

James Reese collection, 1941-1983, bulk 1954-1983

Finding aid prepared by Stacey Doyle, Project Archivist, George Eastman Museum, Moving Image Department, November 2014

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Reese, James, 1914-1993

Title: James Reese collection

Dates: 1941-1983, bulk 1954-1983

Physical Extent: 1.5 cubic feet

Repository:

Moving Image Department

George Eastman Museum

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Content Abstract : The James Reese collection consists of artwork, awards, scripts, and materials from film labs, all of which are related to Reese's work. It also consists of 16mm prints of his films, as well as films he collected.

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Location: Collection materials are located onsite.

Access Restrictions: Collection is open to research upon request.

Copyright: George Eastman Museum holds the rights to the physical materials but not intellectual property rights.

Acquisition Information: The collection was donated by the estate of James Reese in 1994, 1998, and 2005.

Custodial Information: Collection materials were created or collected by Mr. Reese and maintained by him during his lifetime.

Funding for this finding aid was provided by a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources' Hidden Collections Program.

Biographical Note

James Harold Reese (often credited as "Jay Reese") was born on May 20, 1914. His early career in film production was dedicated to industrial films, but towards the end of his life he explored his interest in ethnographic, sociological, and nature films.

Reese attended the University of Washington, where he was a member of the Kappa Sigma fraternity and the university basketball team. He received a Bachelor of Arts in August 1938 and a Master of Arts in English in August 1939 with a thesis titled "Emerson and Spinoza: a Comparative Study of Their Metaphysics and Ethics and Emerson's Position as a Monistic Thinker."

In the 1950s and early 1960s, Reese served as Production Supervisor of the Motion Picture Unit of General Electric's Heavy Military Electronics Department in Syracuse, New York, where he was involved in a number of industrial film productions, including the Golden Eagle award-winning *Hands of Industry* (1962).

Reese was employed by the College at Brockport, State University of New York (SUNY Brockport) from 1966 to 1974. When he left, he was listed in staff directories as Assistant Director of Cinematography, ECC (Educational Communication Center). During his time there he was involved in the production of numerous films about the university and the local environment, as well as more personal interests. These films include a series on the Bergen Swamp shot over the course of several seasons, an orientation film for SUNY Brockport entitled *What is a College?* (ca. 1968), and the Golden Eagle award winning, *The Faces of Jocotepec* (1970) about the disappearing native cultures of Mexico.

James Reese passed away on October 11, 1993.

Scope and Content Note

The James Reese collection consists of scripts, photographs, films, illustrations by Reese, awards, and materials from film laboratories. The materials are predominantly professional rather than personal. They do not cover the entirety of his career; most of the materials are from Reese's time at SUNY Brockport, and there are some materials dating from his time with General Electric. Geographically, the collection covers work done in the United States and Mexico.

A particular strength of the collection is material related to film production, with numerous timing cards and information from film-processing labs.

Arrangement of the Collection and Series List

The collection is divided into five series, based on topic or medium: Art/Photographs, Awards, Film Lab/Production Materials, Films, and Scripts. The films are stored separately from the other materials, which are housed in one standard-sized archival box and one medium-sized flat box. Prior to processing, all materials that were not films were stored in a single standard-sized archival box. This rehousing was done for reasons of size and safekeeping. The details of the five series that comprise the collection are as follows:

Series 1, Art/Photographs, 1956-1983

Series 2, Awards, 1960-1970

Series 3, Film Lab/Production Materials, 1969-1975, undated

Series 4, Films, 1941-1973, undated

Subseries 1, Produced, 1955-1973, undated

Subseries 2, Collected, 1941-1945, undated

Series 5, Scripts, 1954-ca. 1973, undated

Access Terms

Personal Names:

Bobear, Jean B., 1922-2009

Reese, James, 1914-1993

Corporate Names:

Byron Motion Pictures

General Electric Corporation

State University of New York College at Brockport

Subjects:

Botany -- New York (State)

Ethnographic films -- United States

Education, Higher -- New York (State)

Industrial films
Indian art--Northwest Coast of North America
Indians of Mexico

Form and Genre Types:

acetate film
albums (books)
awards
black-and-white photographs
booklets
brochures
business records
color photographs
commercial correspondence
drawings (visual works)
filmmaking and filmmaking processes and techniques
grant proposals
notes
photograph albums
programs (documents)
screenplays
shipping records
trophies (objects)

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

James Reese Collection, 1941-1983, bulk 1954-1983, George Eastman Museum, Moving Image Department, Stills, Posters and Paper Collections

Related Collections

Researchers interested in this collection may also wish to consult the following:

The Rose Archives at the College of Brockport
Drake Memorial Library
The College of Brockport, State University of New York
<https://www.brockport.edu/about/archives>

SUNY Brockport also houses collections related to the history of western New York State which may be relevant to the study of James Reese. Please contact the college archivist for further details.

