

# GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE

900 EAST AVENUE, ROCHESTER 7, NEW YORK • BRowning 1-3361

Director  
BEAUMONT NEWHALL

Vice Director  
JAMES CARD

Assistant Director  
NATHAN LYONS

June 4, 1963

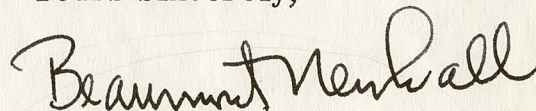
Admiral Smedberg  
Bureau of Personnel  
U. S. Navy Department  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Admiral Smedberg:

I am writing you at the suggestion of Admiral Quackenbush. I am currently engaged in updating my "History of Photography." One of the photographers whose work I discuss is Captain Edward Steichen. On information published by the Museum of Modern Art, I have stated in my draft that he was "in command of all Navy Combat Photography." Admiral Quackenbush questioned this, and suggested that I write you for the specific statement of his command in the Navy records.

I would appreciate clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Beaumont Newhall  
Director

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20 JUN 1963

Mr. Beaumont Newhall  
George Eastman House  
900 East Avenue  
Rochester 7, New York

Dear Mr. Newhall:

This is in reply to your letter of 4 June 1963 requesting information concerning Captain Edward John Steichen, United States Naval Reserve.

The records of this Bureau show that during calendar years 1944 and 1945, Captain Steichen served as Director of Navy Combat Photography while attached to the office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

In an effort to be of assistance to you, the enclosed copy of a biographical sketch of Captain Steichen, previously prepared for press release, is forwarded.

Sincerely yours,

W. R. SMEDBERG, III  
Vice Admiral, USN  
Chief of Naval Personnel

Encl:

(1) Biographical Sketch of Captain Edward J. STEICHEN, USNR (Ret)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF CIVILIAN MANPOWER MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20390

IN REPLY REFER TO

OCMM 034:fs

8 APR 1971

Mrs. Grace M. Mayer  
Curator, The Edward Steichen Archive  
The Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53 Street  
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mrs. Mayer:

This is in reply to your inquiry of 29 March 1971 concerning the awarding of a Plaque and the Distinguished Service Medal to Mr. Edward Steichen.

Due to the length of time that has elapsed between the granting of this recognition and the present time, I am unable to furnish the additional information you desire.

The citation on the Distinguished Service Medal appears to contain most of the information which would be available on this type of recognition. As a general rule the citation is usually a composite of the information contained in the letter of nomination for such awards. On the plaque, I have no information. However, the Museum of Naval History, located in Building 220 at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D. C., may be of more assistance in obtaining the needed information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "F. X. Churney", is written over the typed name.

F. X. CHURNEY

Head, Motivation and Incentives Branch

# The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

Department of Photography

May 6, 1971

Museum of Naval History,  
Building 220,  
Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, D. C. 20390

Gentlemen:

The enclosures are self-explanatory. Any further information you may be able to give us about the Awards bestowed on Captain Edward Steichen will be greatly appreciated.

Does your collection include any material relating to the Captain, please?

With thanks for your consideration of this inquiry -

Sincerely,

*Grace M. Mayer*

Grace M. Mayer

Curator, The Edward Steichen Archive

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STEICHEN, Edward

HONORS, AWARDS, Etc.

