

Wharton Harris Esherick (1887-1970) & the Wharton Esherick Museum



Consuelo Kanaga (American, 1894-1978). Wharton Esherick, 1940.

An Annotated Bibliography

Compiled by Ron McColl
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Explanatory Note

This bibliography aims to provide a guide for scholars or others researching the work and life of Wharton Harris Esherick (1887-1970). It includes both primary and secondary works divided into various categories (see table of contents). All sections are arranged alphabetically except for “exhibition catalogs,” which are listed in chronological order.

When they appear, annotations are intended to concisely indicate the unique content of specific articles, collections, or other items. Naturally, many of the resources collected here contain some redundant information. Therefore, general or background information on Esherick and his work discussed in articles, for example, is not explained in annotations; rather, particular anecdotes or quotes exclusive to particular sources typically comprise the bulk of the annotations.

The approach taken to this bibliography is inclusive rather than selective, though several exclusions have been made based on the following rationales.

Several books on craft, furniture, or art, which contain only a brief mention of Esherick or limited images of his work, were not included in this list. No effort was made to identify all articles announcing the opening of exhibitions or sales including Esherick’s work. The selected articles of this type which have been included were chosen for one of the following reasons: to illustrate the relative reputation of Esherick at a particular time; to demonstrate the range of prices commanded by his works at a particular time; to illustrate the way Esherick was contextualized as an artist at a particular time. Similarly, articles announcing events such as the annual woodworker’s competitions at the museum were included only when they were known to contain quotes or anecdotes beyond the scope of information provided by the museum’s press releases. Articles reviewing books about Esherick were likewise excluded from the bibliography.

Primary Sources

Books Illustrated by Wharton Esherick

Anderson, Robert Lane, and Sherwood Anderson. *Thwarted Ambitions*. Marion Pub. Co., 1935.
Printed by the Marion Publishing Company, Marion, Virginia. Illustrated with six woodcuts by Wharton Esherick, including cover illustration. "Second Edition" so indicated on the copy examined.*

Chapin, Katherine Garrison. *Bright Mariner*. Duffield and Green, 1933.
Esherick produced three woodcut illustrations on yachting themes for this memorial pamphlet: a small vignette of a sloop tipped onto the front wrapper; a full page print (illustrated above), and a small vignette of a sloop on calm seas for the last printed page. Not listed among the books in Prints by Wharton Esherick.*

Clark, Emily. *Stuffed Peacocks*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1927.
Illustrated with eight linoleum cuts by Wharton Esherick. Dust jacket illustration by Esherick.*

Coppard, A. E., and Wharton Esherick. *Yokohama Garland and Other Poems*. Centaur Press, 1926.
Illustrated with 24 vignettes by Wharton Esherick. Edition of 500 copies.*

Hare, Amory. *Tristram and Iseult: A Play*. Slide Mountain Press, 1930.
Illustrated with 10 linoleum cuts by Wharton Esherick. Edition of 450 copies printed on Bishopstoke handmade paper, each copy signed by the author and artist.*

Lawrence, D. H. *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*. Centaur Press, 1924.
The half-title bears a woodcut Porcupine by Esherick. Edition of 925 copies, bound in marbled boards, with slipcase. The second book of the Centaur Press.*

Marcy, Mary. *Rhymes of Early Jungle Folk*. C.H. Kerr & Co., 1922. Schiffer Publishing, 2015.
Illustrated with 71 woodcuts by Wharton Esherick.*

Esherick, Wharton. *The Song of Solomon*. Centaur Press, 1927.
Edition of 525 copies, bound with orange cloth spine and white boards embossed with colored designs by Esherick.*

Whitman, Walt, Paul Dalmas, and Wharton Esherick. *As I Watch'd the Ploughman Ploughing*. Franklin Printing Co., 1928.
Illustrated with nine woodcuts by Wharton Esherick, including cover illustration. Edition of 200 copies.*

Whitman, Walt. *Song of the Broad-Axe*. Centaur Press, 1924. Schiffer Publishing, 2010.
Illustrated with 20 woodcuts by Wharton Esherick, including dust jacket and illustrations on boards. Edition of 400 copies. The first book of the Centaur Press.*

*from Wessells, Henry. "The Book Illustrations of Wharton Esherick." *AB Bookman's Weekly*, vol. 103, no. 8, 22 Feb 1999, p. 409.

