

Raymond and Paula McNamara, Artists, Papers A&M 4606

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circa 1964-2004, 2016, and undated



Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

A&M 4606

Unit ID

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Unit Date

circa 1964-2004, 2016, and undated

Language

English .

source

McNamara, Erin

Creator

McNamara, Paula, 1925-2016

Creator

McNamara, Raymond, 1923-2021

Extent

1.92 Linear Feet 1 record carton, 15 in.; 1 document case, 5 in.; 1 flat storage box, 3 in.

Repository

West Virginia and Regional History Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is unprocessed but is open for research. Please contact the West Virginia & Regional History Center in advance to request access.

Biographical / Historical

Raymond E. McNamara (1923-2021)

Raymond was born in Chicago, IL in 1923 to second generation Irish American parents, Alice Fitzgerald McNamara and Raymond E. McNamara. Raised in the Hyde Park area of Chicago, he was exposed to a vibrant intellectual and socially aware community. To survive the difficulties of the Great Depression, Ray started working at a very young age to help support his family.

During his time in the Navy during World War II, Ray decided to pursue a career in fine art and education. He attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) on the GI Bill where he met his wife of 67 years, Paula, also an artist and educator. Having earned his Bachelor of Arts Education in 1950 from the SAIC, he went on to earn his Master of Arts Education from the University of Michigan in 1957, and a Master of Fine Arts from West Virginia University in 1975.

Ray began his teaching career holding positions in public schools, first in Illinois and then in Michigan. Interested in teaching on the college level, he accepted a position as the Acting Head of the Art Department at West Virginia State College in 1964, now West Virginia State University, where he taught for 25 years.

While raising a family and teaching, Ray continually produced and exhibited his artwork. His mediums ranged from painting and drawing to printmaking and sculpture. He was successful entering and exhibiting in art shows locally and nationally, receiving numerous awards for his work over the years. Besides the many private collectors of his work, his art can be found in the permanent collections of the Clay Center's Juliet Museum of Art, Huntington Museum of Art, West Virginia State University, Bluefield State College, and the West Virginia State Museum contemporary art collection.

(adapted from donor-created biography, undated)

Paula McNamara (1925-2016)

Paula Wagner McNamara of Charleston left this world on February 10, 2016. Paula, the only child of the late Leah and Paul Wagner, was born in St Louis, MO in 1925. Paula attended school in St. Louis, where she enjoyed dancing ballet, playing cello in her school orchestra, and participating in her local Girl Scouts troop. Her family moved to Chicago, IL during her high school years. She finished high school in Chicago at Hyde Park High School.

She continued her education at the University of Omaha in Nebraska and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, earning her Bachelor of Fine Arts. Paula continued her learning throughout her life while working and raising her children. She began graduate courses at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI, completing her Master's in Special Education at West Virginia University's College of Graduate Studies.

While attending the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Paula met and married Raymond McNamara in 1949. They had five children in the various places they lived. She gave all of her children and grandchildren the love of music, dance, art, humor, and good food.

Paula worked as an art librarian at the Chicago Public Library before beginning her family. In Marquette, MI, she played cello in the symphony. In Warren, MI, she was an art instructor for the Department of Parks and Recreation. After moving to Charleston in 1963, she continued her work as an art instructor with the adult

education program for the Kanawha County Board of Education, as well as at the Children's Museum (Sunrise) and the Charleston Art Gallery. When all of her children were in school, she began full time work at the West Virginia Rehabilitation Center in Institute, WV, as an art instructor and librarian. After retirement, she was the executive director of the WV Therapeutic Recreation Association.

Paula was an award-winning artist, exhibiting work wherever she lived. She was active in the Charleston art scene as a member of the Allied Artists of WV and the Clay Center's Collectors Club. Her work was shown at the Charleston Art Gallery and the Huntington Art Gallery, where she received many first and second place awards.

(adapted from Paula McNamara's obituary, 2016)

Scope and Contents

Sketchbooks, papers, and other material regarding the artwork of Raymond and Paula McNamara, artists based in Charleston, WV, including correspondence, catalogues of work, programs from gallery exhibitions and adjudications, and more. The sketchbooks, correspondence, and photographs are primarily those of Raymond McNamara.

Also included are a bound copy of each of their respective Masters theses, programs for several annual gallery exhibitions at the Charleston Art Gallery and other galleries, newspaper clippings, and a program for the West Virginia Women Artists at the University of Charleston event (2004). Also included is a clipping of Paula McNamara's obituary and the program from her memorial service and an updated Curriculum Vitae (2016).

Box 1 includes sketchbooks; exhibition programs; book reviews by Ramond; Raymond's curriculum vitae; photocopied newspaper clippings; and Raymond's incoming correspondence.

Box 2 includes Raymond's Masters Thesis, Prints and Me: The Changing Style of a Maturing Artist (1975); Paula's Masters Thesis, The Effects of Relaxation Training on Impulsivity and On-task Behavior (1983); newspaper clippings regarding the McNamaras' work; incoming correspondence for the McNamaras; and photographs of their artwork. Most materials are organized by decade from the 1960s through the 2000s.

Box 3 includes sketchbooks; Paula's obituary and funeral service materials; and two Margaret Harold "Prize-Winning Graphics" and one "Prize-Winning Paintings" booklets, each featuring Raymond's artwork.

Keywords

McNamara, Erin