

**Inventory to a Special Collection at Claremont Heritage
Mary Gleason Art Collection
2018.006T**

Descriptive Summary

- Title:** Mary Gleason Art Collection
- Dates:** 1950s – 1990s
- Collection Number:** 2018.006T
- Creator/Collector:** Mary Gleason, Richard Gleason
- Extent:** 10 linear feet (9 boxes and 1 large file folder); containing ceramics, paintings, drawings, textiles, sketches, and stationary
- Repository:** Claremont Heritage Special Collections and Archives
Claremont, California 91711
- Language of Material:** English
- Access:** The collection is open for research use.
- Publication Rights:** Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.
- Preferred Citation:** Mary Gleason Art Collection. Claremont Heritage.
- Abstract:** The Mary Gleason Art Collection includes a variety of artwork made primarily by Mary Gleason and her son, Richard Gleason. Mary Gleason was a longtime Claremont resident and professor at Scripps College from 1936 to 1943.

Biography/Administrative History:

Mary Easton Gleason was born in Pasadena, California on August 30, 1907. The youngest Louis B. and Honor H. Easton's 6 children, Mary grew up in Pasadena and Anaheim where she attended Anaheim schools before graduating from UC Berkeley in 1930, later attending the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles. In 1936, Mary took a position in the Scripps College art department where she taught costume design and weaving until 1943.

Mary Gleason married John Howes Gleason, a professor of history at Pomona College, in 1940. She was an active member of the community, teaching Sunday School at the Claremont Church and was superintendent of fifth and sixth grade

classes. She was also a troop leader for the local Girl Scouts, chairman of volunteers in the American Red Cross, a trustee at Mt. San Antonio Gardens, and assisted with art programs in the Pomona public schools.

In the early 1960s Mary Gleason became interested in the American Field Service and served as the Claremont Chapter chairman for two years and as a host mother to Emil Von Maltitz from South Africa in 1962 -1963. This involvement with AFS led to an exchange year spent in Durban, South Africa. Mrs. Gleason's other travels outside of Claremont came during World War II when she accompanied her husband to Middletown, Connecticut and Washington DC for his US Navy duties and for sabbatical leaves to Arlington, Massachusetts and Oxford England.

Marion "Hoppy" Stewart was a student of Gleason's at Scripps College, later succeeding her as a faculty member and remaining a close friend throughout their lives. Stewart mentions, "It should be noted that Mary did all of the floral arrangements for all of the teas and events at Scripps and was extremely talented at that. When I first came here and over the years, she was generous and kind with her time. She agreed to give a summer course in weaving that started me on my career. I was greatly benefited by her presence at Scripps."

Mary Gleason passed away in 1992. Richard Gleason still lives in Claremont as of 2001.

Scope and Content of Collection:

The Mary Gleason Art Collection includes a variety artwork by Mary Gleason and her son, Richard Gleason, both longtime residents of Claremont. The collection is primarily made up of ceramics, paintings, and textiles, with drawings, sketches, and other materials also included. The collection also includes some ceramic pieces by unknown artists, work by Mary's mother, Honor Webster, and many unsigned works that are most likely Mary's (ceramics and textiles) or Richard's (drawings and paintings). The ceramics in this collection include many useable works like bowls, plates, vases, candle holders, and cups, but also decorative pieces such as tiles and animal sculptures. The textiles are of note due to Mary's position as a textile professor at Scripps and capture the craft and skill that went into her work. The drawings are also a point of interest as they encompass works from throughout Richard Gleason's life from childhood to adulthood that include many studies and sketches, which illustrate the creative process. Though most works in this collection are not dated, the temporal scope of this collection is large, with dated works ranging from 1954 to 1991.

Indexing Terms: Art
Ceramics
Claremont, CA
Claremont Colleges
Craft

Drawing
Painting
Scripps College
Textiles

Container Listing: See attached Container List.