Other Works Containing Esherick Illustrations

American Block Print Calendar 1937. Gutenberg Publishing, 1936.

“February” is the Esherick woodcut included in this calendar.

<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/items/detail/american-block-print-calendar-1937-13778>

Anderson, Sherwood. *The Buck Fever Papers*. U of VA, 1971.

Cover and frontispiece illustration of Buck Fever, originally published in the *Marion Democrat* and the *Smyth County News*, is by Esherick.

Chubb, Thomas Caldecot. “Turkey Gobbler Land.” Centaur Press, 1934.

A broadside of Chubb’s poem, which originally appeared in the August, 1934 issue of *Poetry*.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.16202900/>

Esherick, Wharton, and Rochberg, Gene, editor. *Drawings by Wharton Esherick*. Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1978.

---. *Wharton Esherick: A Portfolio of Prints*. Common Press, 2010.

Furst, Herbert. *The Woodcut: An Annual, Vol. II*. The Fleuron Limited, 1928.

Contains “Of a Great City” by Esherick.

Toomer, Jean. *Psychologic Series I: Living Is Developing*. Mill House Company, 1937.

Esherick woodcuts illustrate the covers of this series of pamphlets printed privately by Toomer.

---. *Psychologic Series II: Work Ideas*. Mill House Company, 1937.

---. *Roads, People and Principles*. Mill House Company, 1939.

Prints in Periodicals

- April, 1922
 - Published: *Century*, 1922 & *The Dial*, March 1926
- The Bid, 1933
 - Exhibited: New York World's Fair, 1939
- Building, 1924 (From Song of the Broad Axe)
 - Published: *Century*, June 1923
- Chessmen at Play, no date
 - Used for Weyhe Gallery invitation
- Curls, 1924
 - Published: *New Republic*
- December, 1923
 - Published: *Century*, December 1923
- February, 1923
 - Published: *Century*, June 1923
- Free, 1925
 - Published: *Forum*, August 1928
- Frontispiece – Harrowing, 1927 (From As I Watched the Ploughman Ploughing)
 - Published: *Vanity Fair*, February 1929 & *The New Woodcut*, 1930
- Gail's Cabin, 1923
 - Published: *Century*, December 1923
- January, 1923
 - Published: *Century*, June 1923 & *American Girl*, January 1925
- Jug Hollow, 1927 (From As I Watched the Ploughman Ploughing)
 - Published: *Vanity Fair*, February 1929
- March – The Manure Spreader, 1923
 - Published: *Century*, June 1923
- Riding, 1928
 - Published: *The Forum*, August 1928
- September (Sometimes referred to as September Corn), 1922
 - Published: *Century*, June 1923
- Sky, 1928
 - Published: *The Forum*, August 1928
- Summer Lilies, 1929
 - Published: *The Forum*, November 1929
- Surf Fishing, 1927
 - Published: *The Forum*, August 1928
- Swing, 1925
 - Published: *The Forum*, August 1928
- Three Rhinoceri, 1922
 - Published: *The Forum*, December 1923

- Turkey, 1934
 - Illustration for a verse by Thomas Caldecot Chubb entitled "Turkey Gobbler Land". Edition: 800, printed by The Centaur Press, Philadelphia
- Turkey Gobbler Land, 1934
 - Illustration for a verse by the same name by Thomas Caldecot Chubb entitled "Turkey Gobbler Land". Edition: 800, printed by The Centaur Press, Philadelphia
- Two Friends, 1923
 - Published: Tuthill Advertising Agency for Roehys Nursery
- Winter, 1924
 - Published: *The Forum*, May 1924
- Woodmen, 1924
 - Published: *The American Girl*, June 1924

Archival Collections Containing Esherick Correspondence, Papers, or Materials

Anderson, Sherwood, Papers, The Newberry Library, Chicago.

Includes correspondence between Sherwood and Eleanor Anderson and Wharton and Letty Esherick; Esherick sketches, prints, and woodblocks; and letter from Henry van Meier to Esherick regarding tombstone design.

