The Bradbury Thompson Collection
CalArts Library and Information Resources, Department of Special Collections

Thompson, Bradbury
Processed by Susan Lowenberg

California Institute of the Arts
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Department of Special Collections
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Descriptive summary

Title The Bradbury Thompson Collection

Creator Bradbury Thompson, 1911-1995

Extent 26 books; 30 periodical issues; 4 boxes (1.5 linear feet)

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Biography James Bradbury Thompson, one of the most important graphic designers of the twentieth century, was born in Topeka, Kansas on March 25, 1911. He received his BA in 1934 from Washburn University, Topeka. He served as Art director for Capper Publishers from 1934-38, and for the Rogers-Kellogg-Stilson agency from 1938-42. During World War II he was assigned to the Office of War Information where he designed Victory and USA magazines that were dropped behind enemy lines to combat censorship. He was a freelance graphic designer and art director in New York, from 1945. He was the art director of Mademoiselle, design director of Art News and Art New Annual and designed the formats for some three dozen other magazines, including the Smithsonian. He designed over twenty-four limited edition volumes for the Westvaco Corporation. Each six-by-nine-and-one-half-inch volume in this unique series is slipcased, creating an elegant effect, along with additional touches such as head bands, end sheets, and a colophon. Thompson served as a design consultant to Pitney-Bowes, Famous Artists Schools, Time-Life Books, McGraw-Hill, Field Enterprises, Cornell University, and others. He formulated the design breakthroughs that have been called “the most thorough typographic reassessment of the Bible since Gutenberg,” producing the Washburn Bible. He used a large page and “arranged the text in phrases and separated them where the reader would naturally hesitate or stop”. He also designed over a hundred U.S. postage stamps and served for more than thirty years on the faculty of the Yale School of Art and Architecture. Thompson died on November 1, 1995.
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Abstract  Bradbury Thompson collection contains 24 books that Thompson designed, including 19 of the Westvaco limited editions. In addition, there are periodicals, annual reports, stationery and posters he designed. A few articles about Thompson and his work are also included.

Physical location  Stored in the Department of Special Collections.

Language  English

Administrative Information


Access  Available for use at the Department of Special Collections of the California Institute of the Arts Division of Library and Information Resources.

Access Terms  The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog:

Thompson, Bradbury  
Bradbury Thompson Collection

Restrictions of Use  Copying restriction and policies are available from the CalArts Department of Special Collections / Archives.

Preferred Citation  [Identification of item], The Bradbury Thompson Collection, California Institute of the Arts, Division of Library and Information Resources, Department of Special Collections, Valencia, California.

Scope and Contents  The Bradbury Thompson Collection consists of twenty-four books designed by Thompson. The Art of Graphic Design (Yale University Press, 1988), written by Thompson. Homage to the Book contains examples of Thompson’s designs. The following materials designed by Thompson: 30 issues of the magazine Westvaco Inspirations for Printers; 23 issues of periodicals; 34 annual reports; pieces of stationery; college catalogs; exhibition catalogs; programs. There are two articles about Thompson’s works and two invitations to events honoring him.

Genres and Forms of Material

Books  
Periodicals  
Annual reports  
Corporate brochures  
Letterhead stationery  
Newspaper clippings  
Posters
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**Organization**  Books are fully cataloged and arranged in call number order. The periodical Westvaco Inspirations for Printers is unbound and placed in two slipcases. The other materials are arranged in archival boxes.

