



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Richard McDermott Miller Papers, 1962-2001, in the Archives of American Art

Tal Nadan

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Archives of American Art  
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Victor Building, Suite 2200  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Richard McDermott Miller papers
<b>Date:</b>	1962-2001
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.millrimc
<b>Creator:</b>	Miller, Richard McDermott, 1922-
<b>Extent:</b>	3.4 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of sculptor Richard McDermott Miller measure 3.4 linear feet and date from 1962 to 2001. The papers document his work as an artist and teacher in New York City through biographical material, financial and business records, writings, subject files, and correspondence. His personal records about the National Academy of Design, of which he was an active member and president, are included.

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The papers were donated by Richard McDermott Miller to the Archives of American Art in 2001.

### Related Material

The holdings of the Archives of American Art include additional photographs of Miller among the Louise Finklestein papers, circa 1944-2000, and sound tapes and partial transcripts of the Alliance of Figurative Artists lectures and panel discussions, 1969-1970, in which Miller participated.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed by intern Tal Nadan in 2008.

### Preferred Citation

Richard McDermott Miller papers, 1962-2001. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research. Use requires an appointment.

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## Biographical Note

Richard McDermott Miller (1922-2004) was a sculptor and educator in New York, NY. Miller was born Richard Alan Miller in 1922. After studying at the Cleveland Institute of Art in the 1940s, Miller returned to his home town of New Philadelphia, Ohio, to work in the family plaque business.

At the age of 40, he and his wife, Gloria Bley Miller, moved to New York City. This transition is the focus of Miller's posthumously published autobiography, *Heading for New York: A Sculptor's Journey*. Upon arriving in New York, Miller began using McDermott (his mother's maiden name) as his middle name.

Countering prevailing tastes, Miller abandoned the popular abstract style to explore the human form. In addition to executing portraits and medals, his primary focus was the nude female figure. He worked with live models, creating sculpture in clay or wax, often casting in bronze. Because of his dedication to naturalistic work, Miller became known as the "Figure Sculptor of SoHo." Miller completed several large-scale commissions for public spaces across the country. He taught sculpture at Queens College, and, with his wife, wrote the textbook *Figure Sculpture in Wax and Plaster*.

In New York, Miller was a prominent presence among the city's sculpture organizations, writing many letters to newspapers demanding proper recognition for sculptors. He was active in the Sculptors' Guild, and active member and president (1989-1992) of the National Academy of Design, and president (1997-2000) of the National Sculpture Society. Upon his death in 2004, he bequeathed his SoHo building to the National Sculpture Society.

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## Scope and Content Note

The papers of sculptor Richard McDermott Miller measure 3.4 linear feet and date from 1962 to 2001. The papers document his work as an artist and teacher in New York City through biographical material, financial and business records, writings, subject files, and correspondence. His personal records about the National Academy of Design, of which he was an active member and president, are included.

Biographical material consists of a resume and exhibition history, as well as notes and correspondence not involving Miller's vocation. Financial and Business records contain account books of income and expenses, records of his bronzes and a register of his work. Writings include speeches Miller prepared as he practiced for his teaching career. Also found are miscellaneous texts and drafts of unknown purpose, and musings on art. Artwork consists of one ink drawing.

Subject files reflect Miller's activities in New York City. Of particular interest is his pursuit of gallery representation, which led him to friendship and affiliation with Louis Pollack and the Peridot Gallery. There are also files relating to the Sculptors' Guild and the National Sculpture Society. Correspondence is mainly with other artists, patrons and collectors.

A significant portion of Richard McDermott Miller's papers relates to the National Academy of Design. Included are financial and legal records, correspondence, and minutes stemming from his involvement with the Academy. This series is especially rich for the period of his presidency, 1989-1992.

The small number of photographs found in this collection are mainly promotional in nature, and some are annotated.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 9 series:

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1969-1997 (Box 1; 2 folders)

- Series 2: Financial and Business Records, 1962-circa 2000 (Box 1: 0.4 linear ft.)
- Series 3: Writings, 1968-1969 (Box 1; 2 folders)
- Series 4: Artwork, 1985 (Box 1; 1 folder)
- Series 5: Subject Files, 1962-2001 (Boxes 1-2; 1.2 linear ft.)
- Series 6: Correspondence, 1963-2001 (Boxes 2-3; 0.8 linear ft.)
- Series 7: National Academy of Design Files, 1972-2001 (Boxes 3-4; 1.0 linear ft.)
- Series 8: Photographs, circa 1981 (Box 4; 1 folder)

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Art -- Study and teaching

Names:

National Academy of Design (U.S.)  
National Sculpture Society (U.S.)  
Peridot Gallery (New York, N.Y.)  
Pollack, Louis  
Sculptors Guild (New York, N.Y.)

