

Bob Gill Collection

Collection, MG.34

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Bob Gill, Sara Fishko

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Date

1952 – 2018 (Date ranges)

Abstract

Bob Gill (1931–2021) was a renowned designer, teacher, and author. He began his career in New York City and was one of the earliest design instructors at the School of Visual Arts. In 1960 he moved to London where he eventually formed Fletcher Forbes Gill, the design firm that later became Pentagram. He returned to freelance work in 1967 and moved his practice back to New York in 1975. In addition to his work as a print designer and illustrator, over the course of his career Gill also designed title credits, directed industrial films, created theatrical productions, and was the author of many children's books as well as books aimed at designers. The Bob Gill Collection contains print work designed by Gill, plus some original art and production files. The Gill Collection also includes film, audio and video recordings which are not yet available for research.

Biographical / Historical Note

Bob Gill was a graphic design problem solver, devoted to the ethos that design is about communication, divorced from trendy styles. His work was notably witty and irreverent, often featuring visual puns.

Bob Gill (Robert Charles Gill) was born on January 17, 1931 in Brooklyn. As a child he studied piano with his mother, a piano teacher, and as a teenager he spent his summers playing jazz piano at Catskills resorts. He attended the High School of Music and Art (now the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts), the Philadelphia Museum School of Art (now the University of the Arts), and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. When he was drafted into the US military in 1952 he worked as part of the design corps in Washington, D.C. He returned to New York in 1954 where worked as a freelance designer, illustrator, and instructor. His clients included Esquire, The Nation, Seventeen, Fortune, and Glamour.

Gill joined the faculty at SVA in 1956, very soon after the design department was established. He continued to teach at SVA and other institutions throughout his career.

Gill moved to London in 1960 where he worked for Charles W. Hobson Ltd. advertising agency. In 1962, he joined forces with Alan Fletcher and Colin Forbes to form Fletcher/Forbes/Gill. FFG would later become global design firm Pentagram. In 1967, Gill returned to freelance work; in addition to teaching, designing, and writing children's books, he also produced, wrote, and directed industrial films. His first project as a newly freelance designer was the album cover for the Beatles' Wonderwall on their record label Apple.

Gill returned to New York City in 1975. In the late 1970s, Gill and Robert Rabinowitz co-created Beatlemania, a Broadway multi-media celebration of the 1960s and the Beatles. Throughout his career, Gill designed and wrote books for designers and children. Gill passed away on November 9, 2021.

Bob Gill was elected to the New York Art Directors Club Hall of Fame in 1991 and was a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Designers and Art Directors Association of London.

Scope And Contents

The Bob Gill Collection is composed of posters, advertisements, magazine and newspaper illustration, books, original art and production files. Film, audio, and video recordings are not yet available for research.

Arrangement

The Bob Gill Collection is divided into ten series.

General Physical Description

Five print boxes and one flat file drawer.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

Preferred Citation

Bob Gill Collection, [series. item]. Milton Glaser Design Study Center and Archives, Visual Arts Foundation, New York.

Acquisition Information

The Bob Gill Collection was acquired as a gift from Sara Fishko.

Collection Contents

Bob Gill Collection

Series 1. Posters

(46 records)

Spicers Penguin. Frost!, Box 1 Folder 10

Nappi / Eliran. Is Your Advertising Boring..., Box 1 Folder 7

Art Directors Club. 65th Art Directors Annual, Box 1 Folder 4

426 West Broadway. 6-Fingered Hand, Box 1 Folder 1

Abraham & Straus. Mothers' Day, Box 1 Folder 2

Ahmedabad. This Family Just Happened. This Family Happened to Be Planned., Box 1 Folder 3

Ahmedabad. Are You Leaving It To Fate? Or Are You Planning a Small Family?, Box 1 Folder 3

Angel Action Group. Them/Us, Box 1 Folder 1

Angel Action Group. Them/Us 2, Box 1 Folder 1

Boycott Apartheid Sport. It's Not Cricket, Drawer 93 Folder 4

La Settimana Britannica a Milano. British Week Milan (Union Jack box), Drawer 93 Folder 14

CAI. Series of 5 Evening Concerts at Carnegie Hall, Box 1 Folder 5

Curwen Gallery. Don't Have a Traditional Christmas This Christmas, Drawer 93 Folder 5

