Barry Shapiro photograph archive

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2017
Descriptive Summary

Title: Barry Shapiro photograph archive


Collection Number: BANC PIC 2016.003

Creator/Collector: Shapiro, Barry

Extent: approximately 35,000 photographs (negatives, transparencies, slides, and photographic prints)

Repository: UC Berkeley. Bancroft Library

Berkeley, California 94720-6000

Abstract: Photographic archive of San Francisco Bay Area based freelance commercial photographer Barry Shapiro. Images include photographs shot for documentary projects, magazine stories, commercial promotional work, and portraiture. Of note are his series on "handmade houses"; portraits of men dressing in drag in the late 1970s; portraits of African Americans and street scenes in San Francisco's Hunters Point neighborhood between 1972 and 1982, a series on twins, California skateboarding, and the Long Beach Pike.

Language of Material: English

Access

Portions of the collection are open for research. Photographic prints for the series (subject areas or projects) listed in this preliminary guide are available for use, with the exception of the large format exhibition prints (in B boxes), which require curatorial approval for use. Some library material is stored off-site and advance notice may be necessary for use. Consult the library's catalog for updated details and restrictions.

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Preferred Citation

Barry Shapiro photograph archive. UC Berkeley. Bancroft Library

Acquisition Information

Gift of the family of Barry Shapiro: Janet Lipkin, Michelle McKechnie, Noelle Stroyke, Max Shapiro, and Ruby Shapiro, 2015.

Biography/Administrative History

Barry Lee Shapiro (March 22, 1941-October 17, 2009) was born in Chicago, Illinois. He attended California State University, Long Beach (B.A., Education, 1964) and University of Southern California (M.S., 1969), and worked as a teacher and administrator in a variety of schools, first in Southern California, then in the San Francisco Bay Area, specializing in special and alternative education. He served as principal of MacGregor High School in Albany, California, an alternative school serving students who had difficulties achieving their goals in traditional school settings, and as principal of Albany Adult School. Beginning in the early 1970s, Shapiro also worked as a professional photographer, with his photographs appearing in several books on home building and landscape gardening, in addition to his own books, Forbidden Fantasies (1980, with Mike Phillips), which profiled transvestites in San Francisco, and A Dangerously Curious Eye (2010), which documented the African American community of Hunter's Point, San Francisco and also featured work from his "Through the Window" series, shot from his car. Shapiro died of cancer at age 69 in 2009.

Scope and Content of Collection

This preliminary guide (linked below as a "List of Contents" under "Additional Collection Guides") only describes the photographic prints that have been made available as of October, 2016. These comprise all of the photographic prints for Barry Shapiro's highest-interest projects, considered his most historically significant work. Of special note is his Hunters Point series documenting life in this African American neighborhood of San Francisco throughout the 1970s. Other prints available record the Long Beach Pike, views taken through Shapiro's car window (chiefly on urban streets), photographs of "handmade houses", a series of portraits of twins, cross-dressing men for his Forbidden Fantasies project, the Space Shuttle Challenger, various portraits, and miscellaneous large format or mounted prints. Available prints are housed in PIC boxes 1-6 and AX boxes 1-5. Available for use by appointment are LAN boxes 1-9: slides and other transparencies of images made for
the handmade houses series documenting modern craftsman homes of the 1970s, chiefly in California and Oregon, related to book projects with Art Boericke (Handmade houses, The Craftsman builder, and Handmade homes). The unarranged and unavailable bulk of the archive consists of negative files and 35mm color slides, as well as miscellaneous photographic prints not part of the series described in this preliminary list. This material includes a large quantity of studio portraiture, jobs related to human interest and other stories for popular magazines, voluminous stills shot during the filming of The Third Walker in Nova Scotia, and additional slides related to some of the photographic print projects described in this listing. Also among the unprocessed material are representative examples of Shapiro's commercial studio shoots of various products, and some of his portraiture, nudes and erotica. A large quantity of his commercial work and nudes have not been included in the archive.

Indexing Terms
African Americans -- California -- San Francisco
Skateboarding
Female impersonators
Transvestites
Amusement parks -- California -- Long Beach
Video arcades
Dwellings -- West (U.S.) -- Photographs
Self-reliant living -- Photographs
Architecture, Domestic -- 20th century -- Photographs
San Francisco (Calif.)
San Francisco Bay Area (Calif.)
Long Beach (Calif.)
Hunters Point (San Francisco, Calif.)
Photographs

Container List