



Cooper Hewitt

Smithsonian Design Museum

Nathan Horwitt collection, [193-]-[196-]

2011

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Libraries
Title:	Nathan Horwitt collection
Identifier:	SIL-CH.1991-127-1
Date:	[193-]-[196-]
Creator:	Horwitt, (George) Nathan, 1889-1990.
Extent:	4 Cubic feet
Language:	Undetermined .
Summary:	This collection documents Horwitt's major projects from the 1930s to the 1960s. Project files include drawings, sketches, blueprints, correspondence, patents, legal correspondence, clippings, financial reports, and advertisements for Horwitt's projects. Samples of logos and letterheads he designed are included as well. The most thorough documentation pertains to the Braquette, the Cyclometer, the Museum Watch, and the Beta Chair. Drawings, sketches, blueprints, and plans are boxed separately, mostly flat. Interviews with individuals who worked with and knew Horwitt are on audio cassettes, "Recollections of Nathan Horwitt." Two short videos, "The Legend behind the Museum Watch" and "Movado Worldwide Museum" are stored on 3/4 in. video cassettes.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Hank Horwitt, the designer's son, gave Cooper-Hewitt all his relevant design materials from his home studio in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1991.

Other Finding Aids

19-page Research Guide.

Restrictions

Unrestricted research use onsite by appointment. Permission of staff required to photograph materials.

Biographical Note

Industrial designer. Born Romania, 1889. Horwitt studied at City University of New York, New York University, and the Art Students' League, New York. In the 1920s, Horwitt formed his own, short-lived company, Design Engineers, Inc. He served as an advertising copywriter for the pharmaceutical company, E.R. Squibb, after serving in World War II.

Horwitt is best known for his design of a numberless black-face watch that has become known as the "Museum Watch" and was produced by the Movado Watch Company. He also designed the 1930 Beta chair and the Braquette, a frameless picture frame. His innovative designs for timepieces incorporated the classic elements of modern design while retaining some of the traditional elements of telling time, such as the circular face.

Arrangement

Arranged in six record groups; 1) Project files; 2) Drawings, sketches, and blueprints; 3) Film and video; 4) Photographs and Transparencies; 5) Sound Recordings; and 6) Reference Material.

Location of Other Archival Materials Note

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Applied Arts Department. Models and prototypes of approximately 25 objects, including models of the Museum Clock, the Cyclox clock, the Braquette, and the Beta Chair.

Location of Other Archival Materials Note

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Drawings and Prints Department. Three drawings of Horwitt's designs for perfume bottles.

Location of Other Archival Materials Note

Movado Web Page. Information on Horwitt's work for the Movado Watch Company can be found on the company's web site, <http://www.movado.ch/nhorwit.html>.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Beta Chair
- Braquette
- Chair design
- Clocks and watches -- Design
- Design, Industrial -- United States
- Lamps -- Design
- Letterheads -- Design
- Logos (Symbols) -- United States
- Museum Clock
- Museum Watch
- Postage stamp design -- United States
- Radio -- Receivers and reception

Types of Materials:

- Advertisements

Articles
Audiocassettes
Blueprints
Brochures
Clippings
Correspondence
Drawings
Financial records
Legal correspondence
Negatives
Patents
Photographs
Plans
Sketches
Slides
Speeches
Videocassettes

Names:

Braquette, Inc.
Cooper-Hewitt Design Archive
Design Engineers, Inc.
Horwitt, (George) Nathan, 1889-1990.
Howard Miller Clock Company
Movado Watch Corporation

Occupations:

Industrial designers -- United States