El Al. The Body is From Caesarea, the Head is From Putney (statue/head), Box 2 Folder 8

Evening Standard. Small Ads. Let Sold Filled, Drawer 93 Folder 6

High Times Magazine. A Few Words from the New Publisher, Box 1 Folder 5

Voices and Visions / PJ Library. Jewish Thoughts (building blocks), Box 1 Folder 11

Voices and Visions / PJ Library. Jewish Thoughts. Building Blocks (Small), Box 1 Folder 11

Langen & Wind. Dye Transfers. I used to be frightened... (Knight), Drawer 93 Folder 7

Langen & Wind. Dye Transfers. When I was in Films... (Woman's Face), Drawer 93 Folder 8

Langen & Wind. Dye Transfers (King of Clubs), Drawer 93 Folder 10

Langen & Wind. Dye Transfers (Union Jack), Drawer 93 Folder 11

Langen & Wind. Dye Transfers. Maureen and I Get Around., Drawer 93 Folder 7

Langen & Wind. Dye Transfers. If I Could Only Think of the Right Words (Shakespeare), Drawer 93 Folder 9

Learning Annex. Give a Man Fish (holiday greeting), Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. We Receive Three Educations (holiday greetings), Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. Serious. And Not So Serious, Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. Before/After, Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. Learning Makes a Man Fit Company For Himself (holiday greeting), Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. Notebooks, Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. Try The Learning Annex Instead of TV, Box 1 Folder 6

Learning Annex. Come Learn With Us, Box 1 Folder 6

Martins RentACar. We Hate Small Print, Drawer 93 Folder 12

National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament. America, Let's Talk, Box 1 Folder 8

NY1. The Bronx, Staten Island, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Box 1 Folder 9

Ronnie Eldridge for Borough President. Wouldn't it Be Nice If Compassion and Ability Defeated Money and Pull!, Box 1 Folder 5

Royal Festival Hall. Orchestra Concert, Box 1 Folder 8

Sappi. Bob Gill. A Real McCoy on the Real McCoy (pencil sharpener), Drawer 93 Folder 13

Save London Action Group. Save London, Box 1 Folder 8

The Sunday Telegraph. The Campaign Begins, Drawer 93 Folder 13

School of Visual Arts. Twelve Scholarships, Box 1 Folder 10

Great American BackRub. Stress-Free Holiday, Box 1 Folder 5

University of Delaware. Year End Show, Box 1 Folder 10

Musee Toulous-Lautrec. Hommage a Toulouse-Lautrec, Drawer 93 Folder 1

Museu da Imagem et Do Som. Bob Gill no Brasil, Drawer 93 Folder 1

Learning Annex. No Calories. No Fat., Drawer 93 Folder 1

Series 2. Posters - Movie

(9 records)

The Magic Christian (Commonwealth United), Box 2 Folder 7

Louis Malle Looks at India (Elliott Kastner and Jerry Gershwin), Box 2 Folder 6

Homeboy (Elliott Kastner), Box 2 Folder 5

Elliott Kastner. 12345 '68, Box 2 Folder 6

The Human Language (Equinox Films), Box 2 Folder 6

Two Bells / Two Worlds (Bernard Stone), Box 2 Folder 6

Sitting Quietly Doing Nothing (David Hart), Drawer 93 Folder 17

The Go-Between (Losey), Drawer 93 Folder 3

The Mattei Affair (Gate Cinema), Drawer 93 Folder 3

Series 3. Posters - Theater

(18 records)

Indiana Repertory Theater Presents (poster/mailer), Box 2 Folder 2

Requiem for a Heavyweight (Arvin Brown/Zev Bufman/Martin Beck Theatre), Box 2 Folder 4

