



Smithsonian
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum

Raymond Loewy papers, [mid-1940s-early 1960s]

2011

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Smithsonian Libraries
P.O. Box 37012
NMAH 1041, MRC 672
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Libraries
Title:	Raymond Loewy papers
Identifier:	SIL-CH.XXXX-0001
Date:	[mid-1940s-early 1960s]
Extent:	3 Boxes (2 letter sized boxes, 1 legal sized box.)
Creator:	Loewy, Raymond, 1893-1986
Language:	Undetermined .
Summary:	<p>This collection spans the period from the mid-1940s to the early-1960s and consists of newspaper and magazine articles by and about Loewy, including the 1949 <i>TIME</i> magazine on which he appeared on the cover. Extensive clippings exist pertaining to his designs for automobiles. Also includes many articles and speeches written by and about William Snaith, a partner in the firm which was renamed Raymond Loewy/William Snaith, Inc. in 1961. A catalog from the exhibition, "Ten Automobiles," which took place at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1953, is included. Other materials include brochures printed and designed by the firm, press releases, a listing of projects, honors, and membership. Some photographs of Loewy and his design team are included. The collection does not contain any original design materials or project files.</p>

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The materials in this collection were donated to Cooper-Hewitt by Betty Reese, Loewy's publicist.

Location of Other Archival Materials Note

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The Raymond Loewy Collection. Drawings, blueprints, sketches, photographs, slides, and audio and video recordings, covering the period from 1929-1988.

Location of Other Archival Materials Note

Canadian Center for Architecture, Special Collections. Vertical file documenting Loewy's work.

Other Finding Aids

No finding aid.

Restrictions

Unprocessed; access is limited. Permission of Library Director required for use.

Biographical Note

Industrial Designer. Born Paris, France, November 8, 1893, Loewy initially studied electrical engineering, and by 1909, he has designed and sold a successful airplane model. He immigrated to the United States in 1919 and became a naturalized citizen in 1938. Loewy began working as a freelance window display designer for Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue, and as an illustrator for Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, and others, from 1919.

He designed the trademark for Neiman-Marcus in 1923. Loewy is identified as one of the founding fathers of industrial design. In 1929, he started Raymond Loewy Associates in New York, and by 1947, he appeared on the cover of TIME magazine. Loewy's designs always stressed the importance of the clean, functional, dynamic design of products. His schooling in electrical engineering translated into his designs for automobiles, trains, airplanes, ships, and spacecraft for NASA. He also designed interiors for many hotels, offices, and supermarkets. He is best known for his designs for the 1947 Studebaker Starlight Coupe; the 1953 Starliner Coupe; the 1961 Avanti; the 1947 line of Hallicrafter radio receivers; the 1929 Gestetner duplicating machine; the 1934 Sears Coldspot refrigerator; and the S-I steam locomotive for the Pennsylvania Railroad.

He also designed logos for Exxon and Shell oil companies, and bottles and refrigerated vending machines for Coca Cola. He became President of the American Society of Industrial Designers in 1946. Loewy established Compagnie de l'Esthetique Industrielle in Paris in 1952. His work has been featured in many exhibitions, including: "An Exhibition for Modern Living", Detroit Institute of Arts, 1949; "The Designs of Raymond Loewy", Renwick Gallery of the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1975; and "The Machine Age in America", Brooklyn Museum, 1986, among others. He authored, "The Locomotive: Its Esthetics", 1937; "Never Leave Well Enough Alone", 1951; and "Industrial Design", 1979. In 1961, Loewy went into semi-retirement, became partners with William Snaith, and renamed the company Raymond Loewy/William Snaith, Inc. Loewy died in Monte Carlo, July 14, 1986.

Arrangement

Unprocessed.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Automobiles -- Design and construction
- Coldspot refrigerator
- Corporate image -- Design
- Design, Industrial -- United States
- Interior decoration -- United States
- Logos (Symbols) -- Design

Packaging -- Design
Radio -- Receivers and reception -- Design and construction
Supermarkets -- Design
Transportation -- Design

Types of Materials:

Clippings
Photographs
Press releases
Speeches

Names:

American Society of Industrial Designers
Coca-Cola Company
Cooper-Hewitt Design Archive
Exxon Corporation
Gestetner Duplicating Machine Company
Hallicrafter
Hupp Motor Company
International Business Machines Corporation
Loewy, Raymond, 1893-1986
Raymond Loewy Associates
Raymond Loewy/William Snaith, Inc.
Sears, Roebuck and Co.
Shell Oil Company
Snaith, William, 1908-1974
Studebaker Corporation
United Air Lines, Inc.
United States. National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Occupations:

Industrial designers
Interior designers
Packaging designers