

CRANBROOK

ARCHIVES

Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration

(1942-1973)
5.8 linear ft.

- Acquisition Number: 1981-09
- Acquisition: The collection was transferred to the Cranbrook Archives in August 1981. Additional records were transferred from the Academy of Art in 1985. These were originally called the “Lost” Academy records.
- Preferred citation: Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration, Cranbrook Archives, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.
- Access: Access to the collection is unrestricted.
- Copyright: Copyright to this collection is held by the Cranbrook Educational Community.
- Processing: The collection was originally processed in June 1990 by Gregg T. Trendowski. In 2002, the pre-1942 records were removed to the Cranbrook Foundation Records and in the summer of 2008, the records were merged with the Lost Academy Records to create a more complete fond. Dominique Daniel re-processed the collection and created a new finding aid.



HISTORY

In 1927 George G. Booth established the Cranbrook Academy of Art as an educational environment where students could come and learn from master artists in residence. These artists-in-residence would contribute to the aesthetic development of the Cranbrook community. The Academy functioned as a department under the Cranbrook Foundation and included painting, architecture, sculpture, ceramics and decorative design. The first Academy students were taken in early 1930. In 1933, the Foundation Board of Trustees allowed the day-to-day operations of the Academy to be administered by the Academy of Art President and an Executive Secretary. In 1942, with the opening of the Museum and Library, the Academy became an autonomous educational, policy-making and administrative unit. The Art Museum was intended not only to house artworks acquired from George G. Booth through the Cranbrook Foundation, but also to serve as a teaching tool through its permanent collections and exhibitions in both the museum and the library.

Frank Leonard Allen was engaged by the Cranbrook Foundation as the Director of Art Education (1930-1932) to serve as an advisor related to the art work carried on by all of the Cranbrook schools. On 16 Jun 1932, he tendered his resignation and on the same day, the Foundation created the office of the President of the Academy of Art. The Board of Trustees elected Eliel Saarinen as the first President (1932-1946). Saarinen was also head of the Cranbrook Architectural Office, chief architect for most of Cranbrook's institutional buildings through 1942, and head of the Academy's Department of Architecture. Saarinen was assisted by an Executive Secretary, Richard Raseman (1932-1941), who was solely responsible for the administration of the Academy. Raseman was instrumental in shepherding the proposal for the Academy to become incorporated as a separate educational institution.

Saarinen was succeeded by Zoltan Sepeshy, who became the Director of the Academy of Art (1946-59) and was then elected President (1959-66). Glen Paulsen, head of the Architecture Department, succeeded Sepeshy (1966-1971). In 1971, Paulsen was replaced by Wallace Mitchell who had been a student at the Academy, a painting instructor (1936-1954), Registrar of the Academy (1944-1958), and Director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art Galleries (1954-1971).

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Cranbrook Academy of Art Collection is arranged into eight series: **Administrative, Construction Records, Curriculum Development, Financial, Museum, Personnel, Student Life, and Topical.** The bulk of the materials date from 1942 to 1973 although some materials precede or post-date this time period.

SERIES I: Administrative is divided in six subseries, each of which is organized alphabetically. **Organization documents** are followed by the records of the **Board of Trustees.** The latter include the complete set of Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Trustees, with three bound volumes and some unbound records, as well as records of the Executive Secretary, and correspondence to and from Trustees about Academy of Art business. Also important is the subseries devoted to materials relative to **Cranbrook Academy of Art Presidents** Eliel Saarinen and Zoltan Sepeshy (1942 to 1966). The **Committees** subseries contains records of several Academy of Art committees: the Art Collection Committee, the General Utilities Committee, the Museum Committee, and a Special Committee set up in 1947 to assess the state of the Cranbrook Academy of Art. There is also a subseries containing various materials from the **Public Relations'** Office and a subseries devoted to the Academy's **Accreditation,** which includes self-study reports submitted to the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities and the 1969 Goals Conference.

SERIES II: Construction Records covers the initial construction of the Cranbrook Academy of Art buildings and subsequent development and maintenance. The records concerning expenditures provide a detailed cost analysis of construction materials and fixtures from 1925 to 1960.

SERIES III: Curriculum Development consists of brochures of course announcements for Academy students as well as for children who participated in the activities of the Young People's Art Center. There is also material from the Design Department, including academic requirements and the layout of the studios. In addition, there is a major follow-up study of Academy of Art Alumni, ordered in 1971 to assess the impact of the curriculum.