Forever Plaid (Gene Wolsk), Drawer 93 Folder 2

Indiana Repertory Theater. Some of the company..., Box 2 Folder 2

Dangerous Games (Jules Fisher), Box 2 Folder 1
Rock 'n Roll (Gill & Rabinowitz/St. James Theatre), Box 2 Folder 4
The Rink (Kander & Ebb/Martin Beck Theatre), Box 2 Folder 4
Beatlemania (Winter Garden Theatre / Lever & Krebs), Box 2 Folder 1
Catch Me If I Fall (Nickerson Theater), Box 2 Folder 1
Mastergate (Larry Gelbart/Criterion Center), Box 2 Folder 2
Trophies (Yabadoo Productions/Cherry Lane Theatre), Box 2 Folder 4
Let's Get a Divorce! (Comedy Theatre), Drawer 93 Folder 15
Lotte Goslar's Pantomime Circus. Woman (For Humans Only) (no text), Drawer 93 Folder 16
Alice in Wonderland (Eva Le Gallienne), Drawer 93 Folder 2
Garcia Lorca's The House of Bernarda Alba (Great Neck Theater), Drawer 93 Folder 2
Dancemaker (Paul Taylor Dance Company), Drawer 93 Folder 3A
Winter Lies (Serendipity Productions), Drawer 93 Folder 3A
Lotte Goslar's Pantomime Circus. For Humans Only, Box 2 Folder 3

Series 4. Advertisements

(30 records)

Pirelli. Slippers (Orange), Box 3 Folder 4
Pirelli. Slippers (Green), Box 3 Folder 4
Pirelli. Cintura. Behind these Engineers/Rover 2000, Box 3 Folder 3
Ruby Austin 7 car advertisement, Box 3 Folder 5
Faces (Academy One) (John Cassavetes movie advertisement), Box 4 Folder 10
Bourges. Bourges Color Sheets (3 tools with color), Box 4 Folder 1
Cammell and Hudson Associates Limited. Admen Golfing, Box 4 Folder 2
Cammell Hudson and Brownjohn Associates Limited. Would You Buy a Secondhand Car From This Man? (Robert Brownjohn), Box 4 Folder 3
Cammell Hudson and Brownjohn Associates Limited. Our Portfolio Takes 18 1/2 Minutes, Box 4 Folder 3
Cammell and Hudson Associates Limited. Send Us Your Most Difficult Cinema or TV Problem, Box 4 Folder 2
Cammell and Hudson Associates Limited. Five of our Favourite Clients, Box 4 Folder 2
Cammell and Hudson Associates Limited. Clio, Box 4 Folder 2
Cammell and Hudson Associates Limited. U (film canister), Box 4 Folder 2
Cammell and Hudson Associates Limited. If We're So Great, How Come We Have to Advertise, Box 4 Folder 2
Carol Cutner Photography. Head Silhouette promotion, Box 4 Folder 4
Concert Associates, Inc. I Musici, Box 4 Folder 5
Design and Art Direction. Call For Entries (3 different), Box 4 Folder 8
Decorators' Workroom. After/Before, Box 4 Folder 7
De Laurentiis. Pasta, Box 4 Folder 6
El Al. What Is Long, Slim and Always in the Sun?, Box 2 Folder 8
El Al. Better Red Than Dead, Box 4 Folder 9
I. Miller. Cesare Ciotti, Box 3 Folder 2
Elvis: An American Musical (Jules Fisher), Box 3 Folder 1
Langen and Wind. Having Trouble Controlling the Quality of Your Dye Transfers? (pipes), Box 4 Folder 11

Langen and Wind. Color Colour, Box 4 Folder 11
Langen and Wind. Poifect! Super!, Box 4 Folder 11
Langen and Wind. Langen and Wind Make Great, Super, Sensational..., Box 4 Folder 11
Langen and Wind. Mr. Langen, Box 4 Folder 11
Learning Annex. We Don't Read It, Box 4 Folder 12
A Chorus of Disapproval (Elliott Kastner) (film advertisement), Box 2 Folder 9

Series 6. Books

(15 records)

Bob Gill Illustration (Images), Box 5
Supposing (New York Review Children's Collection), Box 5
A Balloon for a Blunderbuss (Japanese edition) (Phaidon), Box 5
Graphic Design as a Second Language (Images), Box 5
Bob Gill, So Far (Laurence King), Box 5
Graphic Design: Visual Comparisons (Studio Vista/Reinhold), Box 5
Graphic Design Made Difficult (Van Nostrand Reinhold), Box 5
Forget All the Rules (Korean edition) (Watson-Guptill), Box 5
The Present (Japanese edition) (Corraini), Box 5
Dogs are Just Like Us (Corraini), Box 5
Estou Sempre Mudando (I Keep Changing) (Martins), Box 5
La Prodigiosa Wonder Car di Kate / Kate's Really Remarkable Wonder Car (Corraini), Box 5
Bob Gill's A to Z (Corraini), Box 5
The Concert (Corraini), Box 5
Words Into Pictures (Images), Box 5

