

# Guide to the John McHale archive

MSS 60



YCBA Library Court. Photograph by Richard Caspole, YCBA, 2016.

compiled by Francis Lapka

November 2019

Institutional Archives  
1080 Chapel Street  
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(203) 432-8395

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<https://britishart.yale.edu/about-us/departments/institutional-archives>

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	3
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Bibliography .....	4
Arrangement .....	4
Collection Contents .....	6
Series I: Collage Books .....	6
Series II: Collage Books, unfinished .....	8
Series III: Collages .....	9
Series IV: Collages, unfinished .....	11
Series V: Palettes .....	12
Series VI: Paintings .....	14
Series VII: Drawings .....	15
Series VIII: Sketchbook .....	19
Series IX: Sheets prepared by McHale for discussion of lecture by E.W. 'Bingo' Meyer, entitled "Probability and Information Theory and their Application to the Visual Arts" given March 8, 1955, to the Independent Group at the Institute of Contemporary Arts .....	23
Series X: Posters .....	26
Series XI: Catalogs, periodicals, ephemera, and small posters .....	28
Selected Search Terms .....	34

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Center for British Art, Institutional Archives  
Institutional Archives  
1080 Chapel Street  
P. O. Box 208280  
New Haven, CT 06520-8280  
(203) 432-8395  
ycba.institutionalarchives@yale.edu  
<https://britishart.yale.edu/about-us/departments/institutional-archives>

**CALL NUMBER:** MSS 60

**CREATOR:** McHale, John

**TITLE:** John McHale archive

**DATES:** ca. 1950-1978.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 25 linear feet (7 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection comprises collage books, collages, drawings, palettes, and posters by John McHale, with related printed material, including catalogs, periodicals, ephemera, and small posters.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/ycba.mss.0060>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/ycba.mss.0060>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Magda Cordell McHale

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

In Copyright

The collection is the physical property of the Yale Center for British Art. Literary rights, including copyright, also belong to the Yale Center for British Art. For further information, consult the Archives Department.

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## Preferred Citation

John McHale Archive. Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Magda Cordell McHale

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## Biographical / Historical

John McHale (1922-1978) was a British collage artist, art theorist, and sociologist. As a member of the Independent Group, formed at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in 1952, McHale helped to originate Pop Art in Britain, a movement rooted in American mass culture and modern technology.

McHale spent a year at Yale University in 1955-1956 and returned permanently to the US in 1962 to work with Richard Buckminster Fuller on ecological issues and environmental sustainability. With his wife, the artist Magda Cordell, McHale founded the Center for Integrative Studies (CIS) to consider the impact of modern industrialized world on human society and the environment.

In a 1984 retrospective of McHale's work, Charlotta Kotik wrote: "The unique oeuvre of John McHale results from both his special creative talents and his exceptional human qualities. John McHale was at once a visual artist, writer, educator and organizer; but most important, he was a humanist philosopher endowed with relentless energy to pursue innovations which were ultimately to result in changes beneficial to mankind. He looked toward the future with a mixture of optimism and skepticism, but above all with a great deal of realistic wisdom, making possible a clear formulation of our predicament, and the consequences of our behavior well in advance of the mainstream." (*The Expendable Ikon*, p. 9).

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## Scope and Contents

The collection comprises collage books, collages, drawings, palettes, and posters by John McHale, with related printed material, including catalogs, periodicals, ephemera, and small posters. The collage books include McHale's *Why I Took to the Washers in Luxury Flats* and his *Shoe-Life Stories*, both completed ca. 1954. The collages series includes McHale's *Transistor* (1954), *Aluminum Head* (1956) and *Untitled (Head)* (1977). The drawings series 14 drawings of geometric or abstract design and several studies for *Aluminum Head*. Among the printed material are posters and literature concerning exhibitions of work by John McHale or related exhibitions at the Institute for Contemporary Arts.

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## Bibliography

The Independent Group: postwar Britain and the aesthetics of plenty. Edited by David Robbins. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1990

McHale, John. *The expendable ikon*. Buffalo, NY: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1984

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged into eleven series: I. Collage Books; II. Collage Books, unfinished; III. Collages; IV. Collages, unfinished; V. Palettes; VI. Paintings; VII. Drawings; VIII. Notes on paintings and drawings; IX. Sheets prepared by McHale for discussion of lecture by E.W. 'Bingo' Meyer, entitled "Probability and Information Theory and their Application to the Visual Arts" given March 8, 1955, to the Independent

Group at the Institute of Contemporary Arts; X. Posters; XI. Catalogs, periodicals, ephemera, and small posters.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Collage Books

Much of McHale's works of the 1950s are devoted to (re)processing media information. There is a recurrent interest in the processing of information through communication systems (see McHale's lecture material). His collage books are best understood as efforts to enact/create such systems in a viewer-interactive form.