Centaur Book Shop and Press Archive, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Chester County Art Association Collection, Special Collections Department, Francis Harvey Green Library, West Chester University.

Contains some correspondence between Esherick and association, documents showing Esherick as an early board member, and early annual exhibition catalogs including Esherick's works. This collection is unprocessed; no finding aid exists.

Content, Marjorie, Papers and Photographs, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Includes correspondence between Content and Esherick dating from 1937 to 1963.

Dreiser, Theodore, Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Collection includes correspondence between Dreiser and Esherick, prints by Esherick, and the manuscript for "He Helps Me Build a Building," an article Dreiser encouraged Esherick to write.

Edwards, Robert, Research and Business Papers, 1963-2010, The Winterthur Library, The Winterthur Museum.

Edwards collected many notes, clippings, photographs, and correspondence pertaining to Esherick's work.

Esherick, Wharton, Family Papers, Wharton Esherick Museum.

The museum is the primary repository of Esherick's personal papers and business papers and correspondence, sketches, personal library, and many other items.

"The Furniture and Sculpture of Wharton Esherick: December 12, 1958 through February 15, 1959, Museum of Contemporary Crafts of the American Craftsmen's Council, New York," Exhibition Collection, Museum of Contemporary Crafts/American Craft Museum Archives, American Craft Council Library, Minneapolis, MN.

This collection includes correspondence, press releases, clippings, photographs, exhibition catalog, and list of owners of pieces lent for exhibit. Several photographs from the collection may be viewed online at: <http://digital.craftcouncil.org/digital/search/searchterm/The%20Furniture%20and%20Sculpture%20of%20Wharton%20Esherick/mode/exact> Additional items from the collection are viewable online in Kearstin L. Roy's "Idiosyncratic Wharton Esherick" blog post (see Popular Articles in this bibliography).

Hedgerow Theatre Collection, Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University.

Contains correspondence between Esherick and Jasper Deeter as well as wood and linoleum printing blocks by Esherick.

Hedgerow Theatre Company collection, 1901-2016, Ms. Coll. 1321, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Poor, Henry Varnum, Papers, 1873-2001, bulk 1904-1970, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Includes photographs and price information for several early Esherick pieces as well as background views of studio's early interior. Finding aid: <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/henry-varnum-poor-papers-13442/> [items are digitized and viewable online]

Seligmann, Jacques & Co. Records, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Correspondence includes price information related to several Esherick pieces on consignment in the 1930s at the Seligmann gallery in New York City. <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/jacques-seligmann-co-records-9936/subseries-1-3/box-34-folder-21> [items are digitized and viewable online]

Swanberg, W. A., Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Includes notes from Swanberg's 1962 interview with Esherick in preparation for Swanberg's biography on Theodore Dreiser.

Toomer, Jean, Papers, James Weldon Johnson Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Contains unpublished manuscript of "Talks with Peter," which Toomer based on the 1937 conversations he had with Wharton's son Peter and inspired by the philosophy of Gurdjieff.

Wildenhain, Frans, Papers, 1890-1986, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Zigrosser, Carl, Papers, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Includes some correspondence between Zigrosser and Esherick.

Oral Histories & Interviews

Bascom, Mansfield, and Ruth Bascom. "Oral history interview with Mansfield Bascom and Ruth Esherick Bascom about Wharton Esherick, 1990 July 13". By Richard Polsky. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Bascom, Ruth, and Mansfield Bascom. "Oral History Interview with Ruth Esherick and Mansfield Bascom on Wharton Esherick, 1991 Mar. 26". By Marina Pacini. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Castle, Wendell. "Oral History Interview with Wendell Castle, 1981 June 3-Dec. 12." By Robert Brown. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
Castle recounts visiting Esherick and shares his personal opinions of Esherick's work and level of craftsmanship. <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/oralhistories/transcripts/castle81.htm>

Castle, Wendell. "Oral history interview with Wendell Castle, 2012 February 22-24." By Jeannine Falino. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
Castle recounts visiting Esherick, explains Esherick's connection to Frans Wildenhain and Rochester's Shop One gallery, and also discusses the house Wharton designed for Michael Watson. <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-wendell-castle-16166#overview>

Esherick, Joseph, and Suzanne B. Riess. *Architectural Practice in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1938-1996*. Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, 1996.
Joseph Esherick recalls his boyhood visits to his uncle Wharton's studio.

