Al Greene (1906-1980) Photographic Print Collection

(bulk 1880-1950s)
Descriptive Summary
Title: Al Greene (1906-1980) Photographic Print Collection
Dates: (bulk 1880-1950s)
Collection Number: P-002.3
Creator/Collector: Greene, Al (1906-1980); Maude, Frederick Hamer (1858-1959); Putnam, John R.; Putnam, Arion; Al Greene and Associates; Putnam & Valentine
Extent: 47 linear feet (186 three-ring binders)
Repository: Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
Abstract: The Al Greene Photographic Print Collection constitutes an important collection of historical photographs of early California and Los Angeles up to the mid-20th Century. The collection of approximately 13,000 prints was assembled by Al Greene, a photographer and long-time operator of a thriving Los Angeles photographic and photo-mural business. The collection is divided into geographical headings: Center city Los Angeles; Los Angeles neighborhoods; Los Angeles County; California cities and counties; and the western United States. Later sections of the collection are arranged by subject rather than by geographic location: California Missions; Industries; Agriculture; Transportation; Schools; Houses. Within these large sections are smaller categories that focus on the history, landscape, built environment, and development of Southern California and the Southwest from approximately 1869-1950.
Language of Material: English
Access
Research is by appointment only.
Publication Rights
Permission to publish, quote or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.
Preferred Citation
Al Greene (1906-1980) Photographic Print Collection. Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
Acquisition Information
Al Greene's archive was acquired directly from the photographer by the History Department of the Natural History Museum in the early 1960s.
Biography/Administrative History
Al Greene (1906-1980) was a commercial photographer in mid-twentieth century Los Angeles whose company, Al Greene & Associates, specialized in making photographic murals. He not only shot many of the photographs in this collection, but also bought the print and negative collections of retiring photographers in the region, such as Frederick H. Maude, John R. and Arion Putnam, and C.C. Pierce, among others. Consequently the range of images covered extends from the 1869 into the 1950s. Greene's practice of copying other photographer's images and supplying his own identification should alert researchers to treat the photographer/creator, descriptive, and date information on the photographs with some skepticism. The collection concentrates on Los Angeles, Southern California, and the Missions but also includes Northern California tourist destinations such as San Francisco and Yosemite and Arizona's Grand Canyon.
Scope and Content of Collection
The collection is divided into both subject and geographical headings assigned by former History Department curators and archivists. The geographical headings include: Los Angeles city center; Los Angeles neighborhoods; Los Angeles County; California cities and counties; and other western states. Subject headings include: California Missions; Industries; Agriculture; Transportation; Schools; and Houses. Within these large sections are smaller categories that focus on the history, landscape, built environment, and development of Southern California and the Southwest from approximately 1869-1950. Greene not only produced many of these photographs but also bought the print and negative collections of retiring photographers in the area. Consequently the range of images covered extends from the 1869 into the 1950s. Greene's practice of copying other photographer's images and supplying his own identification should alert researchers to treat the photographer/creator, descriptive, and date information on the photographs with some skepticism. Greene generally assigned numbers to his negatives and the corresponding prints. However, some prints are not numbered on the back. The Greene Binder Number is that assigned by the Seaver Center. Researchers should refer to the Greene Binder Number at all times when ordering reproductions.
Indexing Terms
Cityscapes--California--Photographs
Cities and towns--California--Photographs
Landscape--United States--Photographs
Missions--California--Photographs
Adobe houses--California--Photographs
Agriculture--California--Photographs
Industries--California--Photographs
Vehicles--California--Photographs
Plants--California--Photographs
Animals--California--Photographs
Los Angeles (Calif.)--History--19th century--Photographs
Los Angeles (Calif.)--History--20th century--Photographs
California--History--Photographs
Churches
Transportation
Parks
Architecture
California
Los Angeles, California
Photographs
California
Los Angeles, California
Photographs

P-002.3 Al Greene Series and Subseries