Thomas Smith:
An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Smith, Thomas G. (Thomas Graham), 1938-
Title: Thomas Smith Papers
Dates: 1977-2002
Extent: 20 document boxes, 2 oversize boxes (osb) (8.82 linear feet)
Abstract: The Thomas Smith Papers consist of the professional papers of visual effects producer Thomas Smith. The papers document Smith's professional work through the 1980s and 1990s and include film scripts, special effects storyboards, and pre-production research.

Call Number: Film Collection No. FI-058
Language: English
Access: Open for research; please see redactions and restrictions notes below.

Redactions Note: The production and research materials contain a number of items from which personal information has been redacted or restricted to protect an individual's privacy. Examples are salaries, telephone numbers, and addresses.

Restrictions Note: Per the donor agreement, storyboards for the film project Jamboree (later released as the Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring) are closed to researchers for ten years.

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 2011 (11-10-003-G)
Processed by: Carly Dearborn, 2011
Repository: The University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center
Biographical Sketch

Thomas G. Smith was born in Canton, Illinois, in 1938. He attended Northwestern University, and following his graduation in 1960, he studied film in Paris at the Institute of Higher Studies in Film (IDHEC) on a Fulbright Scholarship. After three years' service in the U.S. Air Force, Smith began his career in film as a writer and producer-director for Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corporation (EB), where he directed more than fifty educational films. *Solar System* (1977), one of his last projects for EB, changed the trajectory of his career to special effects. The film not only allowed Smith to experiment with special effects, but it also caught the eye of George Lucas.


In addition to his work with Disney, Smith also worked on projects for Jim Henson Productions (*Muppet Treasure Island* [1996] and *Muppets from Space* [1999]) and Turner Pictures (*Gods and Generals* [2003]). He won a British Academy Award for outstanding visual effects on *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* (1989). Smith worked for Disney until 1992; since then he has worked on several projects, including his own feature film, *The Arrival* (1996).

Sources:

In addition to material found within the Thomas Smith Papers, the following sources were used:


The Thomas Smith Papers consist of special effects storyboards, screenplays, pre-production research, production materials, newspaper clippings, photographs, and published materials such as fan magazines and cinematography periodicals. The papers also contain material relating to Smith's time at Industrial Light and Magic (ILM) and Lucasfilm. The papers are organized into two series: I. Films and Attractions, 1977-2002 and II. Lucasfilm, 1982-1991.

Series I. Films and Attractions makes up the bulk of the papers and includes materials associated with Smith's major projects. It is arranged into two subseries: A. Films, 1977-2002 and B. Special Attractions, 1989-1997. Materials in these subseries are arranged chronologically and follow the order of storyboards, screenplays and scripts, and supporting materials. Supporting materials include production research, cast and crew information, premiere and publicity packets, and published reviews. There are also two oversize boxes containing soft-sided, personalized three ring binders, one of which contained much of Smith's materials dealing with *Muppet Treasure Island* (1996).

Much of Smith's material arrived at the Ransom Center grouped by film but not arranged in chronological order. Some material was included in folders and envelopes with labels made by Smith, and these labels and groupings are maintained in the new folders. Smith placed some material associated with large projects such as *Gods and Generals* (2003) and the unproduced film Joan of Arc in "miscellaneous" categories. These materials are roughly arranged in the order of storyboards, scripts, and supporting materials. Joan of Arc never advanced to the production phase, but pre-production costs reached over $1 million. The materials associated with the film reflect the pre-production process and include site research, vendor searches in France, and budget estimates.

Subseries A. Films represents much of Smith's work throughout the 1980s and 1990s; however, the collection does not represent his early career as a writer and director for Encyclopedia Britannica Education Corporation. Many of the films included in this series appear with their working titles. Films are arranged alphabetically by their official title, followed in parentheses by alternative working titles. These titles include: *The Arrival* (Shockwave), *E.T. (A Boy's Life)*, *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* (Grounded, Teenie-Weenies, Teeny-Weenies), and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (The Temple of Death).

Subseries B. Special Attractions represents Smith's work on 3D attractions for Disney and Jim Henson Productions. Attractions are arranged alphabetically. Supporting material is limited, but may include storyboards, scripts, cast and crew lists, press kits, and newspaper clippings.

Index Terms

People

Barwood, Hal
Beatty, Warren, 1937-
Bennett, Harve
Caldow, Julian
Cash, Jim
Epps, Jack
Henson, Brian
Huyck, Willard
Johnston, Joe
Kasdan, Lawrence
Katz, Gloria
Lucas, George, 1944-
Maxwell, Ronald F.
Naha, Ed
Prady, Bill
Robbins, Matthew
Rodis-Jamero, Nilo
Rota, Bot
Sallin, Robert
Schulman, Tom
Twohy, David

Subjects

Cinematography—Special effects
Lucasfilm Animation (Firm)
Motion Pictures, American
Producers and Directors, American

Document Types

Clippings
Correspondence
Ephemera
Photographs
Publications
Screenplays
Storyboards
Series I. Films and Attractions, 1977-2002