SERIES IV: Financial is arranged alphabetically. The ledgers were all removed from this series and shelved with all other Cranbrook ledgers/registers. Particularly noteworthy are the **Annual Financial Reports** for the 1942-1954 period, **Student Tuition Lists** for the 1943-1966 period, **Inventories,** and correspondence related to **Scholarships.** The departmental inventories illustrate each department's holdings of equipment, supplies, and furnishings. Also of note are the records pertaining to Michael Gorman and the scholarship fund set up after his passing in 1958. The Hungarian Student Scholarship records show the involvement of the student council in bringing a Hungarian artist, Laszlo Ispansky, to Cranbrook during a politically charged time in Hungarian history.

SERIES V: Museum is divided in two subseries, both organized alphabetically. The **Administrative** subseries contains a variety of records concerning the Museum (which until 1973 was known as the Galleries) of the Cranbrook Academy of Art. Among those are the Curator's Reports to the Trustees and to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. Most noteworthy is a large selection of materials documenting the auction of the collections that the Academy of Art organized in 1972 to raise money. The second subseries is devoted to the **Collections and Exhibits** of the Museum. It contains various inventories, as well as exhibition brochures and supporting documents.

SERIES VI: Personnel includes a **Faculty/Staff** subseries which is organized by names of faculty or staff members or institutions, and includes contractual employment agreements from 1949 to 1976, lists of faculty appointments, and correspondence with job applicants and recruits including Harry Bertoia, Pierre Kleykamp, Carl Milles and others. The **Topical** subseries is organized alphabetically and contains primarily records pertaining to benefits received by personnel at the Academy of Art, documents concerning firings and retirements, and union agreements.

SERIES VII: Student Life primarily consists of student rosters, including those for students who were veterans. There are three types (or sets) of student rosters included here: **Typescript Rosters**, **Printed Rosters**, and **Computer Generated Rosters**. All three sets have been retained as, even though they overlap, they each contain some unique information. This series also includes commencement brochures and related materials, including the First Commencement ceremony of 1943, as well as the complete series of President Sepeshy's Commencement speeches.

SERIES VIII: Topical, which is organized alphabetically, provides records pertaining to various issues of interest to the history of Cranbrook Academy of Art. There is a chronology of the Academy's history, put together by curator Mary Riordan, and various memorabilia and brochures produced by the Academy. Documents about the proposal to create an Art Association in 1953 provide information about the condition of the Academy's Museum and the thoughts of the Academy's leaders on its objectives and future development.

RELATED COLLECTIONS

- CAA Office of the President, Roy Slade (1995-09)
- CAA Office of the Registrar Records (1990-19)
- CAA Publications (1998-05)
- CAA Historic Films
- Cranbrook Foundation Records (1981-05)
- George Gough Booth Papers (1981-01)
- Henry Scripps Booth Papers (1982-05)
- S. Glen Paulsen Papers (1991-25)
- Oral History Collection

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2. By-laws – Amendment drafts, 1957

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4. Executive Secretary – Reports, October 1942-October 1943
5. Correspondence – Members' appointments, 1947-1970 (non inclusive)
6. Correspondence – Billington, Cecil, 1942-1946
7. Correspondence – Gorman, Michael A., 1943-1958
8. Correspondence – "Negro" students, 1948
9. Correspondence – Pope, Gustavus D., 1943-1947
10. Correspondence – Richardson, Edgar P., 1947-1957
11. Correspondence – White, Lee A., 1932, 1948-1949
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13. General correspondence, 1944-1965o
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2. Accreditation – Self-survey report, 1959
3. Accreditation – Report for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1960

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4. Accreditation – Report for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1969
5. Accreditation – Report for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1973
6. Goals Conference – Summary Report, 1969
7. National Architecture Accreditation Board – correspondence, 1945
8. North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools – Correspondence, 1964

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11. Museum Committee – Meeting Minutes, 1949
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- 7A. Women's Committee – Bylaws, 1966

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9. Saarinen, Eliel – Correspondence, 1943
10. Saarinen, Eliel – Correspondence, 1944-1950
11. Saarinen, Eliel – Clippings, 1939-1945
12. Saarinen, Eliel – Writings, 1942-1943
13. Saarinen, Eliel – Memorial Concert, November 1950
14. Sepeshy, Zoltan – Biographical Materials, 1957-1973
15. Sepeshy, Zoltan – Correspondence, 1942-1945 (non-inclusive)
16. Sepeshy, Zoltan – Correspondence, January-March 1946
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8. Sepeshy, Zoltan – Correspondence, 1952-1953
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11. Sepeshy, Zoltan – Correspondence, 1960-1962
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13. Sepeshy, Zoltan – Michigan College Association Membership, 1952-1962
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15. Paulsen, Glen – Address, 1969
- 15A. Paulsen, Glen – Reports, 1967

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17. Public Relations – Correspondence, 1966, 1968

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