



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Seymour Robins collection

NMAH.AC.1270

Vanessa Broussard Simmons and NMAH Staff

2024

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Seymour Robins Papers
Date:	1978-1984
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1270
Creator:	Robins, Seymour, 1913-2011
Extent:	0.5 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Collection documents Robins' work as a graphic and industrial designer for the Kimberly-Clark Corporation.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

All materials were donated by Mr. Robins in 1992 to the Cooper Hewitt Museum. and transferred to the Archives Center in 2012.

Provenance

Collection transferred from the Cooper Hewitt Museum to the Archives Center in 2012.

Related Materials

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Warshaw Collection of Business Americana Subject Categories: Paper Products, NMAH.AC.0060.S01.01

Landor Design Collection, NMAH.AC.0500

Francis M. Mair Papers, NMAH.AC.0548

Freda Diamond Collection, NMAH.AC.0616

Procter & Gamble Company Product Packaging Collection, NMAH.AC.0836

Aladdin Industries, Incorporated Records, NMAH.AC.0844

Lockwood Greene Records, NMAH.AC.1113

Alfons Bach Papers, NMAH.AC.1272

Saul Nesbitt Papers, NMAH.AC.1275

Lester Beall Collection, NMAH.AC.1278

Benjamin H. Stansbury Papers, NMAH.AC.1350

Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

William E. L. Bunn Papers, 1AAA.bunnwill

Richard E. Filipowski Papers, AAA.filirich
Antonin Heythum Papers, AAA.heytanto
Paul Hollister Papers, AAA.hollpaul
Dorothy Liebes Papers, AAA.liebdoro
Viktor Schreckengost Papers, AAA.schrviht
Charles Sheeler Papers, AAA.sheechar
John Vassos Papers, 1898-1985, AAA.vassjohn

Smithsonian Institution Archives

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. Exhibitions, Exhibition Records, SIA.FA10-061
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Department of Applied Arts and Industrial Design, Records, SIA.FA95-170
Floyd Alonzo McClure Papers, Accession T90028

Smithsonian Libraries

Henry Dreyfuss Collection, SIL-CH.1972-88-332-4
Belle Kogan, SIL-CH.XXXX-0003

Processing Information

Collection processed by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist, 2024.

Preferred Citation

Seymour Robins Papers, 1978-1984, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270.

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Biographical / Historical

Seymour (Rabinowitz) Robins, a graphic and industrial designer, was born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada on June 5, 1913, to David Rabinowitz (September 28, 1883 - June 27, 1950) and Dora Pellman (December 24, 1885 - September 1976). He lived most of his life in New York City where he had a design practice. Although locking together slotted pieces of paper had been done for many years, in the two decades that Robins designed these shapes that became forms when opened, he developed them into a unique art form. He did successful design work for AT&T, Incorporated; Diamond International, Corporation; Genesco, Incorporated; Mohawk Paper Mills; Neenah Paper; Creative Playthings; and other major American companies. In addition, he did work for cultural institutions including the complex and precise Armillary Sphere for the Smithsonian Institution and paper sculptures for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Philadelphia Museum, and others. Over the years his demands and guidance for perfection in production had forced graphic arts suppliers into innovative improvements that have raised the level of die-makers' and the die-cutters' crafts. Robins work appeared regularly in international design journals. He moved to Sheffield, Massachusetts where he converted a

barn into a studio and home. Seymour (Rabinowitz) Robins died of natural causes on April 10, 2011, in Lenox, Berkshire County, Massachusetts at the age of ninety-seven.

Scope and Contents

The collection documents Robins' work as a graphic and industrial designer and includes project catalogs for Mohawk Paper Mills and Neenah Paper, a division of Kimberly-Clark. The materials are arranged in chronological order.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Design, Industrial -- Sources -- History -- 20th century -- United States
- Graphic arts -- Sources -- History -- 20th century -- United States
- Paper
- Paper art

Types of Materials:

- Trade catalogs

Names:

- AT & T (Firm)
- Cooper-Hewitt Design Archive
- Creative playthings, Inc.
- Diamond International Corporation
- Genesco, Inc.
- Kimberly-Clark Corporation
- Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.)
- Mohawk Paper Mills (Cohoes, N.Y.)
- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
- Neenah Paper (Firm)
- Philadelphia Museum of Art
- Smithsonian Institution
- Whitney Museum of American Art

Occupations:

- Industrial designers -- United States

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Neenah Paper, Incorporated, catalog, 1978
Box 1, Folder 2	Mohawk Paper Mills, linen paper catalog, 1981
Box 1, Folder 3	Mohawk Paper Mills, Poseidon, Mazes and Labyrinths, catalog, 1984
Box 1	Addenda 2016