Container List Arranged by Series

Series 1, Art/Photographs, 1956-1983

Materials are in English.

Scope and Content

Series consists of photographs and drawings. Photographs show Reese throughout his career and subjects from film projects. Illustrations are for his film *The Theft of the Sun* (1957). Series consists of four albums, all housed in Box C111. Original order was maintained.

Box C111

Folder 21: *The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Falisco, Mexico; 1972-1980

Photo album, with black and white photos affixed to pages in a spiral-bound red book, alongside an extensive write-up on the film.

Box C111

Folder 22: "Plants, Art, & Architecture in the Americas -- The Maya, Mixtec, & Zapotec of Mexico" -- James H. Reese, Brockport, New York; 1983

Photo album, in the form of a spiral-bound green book. Color photographs are placed alongside an extensive write-up and captions.

Box C111

Folder 29: [Unlabeled Blue Album]; 1956, 1962, 1970-1971

Contains photographs and clippings, mostly of Reese, and a brief biography of Reese from a convention flyer. Includes reproduction of a childhood photo of Reese, from ca. 1923.

Box C111

Folder 31: [Unlabeled Black Album]; 1957

Bound album, with black and white illustrations, photographs, and a typed script for *The Theft of the Sun*.

Series 2, Awards, 1960-1970

Materials are in English.

Scope and Content

Series consists of one three-dimensional object and one folder containing certificates and awards for Reese's work for General Electric and the work he did while at SUNY Brockport. Items are housed in a box designated for oversized materials, Box C111-OS. They were originally in box C111.

Box C111-OS

Folder 3: James H. Reese Film Awards; 1961-1963, 1967, 1970

Folder contains certificates and awards for the following films: *The Prosperity of Water*, *The Hands of Industry*, *Dr. Lipschitz's Fairytale*, *The Faces of Jocotepec*, *Audio-Visual Tutorial Program in Principles of Biology*.

Box C111-OS

Folder 4: Annual Industrial Film Award; 1960

Certificate of Merit awarded to the General Electric Company for *The Prosperity of Water* in the class of public relations, September 1960. Item is a certificate laminated on wood suitable for hanging. Size is approximately 15" x 12".

Series 3, Film Lab/Production Materials, 1969-1975, undated

Materials are in English

Scope and Content

Series consists of 18 folders containing price lists, promotional materials, shipping memos, and timing cards from film labs related to the production of Reese's films. This series also contains notes and labels that were found inside film cans in this collection. All folders are housed in Box C111 and Box C111-OS. Many folders consist of items originally found in film cans.

Box C111

Folder 5: ["Botany" Project Materials]; 1969, 1971

Material related to "Botany" project. Information about this footage, research and development grant proposal, sequence of scenes, and correspondence.

Box C111

Folder 6: Active Contract Price Lists; 1969, 1972

Film laboratory price lists; Consolidated Film Industries motion picture film calculator

Box C111

Folder 7: [*The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Notes and Labels]; ca. 1970

Notes and labels found inside *The Faces of Jocotepec* film cans.

Box C111

Folder 8: [*History, The Mayas and Palenque* -- Timing Cards]; 1972-1973

Film printer timing card for "*History, The Mayas* Prod. #149," dated 1972 and film printer timing card for "Prod. #160 *Palenque*." Both are from Byron Motion Pictures.

Box C111

Folder 9: [*Bergen Swamp -- Fall 1970 -- Timing Card*]; 1970
Byron Motion Pictures timing card for *Bergen Swamp -- Fall 1970*.

Box C111
Folder 10: [*Botany -- Timing Card*]; 1970
Byron Motion Pictures timing card for *Botany* and notes on index card.

Box C111
Folder 11: [*Botany -- Shipping Memo*]; 1970
Byron Motion Pictures shipping memo and timing card for *Botany*.

Box C111
Folder 12: [*Dance #1 Chaconne in D Minor -- Timing Card*]; 1971
Byron Motion Pictures timing card for "*Dance #1 Chaconne in D Minor*."

Box C111
Folder 13: [*Bergen Swamp -- July 1970 -- Timing Card*]; 1973
Byron Motion Pictures timing card for *Bergen Swamp -- July 1970*.

