Katherine and Michael McCoy

Papers, ca.1971-1995

10 linear ft.

Acquisition Number: 1995-01

Acquisition: Items were given to the Archives in 1995 by Katherine and Michael McCoy

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Photographs: Box 23

Index: See end of finding aid.

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History

Katherine and Michael McCoy were the co-chairman of the design department at Cranbrook Academy of Art from 1971 – 1994. The department taught both 2D and 3D design, with Katherine teaching 2D and Michael teaching 3D. They ran the department in a way that was occasionally labeled controversial, with no deadlines or assignments and only required a final thesis show of their students. The McCoys often encouraged radical thinking and it was not unheard of for them to collaborate with students on their projects.

Michael McCoy was born on September 16, 1944 and received his BA from Michigan State University in industrial design in 1966, following it with an MA in industrial design form Wayne State University in 1968. He married Katherine in 1967. In 1975 he co-authored Problem Solving in the Man-Made Environment. He worked on the San Francisco Mass Transit Vehicle and designed high-tech furniture systems for Knoll International, Inc. He won over 100 national and international design awards and served on the board of editors for Industrial Design Magazine.

Katherine McCoy was born Katherine Braden on October 12, 1945 and received her Magna Cum Laude BA in industrial design from Michigan State University in 1967. She worked with Unimark, Chrysler Corp. and Omnigraphics before founding McCoy & McCoy with her husband Michael in 1972. During her tenure as co-chairman of the CAA, she was on the board of editors for Industrial Design Magazine, and was the executive vice president of the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA), was a member of Alliance Graphique Internationale and the president of the American Center of Design. In 1983, she was elected to a 2 year term as the president of the IDSA, not only the first woman but the youngest person to do so. She has received various awards from the AIGA, the Society of Typographic Arts 100 Show and the IDSA Education Award, amongst others. After her Cranbrook tenure, she was a visiting distinguished professor of the Royal College of Art in London, and a senior lecturer at Illinois Institute of Technology’s Institute of Design in Chicago from 1995 – 2000. In 2005 she was a consulting professor at Kansas City Art Institute and she currently consults as a continuing partner at McCoy & McCoy.

Together the McCoys created McCoy & McCoy and designed for Knoll International, Philips, Unisys and designed the signage for the Pontiac Silverdome in 1976. Besides being the co-chairmen for the CAA, they both worked on Cranbrook Design: The New Discourse in 1990 and in 1994 were awarded the Chrysler Award for Innovation in Design. McCoy & McCoy has won more than 150 design awards.
Scope and Content of Collection

The majority of the collection dates from 1972 – 1995. Materials include correspondence, design samples and project and exhibit proceedings that pertain to the Cranbrook Academy of Art as well as various other professional affiliations and projects. While the collection is technically that of both the McCoys, the large majority of materials relate to Katherine McCoy. It appears that when correspondence or other materials are from both McCoys, it was Katherine who actually wrote most of the copy. When materials that are directly related to Michael McCoy appear, they are noted in the index. The collection has been arranged into six series: PERSONAL, EDUCATIONAL, PROFESSIONAL, CORRESPONDENCE, PHOTOGRAPHS & SLIDES, and OVERSIZED. Folders have been arranged alphabetically.

Series I. Personal (Box 1) This series includes resumes for both McCoys and Katherine McCoy’s datebooks and a sketchbook from one of her undergraduate college art classes.

Series II. Educational (Boxes 1 - 6) This series contains correspondence, student information and projects, and design samples relating to the Cranbrook Academy of Art and the McCoy’s co-chairmanship of it.

Series III. Professional (Boxes 7 -14) This series includes the design projects, conferences, professional affiliations, exhibits and correspondence related to either McCoy & McCoy or Katherine McCoy during the years of the McCoy’s co-chairmanship.

Series IV. Correspondence (Boxes 14 -22) This series contains correspondence divided chronologically and also separated into general correspondence and letters from design graduates.

Series V. Photographs & Slides (Box 23) This series contains photographs and slides relating to Cranbrook Catalog, CAA Tokyo Exhibit (1991), DIA Photo Poster (1989), and CEC Signage (1994).

Series VI. Oversized (Box 24) – This series includes a design samples scrapbook, IDSA membership certificates, and Pontiac Metropolitan Stadium brochure.

