

CRANBROOK

ARCHIVES

Astrid Sampe Collection of Eero Saarinen Correspondence

1948-1960
.25 linear ft.

- Acquisition Number: 1995-87
- Acquisition: This collection was donated to the Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum by Astrid Sampe after the *Design in America* exhibit. It was transferred to the Archives on 6 February 1984 by Museum director John Gerard, with the exception of two Eero Saarinen sketches which were retained by the Museum.
- Access: Access to the collection is unrestricted.
- Copyright: Copyright Cranbrook Archives
- Preferred Citation: Astrid Sampe Collection of Eero Saarinen Correspondence, Cranbrook Archives, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.
- Photographs: One photograph has been transferred to the Archives Eero Saarinen photo file and replaced by a facsimile. Facsimiles have also been placed into the collection for the two Saarinen sketches retained by the Cranbrook Art Museum.
- Processing: William Landis, 1995. Collection was rehoused and indexed by Leslie S. Edwards in Mar 2005, and the finding aid was updated.



History

Astrid Sampe, born in Stockholm in 1909, was the third generation of a Swedish textile family. As an only child, a career within textiles was a natural choice. From 1928-1932, she attended the Higher Industrial Art School of Stockholm, during which time she had the opportunity to become an exchange student at the Royal Academy of Art in London. After her studies in 1935, Astrid was hired by Nordiska Kompaniet (NK) and in 1937, helped to set up the textile studio, soon being appointed as the head of NK's Textile Chambers until it was closed down in 1971. She also took part in the Paris World Exhibition.

In 1939, Astrid took part in the New York World Exhibition; and in 1946, along with Elias Svedborg, she arranged the "Modern Swedish Home" exhibition at the London Building Centre. In 1949, Astrid Sampe was appointed "Royal Designer, Hon.RDI of the Royal Society of Arts and in 1951, wove the first fiberglass fabrics. In 1979, Astrid Sampe began creating the first computer-based textile patterns produced in Sweden. Other professional affiliations have included Nordiska Co. (Stockholm), Donald Bros. (Dundee), and Knoll International Textile Section (New York). Astrid Sampe died in 2002.

Scope and Content of Collection

The correspondence in this collection reflects both the romantic attachment between Eero Saarinen and Astrid Sampe, as well as her role as a critic of his design ideas. The collection is arranged in chronological order, with undated letters grouped after those with dates. Envelopes have also been retained for the information they provide.

The collection came to the Archives in no particular order. John Gerard, the director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum from whom the Archives received the collection, did create an inventory of the letters before sending them to the Archives; that inventory has been retained in the donor file.

Translations of the letters were done by Ann Gheorghiadé, a volunteer at the Archives. Acid-free copies of the translations are included with each letter.

Related Collections

- Saarinen Family Papers (1990-08)

Box Number--Description

Box 1

1. Correspondence, 1948-1949
2. Correspondence, 1950
3. Correspondence, 1952
4. Correspondence, 1953
5. Correspondence, n.d. (ca 1950-1953)
6. Correspondence, 1960
7. Envelopes, 1948-1960
8. Correspondence, Hans Knoll, 1948

Index

Aalto, Alvar, 1:2
Aspen Music Tent, 1:1

Detroit Civic Center
--fountain, 1:5
Drake University
--dormitories, 1:4
Dulles International, 1:6

Eames, Charles, 1:3

General Motors Technical Center, 1:1, 1:3-4
Gerard, Sandro, 1:3

Hammarstrom, Olav, 1:1
Helsinki Embassy, 1:4

Johnson, Phillip, 1:5

Irwin Union Trust, 1:3

Knoll, Hans, 1:3
Knoll Furniture, 1:5

Lincoln Center Theater, 1:6
London Embassy, 1:6

Miller, Irwin, 1:3
Milles, Carl, 1:5
Milwaukee War Memorial, 1:3-4
MIT
--Auditorium, 1:4
--Chapel, 1:4-5

Roche, Kevin, 1:4
Roszack, Theodore, 1:6

Saarinen, Eames, 1:6
Saarinen, Eliel
--death, 1:2
Saarinen, Eric, 1:3-4

Saarinen, Lily Swann, 1:4
--tuberculosis, 1:1

Stephens College, 1:4
St. Louis Arch, 1:6

Time, Inc., 1:3

UNESCO, 1:3
--report, 1:5
University of Michigan campus plan, 1:3-4

Weese, Harry, 1:3
W.H.O., 1:6
Winston, Lydia (Kahn), 1:3

Yale University, 1:3
--teaching, 1:1