- |               |  |          |
|---------------|--|----------|
| b. 4, item 1  | <p>Why I Took to the Washers in Luxury Flats<br/><i>1 collage book ; 46 x 24 cm (closed)</i><br/>McHale, John</p> <p>"McHale at this time abandoned the neural forms of his earlier work in order to emphasize the role of communications media. He wished to visualize how raw data (represented by torn bits of colored paper, newspapers, and magazines) might be organized by a human or mechanical brain into discrete messages. The collage books that he produced in 1954 (cat. no. 37) synthesized the themes of mass culture, information processing, and viewer participation. Each page of these books (one of which was shown in the ICA's <i>Collages and Objects</i> exhibition in 1954) is composed of a collage cut into strips, so that the volume becomes a bound series of variable collages to be 'read' however the viewer wishes."--Baas, Jacquelynn. "John McHale" In <i>The Independent Group: postwar Britain and the aesthetics of plenty</i>. Edited by David Robbins. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1990.</p> <p>Restricted fragile material. Use requires permission of the Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts.</p> <p>Signed on front cover: John McHale '54</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>Collage books<br/>Collages (visual works)<br/>Interactive art</p> <p>Subjects:<br/>Human information processing<br/>Popular culture</p> | 1954     |
| b. 4, item 2a | <p>Shoe-Life Stories<br/><i>1 collage book ; 25 x 21 cm (closed)</i><br/>McHale, John</p> <p>"Shoe-Life Stories (circa 1954) sliced reproductions of faces vertically and alternated these with textures of objects from a jeweler's catalog."--Buckley, Craig. <i>Graphic Assembly: Montage, Media, and Experimental Architecture in the 1960</i>. University of Minnesota Press, 2019, page 50.</p> <p>"McHale at this time abandoned the neural forms of his earlier work in order to emphasize the role of communications media. He wished to visualize how raw data (represented by torn bits of colored paper, newspapers, and magazines) might be organized by a human or mechanical brain into discrete messages. The collage books that he produced in 1954 (cat. no. 37) synthesized the themes of mass culture, information processing, and viewer participation. Each page of these books ... is composed of a collage cut into strips, so that the volume becomes a bound series of variable collages to be 'read' however the viewer wishes."--Baas, Jacquelynn. "John McHale" In <i>The Independent Group: postwar Britain and the aesthetics of plenty</i>. Edited by David Robbins. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1990</p>  | ca. 1954 |

Restricted fragile material. Use requires permission of the Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts

Genres / Formats:

Collage books  
Collages (visual works)  
Interactive art

Subjects:

Human information processing  
Popular culture

---

b. 4, item 2b	Photographic copy of Shoe-Life Stories <i>9 sheets</i> McHale, John A photographic copy of item 2a in the present collection.	ca. 1955?
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Genres / Formats:  
Collage books  
Collages (visual works)  
Photographs

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## Series II: Collage Books, unfinished

- b. 5, item 3a      Untitled collage book (unfinished)      1950s  
*1 collage book (unfinished) : magazine tear sheets cut in strips and glued to heavy-stock paper ; 25 x 42 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned.
- Genres / Formats:  
        Collage books  
        Collages (visual works)  
        Interactive art
- Subjects:  
        Human information processing  
        Popular culture
- 
- b. 5, item 3b      Untitled collage book (unfinished)      1950s  
*1 collage book (unfinished) : magazine tear sheets cut in strips and glued to heavy-stock paper ; 30 x 46 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned.
- Genres / Formats:  
        Collage books  
        Collages (visual works)  
        Interactive art
- Subjects:  
        Human information processing  
        Popular culture
-



**Series III: Collages**

b. 5, item 4      Transistor      1954

*1 collage: brown kraft paper, gray construction paper and yellow and black coated papers; 19.5 x 59 cm*

McHale, John

From a series of works called Transistors. These works serve as visual analogs to the processing of information. The invention of the transistor in 1948 led to the development of the electronic computer, as well as smaller radios and other communication devices. McHale's works relate to such new technological phenomena.

Signed: John McHale 1954.

Subjects:

Computers  
Human information processing  
Transistors

Genres / Formats:

Collages (visual works)

b. McHale      Aluminum Head      1956  
oversize, item 5

*1 collage: black ink on white paper and aluminum foil; 47.5 x 39.5 cm, in framed 65 x 56.5 cm*

McHale, John

Aluminum was a lightweight construction material increasingly used in the 1950s by architects. It is sometimes associated with the New Pragmaticist architecture being built in Britain in these years. McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.

