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24700 McBean Pkwy
Valencia, California 91355
(661) 253-7882
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Guide to the California Institute of the Arts School of Design Records, 1966-1976
Dates: 2014-09-08
Collection Number: CalArts-006
Creator/Collector: California Institute of the Arts
Extent: 4 linear feet
Repository: California Institute of the Arts Institute Archives
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Abstract: The California Institute of the Arts’ School of Design was established in 1970. In 1976, it merged with CalArts’ School of Art to become the School of Art and Design, a merger that lasted until 1984. In 1984, the School of Art and Design became the School of Art. Collection consists of administrative, curricular, exhibition and event materials, black-and-white photographs, and posters related to the School of Design.
Language of Material: English
Access
Open for research. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the institute archivist to make an appointment to view materials.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Acquisition Information
Collected by California Institute of the Arts as part of the California Institute of the Arts Institute Archive.
Biography/Administrative History
The California Institute of the Arts, commonly known as CalArts, is located in Valencia, California, and grants degrees in the visual and performing arts. Incorporated on September 1, 1961, it was the first degree-granting institution of higher learning in the United States created specifically for students of both the visual and the performing arts. It was the dream and vision of Walt Disney to create such an institute and he provided funding for it in his will. Initially formed through the merger of the Chouinard Art Institute (founded 1921) and the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music (founded 1883), it opened at its present campus in Valencia, California, in November 1971. The California Institute of the Arts’ School of Design existed from 1970 to 1976 offering BFA and MFA degrees. From 1970 to 1974 its goal was to train students in the management of the future and in the initiation of positive changes as they applied to shelters, settlements, regions, tools, systems, artifacts, visual communications, the environment and products, with an emphasis on an ecological approach to design. Areas of study included visual and physical phenomena, design strategy, morphology and structure in nature, production processes and technology, the history of invention, principles of ecological design, computer-assisted design, economics and distribution strategies, human factors engineering, environmental simulation and gaming, photographic communications and product design. The aim was to form the faculty and students into task forces bent on solving concrete problems in natural and social environments. In 1974 the goal of the School of Design was to train designers to would work in designer-manager positions in industry, production, and community planning. Graduates were expected to contribute to the management of the future and to the innovation of improvements in those areas of human endeavor that deal with the social, practical, and aesthetic aspects of design. Courses in Design were grouped into four categories: Photography, Graphic Design, Product Design, and Environmental Design. Courses offered included visual and physical design, photography, science, programming, probability and statistics, systems theory, design of shelters, settlements and regions, as well as courses in methods, tools and processes. The Women’s Design Program, initiated by Sheila deBretteville in 1971, was a year-long program within the School of Design that aimed at the development of a design subject matter appropriate to, and in keeping with, feminist identity. Design processes, group processes, media projects, and a reading seminar were the cornerstones of the program. The School of Design merged with the School of Art in 1976 to become the School of Art and Design. Sources: Admissions bulletin, 1971- 1972; 1972-1973; 1974-1975.
Scope and Content of Collection
The California Institute of the Arts School of Design Collection documents the activities, events, and academics of the California Institute of the Arts School of Design. The bulk of the collection comprises correspondence and memoranda of deans and of faculty. It also contains a small number of design project proposals and publications; black and white

Indexing Terms
California Institute of the Arts – School of Design – History
Maguire, Paul
Bretteville, Sheila de
Papanek, Victor J.
Photographs
Correspondence
Posters
Memoranda