs series, which have been divided into three sub-series: Reindel, Reproductions of Work, and Exhibition. Most of the photographs are reproductions of

Reindel's paintings, prints, collages, and sculptures. There are also several portraits of Reindel, including two large, matted prints of her in the studio. Some of the photographs in the Reproductions of Work sub-series are not by Reindel.

The correspondence in the collection, between Reindel and *Life* magazine, relates to the Women at War series for *Life* magazine, of which four are now in the NMWA permanent collection. The photostatic proofs of Reindel's sketches for *Life* constitute the last series of the collection. They are referenced in one of the letters from *Life* magazine.

The collection is divided into eight series:

- Series I: Biographical Writings, n.d .
- Series II: Clippings, 1926-1978 (chronologically)
- Series III: Ephemera, 1926-1979 (chronologically)
- Series IV: Manuscript, n.d. (original order)
- Series V: Photographs, 1930-1951 (chronologically)
  - Sub-Series 1: Reindel
  - Sub-Series 2: Reproductions of Work
  - Sub-Series 3: Exhibition
- Series VI: Correspondence, 1943-44 (chronologically)
- Series VII: Awards, 1935
- Series VIII: Proofs, 1943

## Provenance

The Edna Reindel Papers appear to have been donated in 1990 by Pauline Davidson, who had durable power of attorney for Reindel and who donated that year four of the paintings from Reindel's Women at War series. In letters from Davidson kept in the collection dossier, the following parts of the collection are mentioned: "I have photographs of Ms. Reindel sitting in a bomber. Also some correspondence between herself and *Life* Magazine. I have the original cartoons of this work (black ink on graph paper)" [this last part probably refers to the photostatic prints of the Women at War series, as they have a graph paper background. The sketches were in charcoal, not ink.] Later in 1990, Davidson sent "exhibition catalogues, clippings, reproductions of work, etc., for your Library and Research Center."

## Series Descriptions

### Series I: Biographical Writings, n.d

This series consists of biographical writings, which are made up primarily of timelines but also include biographic sketches, and short essays (by Reindel, but also one contemporary, scholarly writing by Robert Henkes).

### Series II: Clippings, 1926-1978 (chronologically)

This series is composed of clippings from 1926 to 1979, of which most are from the 1930s through the 1940s.

### Series III: Ephemera, 1926-1979 (chronologically)

This series includes ephemera including exhibition materials.

### Series IV: Manuscript, n.d. (original order)

This series is a manuscript by Reindel.

### Series V: Photographs, 1930-1951 (chronologically)

Sub-Series 1: Reindel  
Sub-Series 2: Reproductions of Work  
Sub-Series 3: Exhibition

Photographs is the largest series in the collection, which have been divided into three sub-series: Reindel, Reproductions of Work, and Exhibition. Most of the photographs are reproductions of Reindel's paintings, prints, collages, and sculptures. There are also several portraits of Reindel, including two large, matted prints of her in the studio. Some of the photographs in the Reproductions of Work sub-series are not by Reindel.

#### Series VI: Correspondence, 1943-1944 (chronologically)

This series is correspondence between Reindel and *Life* magazine, which relates to the Women at War series for *Life* magazine.

#### Series VII: Awards, 1935

This series is awards, which has two awards from Art Directors Club.

#### Series VIII: Proofs, 1943

The last series is a group of Photostatic proofs of Reindel's paintings "Women at War," sent by *Life* magazine.

## Processing

The Edna Reindel Papers are housed in four acid-free boxes in the Archives of the Library and Research Center. The collection is in generally good condition, however many of the papers, particularly the newspaper clippings, are brittle. The photographs are generally in good condition, but as many of the prints are not in protective sleeves -- the handler should take extra care.

In 1994, Freyda Spira wrote a finding aid for the Edna Reindel Papers. In 2003, this collection were processed and placed in acid-free folders. In 2006, Patrick Brown re-housed and reprocessed the collection. The collection was divided into eight series: Biographical Writings; Clippings; Ephemera; Manuscript; Photographs (with the three sub-series Reindel, Reproductions of Work, and Exhibition); Correspondence; and Awards. A finding aid was produced using DACS.

## Related Materials

The Archives on Women Artists in the Library and Research Center at the National Museum of Women in the Arts maintains a vertical file on Edna Reindel, which includes articles and other secondary research material.

## Box Inventory

### **SERIES I: BIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS**

#### **Box 1**

Biographical Writings, n.d.

### **SERIES II: CLIPPINGS, 1926-1978**

#### **Box 1**

Clippings, 1926-1929  
Clippings, 1930-1933  
Clippings, 1934  
Clippings, 1935-1936  
Clippings, 1937  
Clippings, 1938  
Clippings, 1939  
Clippings, 1940-1941  
Clippings, 1943-1946  
Clippings, 1947-1949  
Clippings, 1952, 1957-1958, 1978  
Clippings, Undated

**Box 4**

Clippings, Life, 1937, 1944

**SERIES III: EPHEMERA, 1926-1979**

**Box 1**

Exhibitions, 1926, 1928, 1937  
Exhibitions, 1940, 1945, 1947  
Exhibitions, 1953, 1978-1979

**SERIES IV: MANUSCRIPT**

**Box 1**

Painting Instruction Manuscript with Corrections, n.d.  
Painting Instruction Manuscript, n.d.

**SERIES V: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1930-1951**

**Sub-Series: Reindel**

**Box 2**

Portraits, n.d.  
Poses with Lockheed Aircraft, c. 1942  
Poses with Lockheed Factory Workers c. 1942

**Box 4**

Portraits, n.d.

**Sub-Series: Reproductions of Work**

**Box 2**

Reindel, 1930-1934  
Reindel, 1935-1939  
Reindel, 1940-1944  
Reindel, "Women at War," color, c. 1942  
Reindel, "Women at War," c. 1942  
Reindel, 1945-1949  
Reindel, 1950-1951  
Reindel, Collages, n.d.  
Reindel, Landscapes, n.d.  
Reindel, Murals, n.d.

Reindel, Pen & Ink, n.d.

**Box 3**

Reindel, Portraits, n.d.  
Reindel, Sculpture, n.d.  
Reindel, Still Lifes,  
Miniatures, n.d.  
Portraits, n.d.  
Sailboats, n.d.  
Sculpture, n.d.  
Still Lifes, n.d.

**Box 4**

Reindel, Still Life, n.d.

**Sub-Series: Exhibition**

**Box 3**

Macbeth Gallery, 1949

**SERIES VI: CORRESPONDENCE, 1943-1944**

**Box 3**

Life, 1943-1944

**SERIES VII: AWARDS, 1935**

**Box 4**

Art Directors Club Awards, 1935

**SERIES VIII: PROOFS, 1943**

**Box 4**

Photostats of "Women at War," 1943