Tobe Hooper:
An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Hooper, Tobe, 1943-2017
Title: Tobe Hooper Papers
Extent: 9 document boxes (3.78 linear feet), 6 oversize boxes (osb)
Abstract: The Tobe Hooper Papers document the creation of director, writer, and producer Tobe Hooper's first feature-length films, Eggshells and the Texas Chainsaw Massacre. The Papers include production notes, publicity documents, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, serials, and props along with other professional and personal materials.

Call Number: Film Collection FI-014
Language: English and French
Access: Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 1995
Processed by: Katherine Kapsidelis, 2015
Repository: The University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center
Biographical Sketch

Director, writer, and producer Tobe Hooper was born in Austin, Texas, on January 25, 1943. Hooper's parents were hotel managers who also owned a movie theatre in San Angelo, Texas, and Hooper became a fan of the cinema at a young age. He studied film at the University of Texas at Austin, and his early films included the short *Heisters* (circa 1963-1965) and documentaries on education (*A Way of Learning*, circa 1967), the demolition of a neighborhood home in Austin (*Down Friday Street*, circa 1970), and the folk group Peter, Paul, and Mary (circa 1970).

His first feature-length film was *Eggshells: An American Freak Illumination* (1970), an independent production that Hooper wrote and directed. Filmed in Austin, *Eggshells* was a mix of fantasy and reality aimed at the "bohemian segments of our society." The film won a gold award at the 1971 Atlanta International Film Festival.

Kim Henkel, a co-star in *Eggshells* under the pseudonym Boris Schnurr, would go on to collaborate with Hooper on his next film. Hooper and Henkel co-wrote a script loosely inspired by the story of the Wisconsin grave robber and murderer Ed Gein. Filmed with the working title "Leatherface," the movie would ultimately be called *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Hooper directed the low-budget production, which was filmed on a compressed schedule outside of Austin in 1973. It was distributed by Bryanston Pictures, and although commercially successful, the film's release was marred by financial disputes. Initially receiving mixed critical reviews, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was screened at the 1975 Director's Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival and has become an influential classic of the horror genre.

Hooper's long career in film and television since the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* includes the critically acclaimed film *Poltergeist* (1982), the television adaptation of *Salem's Lot* (1979), and the sequel *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* (1986).

Hooper died on August 26, 2017.

Sources:


Scope and Contents

The Hooper Papers, which were previously contained in a storage unit, arrived at the Harry Ransom Center with no discernable organization, arrangement, or (with one exception) labeled files. The collection was organized at the Ransom Center by subject, format, and importance, with items related directly to *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* separated from other professional and personal materials. All file titles (other than folder 2.9, where Hooper's title was retained) have been created by the Ransom Center.


Subseries A. Professional Papers contains career-related documents, including correspondence, slides, scrapbooks, and foreign film posters. The correspondence folder includes letters related to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which is also documented in this subseries with other materials, as is *Eggshells*.

Subseries B. Screenplays by Others contains eleven screenplays in alphabetical order by the name of the writer.

Subseries C. Cannes International Film Festival contains publications and publicity materials from the 1975 festival. Although *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was screened at the Director's Fortnight, there are no documents in this collection that relate directly to this screening.

Subseries D. Personal contains documents, negatives, and photographs along with other materials that are not directly related to Hooper's career.

Series III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977, contains newspapers and magazines, some of which reference Hooper or *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. These materials are in alphabetical order by title then by date. Some publications are incomplete.
The archive was purchased at auction and donated to the Harry Ransom Center.

Related Material

The Ransom Center holds the papers of Warren Skaaren, the first executive director of the Texas Film Commission, who played an important role in the production of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Skaaren's papers include a screenplay for The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Separated Material

More than 950 moving image items and associated sound recordings documenting Eggshells and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, and Hooper's Peter, Paul, and Mary documentary, education project, and other commercial and documentary work were transferred to the Center's Moving Image and Sound Recordings Collections.

A Leatherface mask from The Texas Chainsaw Massacre was transferred to the Costume Collection. Access to the mask is restricted for preservation purposes and available only with curatorial permission.

Savage Cinema by Rick Trader Witcombe (Bounty Books, 1975) was transferred to the Ransom Center Library. The book includes a brief commentary on The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Index Terms

People

Hooper, Tobe, 1943 - .

Subjects

Horror films--Production and direction.
Motion Pictures, American.
Motion picture producers and directors--United States.

Places

Austin (Tex.)

Document Types

Black-and-white photographs.
Clippings.
Color prints (photographs).
Correspondence.
Film negatives.
Film stills.
Moving images.
Newspapers.
Posters.
Screenplays.
Scrapbooks.
Serials (publications).
Slides.
Sound recordings.


- Production notes, circa 1970 Container 1.1
- Film stills, undated Container 1.2
- Slides, 1970 Container Cold Storage
- Atlanta International Film Festival materials, film pressbooks and small poster, 1971 Container 1.3
- Poster, circa 1970 Container osb 1.1


- Production materials, 1973-1975, undated Container 1.4-7,
  2.1
- Slaughterhouse photographs, 1973, undated Container 2.2
- Photograph negatives, film production and location research, 1973, undated Container
  Cold Storage
- Slides, film production, 1973 Container
- Set illustration and Bryanston Pictures Pressbook, 1974, undated Container
  osb 1.2
- Publicity materials and clippings, 1973-1975, undated Container
  2.3-5
- Ritz Theater Poster, 1982 Container osb 1.3
- Publicity flyer of Marilyn Burns, undated Container 2.6
- Photographs of Dottie Pearl [make-up artist for TCM], undated Container
  2.7
- Season's Greetings cards, undated Container 2.8
- Small bones, undated Container 4


