

**SFU** **Simon Fraser University Special Collections and  
Rare Books**

## **Finding Aid - Louis Zukofsky fonds (MsA-29)**

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<http://atom.archives.sfu.ca/msa-29>

# Louis Zukofsky fonds

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Simon Fraser University Special Collections and Rare Books
<b>Title:</b>	Louis Zukofsky fonds
<b>Reference code:</b>	MsA-29
<b>Date:</b>	1936,1938. (date of creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	0.5 cm of textual records
<b>Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b>	Created May 15, 2014, LZ

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Louis Zukofsky (January 23, 1904 May 12, 1978) was one of the most important second-generation American modernist poets. He was co-founder and primary theorist of the Objectivist group and was to be an important influence on subsequent generations of poets in America and abroad. New York-born, of Lithuanian Jewish parents, he studied English at Columbia, graduating with a Master's degree in 1924. He began writing at university and joined the college literary society as well as publishing poems in student magazines. One early poem was published in *Poetry* but never reprinted. In 1934, Zukofsky got a research job with the Works Projects Administration (WPA), a position he held until 1942, working on a history of American handicrafts. In 1933 He met Celia Thaw and they were married six years later. The Zukofskys had one child, Paul, born in 1943, who went on to become a prominent violinist and conductor. In 1943 Zukofsky left the WPA to work as a substitute public school teacher and a technical writer. In 1947, he took a job as an instructor in the English Department of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, and he taught there until his retirement in 1966. Although Zukofsky lived in New York City for most of his life, in 1972 the Zukofskys moved to Port Jefferson, New York, on Long Island. Zukofsky died there in 1978. In his early years, Zukofsky was a committed Marxist. While he associated with Party members and published in Party-associated magazines, his poetry, which while strongly political was resolutely avant-garde and difficult, found little favor in Party circles. Though Zukofsky considered himself a Marxist at least through the end of the 1930s, the focus of his work after 1940 turned from the political to the domestic. Ezra Pound, who Zukofsky considered the most important living poet, promoted Zukofsky's work, putting him in contact with other like-minded poets, including William Carlos Williams. Zukofsky was one of the founders of the Objectivist group of poets and of *To Publishers*, later the Objectivist Press, along with Charles Reznikoff and George Oppen. (Other poets associated with this group included Williams, Basil Bunting, Lorine Niedecker, Carl Rakosi, Charles Reznikoff and Kenneth Rexroth.) Having suffered critical neglect for most of his career, Zukofsky, along with the other Objectivists, was rediscovered by the Black Mountain and Beat poets in the 1960s. In the 1970s, Zukofsky was a major influence on many of the Language poets, particularly in their formalism.

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## Scope and content

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The fonds consists of letters from Zukofsky to the poet Cid Corman. The fonds also contains four letters to the poet Walter Lowenfels.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

### Finding aids

Printed inventory available.

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Level of detail:** Full
- **Status description:** Published

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## Access points

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- Zukofsky, Louis (subject)
- Corman, Cid (subject)
- Textual record (documentary form)
- Arts and culture (subject)

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## Series descriptions

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Reference code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
MsA-29-0-0-0-0-1	File - [Correspondence to Cid Corman]	1966		MsA 29-Box 1
MsA-29-0-0-0-0-2	File - [Correspondence to Cid Corman]	1960-1962`1960		MsA 29-Box 1
MsA-29-0-0-0-0-3	File - [Correspondence to Cid Corman]	1964-1965		MsA 29-Box 1
MsA-29-0-0-0-0-4	File - [Correspondence to Cid Corman]	1966-167		MsA 29-Box 1

MsA-29-0-0-0-5	File - [Correspondence to Cid Corman]	1968-1976	MsA 29-Box 1
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