

## **Collection Guide: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe**

### **Overview**

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) had a long career as professor of architecture and designer of much of the campus of IIT. He was initially recruited in 1938 by Armour Institute of Technology to be Professor of Architecture and Director of the Architectural Curriculum. He maintained this position and title after the 1940 merger between Armour and Lewis Institute to create IIT. Upon the reorganization of the curriculum in 1949 his title was changed to Professor of Architecture and Director of the Department of Architecture and City Planning. He retired in September of 1953, but held the title of Emeritus Professor of Architecture until his death.

Mies played a central role in the design of IIT's main State St. campus following the 1940 merger. He developed the IIT campus master plan in 1941 and designed around 20 buildings on the university's campus on 33<sup>rd</sup> and State St. in Chicago's South Side, including the first classroom building on the campus, Alumni Memorial Hall (1945-1946). Other Mies buildings on campus include Perlstein Hall (1945-1946), Carr Memorial Chapel (1949-1952), Carman Hall Apartments (1951-1953), the Commons (1952-1953), and the world-renowned Crown Hall (1950-1956)<sup>1</sup>. His best known campus building is perhaps S.R. Crown Hall, built 1950- 1956, which continues to house the university's College of Architecture. Crown Hall was featured on a postage stamp in 1982, designated a Chicago Landmark in 1997 and given National Historic Landmark status in 2001.

Mies received ample recognition for his contributions to architecture outside IIT as well. He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from John F. Kennedy in July 1963, the Gold Medal from the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in June 1966, and the Honorary Doctorate of Engineering from IIT, also in June 1966. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1968.

Maintaining Mies' distinctive campus buildings garnered significant enthusiasm and support after his death. The 2001 project to renovate Crown Hall elicited major funding from individuals and foundations including Ralph and Leah Wanger; Phyllis Lambert, MS-ARCH, 1963; Mary Elizabeth Spies Droste, BS-ARCH, 1942; The Getty Foundation; Crown Family via the Arie & Ida Crown Memorial and the Henry & Gladys Crown Trust and Lester Crown; The Estate of Ray S. Dewey; The Estate of Robert M. and Eleanor Krause. The challenge of preserving Crown Hall as an iconic Mies building which is still in use as an academic building housing classrooms, offices, and a library was met by renovating the building's interior to accommodate 21<sup>st</sup> century computer technology, ADA requirements, and current building codes while restoring the building's exterior.

University Technology Park, a complex of buildings designed for Armour Research Foundation (now IITRI) underwent similar renovations in 2010. About half of the complex, which is essentially three separate buildings with connecting hallways, was designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. The projected \$100 million renovation provided wet and dry laboratories for start-up companies as well as research and office facilities for long-term tenants while maintaining the Mies designed exteriors of these buildings.

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<sup>1</sup> Construction dates taken from [Guide to the Campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology](#) by Rolf Achilles. See IIT Acc. No. 2000.12 below.

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Upkeep of Mies buildings and the associating landscaping has also been supported by the IIT Challenge Grant. The Challenge Grant was issued in 1996 by Board members Robert Galvin in Robert Pritzker in response to the 1993-1994 National Commission self-study. Galvin and Pritzker each pledged \$60 million dollars to be matched in a fund raising effort with an ultimate goal of \$250 million, which was met in December 2000. A section of this grant went to carrying out Dirk Lohans master plan to build a new campus center, renovate five Mies buildings, and landscape a substantial portion of campus.

Mies' legacy of innovation and forward thinking design has continued to influence campus developments. On March 9, 2000, ground was broken for the \$45 million McCormick Tribune Campus Center, the first new facility to be added to the campus since 1970. Designed by the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas (OMA, The Netherlands), the building was funded in part by a \$13.3 million gift from the McCormick Tribune Foundation which was matched by the Challenge Grant. In May 2002, ground was broken for a new student residence hall designed by Chicagoan and IIT alumnus Helmut Jahn. Located just south of the Campus Center, the dormitory visually links the Campus Center to Crown Hall, the building Mies designed to house his architecture program. Both the Campus Center and the \$24 million residence hall opened in 2003.

### **Collection Note**

Illinois Institute of Technology (Chicago) is *not* the official repository of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's papers: the Museum of Modern Art in New York holds his drawings, his office papers are at the Library of Congress under LC control no.: mm 74032847, and the University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections holds his personal library. However, IIT's UASC does have some unique manuscripts as well as published materials and a number of secondary collections which relate to Mies and his activities at IIT as well as collections concerning his campus buildings. Note that some collections may be restricted. A very limited number of photographs of Mies are included in the IIT Archives' collections, ask for more information.