Box C111
Folder 14: [*Bergen Swamp -- Spring 1969 and Bergen Swamp -- Lab Order and Shipping Memo*]; 1969-1970
Capital Film Laboratories daily lab order for *Bergen Swamp -- Spring 1969*; Byron Motion Pictures shipping memo for *Bergen Swamp*; notes

Box C111
Folder 15: [*Bergen Swamp -- Label*]; undated
Label from film can for *Bergen Swamp -- "Violets and Periwinkle Original."*

Box C111
Folder 16: [*The Faces of Jocotepec -- Mixing Cue Sheets*]; ca. 1970
Byron Motion Pictures mixing cue sheets for reels 1 and 2 of *The Faces of Jocotepec*.

Box C111
Folder 17: [*The Faces of Jocotepec -- Labels and Notes*]; undated
Labels and notes from film can.

Box C111
Folder 18: [*Dance #3 Field of Light -- Timing Card*]; 1971
Byron Motion Pictures timing card for *Dance #3 Field of Light*.

Box C111
Folder 19: [*The Faces of Jocotepec -- Labels*]; ca. 1970
Labels from *The Faces of Jocotepec* film can.

Box C111

Folder 32: [Unlabeled box of index cards]; undated

Index cards organized alphabetically by name of shot and roll number, with list of camera shots.

Box C111-OS

Folder 1: Kirby and Maya Titles; 1973

Title cards for "Reese -- Palenque -- 1973," "Trees in Flower," "Cities of the Ancient Mayas," and a Part 1 title card for "Palenque 300-900 A.D.," as well as some production cards.

Box C111-OS

Folder 2: Byron Color-Correct Film List; 1975

Promotional folder from Byron Film and Video Laboratories, includes price list and note from the company.

Series 4, Films, 1941-1973, undated

Materials are in English.

Scope and Content

Series consists of approximately 45 individual titles. All material is housed in 16mm single and double reel cans and consists of prints, reversal material, A/B rolls, sound track, ¼" tape, trims, and out-takes. Titles may be inexact as additional inspection and assessment of these materials is needed. This series is split into two sub-series, one for films that Reese worked on (titled "Produced") and one for films that he collected (titled "Collected"). Material is arranged following George Eastman Museum protocol for film cataloging.

Separated Material

The material in this series is located in the safety vaults of the Moving Image Department at George Eastman Museum. For inquiries regarding access to these materials, please contact the Film Study Center at filmstudycenter@eastman.org.

Subseries 1, Produced, 1955-1973, undated

Art Patterns of the Northwest Coast Indians; 1955

16mm print

Wings Over Hanford; ca. 1956

16mm print

Hands Across the Atom; ca. 1956
16mm print

The Prosperity of Water; ca. 1960
16mm print

Hands of Industry; 1962
16mm print

Dr. Lipshitz's Fairytale; ca. 1963
16mm print

What is a College?; ca. 1968
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- May 1968; 1968
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- Fall 1968; 1968
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- Spring 1969; 1969
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- September 1969; 1969
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- Winter 1969; 1969
16mm print

Dance Film -- LeRoi Jones Poetry; 1969
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- July 1970; 1970
16mm print

Bergen Swamp -- July 1970; 1970
16mm print

Bergen Swamp Outtakes; ca. 1970
16mm print

Botany; ca. 1970

16mm print

The Faces of Jocotepec; 1970

16mm print and 1/4" magnetic audio tape

Brockport Resident Dance Co. in Dress Rehearsals -- Spring Concerts -- April 1971; 1971

16mm print

Brockport Resident Dance Co. -- Dance #3 "Field of Light," ca. 1971

16mm print

Dance #4; ca. 1972

16mm print

The Ernst Rosenkrantz Piano; 1972

16mm print

Cities of the Ancient Mayas -- Part 1, Palenque, 300-900 A.D.; 1973

16mm print

Bonampak; ca. 1973

16mm print

Uxmal; ca. 1973

16mm print

Mating behavior of the European corn borer: Ostrinia nubilalis; 1973

16mm print

An Adventure in Metallurgy: The Micro-Deformation and Fracture in Uranium; undated

16mm print

The Color Patterns of Uranium Under Stress; undated

16mm print

Remember the Face; undated

16mm print

Space Science Laboratory; undated

16mm print

The Second Look First; undated

16mm print

Shelley: The Idealist; undated
16mm print

[Various Rolls]; undated
16mm print

Falls; undated
16mm print

Quest for Value; undated
16mm print

[Various Mags Rolls]; undated
16mm print

Expedition to the Red Planet; undated
16mm print

#5 Constellations; undated
16mm print

Flowering Trees in the Northeast United States; undated
16mm print

[100, 101]; undated
16mm print

[Blank]; undated
16mm print

[Blank]; undated
16mm print

[?]; undated
16mm print

[Unidentified]; undated
16mm print

Subseries 2, Collected, 1941-1945, undated

Target for Tonight; 1941
16mm print

Pincers of Japan; 1944
16mm print

Weapon of War; 1944
16mm print

China Crisis (Flying Tigers); 1945
16mm print

Mission Completed; 1945
16mm print

You Are There; undated
16mm print

Berocken Point; undated
16mm print

Great Floor; undated
16mm print

Sky Guys; undated
16mm print

Coming Home; undated
16mm print

Series 5, Scripts, 1954-ca. 1973, undated

Materials are in English.