Subseries A. Films, 1977-2002

The Arrival (1996) (Shockwave)
- Cast and crew contacts, 1995
  Container 1.1
- Producers book, with locations for shooting, storyboards for visual effects, screenplay by David Twohy, 1995
  Container 1.2-6
- Production pages approved, 1995
  Container 1.7
- Screening invitation, 1996
  Container 1.8
- Wrapbook, 1996
  Container 1.9

Captain EO (1986)
- FX book 12/9 cut, circa 1985
  Container 2.1-3
- Photos from film, 1986
  Container 2.4
- Storyboards for the visual effects, with annotations, 1986
  Container 2.5

Dick Tracy (1990)
- Screenplay with annotations by Warren Beatty, circa 1988
  Container 2.6
- Screenplay by Jim Cash and Jack Epps Jr., 1989
  Container 2.7
- Premiere program with film credits, 1990
  Container 2.8

Dragonslayer (1981)
- Shooting screenplay by Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins, 1980
  Container 3.1
- Photo of Dragon Fire (8 x 10 color), 1980
  Container 3.2
  Container 3.3

- Concept drawings for spaceship, circa 1981
  Container 4.12
Shooting screenplay, 1981
Revised first draft, 1981
Visual effects storyboards, 1981
Storyboards, circa 1981
Visual effects storyboards, ILM storyboards no. 8, circa 1981
Proposal for special effects, 1981
American Cinematographer magazine featuring E.T., 1983

The Ewok Adventure (1984) (Ewok I)
Advanced screening invitation, 1984
ABC, George Lucas storyboards, 1984
The Ewok Adventure (Ewok I) storyboards, circa 1984
Storyboards, circa 1984
Tom's Book, Ewok Adventure, 1985
Ewok Holiday Special rough storyboards and research, circa 1984
The Ewok Movie final screenplay, 1984
The Ewok Movie screenplay, first draft, 1984
Ewok II screenplay, 1985
Ewok II storybook, 1985
An Ewok Adventure, Japanese pamphlet on film, 1985
The Ewok: Battle for Endor storybook in German, 1985
The 37th Annual Emmy Awards program, 1985

Calendar, 2001-2002
Original and photocopies of storyboards, circa 2001

Storyboards, circa 2001

Storyboards, 2001

First breakdown of elements, 2001

Screenplay, 2001

Screenplay by Jeff Shaara, 2001

Visual effects vendor research with correspondence, 2001

Contacts and bidders for film's special effects, circa 2001

Contact list, circa 2001

Reference artwork, circa 2001

Honey, I Blew Up the Kid (1992)

Crew contacts, 1991

Publicity photo, 1991

Premiere program, 1991

Visual effects story boards, 1992

Continuity boards, 1991

Honey, I Shrunk the Kids (1989) (Teeny-Weenies; Grounded)

Honey, I Shrunk the Kids screenplay by Tom Schulman, 1988

Teeny-Weenies script by Ed Naha, 1987

Teeny-Weenies screenplay by Ed Naha, circa 1987

Grounded screenplay by Ed Naha, 1987

Teenie Weenies original storyboards, circa 1989

Visual FX storyboards, circa 1987
Storyboards, 1988

"Honey Shoot/#G Script Teenie Weenies," continuity boards with visual effects and cost estimates for shots, 1987

Production boards, 1987

Visual effects, circa 1987

Joke credits and joke cartoon, circa 1987

CineFX Magazine, 1990

Press packet, circa 1987

Photos from the film, 1989

Program credits, 1989

Contract letter and drawings for stop motion work by Phil Tippet, 1988

Budget, 1989

Grounded budget sign-off sheet, 1988

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984) (Temple of Death)

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Death story by George Lucas, screenplay by Willard Huyck and Gloria Katz, 1983

Visual effects storyboards, circa 1983

Credit list, 1984

American Cinematographer, 1984

San Francisco Examiner feature article on George Lucas, 1980

Temple of Doom, Japanese publication, 1984

Jack and the Beanstalk: The Real Story (2001)

Jack and the Beanstalkers screenplay, 2000

Contact crew list, 2001
Jack and the Beanstalk and Henson Production photos, 2001

Joan of Arc, miscellaneous correspondence and storyboards, circa 1998

The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992), premiere program (2), 1992

Muppet Treasure Island (1996)

Original storyboards by Julian Caldow and Tom Smith, circa 1995

Review, Los Angeles Times, 1996

Screenplay, 1995

Lyrics to songs, circa 1995

Poster, circa 1996

Screening invitation, circa 1996

Thank you letter to Tom Smith from Brian Henson, circa 1996

Unit lists for cast and crew, model unit and second unit crew lists, 1995

Replacement "red" pages, shooting screenplay, 1994

Call sheet, 1995

Crew photo with key, circa 1995

Premiere program, 1996

Draft 14.1 final white page screenplay, 1995

Script with visual effects annotations, 1995

Muppets from Space (1999)

Storyboards, 1998

Screenplay, 1998
Screenplay, draft 17, 1998

Draft 19, circa 1998

Crew list, film review in Daily Variety, and digital production photograph of Noah's Arc, 1998-1999

Final crew list, 1999

Cast and crew photo, 1999

Neighbors (1993)