### **Materials in UASC**

#### ***Processed Collections***

*1998.004 Joseph Finnegan Papers*

Two files titled: Mies Van Der Rohe Dinner, October 1938; Mies Van Der Rohe Dinner, c. October 1938

*1991.015 Mies van der Rohe Centennial Records*

13 boxes and 7 tapes: Administrative files relating to the planning and conducting of events at Illinois Institute of Technology which marked the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Events included lectures and an exhibit and catalogue entitled *Mies van der Rohe: Architect as Educator*. Collection materials date 1985 – 1986.

*1991.006 Deceased Donor Files*

1 file title: Mies van der Rohe, Ludwig

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- 1991.02     *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe Collection*  
Film “Mies van der Rohe,” directed and co-produced by subject’s daughter, Georgia van der Rohe, in cooperation with a television station in (West) Germany. Script by Mies biographer, Franz Schulze. “Film includes footage of Mies reflecting on his life’s work the year before his death, biographical material, and segments on major projects built in Chicago, Toronto, New York, Berlin, and other cities” (per IIT internal memo found with the film). Includes scenes of IIT campus. Chicago premier of the film was held at IIT, March 11, 1980. Color and sound; 16 mm; two 14” reels.
- 036.04.04/03     *Films Collection/Chicago Tonight Episode*  
Public television broadcast *Chicago Tonight* with John Calloway; WTTW production on 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of birth of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Show’s guests include Jack Hedrick (partner [?], Hedrick Blessing), Franz Schulze (Mies’ biographer), Rolf Achilles (Administrative Director of Mies Centennial Project), Dirk Lohan (Mies’ grandson). Identified as #84-052V (IITV’s log number?). Date: 4/29/1986. ½ hr. long
- 1998.40     *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe Collection*  
Reproductions of two drawings 10¼ x 13¾” by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe of Court House Projects, ca. 1934. Originals are ink on tracing paper, 8½ x 11¾” in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art. Ca. 1980s
- 1998.33     *Faculty Files Collection*  
The text of comments made April 17, 1950 by Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Serge Chermayeff on the merger if the Institute of Design with IIT is in the Chermayeff file. Speech by Mies is titled *Architecture and Technology*.
- 1998.27     *Anita Anderson Papers*  
Two promotional pieces (probably artwork “slicks” for ads; 11x14” each) featuring Mies van der Rohe and the architecture program, ca. 1985.
- 1998.62     *Willard Hotchkiss Papers*  
See materials in Box A – Arc/Folder: Architecture, Department of, September 1935 re Mies van der Rohr’s recruitment and hire by Armour Institute of Technology.
- 1998.184     *John T. Rettaliata Papers*  
Crown Hall dedication materials (including Mies van der Rohe’s speech and Pres. Rettaliata’s comments) in Box 12/Folder 2 and Box 15/Folder 18.
- 1998.10     *Gilbert Force Papers*  
Memo (8/1/46) signed by Mies van der Rohe re architecture students coming to IIT campus; “Navy Building” (i.e., Alumni Memorial Hall).
- 1998.49     *Henry T. Heald Papers*  
One file titled: Mies van der Rohe [Welcome Reception] Dinner, 1938

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- 1998.43 *Mies van der Rohe Collection*  
Two monochrome photos, both oversize and mounted for exhibition. Item .1 is a 45 x 35” interior view of Mies van der Rohe’s Barcelona Pavilion and shows white Barcelona chairs and stools, black marble walls, one interior column, ceiling, tile floor, and exterior window walls. The view, with high shadow contrast, shows reflections and images of surrounding sculptures, gardens and structures in and through the glass walls.  
Item .2 is a 22 x 30” monochrome image of the interior the 1887 Paris Exposition’s Gallery of Machines.  
These are identified as being “original photo(s) brought from Europe by Mies van der Rohe in late 30’s.”
- 1999.13 *Irwin B. Fieldhouse Interview*  
Transcription index includes a reference to Mies van der Rohe on page 2.
- 1998.130 *Miscellaneous Publications and Brochures*  
Items listed in this collection include the following (title of piece or folder title):  
*Mies In America* (CCA/MCA exhibit), 2002  
*Centennial Preview: Armour and Art Institute Lay Foundation for Miesian Revolution*  
Mies van der Rohe, 1938 Reception & Dinner Invitation (Armour Institute of Technology ) **Moved to 1998.186/Box 11**  
*A Guide to Mies Van Der Rohe in Chicago*  
Dept. Of Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Lecture Series **Moved to 006.02.02**  
S. R. Crown Hall – Chicago Landmark Commission, Preliminary Staff Summary of Information **Moved to 1998.183**  
Mies van der Rohe: Architect as Educator (a book published by IIT)
- 1998.131 *Alschuler Campus Plan*  
Printed brochure published by Illinois Institute of Technology showing the “Campus Plan” (building and grounds design) done by architect Alfred S. Alschuler. Collection documents an alternate campus plan to the Mies van der Rohe plan which was apparently being proposed or drawn concurrently with this one shown in this brochure. The Mies plan was ultimately implemented.
- 1998.151 *Momentum Nineteen Fifty*  
A portfolio of reproductions of creative work originating in the Chicago area.”  
Published in Chicago, 1950, by Momentum, an art movement. Item does not appear to have any direct connection with IIT, but Mies van der Rohe was one of the four-member jury.
- 1998.205 *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe Papers*  
Blueprints by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe of the (unbuilt) Library and Administration Building designed for Illinois Institute of Technology (Chicago). Five pages; 36” x 48”; 1/8”=1’ scale.