Signed: McHale '56

Subjects:

Aluminum  
Consumption (Economics)  
Mass media

Genres / Formats:

Collages (visual works)

Names:

Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005

- b. 5, item 6      Untitled (Head)      1977  
*1 collage: orange yellow and white construction paper with black fiber-tip pen on white wove paper; 60.5 x 46 cm*  
McHale, John
- McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.
- Signed: McHale '77.
- Subjects:  
Consumption (Economics)  
Mass media
- Genres / Formats:  
Collages (visual works)
- Names:  
Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005
-

**Series IV: Collages, unfinished**

- |              |   |        |
|--------------|---|--------|
| b. 5, item 7 | <p>Head</p> <p><i>1 collage: magazine and newspaper tear sheets and black construction paper on wove paper; 56.5 x 46 cm</i></p> <p>McHale, John</p> <p>McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.</p> <p>Unfinished. Unsigned.</p> <p>Subjects:<br/>Consumption (Economics)<br/>Mass media</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>Collages (visual works)</p> <p>Names:<br/>Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005</p>     | 1950s? |
| <hr/>        |   |        |
| b. 5, item 8 | <p>Untitled (Head)</p> <p><i>1 collage: magazine tear sheets on green construction paper, mounted on purple paper; 65 x 47.5</i></p> <p>McHale, John</p> <p>McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.</p> <p>Unfinished. Unsigned.</p> <p>Subjects:<br/>Consumption (Economics)<br/>Mass media</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>Collages (visual works)</p> <p>Names:<br/>Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005</p> | 1978   |

**Series V: Palettes**

b. 2, item 9	<p>Palette #1  <i>97 items : magazine and newspaper tear sheets ; 26 x 10 - 27 x 36 cm</i>          McHale, John</p> <p>Periodicals used include <i>Life</i>, <i>London Sunday Times</i>, <i>Look</i> and <i>Saturday Evening Post</i>. Includes "A 100 mile high portrait of Earth" (from <i>Life</i>) and an almost complete copy of <i>Life</i>, April 11, 1955. One advertisement in this issue is noted as being used in Richard Hamilton's <i>A-A-AH</i>.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:          Tear sheets</p> <p>Subjects:          Periodicals</p>	1950-1957
b. 3, item 10a	<p>Palette #2  <i>106 items : newspaper and magazine clippings, tear sheets, articles and a business card ; 10 x 15 - 27 x 36 cm</i>          McHale, John</p> <p>Periodicals used include <i>Madison Avenue</i>, <i>New Yorker</i>, and <i>Time</i>. One of the photographs depicts McHale's <i>Virginia Imported</i>, 1957.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:          Periodicals          Tear sheets</p>	1955-1959
b. 3, item 10b	<p>Palette #2: seven drawings  <i>7 drawings : graphite on paper ; 30 x 24 cm</i>          McHale, John</p> <p>associated with palette #2</p> <p>Genres / Formats:          Graphite drawings</p>	1955-1959
b. 3, item 10c	<p>Palette #2: unfinished collage book project.  <i>7 items : collage pieces from tear sheets and paper; two photographs, one ink drawing (folded)</i>          McHale, John</p> <p>Associated with palette #2. The photographs are probably related to the collage book project. The drawing illustrated a plan for the book format.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:          Collage books          Collages (visual works)          Photographs          Tear sheets</p>	1955-1959

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b. 3, item 11a	<p>Palette #3 <i>127 items : magazine and newspaper tear sheets, construction paper</i> McHale, John</p> <p>The last working palette, although a number of tear sheets are dated earlier (1950s). Some are prepared for collage.</p> <p>Genres / Formats: Periodicals Tear sheets</p>	1971-1978
b. 5, item 11b	<p>Palette #3: oversized material <i>3 items : magazine and newspaper tear sheets, construction paper</i> McHale, John</p> <p>Partially assembled collage parts, pieces of construction paper, oversized palette material. Includes a portion of the <i>Houston Chronicle</i>, section 1, for September 1, 1977.</p>	1971-1978
b. 2, item 12	<p>Palette #4 <i>5 items : magazine and newspaper tear sheets, photograph</i> McHale, John</p> <p>Includes tearsheet from tackboard in John McHale's London studio c.1956, as depicted in the Sam Lambert photograph.</p> <p>Genres / Formats: Periodicals Photographs Tear sheets</p>	c1956