United States Of America Navy  
For Distinguished Service

1945

Medal and Citation

Citation on letterhead of The Secretary of The Navy Washington

"The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the  
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL to CAPTAIN EDWARD J. STEICHEN UNITED STATES  
NAVAL RESERVE, RETIRED for service as set forth in the following  
CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service to the Government of the United States  
as Commanding Officer of the Naval Aviation Photographic Unit under DCNO (Air)  
and later as Director of the Navy Photographic Institute during the period  
February 26, 1942, to the cessation of hostilities with the Japanese Empire.  
Adapting his wide experience as an illustrious photographer to this important  
assignment, Captain Steichen maintained the highest possible standards of  
excellence in Navy photography for training the Navy's flyers, for informing  
the public as to the progress of the war and for creating an invaluable historical  
record of our ships, planes and fighting men. In two tours of duty in the Pacific,  
one in 1943, aboard the U. S. S. LEXINGTON, when she sustained a torpedo attack,  
and again in 1944, at Guam and Iwo Jima, Captain Steichen studied Naval photography  
at close range. His enthusiasm and skill were responsible for raising to a remark-  
able plane of realistic art such documentary films as 'The Fighting Lady' as  
well as moving pictures depicting the drama and fury of aerial combat. In

STEICHEN, Edward

HONORS, AWARDS, etc.

United States Of America Navy Department  
Distinguished Public Service  
Awarded To Edward J. Steichen

Gold Medal, Ribbon, Pin, Certificate  
July 1, 1949

Certificate: United States Navy Certificate of Award to Mr. Edward J. Steichen  
In appreciation of Distinguished Public Service To The United States Navy  
(Signed): John L. Sullivan Secretary of the Navy

Letter from the Department of the Navy Office of Civilian Manpower Management,  
dated March 23, 1971 and signed by F. X. Churney, Head, Motivation and Incentives  
Branch: "We have ascertained that Mr. Steichen's award was presented on 1 July  
1949. However, our files do not contain the case history on this award due to the  
length of time that has expired since it was approved. It is regretted that the  
additional data you requested is not available."

Records of The Museum of Modern Art

bringing to all Navy photography his own high caliber of achievement, he has rendered distinguished service not only to his contemporaries but also to future generations."

(Signed)

For the President,  
James Forrestal  
Secretary of the Navy



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

IN REPLY REFER TO  
OP-09B

Ser 460P09B92  
7 June 1971

FROM: Director of Naval History  
TO: (Check routing below)  
SUBJ: Referral for Action

<input type="checkbox"/> NAVSUP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUPERS	<input type="checkbox"/> AVIATION HISTORY
	Pers G 25	
<input type="checkbox"/> NAVSHIPS	<input type="checkbox"/> CHINFO	<input type="checkbox"/> OFFICE CHIEF MILITARY HISTORY
<input type="checkbox"/> HQ. USMC	<input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL ARCHIVES	<input type="checkbox"/>

(CHECK APPLICABLE ITEMS ONLY)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION	<input type="checkbox"/> AS A MATTER OF POSSIBLE INTEREST
<input type="checkbox"/> AS A MATTER UNDER YOUR COGNIZANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> PLEASE FURNISH THIS OFFICE A COPY OF YOUR REPLY

INQUIRY: Information about medals of Captain Edward Steichen, USN  
(Ret.)

DATE OF INQUIRY: Mrs. Grace M. Mayer  
Curator, The Edward Steichen Archives  
The Museum of Modern Art

REMARKS: 11 West 53rd Street  
New York, New York 10019

Referred as discussed with Mrs. Barnes, 4 June 1971.

*D. C. Allard*  
D. C. ALLARD  
By direction

PERSONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION  
MEDALS & AWARDS BRANCH

JUN 10 1971  
AM 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 PM

COPY TO: Mrs. Mayer

OPNAV FORM 5216-130  
(12-66)

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29 June 1971

TRY SM

Mrs. Grace M. Mayer, Curator,  
The Edward Steichen Archives  
The Museum of Modern Art  
11 West 53rd Street  
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mrs. Mayer:

This is in reply to your letter of 6 May 1971, requesting information concerning the naval service of Captain Edward J. Steichen, U. S. Naval Reserve (Retired).

The enclosed biography of Captain Steichen's naval service, is forwarded in response to your request.

By direction of Chief of Naval Personnel:

Sincerely yours,

K. C. WALSER  
Lieutenant, U.S. Navy  
Head  
Correspondence & Services Branch

Encl: (1)

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