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Also included is the original mailing envelope (postmark illegible) with label from Mies van der Rohe's Wabash Ave. office in Chicago, Ill.; package was addressed to William H. Hyde, Jr. (IIT librarian).

The five blueprint pages show:

1. North, south, east, and west elevations.
2. Ground level floor plan showing offices, garden court, and book stacks.
3. Mezzanine floor plan with president's suite and reserve book room.
4. Interior elevations – fronts and backs of administration and library facades, mezzanine, court, and book stack entrances.
5. Three cut-away facades.

- 1999.27      *Alumni Memorial Hall*  
Three pages of blueprints (27 x 41") for "Navy Building" (later, Alumni Memorial Hall) by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Holabird & Root. Drawings are identified as First Floor Framing, drawing S2; 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Framing, S3; and Roof Framing Plan, S4. All are dated 5/17/1945 and are identified as revisions of commission number 7774.
- 1999.26      *Topical Files*  
Informational brochure (4 color; 8 ½ x 11") related to current campus revitalization activities titled *Renewing the Mies van der Rohe Campus*; 1999.
- 1999.22      *Sara Fishman and Mary Dawson Papers*  
Office of Public Relations files titled: Architecture/Mies van der Rohe Case, 1997; Mies van der Rohe Interpretive Center, 1997; *Beyond Mies*, 1997
- 1999.51      *McCormick Tribute Campus Center Collection*  
VHS video titled *Beyond Mies* (by Rich Goodman Productions), 1998 Video tape (17 minutes) documenting the 1997 Richard H. Driehaus Foundation International Design Competition to select an architect for the Campus Center. Features interviews with Dirk Lohan and finalists including winner Rem Koolhaas.
- 2000.19      *F. Peter Weil Photographs*  
Black and white photographs (4x5" and 35" negatives, proof sheets and individual prints) taken by F. Peter Weil during (and after?) his time as a student at Institute of Design (Chicago), ca. 1952 – 1964. Photographs are generally in thematic series; topics depicted include: Interiors of lobby and apartments in Mies van der Rohe's 860 – 880 Lake Shore Drive Building.
- 2000.12      *Guide to the Campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology*  
24 page brochure by Rolf Achilles & Charlotte Myhrum detailing the architectural history of 30 buildings on the IIT campus. A photograph of each building is included.
- 2000.08      *Cathal O'Neill's Dublin*  
Cathal O'Neill (an Illinois Institute of Technology architecture alumnus, ca. 1959. He subsequently worked in Mies van der Rohe's office and later became head of the School of Architecture at UCD, Ireland.) A 143 page hardbound book with watercolor

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images and text by noted Irish architect Cathal O'Neill; includes images of buildings and green spaces in Dublin Ireland. Inscribed "To the staff and students of I.I.T. in thanks for the happy time spent in the School 1957 – 1959. Cathal O'Neill Sept 1999."