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, 1969-1997

*(Box 1; 2 folders)*

Scope and Contents: This series includes Miller's resume and exhibition history, as well as a small number of personal notes and correspondence, such as a record of jury duty, a description of a dream, and a real estate advertisement placed in *The Village Voice*.

Box 1, Folder 1      Resume and Exhibition History, 1974-1997

Box 1, Folder 2      Miscellaneous Notes and Correspondence, 1969-1980, undated

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## Series 2: Financial and Business Records, 1962-circa 2000

*(Box 1: 0.4 linear ft.)*

Scope and Contents: Financial records consist of account books (7 volumes and one loose page) which record sales and expenses in the early years of his career. Some of the ledgers contain specific references and contact information for his models.

Miller's three-volume register of his work in bronze describes 400 pieces and includes standard catalog information, casting history, and some sketches. A two-volume sculpture register (with reproductions of thumbnail size photographs) is a seemingly comprehensive list of all of his work through 2000.

Box 1, Folder 3	Account Books (vols. 1-2), 1962-1963
Box 1, Folder 4	Account Books (vols. 3-4), 1964-1965
Box 1, Folder 5	Account Books (vols. 5-7; loose page), 1966-1968, 1973
Box 1, Folder 6	Bronze Sculpture Registers (vols. 1-2), 1963-1979 Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Bronzes, Book One, #1 thru 75, Feb. 63-Mar. 66"</li> <li>• "Bronzes, Book Two, #76 to 205 [1967-1979]"</li> </ul>
Box 1, Folder 7	Bronze Sculpture Registers (vol. 3), 1980-1999 Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Bronzes, Book Three, #206-400 [1980-1999]"</li> </ul>
Box 1, Folder 8	Sculpture Register (2 vols.), circa 2000 Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Richard McDermott Miller-Early Sculpture (Before 1962)"</li> <li>• "Richard McDermott Miller-Bronze Sculptures Numbered 1-411"</li> </ul>

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## Series 3: Writings, 1968-1969

*(Box 1; 2 folders)*

Scope and Contents: Writings of particular note are the speeches Miller prepared as he practiced for his teaching career. Miscellaneous writings include texts (some with many drafts) of unknown purpose. Some seems to be press releases or textbook pages, but others record thoughts and musings on art.

Box 1, Folder 9          Speeches (New School course), 1968

Box 1, Folder 10        Miscellaneous Writings, 1969, undated

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## Series 4: Artwork, 1985

*(Box 1; 1 folder)*

Scope and Contents: This series consists of an unsigned ink drawing executed in April 1985 and annotated with the name "Eliza Decker."

Box 1, Folder 11	Drawing, 1985
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## Series 5: Subject Files, 1962-2001

*(Boxes 1-2; 1.2 linear ft.)*

Scope and Contents: This series reflects the artist's own organization of his professional records. Many focus on a single exhibition or project, and others reflect a continued relationship with galleries and consultants. Subject files may contain correspondence, notes, printed material, invoices, records of consignment, and photographs. These files mostly record Miller's professional activities and relationships with art institutions rather than interaction with individuals.

Box 1, Folder 12	615 Company, 1979
Box 1, Folder 13	Alwin Gallery, 1967-1972
Box 1, Folder 14	American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, 1964-1996
Box 1, Folder 15	Art Consultants - General, 1982-1996
Box 1, Folder 16	Avnet Shaw, 1965-1973
Box 1, Folder 17	B. C. Holland Gallery, 1965-1967
Box 1, Folder 18	Bishop John Neumann Project, 1978-1979
Box 1, Folder 19	Canton Art Institute, 1971-1973, undated
Box 1, Folder 20	Canton Art Institute/ Canton Museum of Art, 1980-1986
Box 1, Folder 21	Canton Art Institute/Canton Museum of Art, 1999-1997 <i>see also: Kent State University)</i>
Box 1, Folder 22	Cavalier Galleries, 1988-1995
Box 1, Folder 23	Chess Set Project, 1967-1989
Box 1, Folder 24	Cleveland Institute of Art, 1966-1991
Box 1, Folder 25	Columbia Union National Bank, 1976-1986
Box 1, Folder 26	Committee to Protect Public Monuments from Sandblasting, 1966-1997
Box 1, Folder 27	Dover Publications, 1983-1987
Box 1, Folder 28	Duke University, 1967-1975
Box 1, Folder 29	Feingarten Galleries, 1966-1967
Box 1, Folder 30	FFS [Friends of Figurative Sculpture] Gallery, 1994-1995