McKinley, Donald, Sam Maloof, and Wharton Esherick. "The New American Craftsman: First Generation: Wood." *Craft Horizons*, vol. 26, no. 3, June 1966, pp. 16-19.
Esherick is interviewed by McKinley and Maloof in this anniversary edition of *Craft Horizons* celebrating the first generation of "the new American craftsman."

Miscellanea

Esherick, Wharton. "On 'The New Ceramic Presence': PRO." *Craft Horizons*, vol. 21, no. 6, Nov./Dec. 1961, p. 6.
In this brief letter to the editor Esherick reveals his impressions of Rose Slivka's article, dismissing the photographs (and presumably the highlighted pieces), while praising the argument and citing Chekhov to make his point.

Secondary Sources

Books & Book Chapters

Adamson, Jeremy. *The Furniture of Sam Maloof*. W. W. Norton, 2006.

Considers Esherick's influence on Maloof and includes discussion of correspondence and visits between the two men.

Bascom, Mansfield. *Wharton Esherick: The Journey of a Creative Mind*. Abrams, 2010.

The essential biography of Wharton Esherick. Numerous photographs of the artist, his work, and related artefacts illustrate this full portrait of his life and legacy.

---. *The Wharton Esherick Museum: Studio and Collection*. 2nd ed., The Wharton Esherick Museum, 1984.

A 2010 edition of this title was edited by Paul Eisenhauer and published by Schiffer (see below).

---. *The Wharton Esherick Museum: Studio and Collection*. The Wharton Esherick Museum, 1977.

Bates, Elizabeth, and Jonathan Fairbanks. *American Furniture: 1620 to the Present*. Richard Marek, 1987.

Bitterman, Eleanor. *Art in Modern Architecture*. Reinhold, 1952.

Blankemeyer, Dennis. *Craft Furniture: The Legacy of the Human Hand*. Schiffer, 2003.

Bradbury, Dominic. *The Iconic Interior: Private Spaces of Leading Artists, Architects, and Designers*. Abrams, 2002.

Brody, Susannah W. *An Honest Heritage*. Chester County Historical Society, 2001.

Cooke, Edward S. *New American Furniture: The Second Generation of Studio Furnituremakers*. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1989.

Cuff, Dana and Russell Ellis. "Joseph Esherick: The Drama of the Everyday." In *Architects' People*, Cuff and Ellis, eds., Oxford UP, 1989. pp. 55-63.

In this book chapter, the authors include interview excerpts with Joseph Esherick, who describes much of the inspiration he drew from Wharton. Particularly covers the influence of literature on the work of both men.

Donelson, Cathy. *Fairhope in the Roaring Twenties*. Arcadia, 2013.

Discusses the Eshericks' time at Fairhope, Alabama.

Eisenhauer, Paul, ed. *Poplar Culture: The Celebration of Esherick's Tree*. Schiffer Publishing, 2012.

---. *Wharton Esherick Studio and Collection*. Schiffer Publishing, 2010.

Eisenhauer, Paul, and Lynne Farrington, eds. *Wharton Esherick and the Birth of the American Modern*. Schiffer Publishing, 2010.

Esherick, Joseph. "Architectural Education in the Thirties and Seventies: A Personal View." In *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, edited by Spiro Kostof. Oxford UP, 1986, pp. 238-279.

Joseph Esherick briefly relates his time with Wharton in this long chapter covering the former's fuller career.

Falino, Jeannine, and Jennifer Scanlan. *Crafting Modernism: Midcentury American Art and Design*. New York: Abrams, 2011.

Includes only limited discussion of Esherick, but situates him as a pioneering and inspirational force in the twentieth century studio furniture and modern craft movements.

Fath, Reinhold. *Dornach Design: Möbelkunst 1911 bis 2011*. Futurum, 2011.

Fitzgerald, Oscar P. *American Furniture: 1650 to the Present*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

---. *Studio Furniture of the Renwick Gallery: Smithsonian American Art Museum*. Fox Chapel Publishing, 2008.