Series 7. Miscellaneous Print Materials

(16 records)

No New Jokes book cover (Norton), Box 4 Folder 17
Troubadour Records. Collin Bates Trio album cover, Box 3 Folder 7
Westminster Records. Haydn. String Quartet in G Major album cover, Box 3 Folder 7
Apple Records. Wonderwall Music by George Harrison album cover, Box 3 Folder 7
Geers Gross. Annual Report cover, Drawer 93 Folder 19
Learning Annex Annual Report 1986, Box 4 Folder 20
Learning Annex Annual Report cover 1987, Box 4 Folder 20
Albert Koski and David Cammell and Hugh Hudson and Robert Brownjohn party invitation, Box 4 Folder 20
How to Talk Sports to Men book cover (The Learning Annex), Box 4 Folder 17
Indiana Repertory Theater brochure, Box 4 Folder 20
Logos brochure (self-promotion), Box 4 Folder 18
Fucci Stone Films. Director's Chair, Box 4 Folder 19
Homeboy (alternate) (Elliott Kastner), Box 2 Folder 5
Elliott Kastner. Homeboy (Flyer used for Poster), Box 2 Folder 5
Forum Gallery moving announcement, Box 4 Folder 20
One Man Band flyer (self-promotion), Box 4 Folder 18

Series 8. Limited Edition Prints

(2 records)

Traffic (Alternate), Drawer 93 Folder 18

Jazz (Print Club), Drawer 93 Folder 18

Series 9. Original Art and Production Materials

(9 records)

Jules Fisher. Elvis: An American Musical advertisement paste-up, Box 3 Folder 10

Jules Fisher. Third Eye Studios mock-up, Box 3 Folder 11

Rock Coloring Book book dummy, Box 3 Folder 13

Punk Playing Video Game, Drawer 93 Folder 20

The New Yorker. Bagels paste-up, Box 2 Folder 11

Musee d'Art Modern (Luxembourg). Graphic Design Made Difficult. Bob Gill exhibition poster mock-up, Box 3 Folder 8

The Learning Annex Will Make You Feel Ten Feet Tall in One Easy Lesson advertisement mock-up, Box 3 Folder 9

The Learning Annex cover mock-up (woman knitting), Box 3 Folder 9

National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament. America, Let's Talk paste-up, Box 3 Folder 12

Series 10. Work by Other Artists

(3 records)

R.O. Blechman. No Smoking,

Tony Palladino. Hammer,

Stefan Sagmeister. Zumtobel AG annual report,

Series 5. Magazine and Newspapers Covers and Illustration

(8 records)

Art Direction no 45, March 1957, Box 4 Folder 13

Cue Magazine, February 16, 1952, Box 4 Folder 14

Learning Annex. Various Covers, Box 4 Folder 15

New Politics. Various Covers, Box 4 Folder 16

New York Times. Goodbye, Golden Years (chairs), Box 2 Folder 10

New York Times. One Bad Call (baseball and Olympics), Box 2 Folder 10

Publication Unknown. Subway (Two Returns to Manhattan), Box 2 Folder 10

Publication Unknown. It Was Eugene's Best Friend..., Box 3 Folder 6

Series 11. Films and Videos

(18 records)

"Productivity: a film by Bob Gill" video cassette,

"All I Want Is a Room of My Own" film,

"Divertimento for Olivetti Machines" film,

"Come to the Fabergé" film,

[1960s reel] film,

"Birds and Planes" film,

["Parfums Fabergé, at the Hotel Plaza Athénée in Paris"] film,

"...fizz, fizz, fizz, bubble" film,

"Truman: a Self-Portrait" (Harry S. Truman documentary by Sara Fishko) video cassette,

"Room 330" [Holiday Inn] video cassette,

"Room 330" [Holiday Inn] film,

Miscellaneous British PSAs (Release, a 24-hour emergency number; the Citizen's Rights Office; PSA on rent reduction; the National Playing Fields Association) film,

"Jack Says...." film,

"One Two Three One Two Three" film,

"Productivity: a film by Bob Gill" film,

[Salesman] film,

"Teaching People" film,

"You'll Love the District" film,