Scope and Content

Consists of 13 folders containing film scripts (some for unproduced works), shot lists, and accompanying illustrations. All folders are housed in Box C111. Original order was maintained.

Box C111

Folder 1: Barney -- Original and Carbon; ca. 1967
Script for *Where's Barney*. Two copies, with revisions.

Box C111

Folder 2: Barney; ca. 1967
Script for *Where's Barney*. Multiple copies, with revisions and notations.

Box C111

Folder 3: Uxmal; ca. 1973

Script for *Cities of the Ancient Mayas -- Part One, Palenque and Cities of the Ancient Mayas - Part 2, Uxmal*, with revisions and notations.

Box C111

Folder 4: Tree Flowers Script; undated

Script for *Flowering Trees in the Northeast United States*.

Box C111

Folder 20: [*What Is a College*], ca. 1968

Spiral-bound scenario for *What Is a College: Brockport in Transition 100 Years*. Yellow cover.

Box C111

Folder 23: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, July 1971; 1971*

Film script by Jean Bobear.

Box C111

Folder 24: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp April 1970; 1970*

Film script by Jean Bobear.

Box C111

Folder 25: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, September 1969; 1969*

Film script by Jean Bobear.

Box C111

Folder 26: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, February 1969; 1969*

Film script by Jean Bobear.

Box C111

Folder 27: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, October 1968; 1968*

Film script by Jean Bobear.

Box C111

Folder 28: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, May 1968; 1968*

Film script by Jean Bobear.

Box C111

Folder 30: Scripts & Articles; 1954, 1956

Black three-ring binder containing script for *Art Patterns of the Northwest Coast Indians* and script and story synopsis for *The Theft of the Sun*. The binder does not contain articles as labeled.

Box C111

Folder 31: [Unlabeled Black Album]; 1957

Bound script for "The Theft of the Sun," with illustration on cover, pencil drawings, and photographs.

Box Inventory

Box C111

Folder 1: Barney -- Original and Carbon

Folder 2: Barney

Folder 3: Uxmal

Folder 4: Tree Flowers -- Script

Folder 5: [*Botany* Project Materials]

Folder 6: Active Contract Price Lists

Folder 7: [*The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Notes and Labels]

Folder 8: [*History, the Mayas and Palenque* -- Timing Cards]

Folder 9: [*Bergen Swamp -- Fall* -- Timing Card]

Folder 10: [*Botany* -- Timing Card]

Folder 11: [*Botany* -- Shipping Memo]

Folder 12: [*Dance #1 Chaconne in D Minor* -- Timing Card]

Folder 13: [*Bergen Swamp -- July 1970* -- Timing Card]

Folder 14: [*Bergen Swamp -- Spring 1969* and *Bergen Swamp* -- Lab Order and Shipping Memo]

Folder 15: [*Bergen Swamp* -- Label]

Folder 16: [*The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Mixing Cue Sheets]

Folder 17: [*The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Labels and Notes]

Folder 18: [*Dance #3 Field of Light* -- Timing Card]

Folder 19: [*The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Labels]

Folder 20: [*What Is a College*]

Folder 21: *The Faces of Jocotepec* -- Falisco, Mexico; 1972-1980

Folder 22: Plants, Art, & Architecture In the Americas -- The Maya, Mixtec & Zapotec of Mexico

Folder 23: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, July 1971*

Folder 24: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, April 1970*

Folder 25: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, September 1969*

Folder 26: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, February 1969*

Folder 27: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, October 1968*

Folder 28: *Floristic Associations of Bergen Swamp, May 1968*

Folder 29: [Unlabeled blue album]

Folder 30: Scripts / Articles

Folder 31: [Unlabeled Black Album]

Folder 32: [Unlabeled box of index cards]

Box C111-OS

Folder 1: Kirby and Maya Titles
Folder 2: Byron Color-Correct Film List
Folder 3: James H. Reese Film Awards
Folder 4: Annual Industrial Film Award