- Parallel Productions Education Project, 1967  Container 2.9
- Footage notes, undated  Container 2.10
- Publicity photographs and film stills, 1973, undated  Container 2.11
- Mona Lee Fultz, note to Tobe Hooper, resume, headshots, circa 1975  Container 3.1
- Correspondence, financial documents, and other materials, 1974-1975  Container 3.2-4
- Deluxe general, West Coast Price List; Beaulieu manual, 1971, undated  Container 3.6
- Slides, 1971, undated  Container Cold Storage
- Scrapbooks with film sequence photographs, undated  Container 4

Subseries B. Screenplays by Others, 1973-1975, undated

- Bloom, Jeffrey. The Arisen, 1973  Container 5.1
- Carson, L. M. Kit. Double Eagle, 1975  Container 5.2
- Case, Allen and Bob Porter. Character and Storyline Treatment, John Hurd, undated  Container 5.3
- Case, John. Now I Lay Me Down to Die, undated  Container 5.4
- Fehr, Grant. Spooks, 1974  Container 5.5
- Feigelson, J. D. Final Printout, undated  Container 5.6
Jackson, Donald G. and Jerry Youngkins. The Demon Lover, 1974. Includes correspondence and Finders Keepers zine, Winter 1973  Container 5.7

Lamb, Bernadette. Bury the Dead, undated  Container 5.8

Ritchey, Lloyd F., Jr. Night of the Electric Death, 1973  Container 5.9

Teller, Ira  Container

Death Machines, 1975  Container 6.1

Fear in Dark Places, 1973  Container 6.2

Subseries C. Cannes International Film Festival, 1975

Cinema Australia publicity materials, 1975  Container 6.3

Cinema Canada publicity materials, 1975  Container 6.4

CinemaTV Today, Cannes 75 Festival Special, 1975  Container 6.5

Le Film Francais, 1975  Container 6.6

The Hollywood Reporter, Cannes Special Issue; Paris Côte d'azur, Special Festival, 1975  Container 6.7

UniCinema, 1975 (2 copies)  Container 6.8-7.1

Film programs and press kit, circa 1975  Container 7.2

Publicity materials, postcards, personal note, and other documents, circa 1975  Container 7.3-4

Subseries D. Personal, 1972-1974, undated

Photographs, undated [Negatives moved to cold storage.]  Container 7.5

McGovern and Shriver campaign leaflets, clipping, 1972, undated  Container 7.6

Children's drawings, undated  Container 7.7

Programs, hotel ephemera, and other documents, 1973-1974, undated  Container 7.8

Reefer Madness poster, undated  Container osb 1.6

Personal effects: cigar (partial), airgun pellets, lens, rubber tripod feet, undated  Container 4
Series III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977

ARX Literary Monthly, August 1969

Austin American Statesman, Show World section

  March 1, 1970
  September 8, 1974
  September 29, 1974
  October 6, 1974
  October 13, 1974
  October 20, 1974
  October 27, 1974
  December 1, 1974
  December 15, 1974
  January 5, 1975
  March 23, 1975
  April 13, 1975
  November 2, 1975

Austin Citizen

  October 3, 1974
  October 5, 1974
  October 12, 1974
  October 17, 1974

Austin People Today

  October 1973 (2 copies)
  November 1975
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<td>Cavalier Magazine, April, 1968</td>
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<td>Continental Film Review, circa 1975 (vol. 22, no. 9)</td>
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<td>Creem, November 1975</td>
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<td>Daily Texan</td>
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<td>Pearl, December monthly magazine supplement, 1974</td>
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<td>East Village Other</td>
<td>November 15-December 1, 1966 (vol. 1, no. 24)</td>
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<td>April 15-May 1, 1967 (vol. 2, no. 10)</td>
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Entertainment Today, November 1, 1974

Esquire, March 1970

Excalibur (York University Community Paper)
   March 13, 1975
   March 20, 1975

Filmmakers Newsletter,
   January 1972 (vol.5, no. 3)
   August 1975 (vol. 8, no. 10) (2 copies)

Films in Review, February 1973

Free & Easy (Central Texas)
   September 15–October 15, 1974
   November 15–December 15, 1974

Houston Post Spotlight section, October 13, 1974

Japan Times
   March 2, 1975
   March 5, 1975

Life, May 19, 1941


New York, September 8, 1975

New York Post, November 1, 1974

New Yorker
   August 4, 1975
   September 22, 1975
   September 29, 1975
October 6, 1975
October 13, 1975
October 20, 1975
October 27, 1975
Rag (Austin, TX), June 15-22, 1970 (vol. 4, no. 29)
Sight and Sound
  Autumn 1975
  Spring 1977
Texas Monthly, March 1974
Time, March 3, 1975
Variety (New York edition)
  May 8, 1974, 17th International Film Festival Annual
  May 15, 1974
  June 5, 1974
  September 4, 1974
  October 9, 1974
  October 16, 1974
  October 30, 1974
  November 6, 1974
  November 13, 1974
  November 20, 1974
  November 27, 1974
  December 4, 1974
  December 11, 1974
December 18, 1974
February 12, 1975
August 13, 1975
September 24, 1975
October 1, 1975
October 8, 1975
October 15, 1975
November 19, 1975
November 26, 1975

Variety (Hollywood edition)
May 17, 1974
May 21, 1974
May 22, 1974
June 5, 1974
November 5, 1974 (Marilyn Burns' subscription)

Variety, Anniversary Edition
69th Anniversary, 1974
70th Anniversary, 1975

Village Voice
October 13, 1974
September 22, 1975

Whole Earth Catalog, Fall 1969