Russel Wrigh

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Russel Wright was born in 1904 in Lebanon, Ohio. Baptized Russell Wright, according to Russell Lynes, Wright ordered some stationary that arrived misprinted, “Russel”; Wright is quoted at explaining his name change, “That (spelling) seemed to be distinctive, so I adopted it”.
Wright’s education was varied. He attended Princeton in 1921 and stayed until 1924 but left without graduating. He studied at The Art Student’s League, he worked for Norman Bel Geddes designing theatre sets, he attended the 1925 Paris Exposition, and The Industrial Designers Society of America says he attended The Columbia University of Architecture. All this before he was 30 years old.
In 1927 he married Mary Small Epstein and began his career as a designer. They called their firm Wright Accessories.
In 1934 he designed 60 pieces of furniture for Heywood Wakefield, the majority was sold at Bloomingdales in New York. Most of the pieces were veneered, which caused problems in production and brought customer complaints. His contract was canceled after one year.
In 1935 he signed a contract with Conant Ball to design a line of solid maple furniture to be sold through Macy’s Department Stores in New York City. The line was originally called “Modern Living”, and it was soon changed to, “American Modern”. All the pieces were marked, “American Modern” and most had Russel Wright’s name on them also.
After Mary Wright’s death in 1952, Wright returned to his estate and studio, Dragon Rock in Manitoga, New York. Russel Wright died in 1976.

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