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**Series VI: Paintings**

b. Paintings B1995.24.1	e.v.I <i>1 collage : paper collage mounted on masonite board ; 121.6 x 110.2 cm</i> McHale, John  For a full description and image of this work, see the <a href="#">online catalogue</a> of the Yale Center for British Art.  Genres / Formats: Abstract art Collages (visual works)	1958
b. Paintings B1995.24.2	Pink Eyes <i>1 painting : oil and paper collage on canvas ; 152.4 x 101.6 cm</i> McHale, John  For a full description and image of this work, see the <a href="#">online catalogue</a> of the Yale Center for British Art.  Genres / Formats: Abstract art Collages (visual works)	1959
b. Paintings B1995.24.3	11/60 <i>1 painting : oil and paper collage on canvas ; 152.1 x 101.3 cm</i> McHale, John  For a full description and image of this work, see the <a href="#">online catalogue</a> of the Yale Center for British Art.  Genres / Formats: Abstract art Collages (visual works)	ca. 1960

**Series VII: Drawings**

- |                |   |      |
|----------------|---|------|
| b. 5, item 13a | <p>Untitled geometric drawing 1<br/> <i>1 drawing : brush and black ink (possibly on japan paper) ; 56.5 x 44.5 cm</i><br/>           McHale, John</p> <p>One of three in a series of geometric drawings, 1952.</p> <p>Signed: McHale '52</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Drawings (visual works)</p>   | 1952 |
| b. 5, item 13b | <p>Untitled geometric drawing 2<br/> <i>1 drawing : brush and black ink on wove paper with deckled edges ; 60 x 43 cm</i><br/>           McHale, John</p> <p>One of three in a series of geometric drawings, 1952.</p> <p>Unsigned.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Drawings (visual works)</p>   | 1952 |
| b. 5, item 13c | <p>Untitled geometric drawing 3<br/> <i>1 drawing : brush and black ink with collage, blue-gray construction paper on wove paper ; 58.5 x 46 cm</i><br/>           McHale, John</p> <p>One of three in a series of geometric drawings, 1952.</p> <p>Signed: John McHale '52.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Drawings (visual works)</p>  | 1952 |
| b. 5, item 14a | <p>Study for Aluminum Head<br/> <i>1 drawing : pen and black ink with gray wash ; 53.3 x 38</i><br/>           McHale, John</p> <p>Aluminum was a lightweight construction material increasingly used in the 1950s by architects. It is sometimes associated with the New Pragmaticist architecture being built in Britain in these years. McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.</p> <p>Signed: McH '54.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Drawings (visual works)</p> <p>Subjects:<br/>           Aluminum<br/>           Consumption (Economics)<br/>           Mass media</p> | 1954 |

- b. 6, item 14b      Study for Aluminum Head      1954  
*1 drawing : pen and brush, black ink and gray wash ; sheet 91 x 58.5 cm*  
 McHale, John
- Aluminum was a lightweight construction material increasingly used in the 1950s by architects. It is sometimes associated with the New Pragmaticist architecture being built in Britain in these years. McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.
- Unsigned
- Genres / Formats:  
 Drawings (visual works)
- Subjects:  
 Aluminum  
 Consumption (Economics)  
 Mass media
- 
- b. 1, item 14c      Sketch for Aluminum Head      1954?  
*1 drawing : pen and black ink (possibly on japan paper) ; 28 x 21 cm*  
 McHale, John
- Aluminum was a lightweight construction material increasingly used in the 1950s by architects. It is sometimes associated with the New Pragmaticist architecture being built in Britain in these years. McHale's 'head-collages' of the 1950s, although they bear a superficial resemblance to Paolozzi's works, have been better described as images of the 'media-fed man' (Robert Freeman) -- figures that are "defined by what they consume." This consumerist conception of collage differs somewhat from its predecessors.
- Unsigned
- Genres / Formats:  
 Drawings (visual works)
- Subjects:  
 Aluminum  
 Consumption (Economics)  
 Mass media
- 
- b. 6, item 15      Untitled (Cross with two circles)      ca. 1960?  
*1 drawing : brush and black and red paint on shiny wove paper ; sheet 91.5 x 59.5 cm*  
 McHale, John
- Unsigned
- Genres / Formats:  
 Drawings (visual works)
-



- 
- b. 5, item 16a      Untitled (Abstract Drawing)      1960s  
*1 drawing : black fiber-tip pen on shiny tearsheet from yearbook (photos on verso); 54 x 38 cm*  
McHale, John  
From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.  
Unsigned  
Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)
- 
- b. 6, item 16b      Untitled (Abstract Drawing)      1960s  
*1 drawing : brush and black poster paint and black fiber-tip pen on shiny tearsheet from yearbook (photos on verso); sheet 76 x 54 cm*  
McHale, John  
From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.  
Unsigned  
Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)
- 
- b. 6, item 16c      Untitled (Abstract Drawing)      1960s  
*1 drawing : black fiber-tip pen with red shiny construction paper on shiny tearsheet from yearbook (photos on verso); sheet 77 x 54 cm*  
McHale, John  
From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.  
Unsigned  
Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)
- 
- b. 6, item 16d      Untitled (Abstract Drawing)      1960s  
*1 drawing : black fiber-tip pen on shiny tearsheet from yearbook (photos on verso); sheet 78 x 54 cm*  
McHale, John  
From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.  
Unsigned  
Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)
-