Ford, Ford Maddox. *Great Trade Route*. New York: Oxford UP, 1937.

Esherick and his studio make an appearance in Ford's book following the latter's visit with Esherick during the Christmas season of 1934.

Gotkin, Michael. *Artists' Handmade Houses*. Abrams, 2011.

Half a Century in Wood, 1920-1970: The Woodenworks of Wharton Esherick. Wharton Esherick Museum, 1988.

Hall, Julie. *Tradition and Change: The New American Craftsman*. E.P. Dutton, New York, 1977.

Halton, Eugene. *The Great Brain Suck: And other American Epiphanies*. U of Chicago, 2008.

Hartshaw, Horace. *A Pencil in the Hand of the Master: Recollections of Esherick*. Seasholtz Publications, 2004.

Helphand, Kenneth. "'My Garden, My Sister, My Bride': The Garden of 'The Song of Songs.'" *Gender and Landscape: Renegotiating the Moral Landscape*, edited by Lorraine Dowler, Josephine Carubia, and Bonj Szczygiel, Routledge, 2005, pp. 254-68.

Includes a brief interpretation of the Esherick woodcut "Solomon Had a Vineyard" from *The Song of Solomon*.

Hemachandra, Ray. *500 Chairs: Celebrating Traditional and Innovative Designs*. Lark Crafts, 2008.

Houston, Joe. *The Cranbrook Art Museum: 100 Treasures*. Cranbrook Art Museum, 2014.

Ingersoll, Richard, ed. *World Architecture 1900-2000: A Critical Mosaic Volume 1: Canada and United States*. Springer, 1999.

- Iovine, Julie V., and Todd Merrill. *Modern Americana: Studio Furniture from High Craft to High Glam*. Rizzoli, 2008.
- Koplos, Janet, and Bruce Metcalf. *Makers: A History of American Studio Craft*. U of North Carolina, 2010.
- Landis, Daphne S., and Roland H. Woodward. *Speaking for Themselves: The Artists of Southeastern Pennsylvania*. Chester County Historical Society, 2003.
- Lauer, David, and Stephen Pentak. *Design Basics*. 7th ed., Cengage Learning, 2007.
Includes a brief discussion of Esherick's spiral staircase.
- Lauria, Jo, and Steve Fenton. *Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects*. Potter Style, 2007.
- Lesser, Wendy. *You Say to Brick: The Life of Louis Kahn*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017.
A biography of Kahn that includes several anecdotes on Esherick and the work undertaken by the two men together.
- Marcus, George H., and William Whitaker. *The Houses of Louis Kahn*. Yale UP, 2013.
Includes a full chapter on the Margaret Esherick House.
- Meilach, Dona. *Contemporary Art with Wood: Creative Techniques and Appreciation*. Crown, 1968.
- . *Creating Modern Furniture-Trends, Techniques, Appreciation*. Crown, 1975.
- Morgan, Bret. *Rustic: Country Houses, Rural Dwellings, Wooded Retreats*. Rizzoli, 2009.
- Pelikan, Alfred G. *American Block Prints: A Cross Section of Contemporary American Art*. Gutenberg Publication, 1937.
- Plummer, Henry. *The Experience of Architecture*. Thames & Hudson, 2016.
- . *Kanōsei No Jūtaku: Amerika Jūkyō No Sanseiki = the Potential House: Three Centuries of American Dwelling*. Ē ando Yū, 1989.
- Pulos, Arthur J. *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975*. MIT Press, 1988.
- Ramljak, Suzanne. *Crafting a Legacy: Contemporary American Crafts in the Philadelphia Museum of Art*. Rutgers UP, 2002.
- Rideout, Walter B. *Sherwood Anderson: A Writer in America*. Vol. 1, U of Wisconsin, 2005.
Both volumes of this biography include several discussions of relations between Anderson and Esherick.
- . *Sherwood Anderson: A Writer in America*. Vol. 2, U of Wisconsin, 2007.

