

# TheMedium

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## Collection of Galveston Architect Donated to Libraries

AUSTIN, Texas – Drawings of noted architect Thomas M. Price have been donated to the Alexander Architectural Archive at The University of Texas at Austin.

The gift – provided by Price's family – includes approximately 2,700 architectural drawings that were formerly held at Rosenberg Library in Galveston.

Thomas M. Price (1916-1998) was Galveston's foremost modern architect. Price was a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and earned his degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 1941, where he studied under Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer.

He was a Professor of Architecture and Visiting Architecture Critic at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and was employed as a designer and draftsman for the prestigious firms of Gropius and Breuer, Hugh Stubbins and Oscar Stonarov.

During World War II, Price was commissioned Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy and trained at the M.I.T. School of Naval Architecture.

In 1947, Price opened his architectural firm in Galveston, where his work included private residences, hotels, schools, a social club and commercial buildings. His major works include the Sealy & Smith professional building (1964), the Flagship Hotel (with Houston firm Neuhaus & Taylor), the Seahorse Motel (1956) and the Galveston Artillery Club (1959).

Price's other Texas work includes the Lasher House in Houston, as well as buildings in Alvin, Bay City, Freeport, Hitchcock and Webster. He also designed hotels in Asheville, Biloxi and San Francisco.

Price was also involved in early efforts to preserve Galveston's 19th century architectural heritage. He was responsible for two pioneer preservation planning studies prepared for the city of Galveston.

His work has been published in "Architectural Record" and "Galveston: Architecture Guidebook."

Submitted by Beth Dodd 5/26/09

# Indianapolis Conference Report by Lois Swan Jones Award Recipient

As this year's Lois Swan Jones Award recipient I was able to attend my first professional conference. Currently I'm a student at the iSchool at UT-Austin where I've been focusing on archives and museum studies. I work in the photography archives at the Harry Ransom Center, and I hope in my future career to work as an art museum librarian and as a visual materials archivist. The ArLis/NA conference showed me the many career possibilities even within the field of art librarianship, which was very exciting to discover as someone entering the field.

I started the conference bright and early on Friday morning by attending the Bloomington Treasures Tour. A small group of us visited the University of Indiana Campus and toured the Kinsey Institute, the Lilly Library, the Fine Arts building, and the IU Art Museum. We saw some of Thomas Hart Benton's murals in situ in the theater and a couple murals undergoing conservation treatment in the Museum's labs. This tour was a wonderful opportunity to see some great architecture (the Museum was designed by I. M. Pei), interesting objects (such as the puzzle collection at the Lilly Library), and shocking art (everything at the Kinsey Institute!). It was also refreshing to visit a campus with such a strong commitment to the arts. Later that evening, the First-Time Attendees Orientation, Convocation and Welcome party at the Eiteljorg Museum were all great ways to learn about the Society and meet colleagues.

Saturday and Sunday were both overwhelming days, full of lots of new information and perspectives on the field. In the Opening Plenary, James Neal of Columbia University spoke about new contextual trends—Web 2.0 technologies and mass collaboration, self-service and customization, restructuring and de-formalization. He stressed the need for research and development to understand creation of new knowledge, marketing the library, and rethinking the library space as a more dynamic, social, and collaborative environment. Then, I attended the Museum Division Meeting which presented some innovative online cataloging systems from a few art museums around the country, including the NYARC catalogue which is a combined system for the Frick, Brooklyn Museum, MoMA and the Met.

"The Evolving Art Librarian" session presented a few perspectives on how the role of the art librarian is changing. All four speakers mentioned that there is a growing emphasis on management and administrative duties. While there is also a growing need to use more 2.0 technologies, there is a lack of training or time to learn it. Collection development remains an important duty, especially in the areas of "non-traditional" materials (almost everything seems "non-traditional" anymore) and digital content.

Presenters at “Discovery on this Side of the Virtual Wall: Evolving Authority Control Resources and Techniques in the Digital Age” discussed maintaining responsibility for the resources librarians create. The most interesting part of this session, I found, was Susan Chun’s presentation of [www.steve.museum](http://www.steve.museum) which is an organization that promotes social tagging of online museum collections. The group’s research shows that 88% of tags (in their sample) were useful and 86% were not duplicates of words found in the objects’ metadata. This organization not only researches the effectiveness of tags but provides software and support for museums to implement it for their online collections.

