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Descriptive Summary

Identifier     ICU.SPCL.OLSON
Title          Olson, Elder. Papers
Date           1939-1974
Size           1 linear ft. (2 boxes)
Repository     Special Collections Research Center
                University of Chicago Library
                1100 East 57th Street
                Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract       Elder Olson, poet, literary critic, teacher. The Elder Olson Papers consist of
                undated typescript poems, reprints of poems and articles (1939-1974), galleys
                and proofs of Olson’s Penny Arcade, manuscripts, and correspondence.

Information on Use

Access          No restrictions.

Citation        When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Elder Olson. Papers, [Box
                #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Elder Olson was born in 1909 in Chicago, Illinois. He studied at the University of Chicago,
where he received his B.A. (1934), M.A. (1935), and Ph.D. (1938).

Olson became a visiting Assistant Professor of English at the University of Chicago in 1942,
Professor in 1955, and Distinguished Service Professor in 1973.

Olson published many volumes of poetry and literary criticism. Things of Sorrow, Poems
(1934), was published while he was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago. Among his
other books of poetry are: The Cock of Heaven (1940), The Scarecrow Christ, and Other Poems
(1954), and Olson’s Penny Arcade: Poems (1975). Olson’s literary criticism includes: The Poetry
of Dylan Thomas (1954), Tragedy and the Theory of Drama (1961), and On Value Judgments
in the Arts and Other Essays (1976).
Elder Olson died on July 25, 1992 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**Scope Note**
The Elder Olson Papers consist of undated typescript poems, reprints of poems and articles (1939-1974), galleys and proofs of Olson’s Penny Arcade, manuscripts, and correspondence.

**Related Resources**
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/poetlit.html

**Subject Headings**
- Olson, Elder
- Poets-20th Century-History and Criticism
- Poets, American-20th Century
- English literature-History and Criticism
- Drama-History and Criticism

**INVENTORY**

**Box 1**

**Folder 1**

- Poems, typescript, n.d.
  - "Epistle Unearthed at Delos"
  - "Hamlet Solus,"
  - "Funerailles"
  - "The High Place"
  - "Abailard Sleeps at His Book"
  - "The Christmas Meditation"
  - "Ahasuerus and the Children of the Dawn"
  - "Anthropos"
  - "The Soliloquy"
  - "Before Oblivion"
  - "The Disputation"
  - "Imago Mortis"
  - "The Night Journey"
  - "Gian Maria Concerning Death"
  - "The Wood of Judas"
  - "Letter From the Dead"
  - "Winter Marketplace"
  - "The Passion and Betrayal"
  - "Signum Nativitatis"
"Soul's Journey"

Box 1
Folder 2
Off-prints and magazine clipping, 1939-1974
- "Rhetoric and the Appreciation of Pope," 1939
- "The Argument of Longinus' On the Sublime," 1942
- "'Sailing to Byzantium'; Prolegomena to a Poetics of the Lyric," 1942
- "Recent Literary Criticism," 1943
- "William Empson, Contemporary Criticism and Poetic Diction," 1950
- "Two Poems," 1950
- "Hamlet and the Hermeneutics of Drama," 1964
- "On Value Judgments in the Arts," 1974
- "In Defense of Superficiality," poem, clipping from The New Yorker, n.d.

Box 1
Folder 3-5
Olson's Penny Arcade, galleys and proofs, n.d

Box 1
Folder 6
Miscellaneous, n.d
- Notes, English 312; History and Theory of English Prosody
- Letter, Olson to Unknown
- Play, "The Blindman," translated by Olson
- Syllabus, "The Analysis of Argument"
- Unpublished essay, "Art and Science"

Box 2
Folder 1
Essays
- "The Poetry of Wallace Stevens," manuscript, n.d
- "Louise Bogan and Lonie Adams," manuscript (n.d)

Box 2
Folder 2
Correspondence and Pamphlet
- Letter, Jay Macpherson to Olson, 1955
- Letter, Charles Newman to Olson, 1965
- Note, T.C. Lai to Olson, 1976
- Pamphlet, "The Art and Profession of Translation," 1976

Box 2
Folder 3
Off-prints, Articles by Olson
- "Mighty Opposites'; Remarks on the Plot of Hamlet," (two copies), n.d.
- "Rhetoric and the Appreciation of Pope," 1939
- "Hamlet and the Hermeneutics of Drama," 1964
- "'Sailing to Byzantium'; Prolegomena to a Poetics of the Lyric," 1969
- "On Value Judgments in the Arts," 1974
- "The Poetic Process," 1975
Folder 4
Article in La Torre
• Elder Olson, "Diologo sobre la funcion del arte in la sociedad," 1953

Box 2
Folder 5
Journals with Articles by Olson, 1963-1964
• "The Abstract Tragedy-A Comedy of Masks" First Stage, 1963
• "Taxco; Daguerreotype Chopina" Tematy, 1964
• "Art in Society" Chicago Review, 1964

Box 2
Folder 6
Journal with Article by Olson, 1977
• "Morality and Art" Religious Humanism