Related Collections

- Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration #1981-09
- Cranbrook Academy of Art: Office of the President 1974-1995 #1995-09
- Cranbrook Educational Community President’s Office: Dr. Lillian H. Bauder Records #1991-16
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**SERIES I: PERSONAL**

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1. Datebooks with Addresses, 1979-1980  
2. Resumes 1968-1989  
3. Resumes 1990-1994  
4. Sketchbook (from life drawing class at MSU, Spring) 1964

**SERIES II: EDUCATIONAL**

6. CAA 3D Projects 1987-1989  
7. CAA Annual Studio Tour 1988  
8. CAA Bibliography 1978-1989  
9. CAA Catalog Budget: 1987  
10. CAA Catalog Design: 1987  
11. CAA Design Archive Project: 1989  
13. CAA Design Department Brochure: 1986  
15. CAA Design Projects: 1974-1978

**Box 2**

1. CAA Design Students: 1986-1994  
2. CAA Graduate Assistants: 1985-1994  
3. CAA Handouts to Students 1987-1988  
5. CAA Student End Term Review Handouts: 1978-1993  
6. CAA Student Design Projects: Gilbert, 1994  
7. CAA Student Design Projects: Nike, 1994  
8. CAA Tokyo Correspondence: 1991  
9. CAA Tokyo Exhibition: 1991  
10. CAA Tokyo Layout 2D: 1991  
12. CEC Capital Campaign Logo Design: 1989  
13. CEC Capital Campaign Logo Presentation: 1989  
14. CEC Directional Signs: 1994  
15. CEC Stationary Revision: 1985-1986

**Box 3**

1. CEC/ID (Identity) 1st System Presentation: 1982  
2. CEC/ID: 1983-1984
5. CEC/ID House and Gardens Seals: 1986
7. CEC/ID Notecards: 1981-1984
9. CEC/ID Production: 1983
11. CEC/ID Promotional Logos
12. CEC/ID Research: 1981
14. CEC/ID Review: Jun 1984
15. CEC/ID Signage: 1992-1993

Box 4
1. CIS (Cranbrook Institute of Science) Symbol: 1983
2. CIS Format Design 1983-1984
3. Crane Seal: 1993
12. Cranbrook Logo 1994

Box 5
2. Cranbrook Logo and Letterhead, Design and Samples
3. Cranbrook Schools Identification: 1985
7. Cranbrook Invitations and Pamphlets
8. Detroit Institute of Art Photo Poster: 1989
11. Field Trip New York City: 1988
12. Field Trip San Francisco: 1987
13. Field Trip Toronto: Jan 1991
14. Fluxus Poster: Jul 1989
Box 6
1. Job Description for Director of CAA and Vice President of CEC
2. Log: 1984-1986
3. Problem Solving in the Man-Made Environment (unbound publication): 1975
4. Ray Carson Summer Correspondence: 1994
7. Sabbatical Faculty: 1991-1992
8. Sample Resumes from Design Students
10. USIA (United States Information Agency) CAA Design Show: 1989

SERIES III: PROFESSIONAL

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1. ACD (American Center for Design) 100 Show: 1990
2. ACD Executive Committee: 1992
3. AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts): 1986
4. AIGA Springhill Retreat Board Meeting: 23-25 Sep 1988
5. AIGA Meetings: 1985-1989
8. AIGA Board Activities: 1988-1989
9. AIGA Conference: 1992

Box 8
1. Articles for Publication: 1991-1993

Box 9
1. Birmingham Figure Skating Club Logo
2. Burroughs Information: 1984-1986
5. Burroughs Planning and Budget: 1985-1986

Box 10
7. Conference Notes: 1978-1979
13. “Discourse” Napkin
15. Dutch Graphic Design Exhibition: 1985-1986
17. East Meets West Pilot Correspondence/Proposals: 1987

Box 11
5. Graphic Designers for Choice: 1992
8. International Ceramics Festival, Mino, Japan: 1989
10. Japanese Film Correspondence: 1984-1985
11. Japan Film Project Invoices: 1985
12. Japanese Film Correspondence: 1986-1988
Box 12
1. Japan NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) Application: 10 Apr 1987
2. Japan Video (Future Wave: Japan Design) Correspondence: 1987-1989
3. Lectures and Juries: 1978 - 1979
6. MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Visiting Committee: 1990-1991
11. NEA Fellowship Panel: 1984-1986
12. NEA New Media Book: 1986-1987

Box 13
1. Philips Graphic Seminar: 1987
5. PSMME Lecture
8. Samsonite: 1987
10. Simpson Lee Poster: 1985-1987
11. Strathmore College Renewal Publication: 1990

Box 14
1. Unisys Brochure: 1989
2. USIA Chair Design: 1988
3. WHYY Video Project: 1990

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4. General Correspondence: Jan – Apr 1993
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6. General Correspondence: Sep – Dec 1993

Box 21
1. General Correspondence: Jan – Jun 1994
2. General Correspondence: Jul – Dec 1994
3. General Correspondence: 1995
4. General Correspondence: undated

Box 22
2. Letters from Design Graduates: 1985-1986
5. Postcards: 1972-1994, Folder 1

SERIES V: PHOTOGRAPHS & SLIDES

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2. CAA Catalog Photos, ca. 1978
3. CAA Catalog Design, ca. 1987
4. Photo Poster- DIA: 1989
5. CAA Tokyo Layout 2D: 1991
6. CEC Signage:1994
7. Book Cover Design – Rizzoli
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