

MS-32

The Museum of Northern Arizona
Harold S. Colton Memorial Library
3101 N. Fort Valley Road
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(928)774-5213 ext. 256

Title

Robert C. Euler collection

Dates

circa 1940s

Extent

6 sandpainting reproductions, 12 photographic images (6 slides, 6 transparencies)

Name of Creator(s)

Spangle, Elsie

Biographical History

Robert Clark Euler (8 August 1924 - 13 January 2002) was born in Brooklyn, New York. During World War II and the Korean War he was a decorated captain the Marine Corps. He earned his BA and MA in economics at Northern Arizona University, and received his PhD from the University of New Mexico.

Early in his career, Euler spent 2 years living with a Navajo family in order to better understand Navajo economies. Throughout his life, his interest in Native American communities only increased. He undertook interdisciplinary work in archaeology, geology, biology, and paleontology, among other areas and worked closely with the Hopis, Havasupais, Hualapais, and Southern Paiutes.

Euler's work included research, teaching, and consulting. He was chair of the Anthropology Department at Northern Arizona University and the University of Utah. He founded the Center for Man and Environment at Prescott College, and later became president of Prescott College. He also taught at Wesleyan University, Arizona State University, and Fort Lewis College and eventually became curator of anthropology at the Museum of Northern Arizona.

In 1974, Senator Barry Goldwater appointed Euler research anthropologist and tribal liaison for the Grand Canyon National Park—a position he would hold for a decade. He was often involved in advising the tribes on land-claim issues. His most important contribution during this time was drafting the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which allowed for the use of Havasupai Traditional Use Lands that Congress has established as part of the Grand Canyon through the Grand Canyon National Park Enlargement Act of 1975. The MOU continues to guide National Park Service and Havasupai management of these lands.

Euler passed away in Prescott in early 2002.

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Scope and Content

This collection consists of 6 Nightway sandpainting reproductions drawn by Elsie Spangle in the late 1940s. The original artist of the sandpaintings, Red Woman's Son (Ashon Bechee Beyaj), had asked another Navajo 40 years prior to copy the sandpaintings on wrapping paper. Red Woman's Son then carried these around with him until he decided he would like better copies made. The superintendant at Wupatki had his ranger, Robert Euler, and Elsie Spangle copy the drawings down on wrapping paper. Red Woman's Son agreed that the copies made by Spangle should be deposited at the Museum of Northern Arizona, so long as he could keep the photographic copies.

System of Arrangement

The original series number has been maintained to ensure that Leland C Wyman's sandpainting index numbers will match. There is no series 1.

Series 2: Nightway Sandpainting Reproductions

Conditions Governing Access

This collection contains culturally sensitive material (Navajo sandpaintings). Therefore, the MS-32 collection has been restricted. This restriction was placed by staff at the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department in 2001 and 2004. Contact the Museum of Northern Arizona archivist for more information.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

Unpublished and published manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection donated by Robert C. Euler in 1950 at the request of the original artist of the sandpaintings (not the reproductions).

Existence and Location of Copies

An album of photographs of the sandpainting reproductions was given to the original artist of the sandpaintings, Red Woman's Son (Ashon Bechee Beyaj).

Related Archival Materials

The Museum of Northern Arizona has related archival collections that contain sandpainting images; these have been collected, researched, and cross-indexed by Wyman with material in his sandpainting file:

- MS-22 (Gladys A. Reichard collection)
- MS-27 (Louisa Wade Wetherill collection)
- MS-33 (Leland C. Wyman Sandpainting collection)
- MS-34 (Katherine M. Harvey Sandpainting collection)
- MS-63 (Father Berard Haile collection)
- MS-100 (Tom Bahti collection)
- MS-110 (Leland C. Wyman collection)

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- MS-132 (Barry Goldwater collection)

Northern Arizona University has a Robert C. Euler collection at the Cline Library, with records mostly relating to his research, surveys, and excavations performed on the Colorado Plateau. Their collection also includes photographs of Euler and various Navajos during the time that the sandpainting reproductions were made.

Publication Note

James Faris used the MS-32 material for his book:

Faris, James C. 1990. *The Nightway: a history and a history of documentation of a Navajo ceremonial*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Description Control

Finding aid written by Eileen Hogan using *DACS*, 1 September 2010

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Title

Series 2: Nightway Sandpainting Reproductions

Dates

circa 1940s

Extent

6 sandpainting reproductions, 12 photographic images (6 slides, 6 transparencies)

Scope and Content

This series consists of 6 Nightway sandpainting reproductions drawn by Elsie Spangle in the late 1940s, as well as a slide and transparency of each.

Series 2: Nightway Sandpainting Reproductions				
Item #	Item Description	Date(s)	Extent	Box/Folder
MS-32-2-1	Elsie Spangle, Nightway, <i>Water Sprinkler</i> [SP Index NC-43]	circa 1940s	1 painting, 1 slide, 1 transparency	SP Image Box 1.6, S.MC-1
MS-32-2-2	Elsie Spangle, Nightway, <i>Fringe Mouths with Water Pool</i> [SP Index NC-58]	circa 1940s	1 painting, 1 slide, 1 transparency	SP Image Box 1.6, S.MC-1
MS-32-2-3	Elsie Spangle, Nightway, <i>Fringe Mouths</i> [SP Index NC-54]	circa 1940s	1 painting, 1 slide, 1 transparency	SP Image Box 1.6, S.MC-1
MS-32-2-4	Elsie Spangle, Nightway, <i>First Dancers</i> [SP Index NC-22]	circa 1940s	1 painting, 1 slide, 1 transparency	SP Image Box 1.6, S.MC-1
MS-32-2-5	Elsie Spangle, Nightway, <i>First Dancers</i> [SP Index NC-28]	circa 1940s	1 painting, 1 slide, 1 transparency	SP Image Box 1.6, S.MC-1
MS-32-2-6	Elsie Spangle, Nightway, <i>Whirling Logs</i> [SP Index NC-30]	circa 1940s	1 painting, 1 slide, 1 transparency	SP Image Box 1.6, S.MC-1

LCSH Access Points

Navajo Indians

Navajo Indians -- Painting

Navajo Indians -- Rites and ceremonies

Sandpaintings

Wyman, Leland Clifton, 1897-1988