

MS-235

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

Title

Fred Kabotie collection

Dates

1965-1977

Extent

7.5 cm textual, 464 photographic images (116 prints, 333 slides, 15 transparencies), 1 7-inch reel

Name of Creator(s)

Belknap, Bill, 1920-
Kabotie, Fred
Wright, Barton

Biographical History

Fred Kabotie (circa February 1900 - February 28 1986) was born in Shungopovi, Second Mesa, Arizona, on the Hopi Reservation. His Hopi name is *Naqavoy'ma* (Day After Day).

Kabotie was born into a deeply traditional family and in 1906 they, together with other Hopis, founded Hotevilla, a community dedicated to preserving Hopi traditions that were disappearing. By 1915, the government was forcing Hopi children to attend the Santa Fe Indian School to be taught discipline. It was there that he was given the name Fred Kabotie and began to cultivate his artistic skills. His teacher encouraged him to use his Native culture for inspiration. Kabotie, who is most well known for his paintings, began to paint Hopi katsinas. His paintings were popular and he began to sell them to friends and collectors.

In 1920 he became a book illustrator and later got work at the Museum of New Mexico and the School of American Research depicting Hopi traditions and customs along with other well-known Native artists. Throughout the 1930s, Kabotie was asked to reproduce Awatovi murals by the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. In 1933, Kabotie was commissioned by Mary Colter, an architect working for the Fred Harvey Company, to paint murals in her Desert View Watchtower on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon.

Kabotie returned to Shungopovi in 1929 where he was initiated and married Alice. By 1937 a high school opened on the reservation for Hopi students. Kabotie taught painting there for 22 years, from 1937-1959.

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In the 1940s, at the suggestion of the Museum of Northern Arizona, Kabotie and his cousin developed a uniquely Hopi style of silverwork that up until then was nonexistent. Their innovative design employed a distinct overlay technique inspired by the designs on traditional Hopi pottery. In 1949, Kabotie helped establish the Hopi Silvercraft Cooperative Guild and later the Hopi Cultural Center.

This teacher, craftsman, lecturer, and painter was dubbed the *Dean of Native-American Painting*. Kabotie passed away in 1986 after a long illness. His artistic legacy was not lost, but taken up by both his son and grandson.

Scope and Content

This collection contains transcriptions from an oral history interview Bill Belknap conducted with Kabotie as well as the original audio reel, which would serve as the basis for Belknap's biography of Kabotie. Also included is a draft/excerpt of that biography. There is also a letter from Kabotie to Edward Danson detailing the history of the Hopi Silvercraft Cooperative Guild, as well as photographic images of Kabotie's paintings (that belong to various institutions), and miscellaneous articles about Kabotie.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

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Languages and Scripts of the Materials

English & Hopi

Custodial History

Author Bill Belknap transferred his original 1975 and 1976 "Talks with Fred Kabotie" audio recordings to Barton Wright to be transcribed. MNA does not have these recordings.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Fred Kabotie donated a portion of this collection (accession #MS-66) in 1966. Later accruals (MS-235, MS-345) were made by Barton Wright in 1977.

Publication Note

Kabotie, Fred, and Bill Belknap. 1977. *Fred Kabotie, Hopi Indian artist: an autobiography told with Bill Belknap*. Flagstaff: Museum of Northern Arizona.

Note

Kabotie's paintings can be found at:

- The Corcoran Gallery
- The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art
- Gilcrease Museum

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- Great Plains Art Museum
- The Heard Museum
- Museum of New Mexico
- Museum of Northern Arizona
- National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution
- The Newark Museum
- The Peabody Museum, Harvard University
- The Philbrook Museum of Art

Description Control

Finding aid written by Eileen Hogan using *DACS*, 15 October 2010

| Fred Kabotie collection | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| File # | File Description | Date(s) | Extent | Box/Folder |
| MS-235-1 | Photographic Images of Kabotie's Artwork | undated | 15 transparencies, 28 prints | 1.1 |
| MS-235-2 | History of the Hopi Silvercraft Cooperative Guild: correspondence | 1965 | .25 cm textual | 1.2 |
| MS-235-3 | Miscellaneous Articles, Correspondence, Announcement | 1976-1977 | .25 cm textual | 1.3 |
| MS-235-4 | "Day After Day": autobiography excerpt | 1977 | 1 cm textual | 1.4 |
| MS-235-5 | Barton Wright interview of Kabotie about paintings | 1977 | 1 audio reel | 1.5 |
| MS-235-6 | "Talks With Fred Kabotie" | 1975 | 3 cm textual | 1.6 |
| MS-235-7 | "Talks With Fred Kabotie" | 1976 | 3 cm textual | 1.7 |
| MS-235-8 | Slides and Prints of Paintings Binder | undated | 333 slides, 88 prints | 2 |

LCSH Access Points

Belknap, Bill, 1920-
First Mesa (Ariz. : Mesa)
Hopi Indian Reservation (Ariz.)
Hopi Indians
Hopi Indians -- Arizona -- Social life and customs
Hopi Indians -- Correspondence
Hopi Indians -- Jewelry
Hopi painting
Hopi silverwork
Kabotie, Fred
Shungopavi (Ariz.)
Second Mesa (Ariz. : Mesa) -- Social life and customs
Third Mesa (Ariz.) -- Social life and customs
Wright, Barton