- Saunders, Max. *Ford Madox Ford A Dual Life: Volume II: The After-War World*. Oxford, 2012.
Includes brief mention of Ford's visit with Esherick.
- Stech, Adam, Sally Fuls, and Robert Klanten. *Inside Utopia: Visionary Interiors and Futuristic Homes*. Gestalten, 2017.
- Stone, Michael. *Contemporary American Woodworkers*. Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1986.
- Wallance, Don. *Shaping America's Products*. Reinhold, 1956.
The book in which Wendell Castle first discovered the work of Esherick.
- White, Theo B. *The Philadelphia Art Alliance, Fifty Years 1915-1965*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965.
Contains photos of Esherick's work in an exhibition held at the Philadelphia Art Alliance.
- Whitsitt, Steven, and Tina Skinner. *Esherick, Maloof, and Nakashima: Homes of the Master Wood Artisans*. Schiffer Publishing, 2009.
- Williamson, Leslie. *Handcrafted Modern: At Home with Mid-century Designers*. Rizzoli, 2010.
- Witham, Barry. *A Sustainable Theatre: Jasper Deeter at Hedgerow*. Palgrave, 2013.

Scholarly Articles

Clearfield, Lynne, and Corey Saft. "Anderson and the Arts and Crafts Movement."

Interdisciplinary Humanities, vol. 21/22, no. 2/1, 2004-2005, pp. 123-139.

The authors of this article on artist Walter Anderson consider the similarities he shared with Esherick in training, geography, and Arts & Crafts style.

de Muzio, David. "Wharton Esherick's Music Room from the Curtis Bok House, Gulph Mills, Pennsylvania, 1935-1938." *Winterthur Portfolio*, vol. 46, no. 2/3, Sum.-Aut. 2012, pp. 58-74.

This article considers the dismantling of architectural woodwork, conservation issues, and preparation for the installation of the music room from the Curtis Bok House in the upcoming expansion of the Philadelphia Museum of Art's American Art galleries. In addition, insights on Wharton Esherick as both an artist and craftsman that were revealed in the process of the dismantling are addressed.

Lapp, Axel. "The Sculpture of Freedom - The International Sculpture Competition for a Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner." *The Sculpture Journal*, no. 2, 1998, pp. 213-222.

A reconsideration of the international competition to design a Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner (proposed by the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London) to which Esherick submitted an entry.

Mayer, Roberta A., & Sfirri, Mark. "Early Expressions of Anthroposophical Design in America: The Influence of Rudolf Steiner and Fritz Westhoff on Wharton Esherick." *The Journal of Modern Craft*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2009, pp. 299-323.

Provides a full treatment of early anthroposophic influences on Esherick designs.

Stewart, Garrett. "Painted Readers, Narrative Regress." *Narrative*, vol. 11, no. 2, May 2003, pp. 125-176.

This essay briefly considers Esherick's "Of a Great City" as a work transforming the window into a modernist abstraction.

Wentz, John. "Anderson's *Winesburg* and the Hedgerow Theatre." *Modern Drama*, vol. 3, no.1, May 1960, pp. 42-51.

An article on the 1937 staging of Sherwood Anderson's play *Winesburg* at the Hedgerow Theatre. Esherick's relationship to both Anderson and the Hedgerow is discussed.

Theses & Dissertations

Benton, Megan Margaret. *The Elite Book in America: Fine Book Publishing, 1920-1932*.

Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1997.

Acknowledges Esherick's contributions to fine book publishing, listing him among a select group of the era's top book illustrators.

Campbell, Katherine Moos. *An Experiment in Education the Hessian Hills School, 1925-1952*.

Dissertation, Boston University, 1984.

An exhaustive treatment of the Hessian Hills School, where Esherick's children attended classes in the late 1920s and both Wharton and Letitia Esherick worked. The dissertation explains the school's connection to the Gardner-Doing Dance Camp and other ideas, places, and people relevant to the Eshericks.

Carmel, Kate. *Modernist American Woodwork and the Emergence of the Studio Wood Movement, 1920-1965*. MA Thesis, Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York, 1997.

This overview of the rise of the studio wood movement discusses the influence and context of Esherick's work. The thesis particularly discusses the transition from the Arts & Crafts movement to the rise of contemporary craft following WWII.

Gore, Holly. *Organic Form in the Functional Woodworks of Wharton Esherick*. Dissertation, Stanford University, 2013.

The only thesis to date to fully investigate Esherick's artistic legacy.

