Finding aid for the Getty Research Institute Collection of Ladislav Sutnar Papers, 1897-1976

Finding aid prepared by Ann Harrison
Descriptive Summary
Title: Getty Research Institute collection of Ladislav Sutnar papers,
Date (inclusive): 1897-1976
Number: Sutnar.Combined
Creator/Collector: Getty Research Institute
Creator/Collector: Sutnar, Ladislav
Physical Description: 44.6 linear feet (33 boxes, 1 flat file folder)
Repository:
The Getty Research Institute
Special Collections
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100
Los Angeles, California, 90049-1688
(310) 440-7390
Abstract: This finding aid describes five separate collections related to Ladislav Sutnar (1897-1976), a pioneer of modern
design, acquired by the Getty Research Institute (GRI) from 1991 to 2013. The archives document Sutnar's work in the
areas of graphic design, product design and exhibition design in his native Czechoslovakia and in the United States.
Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the links included in
each series. Click here for the access policy.
Language: Collection material is in English with some Czech and German.
Biographical/Historical Note
Ladislav Sutnar had a prolific career as a designer in his native Czechoslovakia in the 1920s and 1930s and subsequently in
the United States. Noted for his graphic, industrial and exhibition design work, which drew on the current trends in
modernist aesthetics, Sutnar was also one of the earliest practitioners of what has become known as information design.
Born in Pilsen, Bohemia in the Austro-Hungarian Empire on November 9, 1897, Ladislav Sutnar began painting and drawing
as a teenager. He entered the School of Applied Arts in Prague in September 1915, but after only a month he was drafted
into the Royal and Imperial Army and served as an infantry sergeant on the Balkan and Russian fronts. By the fall of 1918,
World War I had run its course and an independent nation of Czechoslovakia had been recognized. Like many of his
generation, Sutnar would be formed by this experience. His faith in a utopian, industrialized future and his leftist politics,
ideas he shared with most of the Prague avant-garde artistic milieu, developed in these years and would inform his designs
throughout his career.
Sutnar restarted his studies in September 1919 in the charged atmosphere surrounding the new nation. Believing
education to be a tool of societal progress, Sutnar planned to become a teacher. He studied applied graphics at the School
of Applied Arts, supplementing this curriculum with mathematics and geometry courses at the School of Technology and
courses in education, health education and philosophy at the School of Liberal Arts.
After receiving his degree in June 1923, Sutnar worked for the State Department of Education in various roles. He first
taught drawing in secondary schools. By 1926-1927, Sutnar had moved to a prestigious post at the State Institute for
Cottage Industry. In 1932, he shifted from the classroom to administration, taking over as director of the State School of
Graphics, a position he would hold until he left Czechoslovakia in 1939. Sutnar transformed the school's curriculum,
stressing the role of commercial photography, and hiring Jaromír Funke, thereby linking the school with the New
Photography and the New Objectivity movements.
In addition to arts education, Sutnar was actively involved in almost every area of design production – theater and
stagecraft; educational toys; books, posters and other printed matter; household goods and textiles; architecture and
interiors; exhibitions – and he brought the principles of modernism to each. Sutnar's design philosophy was primarily
Functionalist with elements drawn from the Constructivists and the De Stijl movement, as well as being strongly influenced
by the New Typography and the Bauhaus, where he was a frequent visitor.
Sutnar had a complicated career path, always juggling multiple positions and projects, although certain affiliations defined
his career. In 1929 he became art editor of Družstevní práce (Cooperative Work), a publishing cooperative, as well as its
subsidiary design studio, Krásná jizba (Beautiful Home). Sutnar quickly modernized all aspects of its production and
transformed its visual style. For Krásná jizba, Sutnar designed tableware in porcelain and glass, as well as flatware and
textiles. Sutnar's book designs for Družstevní práce, both the cover art and the book itself, were heavily influenced by the
New Typography. Sutnar treated the page as a blank field on which blocks of text and illustration (usually photographs)
would be placed asymmetrically. Sutnar's magazine and book jacket designs used typo-photo design: simple typefaces and
where he would become a citizen in 1948. His wife Františka and their children. Unable to return to Prague, Sutnar began a new life and career in the United States, involved in several stage productions, culminating in his design of the mass outdoor pageants of the 2nd and 3rd Worker's Olympiads in 1927 and 1934. Sutnar soon turned the skills of stagecraft, such as lighting, color usage, rhythm and tempo, to the creation of exhibition environments.