- 
- |                |  |       |
|----------------|--|-------|
| b. 6, item 16e | Untitled (Abstract Drawing)<br><i>1 drawing : brown fiber-tip pen on wove paper ; sheet 97 x 64 cm</i><br>McHale, John<br><br>From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.<br><br>Unsigned<br><br>Genres / Formats:<br>Drawings (visual works)           | 1960s |
| b. 6, f. 16f   | Untitled (Abstract Drawing)<br><i>1 drawing : red and black fiber-tip pen on wove paper ; sheet 94 x 63.5 cm</i><br>McHale, John<br><br>From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.<br><br>Unsigned<br><br>Genres / Formats:<br>Drawings (visual works) | 1960s |
| b. 6, f. 16g   | Untitled (Abstract Drawing)<br><i>1 drawing : black fiber-tip pen on wove paper ; sheet 94 x 63.5 cm</i><br>McHale, John<br><br>From a series of large scale drawings using various pre-Columbian (?) and geometric motifs. The yearbook tearsheet on which these motifs are drawn is almost certainly of American origin.<br><br>Unsigned<br><br>Genres / Formats:<br>Drawings (visual works)         | 1960s |
-

**Series VIII: Sketchbook**

*One sketchpad, with disbound leaves and 24 additional laid-in drawings; includes drawings in pen and ink or graphite; also includes four photocopies of drawings in pen and ink.*

The majority of these drawings are probably preliminary sketches to the larger fiber-tip pen/poster paint drawings in the collection, although a few drawings from this collection of sketches seem to be unrelated. The ball point pen drawings in this series are revisions of earlier graphite sketches. There is also a drawing which is derived from a magazine tear-sheet in Palette #2; in the subsequent sketch the design is further abstracted and reintegrated back into a 'Head' composed of pre-Columbian motifs.

B1995.24.12

Unsigned

b. 1, item 17.1	Drawing 1 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.2	Drawing 2 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.3	Drawing 3 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.4	Drawing 4 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.5	Drawing 5 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.6	Drawing 6 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.7	Drawing 7 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.8	Drawing 8 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.9	Drawing 9 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.10	Drawing 10 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.11	Drawing 11 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?

b. 1, item 17.12	Drawing 12 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.13	Drawing 13 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.14	Drawing 14 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.15	Drawing 15 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.16	Drawing 16 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.17	Drawing 17 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.18	Drawing 18 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.19	Drawing 19 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.20	Drawing 20 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.21	Drawing 21 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.22	Drawing 22 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.23	Drawing 23 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.24	Drawing 24 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.25	Drawing 25 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.26	Drawing 26 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?

b. 1, item 17.27	Drawing 27 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.28	Drawing 28 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.29	Drawing 29 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.30	Drawing 30 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.31	Drawing 31 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.32	Drawing 32 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.33	Drawing 33 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.34	Drawing 34 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.35	Drawing 35 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.36	Drawing 36 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.37	Drawing 37 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.38	Drawing 38 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.39	Drawing 39 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.40	Drawing 40 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.41	Drawing 41 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?

b. 1, item 17.42	Drawing 42 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.43	Drawing 43 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?
b. 1, item 17.44	Drawing 44 <i>1 drawing</i> McHale, John	ca. 1960?

**Series IX: Sheets prepared by McHale for discussion of lecture by E.W. 'Bingo' Meyer, entitled "Probability and Information Theory and their Application to the Visual Arts" given March 8, 1955, to the Independent Group at the Institute of Contemporary Arts**

b. 6, item 18      General Communication System      1955  
*1 diagram : black and red fiber-tip pen with black construction paper ; sheet 58 x 91 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned.

Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)

Subjects:  
Information theory  
Probabilities

Names:  
Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

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b. 6, item 19      Coding      1955  
*1 drawing : black fiber-tip pen ; sheet 91 x 58 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned

Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)

Subjects:  
Information theory  
Probabilities

Names:  
Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

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b. 6, item 20      Forms of Coding      1955  
*1 drawing : black and red fiber-tip pen with blue-gray construction paper and magazine tear-sheets ; sheet 58 x 91 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned

Names:  
Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

b. 6, item 21      Coin Tossing      1955

*1 graph : black, yellow, and blue fiber-tip pen and graphite ; sheet 91 x 58 cm*

McHale, John

Unsigned

Genres / Formats:

Drawings (visual works)