- 1999.36 *Henry Knepler Papers*  
Book titled LLP: A Personal and Idiosyncratic History of the Humanities at IIT by former IIT faculty member (humanities department chairman) Henry Knepler. Index notes references to Mies van der Rohe on pages 12 and 39.
- 2001.16 *Films*  
5 VHS cassettes; 1 ¾ hours viewing time. Audio-visual tape recordings of Nov. 20, 1996 Illinois Institute of Technology Board of Trustees reception in Crown Hall at which the \$120 million dollar Galvin-Pritzker pledge was announced. Includes interviews, introductions, and talks by Dirk Lohan, Lewis Collens, Bob Pritzker, Jay Pritzker, Bob Galvin, Riccardo Legorreta, John Madigan, Frank Gehry (slide presentation). Tapes are unedited raw footage; filmed by Media Process Group, Chicago. Index of scenes available on request.
- 2001.15 *Mary Dawson Papers*  
1 file titled: Mies Centennial, 1986
- 2001.09 *Department of Architecture Records*  
Architecture Department semester grade reports, signed by the instructor. Includes names of students enrolled in class and grade assigned; 1948 – 1958.
- 2000.34 *John P. Makielski Papers*  
Campus plan: 11 x 17" printed piece titled "Illinois Institute of Technology, Technology Center of Tomorrow" showing drawing of proposed campus design (Mies van der Rohe's plan?); image includes "proposed superhighway, south route" south of 35<sup>th</sup> St.; 1947.
- 2001.50 *Chicago Architecture Foundation*  
*Mies & Modernism: The IIT Campus Tour* being a 57-page tour training manual for docents who provide walking tours of the Illinois Institute of Technology campus. The manual has general information about Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the architecture program at IIT, the campus master plan and landscaping, as well as detailed architectural information about specific buildings. Also included is a bibliography and partial list of graduates of the IIT architecture program. Developed for Chicago Architecture Foundation by Dan Fitzgerald, June, 2001; version 3.0; © Chicago Architecture Foundation, 2001.
- 2001.49 *IIT Challenge Grant Video*  
Audio and video tapes (11 unedited tapes) recorded by Illinois Institute of Technology to document two events related to the university's renewal program. Ten of the tapes document events of the March 9, 2000 ground breaking for the McCormick Tribune

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Campus Center including: a video conference with representatives of the various architectural, engineering, university, and public entities who collaborated on the building; the official ground breaking ceremony; and the lunch reception which followed and the August 10, 2001 Gala Celebration which marked the end of the IIT Challenge Campaign.

- 2001.42      *National Historic Landmarks Survey*  
Copy of the finalized 2001 National Historic Landmark nomination form accepted for S. R. Crown Hall (built 1950-1956) with accompanying letter from the National Historic Landmarks Survey. The narrative cites Crown Hall as “an icon of ‘Miesian’ architecture and the International Style” (p. 17) for which it was granted Landmark status. The nomination includes an extensive verbal description of the building and includes technical specifications, drawings (floor plans) and photographs.
- 2002.37      *Engineering Research Building*  
Responses to IIT Request for Qualifications from five firms to provide architectural and engineering services in connection with redevelopment of the campus buildings (formerly IITRI research laboratories) to be used as the Biomedical Research and Development Complex. The contract was awarded to Cannon Design.
- 2002.14      *U. S. Postal Service*  
Two cancelled stamp covers commemorating First Day of Issue stamps in a series on architecture. Image on stamp on these covers is of Crown Hall in recognition of the Mies van der Rohe-designed campus of Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago. Cancellation dated Sept. 30, 1982. Cover also includes an image of Mies van der Rohe and reproduction of his signature. Also included is one copy each of three additional items: a one-page biography of Mies; a one-page flier with photo of Crown Hall interior; a envelope (which contained the materials) with depiction of campus and reading “Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Architect, 1886 - 1969/Commemorative Stamp Issued September 30, 1982, Washington, D.C”.
- 2002.06      *W. Ronald Johnson Papers*  
W. Ronald Johnson (an IIT alumnus who graduated in 1955 with a degree in Fire Protection Engineering) Video tape concerning students activities and campus life at Illinois Institute of Technology, 1952 – 1956. Video consists of still images and includes 30 images of contemporary buildings (i.e., Mies campus) taken from color slides. While quality is not superior, these color images show campus buildings in 1950s landscape, views not otherwise available in IIT Archives photo collections.
- 1993.10      *S. I. Hayakawa (who was on faculty at IIT in 1945)*  
Memo dated Sept. 18, 1945 to “Professor Ludwig Mies van der Rohe” from S. I. Hayakawa. Concerns a request from *COOP* magazine for architectural photos to be used in an upcoming article. Typed, unsigned memo is the copy sent to Frank Wheeler in Illinois Institute of Technology’s News Bureau with a hand-written note appended by Hayakawa (signed “Don”) to Wheeler.