Sutnar's extensive involvement with the Czechoslovak Arts and Crafts Association was critical to other areas of his design output. Even before joining, he exhibited his student work through the organization. One of Sutnar's early areas of interest was educational toy design. In the early 1920s, Sutnar designed wooden toys - animals, vehicles, building block sets - combining modern educational theories with modernist aesthetics. After exhibition through the Czechoslovak Arts and Crafts Association, some designs were even put into production by Artěl, an Czech artisanal cooperative inspired by the Wiener Werkstätte. In this same period, Sutnar became interested in avant-garde puppetry and theater design. He was involved in several stage productions, culminating in his design of the mass outdoor pageants of the 2nd and 3rd Worker's Olympiads in 1927 and 1934. Sutnar soon turned the skills of stagecraft, such as lighting, color usage, rhythm and tempo, to the creation of exhibition environments.

Sutnar revolutionized exhibition design in Czechoslovakia and his designs for international exhibitions raised the world's awareness of the progressive work being done in the country. Beginning in 1926, he designed numerous exhibitions for the Czechoslovak Arts and Crafts Association and his role often extended beyond the display environment to the creation of posters, the catalog and other printed ephemera. Sutnar's exhibition design career reached a peak with the 1937 Exposition internationale des arts et techniques dans la vie moderne in Paris, where his work won fourteen grand prizes and gold medals. This role as the leading designer of Czechoslovakia's entries in international exhibitions led to Sutnar's selection in 1938 as the chief designer for the nation's entry for the 1939 New York World's Fair. Before the fair opened, however, Germany invaded Czechoslovakia and its participation in the Fair ceased. The new government sent Sutnar to New York to close down the partially completed pavilion. Instead, when Sutnar landed in New York in mid-April 1939, two weeks before the Fair was to open, he rejected his assignment and worked with the Czech government-in-exile to open the Czechoslovakian pavilion. Sutnar's action effectively ended his career in Czechoslovakia and led to a long separation from his wife Františka and their children. Unable to return to Prague, Sutnar began a new life and career in the United States, where he would become a citizen in 1948.

When the World's Fair closed in October 1940, Sutnar found himself stranded in a foreign country with limited prospects for employment. He worked on small projects for his World's Fair contacts, such as Norman Bel Geddes, and for various organizations associated with Czech exiles. He attempted to return to product design, promoting plans for glassware and building blocks, but with no success. Sutnar also renewed contact with émigré Bauhaus acquaintances, including Marcel Breuer and Joseph Albers, Walter Gropius and Lázló Moholy-Nagy. It was through these European contacts, at a Congrès internationale d'architecture moderne (CIAM) dinner in New York, that Sutnar met Knud Lönberg-Holm, a Danish emigré who was the director of information research for Sweet's Catalog Service. The two men found they shared an aesthetic and in 1941 Sutnar was hired as Sweet's art director, a position he would hold until 1960.

Sweet's Catalog Service produced and distributed an annually updated set of catalogs for trade and manufacturing companies, aimed especially at architects and the construction trade. When Sutnar arrived, the catalogs were cluttered and confusing with little concern for the clarity of information and the ease of locating products, a standard condition in the industry at this time. Sutnar realized that large amounts of increasingly complex information needed to be structured and literally made visible to reach consumers. He also thought that catalog users needed new, efficient ways to quickly navigate this information in a world with an increasing emphasis on the speed of communication. Sutnar created a system of visual icons, symbols and typographic devices to guide customers through masses of data. Sutnar's catalogs featured simple geometric forms, bright colors, especially orange, diagonal composition, dynamic elements and a hierarchy of information. He was one of the first designers to commonly implement the double-page spread, adding visual interest and creating a much larger field for design. Visual articulation - through alteration of font, type-size and weight contrast, underlining, spacing, varying use of color and reversals - differentiated data and clearly