Books

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T45 1988

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T45 1975a

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T45 1982

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T4538 1964

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T4538 1972

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T4599

Voices from an earlier America: an anthology of poetry, seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.  [S.l.]: Westvaco, c1980.
Call Number:   Z116.A3 T45 1980

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T45 1972

Call Number:   Z116.A3 T45 1971

Denton, Daniel.  *A brief description of New York: formerly called New-Netherlands: With the places therunto adjoyning. Together with the manner of its scituation, fertility of the soyle, healthfulness of the climate, and the commoditieis thence produced. Also some directions and advice to such as shall go thether: an account of what commodities they shall take with them; the profit and pleasure that may
acspeed to them thereby. Likewise a brief relation of the customs of the Indians
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1973

Call Number: Z116.A3 T4538 1974

Call Number: Z116.A3 T4538 1973

Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1978

Franklin, Benjamin. Healthy, wealthy & wise : a variety of enduring selections from the
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1971

Greenwood, John. A young patriot in the American Revolution, 1775-1783 : the
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1981

Westvaco, 1983.
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1983

Holmes, Oliver Wendell. The autocrat of the breakfast-table. [S.l.] : West Virginia Pulp
and Paper Co., 1965.
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1965

Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1974

Jefferson, Thomas. Thomas Jefferson, Monticello, Virginia, USA : in celebration of the
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1975b

Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1964

1977.
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1977

Ruth, John A. Decorum : a practical treatise on etiquette & dress of the best American
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1979
Simmons, Amelia.  American cookery; or, The art of dressing viands, fish, poultry & vegetables, and the best modes of making pastes, puffs, pies, tarts, puddings, custards & preserves and all kinds of cakes from the imperial plumb to plain cake, adapted to this country & all grades of life.  [S.l.] West Virginia Pulp and Paper Co., 1963.
Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1963

Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1969

Call Number: Z116.A3 T45 1966

Periodicals

Call Number: Z116.A3 T4567
30 issues: n.121 (1939); n.123 (1940); n.125 (1940); n.127 (1941); n.129 (1041); n.131 (1941); n.134 (1942); n.138 (1942); n.145 (1945); n.146 (1944); n.148 (1944); n.157 (1946); n.159 (1946); n.161 (1946); n.162 (1947); n.171 (1948) [2 copies]; n.172 (1948); n.184 (1951); n.186 (1951); n.192 (1953); n.200 (1955); n.202 (1955); n.206 (1956); n.210 (1958); n.212 (1959); n.213 (1960); n.214 (1960); n.216 (1961); n. 217 (1962).

Box 1 Periodicals
Baseline: Bradbury Thompson issue.

Famous Artists Magazine, v.17, n.3, 1969; Designer, Consultant: Bradbury Thompson
Famous Artists Magazine, v.18, n.1, 1970; Design Consultant: Bradbury Thompson
Famous Photographers Magazine, v.2, n.8, 1969; Design Consultant: Bradbury Thompson
Famous Writers Magazine, v.8, n.29, 1970; Design consultant: Bradbury Thompson
Print, v.16, n.1, 1962; COVER DESIGN: Bradbury Thompson
Progressive Architecture, March 1971; Bradbury Thompson, Graphics Consultant
Smithsonian, v. 2, n.1, April 1971
Smithsonian, v.10, n.3, June 1979
U.S.A., v.1, n.1; English
U.S.A., v.1, n.2; English
U.S.A., v.1, n.3; French
U.S.A., v.1, n.4; English
U.S.A., v.1, n.8; English
U.S.A., v.1, n.11; Spanish
U.S.A., v.2, n.1; Spanish
U.S.A., v.2, n.2; Spanish


Box 2 Annual Reports
Cornell University Annual Report 1970-71; Design by Bradbury Thompson
Cornell University, Report of the President, 1965-66; Designed by Bradbury Thompson
Famous Artists Schools, Inc., 16th Annual Report 1964
Famous Artists Schools, Inc., 17th Annual Report 1965
Famous Artists Schools, Inc., 18th Annual Report 1966
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1962
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1963
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1964
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Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1966
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1968
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1969
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1970
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1972
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1973
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1974
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1975
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1976 (2 copies)
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1977
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1979
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1981
Pitney-Bowes, Annual Report 1982
United States Envelope, Annual Report 1962
West Virginia Pulp and Paper, Annual Report 1963
Westvaco, Annual Report 1974
Westvaco, Annual Report 1975
Westvaco, Annual Report 1976
Westvaco, Annual Report 1977
Westvaco, Annual Report 1978
Westvaco, Annual Report 1979
Westvaco, Annual Report 1980
Yale University Capital Development Plan, Annual Report 1968; “The design of the report is by Bradbury Thompson.”
Yale University Capital Development Plan, Annual Report 1970 of the Director of University Development; “The design of the report is by Bradbury Thompson.”