Box 1, Folder	Figure Sculpture in Wax and Plaster ( see: Dover Publications; Watson-Guption Publications)
Box 1, Folder 31	Foothills Art Center, 1979-1991
Box 1, Folder	Galleries
Box 1, Folder 32	General, 1962-1984
Box 1, Folder 33	Show Lists, 1962-1986
Box 1, Folder 34	Golden Swimmer Project, 1988-1989
Box 1, Folder 35	Hakone Open-Air Museum, 1985-1996
Box 1, Folder 36	Hartford Festival of Lively Arts, 1965-1978
Box 1, Folder 37	Imprimatur Gallery, 1983-1987
Box 1, Folder 38	J. J. Brookings Gallery, 1986-2000
Box 1, Folder 39	Joe DeMers Gallery, 1973-1980
Box 1, Folder 40	Johnson Atelier Technical Institute of Sculpture, 1977-1986
Box 1, Folder 41	Kent State University, 1974-1983 see also
Box 1, Folder 42	Loveland Academy of Fine Arts, 1996-1997
Box 1, Folder 43	Marcella Halpert Galleries, 1972-1978
Box 1, Folder 44	Medallic Art Company, 1965-1967, undated
Box 1, Folder 45	Middendorf/Lane Gallery, 1981-1988
Box 1, Folder 46	Miscellaneous Printed Material, 1965, undated
Box 2, Folder 1	Models, 1963-2000
Box 2, Folder 2	Modern Art Consultants, 1982-2000
Box 2, Folder 3	Modern Art Foundry, Inc., 1964-2000
Box 2, Folder 4	Nassau County Museum of Fine Art, 1978-1981
Box 2, Folder 5-6	National Sculpture Society, 1977-2001

(2 folders)

Box 2, Folder 7	National Service Industries, Inc., 1989-1993
Box 2, Folder 8	Philharmonic Center for the Arts, 1989-1998
Box 2, Folder 9	Parties, 1973-1986
Box 2, Folder 10	Pearlstein, Philip (with transcript of dialogue), 1977-1986, undated
Box 2, Folder	Peridot Gallery (later Peridot/Washburn; Washburn Gallery)
Box 2, Folder 11	General, 1962-1980, undated
Box 2, Folder 12	Letters, 1964-1976
Box 2, Folder 13	Show Lists, 1965-1979
Box 2, Folder 14	Statements, 1964-1978
Box 2, Folder 15	Queens Museum, 1977-1983
Box 2, Folder 16	Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading, 1982-1985
Box 2, Folder 17	Reviews, 1964-1988
Box 2, Folder 18	Schulman Investment Co., 1979-1987
Box 2, Folder 19	Scottsdale Artists' School, Inc., 1965-1971
Box 2, Folder	Sculptors' Guild
Box 2, Folder 20-21	By-Laws, 1994-1995 (2 folders)
Box 2, Folder 22	General, 1974-1994
Box 2, Folder 23	Speakers Program, 1994
Box 2, Folder 24	Sears, Roebuck and Co., 1965-1971
Box 2, Folder 25	Suburban Bronze Works, 1968-1971
Box 2, Folder 26	"The Figure Sculptor of So Ho" Video, circa 1987 (1 VHS videocassette)
Box 2, Folder 27	University of Houston, 1971-1985
Box 2, Folder 28	Voices in Bronze Project, 1995-2000

Box 2, Folder 29

Watson-Guptill Publications, 1966-1973

Box 2, Folder 30

Weatherproofing, 1963-1973

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## Series 6: Correspondence, 1963-2001

(Boxes 2-3; 0.8 linear ft.)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is arranged alphabetically, and chronologically within each folder. Files labeled "General" are reserved for correspondents with whom there is a very small amount of correspondence. Correspondence is characterized by a more familiar tone between Miller and his friends, patrons, and collectors. Some letters include photographs or clippings which are references in the text. "F-General" contains an illustrated letter from Larry Fadden.

Additional correspondence is found among the subject files (Series 5). Biographical material (Series 1) also contains a small number of letters.