On Sunday, the speakers for “Working Together, Working Better: Liaison Relationships for Art, Architecture, and Visual Resources” offered advice for maintaining the importance and visibility of the art librarian in the eyes of others (i.e. faculty and administration). They all agreed that librarians’ practices should change from collection-focused to user-oriented. Some successful methods presented were: collaborating with faculty on projects; meeting with new faculty and actively maintaining those relationships; having an office in the art department rather than main library; creating a blog for the art department with faculty, students and staff as guest bloggers; auditing classes; collecting syllabi for art department classes; creating physical and virtual exhibitions; and posting lectures and how-to videos on YouTube. Generally, they argued that making your presence as the art librarian very well known fosters greater use and appreciation of the art library.

“Off the Wall: Photography Beyond Aesthetics” was of particular interest to me as I currently work in a photography archives. The speakers were a photography historian, museum curator, and art historian and they offered different perspectives on art libraries than presented in other sessions. They all emphasized the importance of collecting photography for a variety of reasons, from artistic merit to historical evidentiary value, and they urged the audience as art librarians to collect as much photography as possible. This session made me wonder how many art libraries also foray into collecting photography, or other original works, as an archives or museum would?

“Visual Literacy: What, Why How?” was the last session I attended on Sunday before the wonderful Circle City Celebration at the Indianapolis Museum of Art (a great museum, if only we had been able to visit all of it!). Speakers discussed the importance of understanding visual literacy—both the reception of and communication with images—especially in light of studies which prove that students today are cognitively different than those of the past. Though visual literacy is most often linked with art, it is a skill useful across many fields. The speakers encouraged art librarians to promote visual literacy and make this a central part of their jobs.

On Monday, the Membership Meeting breakfast introduced many outgoing and upcoming board members, highlighted other ArLis/NA events, such as European study tours, and provided a preview of next year’s conference in Boston. I attended one more session before the Closing Plenary. Speakers in “Where Libraries and Archives Converge: Artists Files” discussed the difficulty of providing access to holdings of archival and

ephemeral materials about artists, but offered insights from a few initiatives. For example, the Artist Files Online Directory at arlisna.org will provide (when it launches) a listing of libraries and repositories around the country with artist files available, and the digitization project of artist files at the Guggenheim (also yet to launch) showed how digitization can be an easy way to provide access to off-site materials. At the Closing Plenary, Brian Payne of the Central Indiana Community Foundation spoke of his work to transform the city of Indianapolis into a more creative, engaging, and enjoyable city. He has worked to make it a liveable city in part through supporting public arts programs. His talk gave me hope that communities in this country are realizing the importance of the arts and creating environments to foster creativity.

My conference weekend felt jam-packed and exhausting, but it was lots of fun and very enlightening. I again would like to thank the Texas-Mexico chapter for the award which allowed me to attend. The conference helped me realize that I have much to look forward to in my future career.

Submitted by Nicole Davis 5/20/09

## Texas Reference Sources Online

Texas Reference Sources Online ([www.txla.org/pubs/trs/trsonline.html](http://www.txla.org/pubs/trs/trsonline.html)) is a project I have been involved with since I edited the art and architecture section of the 5th (and final) print edition in 2004, coinciding roughly with the appearance of the online edition, which is regularly (or, in the case of my sections, irregularly) updated.

In addition to the art and architecture section, I am continuing editor of design and applied arts.

Very recently, I have submitted some two dozen updates to my sections, including the likes of Intimate Modernism: Fort Worth Circle Artists in the 1940s, Texas 100: Selections from the El Paso Museum of Art, Texas Modern: The Rediscovery of Early Texas Abstraction (1935-1965), Abilene Landmarks: An Illustrated Tour, and Texas Quilts and Quilters: A Lone Star Legacy. Expect these to be added to TRS Online in the coming months.

Works included do not necessarily fit the classic definition of "reference" as a source to be consulted for a specific piece of information. I have thought it important to include catalogues and handbooks of important art collections in Texas, even if their emphasis is not the art of Texas. Monographs on individual artists have somewhat arbitrarily been excluded, although certain architects and a documentary photographer or two have been included.