Subjects:

Information theory

Probabilities

Names:

Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:

Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)

Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

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b. 6, item 22      Information on a Noisy Channel      1955

*1 table : black, red, and green fiber-tip pen and blue-gray construction paper ; 91 x 58 cm*

McHale, John

Unsigned

Genres / Formats:

Drawings (visual works)

Subjects:

Information theory

Probabilities

Names:

Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:

Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)

Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

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b. 6, item 23      Frequency of Occurrence of Letters in English in 1000 Letters      1955  
*1 chart : black and red fiber-tip pen with graphite ; sheet 58 x 91 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned

Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)

Subjects:  
Information theory  
Probabilities

Names:  
Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

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b. 6, item 24      Order / Disorder      1955  
*1 drawing : black fiber-tip pen with yellow and black construction paper ; sheet 91 x 58 cm*  
McHale, John  
Unsigned

Genres / Formats:  
Drawings (visual works)

Subjects:  
Information theory  
Probabilities

Names:  
Meyer, E. W.

Corporate Bodies:  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)

**Series X: Posters**

- |               |   |      |
|---------------|---|------|
| b. 6, item 25 | <p>Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures by Jean Dubuffet<br/> <i>1 poster ; sheet 46 x 31 cm</i><br/>         McHale, John</p> <p>At the Institute of Contemporary Arts Gallery, 17-18 Dover Street, London W1, 30 March - 30 April.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Exhibition announcements<br/>           Posters</p> <p>Names:<br/>           Dubuffet, Jean, 1901-1985</p> <p>Corporate Body:<br/>           Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)</p>   | 1955 |
| <hr/>         |   |      |
| b. 6, item 26 | <p>This is Tomorrow<br/> <i>1 poster : screen print with red and black ink ; sheet 51 x 76 cm</i><br/>         McHale, John</p> <p>The poster, designed by McHale, was produced for an exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, August 9-September 9, 1956.</p> <p>The exhibition was divided into various collaborative groups of architects and artists, each of which produced its own poster. This poster was likely produced independently from the group posters.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Exhibition announcements<br/>           Posters<br/>           Screen prints</p> <p>Corporate Bodies:<br/>           This Is Tomorrow (1956 : Whitechapel Art Gallery)<br/>           Whitechapel Art Gallery</p>   | 1956 |
| <hr/>         |   |      |
| b. 6, item 27 | <p>This is Tomorrow<br/> <i>1 poster ; screen print with black ink ; 77 x 51 cm</i><br/>         Hamilton, Richard, 1922-2011</p> <p>A screen print of Richard Hamilton's <i>Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?</i>, produced for an exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, August 9-September 9, 1956.</p> <p>The exhibition was divided into various collaborative groups of architects and artists. Each of these groups produced its own poster for the exhibition. John McHale was in Group Two with Richard Hamilton and John Voelcker.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>           Exhibition announcements<br/>           Posters<br/>           Screen prints</p> <p>Corporate Bodies:<br/>           This Is Tomorrow (1956 : Whitechapel Art Gallery)<br/>           Whitechapel Art Gallery</p> | 1956 |

- |               |  |      |
|---------------|--|------|
| b. 6, item 28 | <p>This is Tomorrow<br/><i>1 exhibition poster : screen print with black ink</i><br/>Henderson, Nigel, 1917-1985</p> <p>Poster by Nigel Henderson, for the exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, August 9-September 9, 1956. The design features an altered photograph of Peter Smithson, Eduardo Paolozzi, Alison Smithson, and Nigel Henderson.</p> <p>The exhibition was divided into various collaborative groups' of architects and artists. Each of these groups produced its own poster for the exhibition.</p> <p>Corporate Bodies:<br/>This Is Tomorrow (1956 : Whitechapel Art Gallery)<br/>Whitechapel Art Gallery</p> <p>Names:<br/>Henderson, Nigel, 1917-1985<br/>Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005<br/>Smithson, Alison, 1928-1993<br/>Smithson, Peter, 1923-2003</p> | 1956 |
| <hr/>         |  |      |
| b. 6, item 29 | <p>Magda Cordell, John McHale<br/><i>1 poster ; sheet 60 x 42 cm</i><br/>House, Gordon</p> <p>Poster for an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, September 6-October 13, 1962. Credit: Gordon House and Kelpra Studio Ltd., London</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>Exhibition announcements<br/>Posters</p> <p>Names:<br/>McHale, John<br/>McHale, Magda Cordell</p> <p>Corporate Body:<br/>Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)</p>   | 1962 |
| <hr/>         |  |      |
| b. 6, item 30 | <p>The Plastic Parthenon: Two<br/><i>1 poster ; sheet 59 x 37 cm</i><br/>Katayama, Toshihiro, 1928-</p> <p>Poster by Toshihiro Katayama, advertising a lecture by John McHale at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, December 12, 1968.</p> <p>Genres / Formats:<br/>Posters</p> <p>Names:<br/>Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts<br/>McHale, John</p>   | 1968 |

