Finding aid for the Virgil Mirano 3D photography collection 6200

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USC Libraries Special Collections
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URL: http://libraries.usc.edu/locations/special-collections
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: USC Libraries Special Collections
Title: Virgil Mirano 3D photography collection
creator: Mirano, Virgil
Identifier/Call Number: 6200
Physical Description: 6.65 Linear Feet10 boxes
Date (inclusive): 1935-2018
Date (bulk): 1970-2000
Abstract: The Virgil Mirano 3D photography collection comprises the library of Virgil Mirano (1937-2018), the cinematographer and visual effects specialist best known for his work on Die Hard (1988), Blade Runner (1982), and Masters of the Universe (1987). The collection contains books, magazines, and promotional material that incorporate 3D images; 3D photography viewers and glasses; 3D comic books; and Mirano's files on imaging products, services, and events -- all of which document the development of 3D imaging processes from 1935 to 2018.

Biographical / Historical
An extensive collection of materials related to 3D images from the library of Virgil Mirano (1937-2018), the cinematographer and visual effects specialist best known for his work on Die Hard (1988), Blade Runner (1982), and Masters of the Universe (1987). From the mid-1970s through the '90s, Mirano manned the still photography labs of three of the largest visual effects (VFX) houses in Los Angeles. He documented the people and the techniques of a variety of films - images that would serve as an inspiration for a whole new corps of artists now working in the industry. Mirano did more than just take snapshots of the crew. He was a master of the camera and printer. For example, Mirano is responsible for the Polaroid of Zhora that Deckard's Esper machine prints for him in Blade Runner, having developed a technique of distorting a 35mm image, then adding grain, and converting it to a Polaroid print. Remarkably, Mirano accomplished this effect in a darkroom without using a computer.

The history of 3D images begins in the 1830s with the invention of the stereoscope. Initially considered a scientific device, the stereoscope soon entered popular culture as Victorian audiences became fascinated with stereo photographs depicting faraway lands, colossal monuments, current events, and comic scenes. 3D motion picture technology followed in the 20th century, along with consumer products such as View Masters and Stereo Realist cameras. These technologies led to lenticular printing and holography, which generate dimensional effects without the aid of glasses.

[See links under "External Documents" for biographical/historical sources]

Content Description
The Virgil Mirano 3D photography collection contains books, magazines, and promotional material that incorporate 3D images; 3D photography viewers and glasses; 3D comic books; and Mirano's files on 3D imaging products, services, workshops, and conferences. The collection material spans from 1935 to 2018, with the bulk of the material created between 1970 and 2000.

Conditions Governing Access
Advance notice required for access.

Conditions Governing Use
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Preferred Citation
[Box/folder no. or item name], Virgil Mirano 3D photography collection, Collection no. 6200, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Purchased from Johnson Rare Books and Archives, May 13, 2019.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
3-D films -- Archival resources
3-D video (Three-dimensional imaging) -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Cinematography -- Special effects -- Archival resources
Photography -- Special effects -- Archival resources
Three-dimensional display systems -- Archival resources
Three-dimensional imaging -- California -- Los Angeles -- 20th century -- Archival resources
Books
Comic books
Correspondence
Magazines (periodicals)
Photographs
Promotional materials
Slide viewers (hand held devices)
Mirano, Virgil -- Archives

Box 1, Folder 1-4

**3D comic books 1953-1989**

*Scope and Contents*

Thirty-two 3D comic books, most from the mid to late 1980s. In addition, there are three vintage 3D comic books: *Animal Fun 3-D* (1953), missing 3D glasses; *3 Dimensional Noodnik* (1953), missing 3D glasses; and *3-D Bat Man* (1966), with 3D glasses laid in.

Box 7, Box 8, Box 9, Box 10, Folder 3

**3D photography viewers, advertising images, and promotional material 1951-2010**

*Scope and Contents*

More than 30 advertising images and promotional pieces using 3D technology, including a McDonald’s Happy Meal Box with glasses and an Absolut Vodka advertisement shaped like a bottle that doubles as a 3D viewer. Also includes a variety of 3D photography viewers and accompanying materials, including:

1. Stereo Realist Complete Mounting Kit in a green case
2. 3D Metro Cruiser glasses for experiencing the web in 3D
3. Two boxes of unused aluminum stereomount masks made by Edme
4. Stereo Realist Flash Attachment
5. 1-0 display systems 6 VDC glasses with headphones and cords, used with tape repair and other wear
6. Stereo Realist viewer model 2062 with light scuffing
7. Taylor Merchant 3D paper viewers, three copies
8. Two plastic 3D viewer in original plastic, no marking
9. Brown View Master (1951) with wear with 12 View Master reels, including Mickey Mouse, Spiderman and Archie
10. A collection of more than 100 paper 3D glasses with various advertising and other promotional markings
12. 100 3D Damsels adult trading cards in a plastic storage case
Books using 3D images 1935-1998

Scope and Contents
Books using 3D and 3D images, including:

1. Jim Pomeroy's *Ver Multidimensionales*, includes a View Master viewer and 21 3D photographs in the original box
2. Charles & Ray Eames Stereo Photographs 3D View Master reels
9. A group of 19 additional books about the history of 3D printing and stereographs, along with information about creating 3D imagery and storytelling. For example, William Darrah's *The World of Stereographs* published in 1977 and *Paris in 3D to Dimensional Photography* by Herbert McKay published in 1953.

Magazines featuring 3D photography 1970-2018

Scope and Contents
A group of magazines on 3D photography or featuring 3D photography, including:

1. Two issues of *Computer Graphic World*: April and December 2009
2. Three issues of *Stereo World*: May/June 2017; May/June and July/August 2018
3. Five issues of *Starlog*: Number 5, 41, 54 and the "Starlog Fantastic" 3-D photo guidebook and "Starlog Spectacular"
4. A group of 21 various magazines featuring 3D imaging within their pages or features on 3D, including the August 1998 *National Geographic* with 3D glasses and images of Mars; *Astronomy* March 1998 "3-D Blowout"; and the *Hollywood Reporter* with a 3D image on the cover


Processing Information
Rehoused from a three-ring binder to archival folders.

3-D Hines System 1982-1995

Scope and Contents
A red binder labeled "3-D Hines System" containing five magazines, correspondence from HinesLab (Glendale, CA), and a variety of photocopied "how to" articles regarding the operation of 3D cameras. During processing, the contents of the binder were rehoused into archival folders.

3D imaging products, services, and workshops 1978-2010

Scope and Contents
Mirano's files on a variety of different products and services for printing 3D images and producing special effects as well as paperwork and notes from attending workshops relating to 3D imaging and special effects. Companies and topics documented in these files include MKD Productions, Extra Dimensional Products, ICG Stereoscopic 3D Workshop at the Sony 3D Technology Center (2010), Visual Effects Society (VES) meetings and workshops, Kodak, Stereo Labs, Project 640 - View-Master, Reel 3-D News, Nishika 3-D, and ChromaDepth 3-D.