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- 1998.154     *David Spaeth*  
Annotated bibliography of articles and books containing references to Mies.
- 1998.210     *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe & Alfred Caldwell*  
Landscape Plan for Housing Area; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Alfred Caldwell;  
11/1/1954
- 1993.26     *John T. Rettaliata Papers*  
Correspondence to Rettaliata from Mies concerning recommendations for  
appointments to the American Institute of Architects advisory committee; Nov. 14,  
1955.
- 2004.15     *Mies van der Rohe Collection*  
One poster reading *Mies van der Rohe: Architect as Educator* showing a profile of  
Mies' head and a reproduction of his signature. Poster was created to promote the  
exhibit held in Crown Hall on the campus of Illinois Institute of Technology, June 6 –  
July 12, 1986.
- 2004.42     *Mies van der Rohe Collection*  
One video *Mies van der Rohe's 118<sup>th</sup> Birthday, March 26, 2004*, being a celebration  
held in S. R. Crown Hall on the campus of Illinois Institute of Technology. Present in  
order of appearance: Donna Robertson, Peter Beltemacchi, Jack Bowman, Louis  
Rocah, David C. Sharpe, Paul Shaver, Jack Hartray, Peter Roesch. Film produced by  
Dan Kuruna. 51 minutes.
- 2004.43     *Mies van der Rohe Collection*  
Video titled *Mies and Beyond: IIT Alumni Tour* featuring highlights of a tour by  
Illinois Institute of Technology architecture students, alumni, and faculty to Madrid,  
Barcelona, Bilbao, and Berlin in 2002.
- 2005.30     *Mies in America Collection*  
Publicity, program, and printed materials related to the opening of the exhibit *Mies in  
America* at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago) and the event honoring  
Phyllis Lambert, March 9, 2002.

***A/V Materials***

Original cassettes (audio and video) may be heard/viewed in the IIT Archives by appointment. Reel-to-reel items (audio tapes or film) are not accessible until transferred to cassette or digital medium. The researcher is responsible for costs involved in the transfer which will be done at a professional conservation laboratory only. IIT does not necessarily own the copyright to these materials. The researcher is responsible for copyright clearance if the item is used for any purpose other than personal viewing.

1991.7 ?     *Video cassette tapes re: Mies Centennial*





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***Drawings, Plans, and Blueprints***

- 1999.27      *Alumni Memorial Hall*  
Three pages of blueprints (27 x 41") for "Navy Building" now Alumni Memorial Hall
- 1998.205      *Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*  
Five pages of blueprints (36 x 48") for the (unbuilt) Library and Administration Building
- 1998.210      *Alfred Caldwell Collection*  
Landscape Plan for Housing Area; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Alfred Caldwell; 11/1/1954
- 1998.298      *East Map Case*  
Site Plan, Association of American Railroads; Mies van der Rohe, 1955. Existing and proposed buildings.  
Blueprint, Preliminary site plan. Fraternity housing. Mies van der Rohe - Architect. 4-3-57; 2 alternate plans (2 sheets), each with existing Farr Hall.  
Blueprint, New Technological Center for IIT. Electrical Engineering & Physics Building. 1956. Mies van der Rohe - Architect. 1 sheet  
Blueprint, Electrical Engineering, Physics & Mathematics Building - Mies van der Rohe 1955. (3 sheets).

***General Collections Materials***

Other collections which may be of interest are school yearbooks, academic catalogs, and presidents' annual reports for the years Mies taught at the school, ready reference drop files, collections concerning Mies-designed buildings on the IIT campus, and materials concerning campus design and development, ca. 1940–1960 including minutes of various IIT committees from the 1940s–1960s especially Building and Grounds.

**Other Resources at IIT**

An on-line index to IIT's student newspaper at <http://archives.iit.edu/technews/>. (Please note, you will get the best search capability by entering a one-word search term only, i.e., "Mies", rather than "Mies van der Rohe".)

IIT's architecture library, Graham Resource Center, may have materials of interest to researchers. See <http://www.iit.edu/arch/resources/grc/mies.shtml>.

The IIT facilities department has current and some historic blueprints of campus buildings which may be available to researchers. Please contact the IIT Facilities office at [facilities-helpdesk@iit.edu](mailto:facilities-helpdesk@iit.edu) and tell us you are interested in the building drawings.

The Mies Society's website is <http://www.iit.edu/giving/mies/about/>.

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**Additional External Materials**

*Chicago Historical Society*

Research center at <http://www.chicagohs.org/collections/index.html>

*Newberry Library*

Collection materials on Edith Farnsworth at <http://www.newberry.org/nl/collections/farnsworth.html>

*The Art Institute of Chicago's Ryerson and Burnham Libraries*

<http://www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/index.html>

*Chicago Public Library*

Neighborhood History Research Collections

phone 312/747-4875, in the Special Collection & Preservation Division at

<http://www.chipublic.org/001hwlc/spenhrc.html>

*Chicago Architecture Foundation*

<http://www.architecture.org/index.html>

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