

University of Toronto Archives



Irene Romana Nosyk
B2008-0025
B2024-0028

Prepared by G. Wells
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Irene Romana Nosyk Fonds

Biographical Note

Irene Romana Nosyk was born in Chortkiv in Western Ukraine on May 30, 1928. Following the war, she and her parents moved to Prague, Czech Republic and later Innsbruck, Austria where she received her early education and developed her artistic talent. She studied art at the University of Innsbruck from 1945-1949 and in 1949 at The Art Academy of the well-known Austrian artist Kirchmayer. According to a *Toronto Star* article published in January 1957, "In 1947 three of her portraits were included in a collection at the Innsbruck gallery. A year later they were sent to Switzerland exhibits." While attending the University she was offered a scholarship to study art in Rome by the international organization Pax Romana. But her family had already decided to move to Canada, and the fall of 1949, Irene, with her parents, Ivan and Lydia, arrived in Winnipeg.

The following year they moved to Toronto, and her father soon found work as a Lab assistant with the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto. Irene resumed her art studies at the Ontario College of Art, but did not graduate. It was during this time that the University's Department of Zoology was looking for a staff artist to produce drawings of specimens to illustrate lectures and publications. Professor Coventry, and the then Chair of the department, Prof. J. R. Dymond interviewed Irene and on seeing samples of her art work, hired her immediately in 1952. During her more than twenty years with the department, Ms Nosyk produced over 2000 wall charts and numerous illustrations as teaching aids and for publications. (See A2007-0019) The wall charts, measuring an average of 6 feet by 4 feet, were used for more than 35 years by academic staff to illustrate lectures. As the only scientific staff artist, Ms Nosyk sketched frequently from live specimens viewed through her microscope. For the first ten years, her studio was located in the old Botany building at 6 Queen's Park Crescent. When the new Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories building opened in 1965 she moved to the new building and as well, produced a number of paintings in celebration. The Department, however, did not acquire any of these for the new building.

Irene remained with the department for more than twenty years, resigning in 1976 to take a position as staff artist at a medical clinic in New York. Unfortunately, her parents' advanced age and fragile health, forced her to return to Toronto within months of her appointment.

Irene also specializes in oil, acrylic, color inks and mosaics. Over the years she has participated in numerous art exhibitions and shows. Her art is found in many private collections in North American and remains an active member of The Ukrainian Association of Visual Arts in Canada. She continues to live and paint in her family home in Toronto. ¹

¹ Compiled in part from information provided by Christine Hyder in message to Garron Wells Feb. 20, 2009 and from personal interviews with Irene Nosyk.

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ca1966-1975

13 paintings (8.0 m)

57 digital images (jpg)

0.07 m of slides, negatives and prints

0.07 m of textual

0.54 m (1 box) scrapbook containing artwork

Scope and Content

B2008-0025 accession consists of 13 oil paintings depicting various zoological specimens. A series of seven oil on canvas framed paintings are for the most part untitled works, depicting the origin of life, algae, and caterpillars, among others, and were originally produced for an exhibition in the late 1960s. An unframed series of six oil on canvas paintings were produced by the artist for the University's new Zoology building which opened in 1965. They were not acquired by the Department and never exhibited in the building.

This accession also contains 14 digital photographs showing Irene Nosyk painting charts for the Department of Zoology as well as 43 digital scans of an original scrapbook documenting Nosyk's work at the University of Toronto.

B2024-0028 consists of a scrapbook that highlights the types of drawings and paintings done for Zoology including cartoons, sketches, paintings of cells, calligraphy notes, title page artwork. There is also slides and negatives documenting many of the teaching charts in A2007-0019 as well as many of her other drawings she did for academic papers, newsletters, overheads, reports etc... Finally, saved a copy of Laboratory Exercises for First Year Student, Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories, presumably because it contains many her illustrations. Filed at the back are original drawings and photographs used for the illustrations.

Related accessions: A2007-0019

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Irene Romana Nosyk Fonds

B2008-0025 - Paintings

/Box (file)	Title	Dates
B2008-0025/001P	"Origin of Life; oil on canvas; 90 X 127 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/002P	Untitled [algae]; oil on canvas; 118 X 127 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/003P	Untitled; oil on canvas; 102 X 104 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/004P	Untitled; oil on canvas; 121 X 130 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/005P	Untitled; oil on canvas; 94 X 109 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/006P	[Caterpillar]; oil on canvas; 52 X 132 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/007P	[Caterpillar emerging from egg]; oil on canvas; 36 X 46 cm; framed	ca 1969
B2008-0025/008P & /009P	Series of 6 paintings depicting emergence of life; oil on board; 47 X 60 cm; unframed	ca 1966

B2008-0025 Digital photographs

B2008-0025/010P	14 images showing Nosyk painting zoology charts	ca. 1957
B2008-0025/011P	43 scanned pages - This scrapbook documents Nosyk's career as an illustrator in the Department of Zoology. The scrapbook contain photographs, newspapers clippings, the cover and feature article about Nosyk that appeared in the Star Weekly for September 14 1957. Also includes examples of technical and cartoon drawings that she did for the department.	ca. 1957-1965

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B2024-0028/001P	Scrapbook of artwork done by Nosyk for the Department of Zoology	196- 1975
B2024-0028/002P	Slides and negatives of her work ; a few prints showing Nosyk	196- 197-
B2024-0028/001	Laboratory Exercises for First Year Student, Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories	197-