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Sutnar.Combined
moved the reader from one level of information to the next. Icons and symbols also served as navigation devices, such as Sutnar's use of parentheses to highlight and distinguish data elements. In essence, the same principles of design drawn from Constructivism, Functionalism, and the New Typography that Sutnar had once used to create book covers for high-brow literary works were now applied to sales brochures for roofing materials and insulation. This fusion of the worlds of artistic design and commerce in post-war America would see its full development in the next decade with the founding of the International Design Conference in Aspen.

Sutnar's practice of juggling multiple projects did not end with his arrival in the United States. In addition to his work at Sweet's, Sutnar maintained a private design firm under varying names: Sutnar & Hall Art and Design Service (1944-1946 and 1948-1950), Sutnar, Flint & Hall Advertising and Graphic Design Agency (1946-1947), and, from 1951 on, Sutnar Office. Through his own firm, Sutnar created identity and advertising campaigns, graphic and environmental systems, and exhibitions for clients like Addo-x, McGraw-Hill, IBM, RCA, Knoll and Drake Furniture, Fortune magazine, Vera Scarves, Carr's Department Stores, the United Nations and the Bell System. In addition to working for Sweet's and running his own firm, Sutnar taught design at the Pratt Institute from 1946 to 1949 and was chief designer for Theatre Arts magazine from 1959 to 1960.

Sutnar's design work, both through Sweet's and his own office, transformed how information was communicated in America. This influence on the field was reinforced by the fact that Sutnar did not just produce work for clients, he took a pedagogic approach. Sutnar, often with Lönberg-Holm as a co-author, disseminated his ideas to other designers in several publications, including Catalog Design (1944), Catalog Design Progress: Advancing Standards in Visual Communication (1950), Design for Point of Sale (1952), and Package Design: The Force of Visual Selling (1953). In the course of transforming information communication, Sutnar also created the foundation for what has become the field of information design. His work with ideas of navigation and information hierarchy prefigures the information architecture now used on the internet.

The 1960s began a difficult period in Sutnar's career. His successful creation of a self-sustaining production process at Sweet's eliminated the need for his position. Occasionally large commissions came through Sutnar Office, such as his 1964 project for the Bell System, which included his design convention of setting off area codes with parentheses, but in general, clients were fading away. In an attempt to revive his career, Sutnar designed a traveling exhibition, Visual Design in Action, which showcased his lifetime's design work. The exhibition travelled to nine venues in the years from 1961 to 1968. Perhaps ultimately more important than the exhibition itself was the accompanying book, Visual Design in Action: Principles, Purposes (1961), self-published by Sutnar when no publishing house would pay the high production costs of the beautifully designed book. This book serves as a complete textual and visual summary of Sutnar's design philosophy. Although Sutnar had painted and drawn throughout his life, he returned to fine art with increased intensity as his commercial design work disappeared. In the 1960s and into the 1970s, he refocused his creative output into two collections of art featuring precisely constructed, geometric nudes: his Strip Street portfolio of silk-screen prints and a series of Venus paintings in varying scales.

Sutnar received numerous awards for his work in both Czechoslovakia and the United States. He was a member of the New York Art Director's Club and the American Institute of Graphic Artists (AIGA). Sutnar died in New York on November 18, 1976, never having returned to Czechoslovakia.

Access

Publication Rights
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Acquisition Information
The five series presented in this finding aid were acquired separately from 1991 to 2013. See individual entries below for the specifics of each acquisition.

Processing History
The five acquisitions represented in this finding aid were each rehoused upon receipt by the Registrar's office. Ann Harrison processed the collection and created the comprehensive finding aid in 2013-2014.