## Series XI: Catalogs, periodicals, ephemera, and small posters

- 
- b. 7, item 31      Institute of Contemporary Arts : sculpture exhibition arranged by Lawrence Alloway      1954 or 1955?  
*1 sheet ([1] page) ; 33 x 21 cm*  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Lists works by Robert Adams, Kenneth Armitage, Trevor Bates, Reg Butler, Lynn Chadwick, Geoffrey Clarke, Elizabeth Frink, Barbara Hepworth, John McHale, Bernard Meadows, Henry Moore, Eduardo Paolozzi, William Turnbull, and Rosemary Young.
- Subjects:  
Sculpture, British -- 20th Century
- Corporate Body:  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Names:  
Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990  
McHale, John
- 
- b. 7, item 32      Collages and objects      1954  
*8 leaves : photocopy ; 22 x 28 cm*  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Photocopy of the original brochure. "Exhibition organized by Lawrence Alloway; 13 October - 20 November 1954; London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1954."-- Leaf [2]. With a list of the 83 items exhibited, including two collages books by John McHale: Palimpsestuous (no. 81) and Secret Life of a Talisman (no. 82).
- Stapled in upper left corner.
- Genres / Formats:  
Brochures
- Subjects:  
Collage
- Names:  
Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990  
McHale, John
- Corporate Body:  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
-

- b. 7, f. 33      The Independent Group, schedule of seminars for Spring 1955 session      1955  
*2 sheets ([2] pages) : mimeograph typescript ; 33 x 21 cm*  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)
- Seminar speakers include: Lawrence Alloway, Reyner Banham, Frank Cordell, Gillo Dorfles, Richard Hamilton, Anthony Hill, Donald Holmes, John McHale, E.W. Meyer, Eduardo Paolozzi, Tony del Renzio, and Peter Smithson.
- Corporate Bodies:  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Names:  
Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990  
Hamilton, Richard, 1922-2011  
McHale, John  
Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005
- 
- b. 7, item 34      John McHale Collages      1956  
*1 folded sheet : illustrations ; 16 x 37 cm, folded 16 x 13 cm*  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Brochure. Subtitle: "27 November-15 December 1956. ICA Library, 17-18 Dover Street, London, W1." With an enumeration of the collages: "1. Zebra. 2. Puffhead. 3. Figurehead. 4. Rosehead. 5. Flexible head. 6. Chocolate head. 7. Dial. 8. Maphead. 9. Silverhead. 10. Furhead. 11. Olive head."
- Subjects:  
Collage
- Genres / Formats:  
Brochures
- Names:  
McHale, John
- Corporate Body:  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- 
- b. 7, item 35      John McHale and Magda Cordell in studio, with tack board bearing tear sheets      ca. 1956?  
from McHale's Palette #4  
*1 photograph : gelatin silver print ; 17 x 16 cm*  
The photograph is a reproduction, not the original.
- Genres / Formats:  
Gelatin silver prints  
Photographs
- Names:  
McHale, John  
McHale, Magda Cordell

- 
- b. 7, item 35a      Dimensions: British Abstract Art, 1948 to 1957      1957?  
*1 sheet; 10 x 21 cm*  
O'Hana Gallery  
Del Renzio, Toni  
Exhibition announcement, designed by Toni Del Renzio. "Arranged by Lawrence Alloway with the co-operation of the ICA at the O'Hana Gallery, 3 Carlos Place, Grosvenor Square W1, December 6 to 21 ..."
- Genres / Formats:  
Exhibition announcements
- Subjects:  
Art, Abstract
- Corporate Bodies:  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)  
O'Hana Gallery
- Names:  
Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990  
McHale, John
- 
- b. 7, item 36      3 Collagists: New work by E.L.T Mesens, John McHale, Gwyther Irwin      1958  
*1 poster; sheet 40 x 25 cm*  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)  
Small exhibition poster. Institute of Contemporary Arts, 5-29 November 1958.
- Genres / Formats:  
Exhibition announcements  
Posters
- Subjects:  
Collage
- Names:  
Irwin, Gwyther, 1931-2008  
McHale, John  
Mesens, E. L. T., 1903-1971 (Edouard Léon Théodore)
- Corporate Body:  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
-