In conclusion, I quote from the TRS Online homepage on the origins and progress of this prodigious project:

"Texas Reference Sources (TRS) is a selective guide to reference works on, or relating to, Texas and Texans. It is designed to supplement the American Library Association's Guide to Reference Books.

This site is a continuation and update of the 5th edition published by the Texas Library Association in 2004. All content and updates for the printed 5th edition are posted on this site. Due to the large number of revisions, additions, and deletions to Texas Reference Sources since its publication in 2004, the online version was determined to have supplanted the print edition by 2008 and remaining print copies of the 5th edition were withdrawn from TLA Publications inventory and are no longer available for sale. Updating of the errata file for the print edition was discontinued in 2006.

As a continuing project of the Reference Round Table of the Texas Library Association, volunteers throughout Texas compiled, edited, and continue to update this work in the hope of providing a useful guide to identifying

both printed and electronic resources on all aspects of Texan life, history, economics, government, and culture. John C. Hepner supervises the project as General Editor.”

Submitted by Craig Bunch 5/31/09

# Texas State's Wittliff Collections Prepare to Open Archives of Cormac McCarthy

SAN MARCOS, TX—The excitement and anticipation surrounding the Cormac McCarthy Papers is growing as the Wittliff Collections finalize plans for opening the Pulitzer Prize-winning author's archives at Texas State University's Alkek Library in San Marcos. The first researcher is scheduled for May 18.

Due to limited research space, access to the McCarthy Papers will be provided by appointment only. The Wittliff Collections request form for scheduling is [online](#). Research hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Hours are subject to change during University breaks and interim sessions; closed on holidays.

Author of such acclaimed novels as *Blood Meridian* and *No Country for Old Men*, Cormac McCarthy was awarded the Pulitzer in 2007 for *The Road*, which has been made into a soon-to-be-released feature film with Viggo Mortensen in the lead role.

Aside from a few select pieces the Wittliff has displayed in recent exhibitions and printed in their newsletter, *The Keystone*, this will be the first time McCarthy's drafts and manuscripts will be seen by the public. Scholars will have a chance to study the legendary author's research, note taking, and writing processes, which have remained a mystery until now.

Following the acquisition of the McCarthy archives in late December 2007, Wittliff Collections Lead Archivist Katie Salzmann conducted a comprehensive inventory and re-housed the material in acid-free boxes, many of which she specially constructed. Salzmann then spent months organizing the papers according to archival standards and describing them at the item level for the finding aid, including a complete pagination for the more complicated drafts containing McCarthy's sometimes puzzling page-numbering systems.

The fully processed collection stands at almost 100 boxes and includes correspondence, notes, hand-written and typed drafts, setting copies, proofs, and other materials documenting McCarthy's career. The finding aid, plus a link to the Wittliff Collections original news story about the acquisition, is available [online](#).

The official opening of the McCarthy papers was to coincide with a late-spring dedication of the Wittliff Collections' expanded reading room, which is currently being constructed alongside new and larger exhibition spaces for the Wittliff's photography collection. Although delays in construction have pushed the dedication to early fall, Curator Connie Todd is working with Salzmann and her archives staff to establish a secure interim reading room, and the papers will be made available to scheduled patrons beginning May 18.

The Wittliff Collections are on the seventh floor of the Alkek Library at Texas State University in San Marcos, located along the I-35 corridor between Austin and San Antonio. Phone: 512.245.2313. Online: [www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu](http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu).

Submitted by Carla Ellard 5/19/09

## William R. Jenkins Library Staff Wins Multiple Awards at the University of Houston

Members of the William R. Jenkins Architecture and Art Library staff were honored to receive multiple campus awards at the end of the 08-09 academic year. The library coordinator, Catherine Essinger, received the John P. McGovern Employee of the Year Award from the University of Houston Libraries, as well as the Staff Service Award from the College of Architecture. As chair of the UH Libraries Marketing Committee, she was also honored with the Dean's Standard Bearer Award for External Service.

Tina McPherson, who began working as the library's supervisor in June 2008, was awarded the John P. McGovern Rookie of the Year Award. The John P. McGovern awards are endowed awards given annually to reward exceptional service.

Miriam Cardenas, a library student employee and College of Architecture student, was also presented with a Student Achievement Award for her leadership and service during the library's recovery from Hurricane Ike.