Related Archival Materials
Shortly after Ladislav Sutnar's death in 1976, the bulk of his archive was donated to the Cooper Hewitt, National Design Museum. In the ensuing years, the Cooper Hewitt has been deaccessioning duplicate material and the Museum and the Sutnar family have been distributing it to various institutions. Sutnar archival material, much of it duplicating the Cooper Hewitt holdings, is currently held by the Rochester Institute of Technology, Wallace Library Special Collections; Yale
The Getty Research Institute holds other materials related to Ladislav Sutnar in addition to the archives recorded in this finding aid. A search of the library catalog using Sutnar as keyword will yield numerous books published by Družstevní práce and other publishers designed by Sutnar, as well as several of Sutnar's own publications on design. Further archival material related to Sutnar can also be found in the Jan and Edith Tschichold papers (930030), the Harry Lunn papers (2004.M.17), and the Wilhelm Arntz papers (840001).

Scope and Content of Collection

This finding aid provides a single access point for five separate collections related to Ladislav Sutnar, a pioneer of modern design, acquired by the Getty Research Institute (GRI) from 1991 to 2013. In these collections, photographs, printed matter, correspondence, educational toys, brochures and sales catalogs, design drawings and sketches document Sutnar's career in his native Czechoslovakia, and then in the United States. Although the individual acquisitions are often small and limited in scope, when taken as a whole, the Sutnar materials held by the GRI document the range of his career in all essential aspects. Such an overview also allows the elements from design projects, which have become separated, to be reconnected.

The types of the materials in the archives reflect the geographic shift in Sutnar's career. As might be expected given his abrupt departure, Sutnar's work from Czechoslovakia is represented in these archives primarily through photographic documentation, rather than by the works themselves. Also with this early work, the archives preserve only the finished project. Sutnar's work in the United States, however, is thoroughly represented in the archives by original examples of his designs, and often includes the working stages of projects.

Materials relating to Sutnar's design projects form the bulk of the archives. Sutnar worked in multiple areas of design – graphic design, product design and exhibition design – and these archives preserve both original material and documentation for designs in each area. The constant element running through Sutnar's career was graphic design. It was the predominate feature of his work from his earliest poster design for the Czechoslovak Arts and Crafts Association in the early 1920s to his late projects in the United States, such as the use of parentheses to set off area codes in telephone numbers for Bell Systems in the mid 1960s. The bulk of the graphic design material in the collections held by the Getty Research Institute relates to Sutnar's later commercial art work: brochures and sales catalogs, advertising and corporate identity campaigns.

Sutnar's product design is represented in these acquisitions primarily through documentation and printed ephemera in the form of marketing and promotional material associated with the products. One such product demonstrates both the overarching nature of Sutnar's design process and the interconnections of the GRI's separate acquisitions. In the early 1920s Sutnar, who was interested in binding ideas of education and modernism, designed an educational toy, a set of building blocks, which was actually put into production after winning a prize at an exhibition. Much later in the United States in the early 1940s, Sutnar revived his ideas in a similar block set, which he was now going to market under the name of "Build the Town." Following his general practice, Sutnar designed not just the product, but also the accompanying printed matter, such as packaging and marketing materials. Material relating to this single product design are dispersed among the separate GRI acquisitions: a photograph of the original Czech set is in accession number 910005 (Series I); two sets of "Build the Town" prototype blocks are in accession number 2013.M.6 (Series II); and prints Sutnar created for the later product's promotional kit are in accession numbers 910005, 2013.M.7 and 980003 (Series I, III and IV).

Exhibition design is also thoroughly documented. Sutnar's extensive work in Czechoslovakia is recorded only in photographs, but a broader range of materials, including sketches, plans, samples of color tests and wall labels are preserved from Sutnar's American projects, especially his work on the New York World's Fair and Visual Design in Action. In addition to design projects, the Sutnar collections held by the GRI include a substantial quantity of preliminary sketches and studies for the paintings Sutnar produced in his later years. The holdings are completed by a limited selection of Sutnar's miscellaneous professional papers, correspondence, and personal papers.