- b. 7, item 37      3 Collagists: list of exhibits      1958  
*1 folded sheet; 26 x 26 cm, folded to 10 x 26 cm*  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Brochure for an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1958. Includes artists' statements by Irwin, McHale, and Mesens.
- Subjects:  
Collage
- Genres / Formats:  
Brochures
- Names:  
Irwin, Gwyther, 1931-2008  
McHale, John  
Mesens, E. L. T., 1903-1971 (Edouard Léon Théodore)
- Corporate Body:  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- 

- b. 7, item 38      Class of '59 : Magda Cordell, Eduardo Paolozzi, John McHale : paintings, sculpture, collages      1959  
*1 folded sheet; 42 x 33 cm*  
Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990
- Brochure for an exhibition at The Union, Cambridge, February 7-19, 1959. Arranged by the Cambridge Contemporary Art Trust. One side of the sheet serves as a small poster. The verso includes a checklist and a commentary by Lawrence Alloway.
- Subjects:  
Collage  
Painting, British  
Sculpture, British
- Genres / Formats:  
Brochures
- Names:  
McHale, John  
McHale, Magda Cordell
-

- b. 7, item 39      Lady Clare : a review : volume XLIV, June 1959      1959  
*18 pages : illustrations*  
Freeman, Robert, 1936-2019  
McHale, John  
Includes "The Human Image" by Robert Freeman, pages 6-9, with commentary on the work of Magda Cordell and John McHale; and "Images of the mass media" by John McHale, pages 10-11.
- Subjects:  
    Mass media
- Genres / Formats:  
    Periodicals
- Names:  
    McHale, John  
    McHale, Magda Cordell
- 
- b. 7, item 40      Painters' Carpets      1962  
*1 poster ; 42 x 30 cm*  
Blackfriars Settlement  
"Presented by the Blackfriars Settlement ... at the Institute of Contemporary Arts ... 27 April to 12 May 1962 ... Louis le Brocquey, Anne Buchanan, John Ernest, Andrew Forge, John McHale, Sidney Nolan, John Plumb, William Scott, Peter Stroud, Joe Tilson, and William Turnbull." With text describing the Blackfriars Settlement.
- Corporate Bodies:  
    Blackfriars Settlement  
    Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
- Names:  
    McHale, John
- 
- b. 7, item 41      Magda Cordell, John McHale      1962  
*1 folded sheet (3 panels) ; 21 x 60 cm, folded to 21 x 20 cm*  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)  
Fuller, R. Buckminster (Richard Buckminster), 1895-1983  
Banham, Reyner  
Brochure for an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1962. Includes commentaries by R. Buckminster Fuller (on Magda Cordell's *Presences*) and Reyner Banham (on John McHale's *Transition*).
- Names:  
    McHale, John  
    McHale, Magda Cordell
- Corporate Body:  
    Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)
-



b. 7, item 42      Dot zero : no. 3, Spring 1967      1967  
45, [3] pages : illustrations ; 31 cm

Includes "The Plastic Parthenon" by John McHale, pages 4-11.

McHale writes: "The future of art seems no longer to lie with the creation of enduring masterworks but with defining alternative cultural strategies, through a series of communicative gestures in multi-media forms. As art and non-art become interchangeable, and the masterwork may only be a reel of punched or magnetized tape, the artist defines art less through any intrinsic value of the art object than by furnishing new conceptualities of life style and orientation ..."

Genres / Formats:  
Periodicals

Names:  
McHale, John

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## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Genres / Formats

Abstract art  
Collage books  
Collages (visual works)  
Drawings (visual works)  
Ephemera  
Exhibition catalogs  
Periodicals  
Photographs  
Posters  
Sketchbooks  
Tear sheets

### Subjects

Art, Modern -- 20th Century  
Art, Modern -- 20th Century -- Exhibitions  
Collage -- 20th Century  
Collage -- 20th Century -- Exhibitions  
Information theory  
Pop art  
Pop art -- Exhibitions  
Probabilities

### Preferred Titles

*Dot zero*  
*Lady Clare magazine*  
*McHale, John. Aluminum head.*  
*McHale, John. Shoe-life stories*  
*McHale, John. Transistor*  
*McHale, John. Why I took to the washers in luxury flats*

### Names

Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990  
Dubuffet, Jean, 1901-1985  
Irwin, Gwyther, 1931-2008  
McHale, John  
McHale, Magda Cordell  
Mesens, E. L. T., 1903-1971 (Edouard Léon Théodore)  
Meyer, E. W.  
Paolozzi, Eduardo, 1924-2005

### Corporate Bodies

Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)  
This Is Tomorrow (1956 : Whitechapel Art Gallery)  
Whitechapel Art Gallery

### Contributors

McHale, John  
Del Renzio, Toni  
Hamilton, Richard, 1922-2011  
Henderson, Nigel, 1917-1985  
Katayama, Toshihiro, 1928-  
Independent Group (Association : Great Britain)  
Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, England)