

# BLOG

## Raymond Hudd Photographs and Papers

Posted under by [Guest author](#)

*Get to know Raymond Hudd and the contents of [his photographs and papers](#) in this blog post by collections intern Analú M. López, a practicum student in archives this spring.*

The Chicago-based milliner Raymond Hudd (1924–2011) was well known for his bold, whimsical hat designs and was often referred to as the “Mad Hatter of the Midwest.” In 1948, Hudd left his home state of Michigan to study at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. After graduating in 1950, he opened a hat studio and retail store, the Raymond Hudd Hat Studio, located first on Oak Street and later at 2545 North Clark Street in Lincoln Park.

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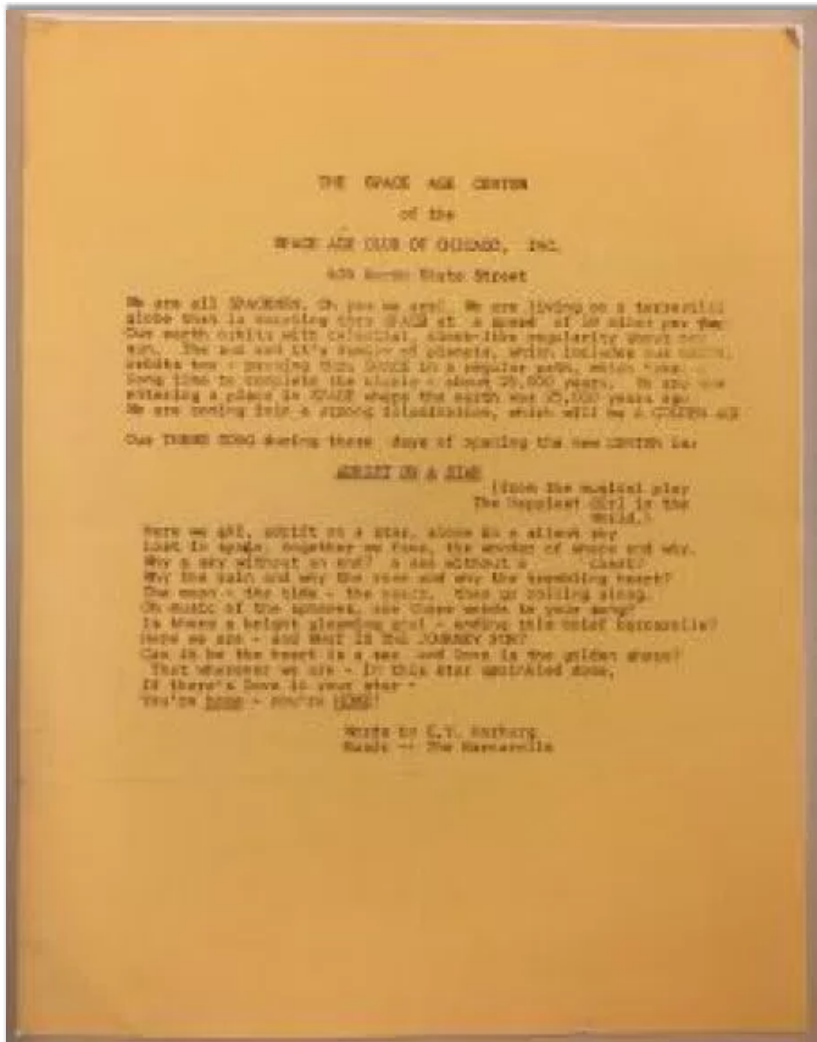
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An example of Hudd's hat designs, 1970. Photographer unknown

I have to admit, I did not know who Raymond Hudd was until I was processing his photograph collection for my archives practicum work at the Chicago History Museum. I was immediately taken by the photographs of his fanciful hats (some of which are in the Museum's costume collection), his celebrity clients such as Phyllis Diller and Joan Crawford, and the poetry he wrote in conjunction with each hat design. But more so, I was fascinated by Hudd's involvement with a mysterious group called the Space Age Club. I knew nothing about this group, and the photographs and printed material included in this collection did even less to explain Hudd's exact relationship with it. After conducting some research, I found an article that explained Hudd had served as president of the Space Age Club of Chicago, which he founded in 1959.



A copy of the Space Age Club's manifesto

I also learned the Space Age Club comprised of people who believed they had experienced contact with unidentified flying objects (UFOs). These individuals were called "contactees," and some of them also claimed to have seen and spoken to alien beings. The collection includes their manifesto, which begins, "We are all SPACEMEN. Oh yea we are! We are living on a terrestrial globe that is swirling thru SPACE at a speed of 18 miles per second." As I read more, I felt as if I was transported into David Bowie's "Starman."



The Space Age Club's second home at 635 North State Street

The club's headquarters were first located in Hudd's studio on Clark Street, but as membership grew, it moved to 635 North State Street. As some images of the Space Age Club events show, the costumes that Hudd likely designed seem to mirror some of his millinery work and certainly carry a similar aesthetic.



In this 1960 fashion show, each of the models' garments represented a planet.

Other images in this collection depict special guests and fellow contactees George Adamski (1891–1965) and Dana Howard. Adamski was a Polish American who became known in ufology circles after he claimed to have photographed spaceships from other planets, met with friendly Nordic space alien brothers, and flew with them to the moon and other planets. Howard, who appears in numerous images of Space Age Clubs events, was another contactee who claimed she went to Venus, married a Venusian, and raised a family there. She was also an author and artist; the collection includes images of her artwork.



Dana Howard and Raymond Hudd hold up a piece of her artwork.

While Hudd's personal experience with UFOs and alien beings is not recorded in this collection, his dedication to the Space Age Club is evident in the scrapbook he compiled to document it.

- [Explore the Raymond Hudd photographs and papers, 1950–2000](#)
- [Learn more about Raymond Hudd's life and millinery career](#)

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