Screenplay by Tom Smith and film budget, 1993

Credit list, circa 1993

Cast and crew, 1993

New York Stories (1989) premiere program with film credits, 1989

Poltergeist (1982)

FX reference script, 1981

Screenplay revisions, 1981

Premiere program with film credits, 1982

Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981)

Effects boards, 1980

Production storyboards "Bantu Winds" and "The Chase," 1980

Production storyboards "The Chase," 1980

Production storyboards "Int. Raven," 1980

Production storyboards "Peru Temple," 1980

Publicity Packet with 8x10 Black and White Photo, circa 1980

Screenplay, fourth draft by Lawrence Kasdan, story by George Lucas, 1980
Raiders of the Lost Ark #229, invitation to screening, 1981

Satirical article in Mad magazine, 1982

American Cinematographer magazine, 1981

Collectors' Album of Raiders of the Lost Ark, 1981

Japanese fan magazine, Raiders of the Lost Ark, circa 1981

Ralph F. Mouse (1990)

Teleplay, 1989

Cast and crew, 1990


Star Trek II Exhibit D storyboards, circa 1982

Letter from Robert Sallin to George Lucas, 1982

Star Trek III: The Search for Spock, screenplay by Harve Bennett, 1983

Star Wars: Episode V-Empire Strikes Back (1980)

#8 storyboards and index, 1979

Additional Visual Effects Shots, 1980

Storyboard for cloud plates, circa 1980

Credit list, 1980

Photo of ILM crew (color), circa 1980

Advanced screening and lunch tickets, 1980

Publicity packet, circa 1980

Sketchbook by Joe Johnston and Nilo Rodis-Jamero, 1980

Official collector's edition fan magazine, 1980

American Cinematographer magazine, 1980
Fortune magazine, 1980  Container 4.9
People magazine, 1980  Container 4.10
Time magazine, 1980  Container 4.11

Star Wars: Episode VI-Return of the Jedi (1983)

Tentative schedule, 1980  Container 15.1
Early screenplay by Lawrence Kasdan and George Lucas, 1981  Container 15.2
Special effects storyboards, 1982  Container 15.3
Visual effects storyboards, 1982  Container 15.4
Missing sequence storyboards, circa 1982  Container 15.5
Master storyboards, colored pages for revisions, circa 1982  Container 15.6-16.2
Rough preliminary storyboards for end of film, circa 1982  Container 16.3
Visual effects color photos, circa 1982  Container 16.4
Return of the Jedi: The Storybook based on the Movie (first printing), 1983  Container 16.5
On Location magazine, 1983  Container 16.6
Time magazine feature article on Return of the Jedi and George Lucas, labeled "Return to Tom Smith," 1983  Container 16.7
American Cinematographer, 1983  Container 16.8
The Star Wars Sketchbook by Joe Johnston, 1977  Container 16.9

White Fang (1991)

Storyboards for mountain climb with photographs, circa 1990  Container 17.10
Credits, 1991  Container 17.11

Subseries B. Special Attractions, 1989-1997
Honey, I Shrunk the Audience

Honey, I Shrunk the Theater and MuppetVision 3D staff and crew list, 1990-1994  Container 18.1

Producer's binder, 1993  Container 18.2-3

The Orlando Sentinel clipping about debut of Honey, I Shrunk the Audience, 1995  Container 18.4

M&M

The Lost Adventure production book, 1997  Container 18.5

3D Movie storyboards for live action scenes, circa 1997  Container 18.6

MuppetVision 3D

Storyboards, circa 1990  Container 18.7

Visual effects list, 1990  Container 18.8

Screenplay by Bill Prady, third draft, 1989  Container 18.9

Screenplay by Bill Prady, fourth draft, 1990  Container 18.10

Screenplay by Bill Prady, read-through draft, 1989  Container 18.11

Muppet Labs Security Clearance for MuppetVision 3D, crew ID badge  Container 18.12

Style sheets, staff and crew lists, 1989  Container 18.13

Storyboards, 1990  Container 18.14

Press kit, circa 1990  Container 18.15

Final continuity boards and final cast list, 1991-1992  Container 18.16
Series II. Lucasfilm, 1982-1991

- Geo Magazine feature story on ILM, 1983 [Container 19.1]
- OMNI Magazine article on ILM based on Tom Smith's Industrial Light and Magic – The Art of Special Effects, 1987 [Container 19.2]
- Photo of George Lucas with ILM models, circa 1983 [Container 19.3]
- Document presented to California Board of Equalization concerning ILM's history and nature of business, 1983 [Container 19.5]

Lucasfilm yearbooks

- 1982 [Container 20.1]
- 1983 [Container 20.2]
- 1984 [Container 20.3]
- 1985 [Container 20.4]
- 1986 [Container 20.5]
- 1987 [Container 20.6]
- 1988 [Container 20.7]
- 1989 [Container 20.8]
- 1990 [Container 20.9]

Lucasfilm 20th Anniversary yearbook, 1991 [Container 20.10]

- Oversize box: Personalized Muppet Treasure Island binder, circa 1995 [Container 21]
- Oversize box: Gods and Generals binder, circa 2001 [Container 22]