Kaitz, Judith A. *Dysfunctional Furniture*. MA Thesis, Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York, 1996.

Esherick is considered as a leading exemplar of the craft element in studio furniture, though the thesis goes on to challenge the traditional view of craft as the movement's primary influence.

Kanawati, Dina. *Founding or Funding: Are Historic House Museums in Trouble?* MS Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2006.

A study of the significance, designation, visitation, membership, governance, collections, and programs of many Greater Philadelphia area historic house museums.

McGoey, Elizabeth *Staging Modern Domesticity: Art and Constructed Interior Displays in America, 1925-1940*. Dissertation, Indiana University, 2013.

Includes a brief discussion of Howe and Esherick's "Pennsylvania Hill House" exhibit at 1939 New York World's Fair.

McGrath, Janet Ruie. *A School for Utopia: Marietta Johnson and the Organic Idea*. Dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1996.

An intellectual history of Marietta Johnson's school at Fairhope, Alabama.

Weale, Mary Jo. *Contributions of Designers to Contemporary Furniture Design*. Dissertation, The Florida State University, 1968.

This long study includes an extended survey of Esherick's work.

Williams, Reba White. *The Weyhe Gallery between the Wars, 1919-1940*. Dissertation, City University of New York, 1996.

Traces the influence and cultural significance of this important gallery where Esherick work was often shown.

Exhibition Catalogs (in chronological order)

Baker, Alex. *Becky Suss/Wharton Esherick*. Fleisher/Ollman Gallery, 2019.

Smith, Jessica Todd. *American Modernism: Highlights from the Philadelphia Museum of Art*. PMA, 2018.

The companion to the PMA's 2018 exhibition "Modern Times: American Art 1910–1950," featuring two works by Esherick.

Cooke, Edward S., Gerald W. R. Ward, Pat Warner, and Kelly H. L'Ecuyer. *The Maker's Hand: American Studio Furniture, 1940-1990*. Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 2003.

Edwards, Robert, and Robert Aibel. *Wharton Esherick, 1887-1970, American Woodworker*. Moderne Gallery, 1996.

Zigrosser, Carl. *Form and Figure: Fourteen Philadelphia Printmakers, 1910-50*. Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1991.

Wharton Esherick, Master of the Woodcut. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1991.

Prints by Wharton Esherick: March 11 through April 29, 1984, Woodmere Art Museum: An Exhibition. Woodmere Art Museum, 1984.

Davies, Karen. *At Home in Manhattan: Modern Decorative Arts, 1925 to the Depression*. Yale University Art Gallery, 1983.

Tarbell, Roberta K., Jeffrey Wechsler, and Joan M. Marter. *Vanguard American Sculpture, 1913-1939*. Rutgers University, 1979.

Renwick Gallery, and Minnesota Museum of Art. *Woodenworks, Furniture Objects by Five Contemporary Craftsmen; George Nakashima, Sam Maloof, Wharton Esherick, Arthur Espenet Carpenter, Wendell Castle*. National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, 1972.

Wharton Esherick: Sculpture, Furniture, Paintings and Graphics. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1968.

Why Is an Object: An Exhibition Investigating Motivation and Purpose. Akron Art Institute, 1962.

Third Philadelphia Arts Festival. Falcon Press, 1962.

Masters of Contemporary American Crafts. Brooklyn Museum, 1961.

The Furniture and Sculpture of Wharton Esherick. Museum of Contemporary Crafts, 1958.

Esherick, Faggi and Zadkine, Drawings and Sculpture. Argent Galleries, 1944.

Chester County Art Association (catalogs from multiple 1930s exhibitions)

Catalogue of the Inaugural Exhibition of a Circulating Gallery of Pictures. Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, 1925.

Exhibition of Paintings by Wharton Harris Esherick. Babcock Galleries, 1921.

Popular Articles

- Austin, Gene. "This Home Is Where the Art Is." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8 Dec. 1991.
Describes the home of Lawrence and Alice Seiver upon its listing for sale. Esherick designed and installed much of the home's interior.
- B., D. A. "Wharton Esherick." *Magazine Antiques*, vol. 180, no. 2, Mar/Apr 2013, p. 101.
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