Box 3

Envelope 1
College at Purchase 1971-72, State University of New York; booklet designed by Bradbury Thompson
Dance 20, Connecticut College School of Dance, 20th Annual Session
Greenwich Arts Council, Bicentennial celebration, June to October 1976
Stephen Colhoun Company Inc., Planning, Design and Evaluation of Motion Pictures for Business and Industry; Bradbury Thompson, Director

Envelope 2
Letterhead and other designs for Barnard College
Baseline magazine
Perrot Memorial Library
Pitney-Bowes
United States Envelope
United Students Aid Fund
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Envelope 3
Letterhead designs for Jens Risom Design, Inc.

Envelope 4
Letterhead designs for Lindenmeyer

Envelope 5
Invitation to a retrospective exhibition of Bradbury Thompson’s work hosted by
Westvaco Canada, Ltd. And the Art Directors Club of Toronto
Westvaco Hourly Paid Employees Pension Plan, Milk Carton Division, Richmond
Virginia, April 1, 1976
Westvaco Book Papers Price List, April 1, 1969
Discover Westvaco, 1976
Bradley Thompson, Westvaco, 1988
Westvaco Fine Papers Division envelope

Miscellaneous Publications
Bradbury Thompson’s design is on page four.
Washburn College Bible, Bradbury Thompson Center. Memorial booklet designed by
Bradbury Thompson.
“This Portfolio presents actual-size facsimile pages of The Washburn College
Bible, Modern Phrased Version, Authorized King James Text, Limited First
Edition.” Copyright 1979 by Washburn College, Topeka, Kansas. “Bradbury
Thompson, the designer and typographer of the Washburn College Bible.”
York: Society of Illustrators, Museum of American Illustration, January 6, 1986
to January 24, 1986.
“Catalog design by Bradbury Thompson.”
Famous Photographers School booklet. Westport, Connecticut: Famous Photographers
School, 1963.
In original mailing envelope.
Keuka II. Keuka Park, New York: Keuka College.
“Design by Bradbury Thompson.”
“This is a publication of the Office of Public Affairs of The Menninger
Foundation . . . It is designed by Bradbury Thompson.”
The Menninger Foundation
Zeitschrift über das Gestalten, das Drucken und das Gedruckte. Das Thema diese Heftes:
Paare. Heft 25, 1/1993. [Magazine on Design and Printing. The theme of this
Envelop 6
Invitation to the exhibition of Bradbury Thompson’s works upon the occasion of his receipt of the Medal for 1975 of the American Institute of Graphic Arts. Medal, Type Directors Club. Medal presented to Bradbury Thompson in 1986.
“Selected pages of Bradbury Thompson’s work presented here were designed by him . . .”
Photocopy of article.
Grumbach, Doris. “A handsome, poetic new design is wrought for the Great Book.” Smithsonian v.10, n.3 (June 1979): 72-81.

Box 4 Posters
Six miscellaneous posters with graphic design
Values in the Making of the Environment, Course Announcement, Spring 1974, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania: The Making of a City, Course Announcement, Spring 1975, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1976, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1977, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1978, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1980, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania (2 copies)
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1981, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1982, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1988, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
The City, Course Announcement, Spring 1989, Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania
UCLA Extension, Summer Quarter Begins June 23, 1990
Portraits, David Wynne, May 17-June 17, 1972, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
Bradbury Thompson, Westvaco
“Peace On Earth”
Contact sheets for PitneyBowes Annual Report cover, 1976
Contact sheets for PitneyBowes Annual Report cover, 1980 (2 copies)