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Marie Wasnock

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Art Institute of Boston, Administrative Records

1942-2008

By Marie Wasnock

Collection Overview

Title: Art Institute of Boston, Administrative Records, 1942-2008

ID: 05/01

Creator: Art Institute of Boston (1912 -)

Extent: 2 Boxes

Arrangement: Arranged by subject. See content list.

Languages: English

Scope and Contents of the Materials

This collection documents the history of the School of Practical Arts (SPA), the Art Institute of Boston (AIB), and the Lesley University College of Art and Design (LUCAD) since its founding. As of Jan 2012, this collection contains papers from 1942-2008. Information about the institution's administration, mission, articles of incorporation, and bylaws are included, as well as records pertaining to budgets, enrollment, curriculum, and programs.

Historical Note

The Art Institute of Boston was founded by Roy Davidson in 1912 as the School of Practical Art and was one of the first private, nonaffiliated studio schools in the United States. A pioneer in the field of commercial art education, Davidson sought an alternative to the traditional art training of his day, which was the apprenticeship system with long years of menial, repetitive labor. To keep pace with the growing needs of industry, the School of Practical Art developed a program that would allow young people to complete their art training in a reasonable length of time and enter fields equipped for successful contribution on a professional level. Davidson was

influenced by art critic John Ruskin, in particular his notion that it is “in art that the heart, the head, and the hand of a man come together.” AIB's early philosophy was based on Davidson's own belief that "beauty comes from the use.” The school opened in Davidson’s own studio, three small rooms in Boston’s Back Bay. As the institution prospered and attracted the attention of the art community, the curriculum expanded to include a wide range of artistic exploration and discipline. The school soon outgrew its first location and moved to progressively larger facilities. (See below for a full listing of addresses and directors.)

Through the mid-twentieth century the school increasingly embraced the fine arts and developed a growing liberal arts curriculum. In 1967 the school was renamed the Art Institute of Boston (AIB), establishing itself as a non-profit institution of higher education and preparing for future expansion and development. The name change also acknowledged the school’s increased focus upon fine art as well as design, illustration, and photography. In 1970 AIB moved to Kenmore Square into a building with 40,000 square feet of studio and workshop space, including a library, gallery, lecture rooms, and administrative offices. In 1972 AIB joined with Northeastern University to create an exchange program, giving AIB students the option of earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Applied Art, Photography, or Fine Art.

In 1998, AIB merged with then Lesley College, located in Cambridge, Massachusetts and founded in 1909. In Autumn 2013, the University officially changed the name of the Art Institute of Boston to the Lesley University College of Art and Design (LUCAD).

LUCAD is governed by the Lesley University Board of Trustees and the larger University administration. The school and University are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Directors:

Roy Davidson served as Director from 1912 to 1940. When Davidson died, he was succeeded by Harold Pollock who served as director from 1941 to 1945, until he became president, a post he held from 1945 to 1962. During this time Alan Furber served as for one year from 1944 to 1945 as president. Pollock was followed by William Willis, who was President from 1962 to 1990. Stan Trecker became president in 1991 and served until 1998. After serving as president of Montserrat College in Beverly, Mass., Trecker returned to Lesley as the art school’s dean.

Locations:

711 Boylston Street (1918-1924)
797 Boylston Street (1925-1926)
857 Boylston Street (1927-1931)
883 Boylston Street (1932-1940)
10 Newbury Street (1941-1951)
665 Atlantic Avenue (1952-1960)
683 Atlantic Avenue (1953-1955)
718 Beacon Street (1960-1969)
700 Beacon Street (1970-2014)
Massachusetts Avenue, Porter Square (2014-present)

Administrative Information

Accruals: Seeking further historical materials about AIB since its founding.

Access Restrictions: In-Library Use Only.

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Processing Information: Processed by Marie Wasnock, January 2012. Updated in October 2014.

Finding Aid Revision History: Finding Aid to be revised as new materials are accessioned into collection.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1: Administration/History, Art Institute of Boston, 1942-2002

Folder 1: Mission Statement, 501(c)3 status, etc., 1968, 1986, 1995

Folder 2: Articles of Incorporation, 1967, 1981, 1985

Folder 3: ByLaws, 1987

Folder 4: AIB / Lesley Merger, 1998

Folder 5: Administration - Roles and Responsibilities, 2000

Folder 6: Presidents - Stan Trecker, 1991-2002

Folder 7: Presidents - Roy Davidson, School of Practical Arts

Folder 8: Past Trustees, Administration, Advisory Boards, and Staff, 1987-1994

Folder 9: Faculty - misc. CVs/Resumes

Folder 10: Budgets - Report for 22 Jun 1942 to 30 Jun 1943, 1942-1943

Box 2: Enrollment/Curriculum/Programs, Art Institute of Boston, 1962-2008

Folder 1: Enrollment Lists, 1962-1965

Folder 2: Enrollment Statistics, 1991-1996

Folder 3: Curriculum Update Report (1 of 3), 1966-1967

Folder 4: Curriculum Update Report (2 of 3), 1966-1967

Folder 5: Curriculum Update Report (3 of 3), 1966-1967

Folder 6: Pre-College Programs, 1996-1999; 2007-2008

Folder 7: Extended Programs, 1995-1997

Folder 8: Young Artists Program (for children), undated

Folder 9: International / Travel Art Programs - Painting on the Adriatic, June 1987