Box 2, Folder 31	A-General, 1974-1980
Box 2, Folder 32	B-General, 1963-1992
Box 2, Folder 33	C-General, 1967-2000
Box 2, Folder 34	Columbia University, 1971-1972
Box 2, Folder 35	D-General, 1967-1992
Box 2, Folder 36	E-General, 1969-2001
Box 2, Folder 37	Elliot, Robert K. and Ida Lee, 1986-1999
Box 2, Folder 38	F-General, 1966-2001
Box 2, Folder 39	G General, 1969-2001
Box 2, Folder 40	H-General, 1967-2000
Box 2, Folder 41	Hale, Nathan Cabot, 2000
Box 2, Folder 42-43	Heckscher, William S., 1964-1973 (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 1	Holden, Donald, 1985-1999
Box 3, Folder 2	J-General, 1965-1983
Box 3, Folder 3	Jones, Ron, 1992-1998
Box 3, Folder 4	K-General, 1966-2000
Box 3, Folder 5	L-General, 1964-1997
Box 3, Folder 6	Leeber, Sharon Corgan, 1981-2000

Box 3, Folder 7	Levine, Elizabeth, 1984-1995
Box 3, Folder 8	M-General, 1964-2000
Box 3, Folder 9	N-General, 1973-1981
Box 3, Folder 10	O-General, 1974-1998
Box 3, Folder 11	P-General, 1967-2000
Box 3, Folder 12	Q-General, 1969-2000
Box 3, Folder 13	R-General, 1967-2000
Box 3, Folder 14	S-General, 1969-1997
Box 3, Folder 15	Stroud Family, 1965-1983
Box 3, Folder 16	T-General, 1967-1991, undated
Box 3, Folder 17	U-General, 1965-1993
Box 3, Folder 18	V-General, 1967-1980
Box 3, Folder 19	W-General, 1968-2000
Box 3, Folder 20	Y-General, 1967-1978
Box 3, Folder 21	Z-General, 1968-1971

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## Series 7: National Academy of Design Files, 1972-2001

*(Boxes 3-4; 1.0 linear ft.)*

Scope and Contents: Elected to the Academy in 1977, Miller served on several committees and at various times acted as treasurer. He became president in 1989 and served until 1992. The bulk of this series relates to Miller's activities as president and the general business of the institution during that period, which was marked by a change in directorship.

Records in this series are the remnants of Miller's engagement with the institution and are by no means comprehensive. General records - minutes, writings and correspondence - reflect his participating in Academy activities. Also included are clippings concerning the National Academy of Design and about topics of interest for personal research on issues regarding the artistic climate of the times.

Box 3, Folder 22	Cain, Walter O., 1990-1992
Box 3, Folder	Correspondence
Box 3, Folder 23	Legal, 1989-1991
Box 3, Folder 24	Presidential, 1989-1992
Box 3, Folder 25	Dobkin, John H., 1985-1990
Box 3, Folder 26	Donation Records, 1988, undated
Box 3, Folder 27	Exhibitions, 1989-1991
Box 3, Folder 28	Finance Committee, 1989-1992
Box 3, Folder 29-30	Financial Records, 1988-1991, undated (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 31	Fundraising, 1988-1994
Box 3, Folder 32-33	Gallagher, Edward P., 1990-1992 (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 34	General Records, 1972-1985
Box 3, Folder 35	General Records, 1989-1990
Box 3, Folder 36-37	General Records, 1991 (2 folders)
Box 3, Folder 37	General Records, 1992-1993
Box 3, Folder 38	General Records, 1995-2001, undated



Box 3, Folder 39	Hutchins, Robert S., 1989-1991
Box 3, Folder 40	Investments, 1987-1991
Box 3, Folder 41	Membership Information, 1989-1990
Box 3, Folder 42	Middleman, Raoul, 1999-2001
Box 3, Folder 43	Mission Statement Committee, 1995-1996
Box 3, Folder 44	Morse, Samuel F. B., 1990-1992
Box 4, Folder 1-2	Museum Board, 1998-1992 (2 folders)
Box 4, Folder 3	New York Academy of Art, 1983-1992
Box 4, Folder 4	Portrait Program, 1989-1991
Box 4, Folder	Printed Material
Box 4, Folder 5	Clippings, 1989-1991
Box 4, Folder 6	Mailings, 1989-1991
Box 4, Folder 7	Publications, 1989
Box 4, Folder 8	Search Committee, 1989-1990
Box 4, Folder 9	Staff, 1989-1992
Box 4, Folder 10	Teaching Philosophy, 1989-1992
Box 4, Folder 11	Treasurer's Records, 1980-1987
Box 4, Folder 12	West Coast Membership, 1990-1992

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## Series 8: Photographs, circa 1981

*(Box 4; 1 folder)*

Scope and Contents: This series consists of photographs of sculptures that appear to have been used in promotional reproductions. Some are annotated.

Box 4, Folder 13      Promotional Photographs of Sculptures, circa 1981, undated

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