Arrangement


In order to facilitate research, design projects, when present, form the first element of each series. These projects are then further divided into graphic design, product design and exhibition design.
### Subjects - Topics
- Advertising layout and typography--United States--20th century
- Book design--Czechoslovakia--20th century
- Commercial art--United States
- Exhibitions--Design
- Graphic arts--Czechoslovakia--20th century
- Graphic arts--United States--20th century
- Graphic design (Typography)--Czechoslovakia--20th century
- Graphic design (Typography)--United States--20th century
- New York World's Fair (1939-1940)
- Product design--Czechoslovakia--20th century

### Genres and Forms of Material
- Brochures
- Design drawings--20th century
- Educational toys
- Gelatin silver prints--20th century
- Paintings
- Photographic prints--20th century
- Sales catalogs
- Sketches

### Contributors
- Getty Research Institute
Series I. Ladislav Sutnar papers related to designs and exhibitions (Accession no. 910005), 1927-1971, undated

Physical Description: 14.0 linear feet (10 boxes, 1 flat file folder)

Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this series through the catalog record for this acquisition. Click here for the access policy.

Scope and Content Note

Documentation of Ladislav Sutnar's career as an exhibition designer comprises the bulk of this series, one of the five separate archives of Sutnar-related material held by the GRI. Photographs record Sutnar's exhibition work in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s and 1930s, from his early painted ceiling design for the 1927 Leipzig book fair to his concept for the nation's display at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Sutnar's later exhibition designs in the United States, which focused on displays of his own work, are more thoroughly documented. For his 1961-1968 traveling exhibition, Visual Design in Action, design sketches and drawings, correspondence, and printed ephemera supplement the photographs.

Sutnar's product design work in the areas of tableware and toy design is represented here by a small sample of material. Sutnar's early toy production in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s is recorded in photographs, while drawings and printed matter document his household designs for Krásná jizba in the 1930s. Also found here is evidence of Sutnar's unsuccessful attempts to create a product design career in the United States in the years after his arrival: promotional prints for a childrens' building block set and a design drawing for a set of glass tumblers for Georg Jensen, Inc.

Graphic design, ranging from Sutnar's early work in Czechoslovakia for Družstevní práce and Krásná jizba to his American industrial catalog work for Sweet's to his independent informational graphic work, is also represented in the series. Of particular interest are two unrealized projects for children: a picture book on shape and a poster series promoting good habits. Although late, and perhaps not the peak of Sutnar's design skills, these projects are important because the related working materials preserved in the archive give an idea of Sutnar's process, merging the creation of the design with the manufacture and marketing of the product.

A small selection of Sutnar's correspondence from 1958-1971 completes this series. The bulk of this correspondence is with Eckhard Neumann regarding his attempt to stage an exhibition of Sutnar's work in Germany, but exchanges with Bauhaus exiles with whom Sutnar reconnected in the United States, such as Joseph Albers and Marcel Breuer, are also included.

Arrangement

Arranged by topic into two broad categories: design projects and correspondence. Design projects are further divided into graphic design, product design and exhibition design. Although almost all Sutnar projects involved some elements of graphic design, the projects categorized here as graphic design are almost solely that. Elements of graphic design as part of a larger product or exhibition design are included in those categories.

Acquisition Information


Preferred Citation

Ladislav Sutnar papers related to designs and exhibitions, 1927-1971, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, Accession no. 910005.

Design projects, 1927-1971, undated

Graphic design, 1931-1971

Scope and Content Note

For graphic design of printed ephemera related to Sutnar's product and exhibition designs, see relevant sections below.
Box 910005.bx3, Folder 1-4

Designs for Družstevní práce and Krásná jizba, 1931-1939, undated
Scope and Content Note
Examples of Sutnar's graphic designs including brochures illustrating his book designs, marketing materials for Krásná jizba products, and typography.

Industrial catalogs and trade publications, 1944-1950, undated
Scope and Content Note
Primarily color brochures and leaflets; includes materials designed by Sutnar in his role as art director for Sweet's Catalog Service, as well as those designed through his independent firm.

American Optical Company, "Absorptive Efficiency of AO Calobar Glass," 1945
Andersen Corporation, "Wood Window Units (15/13)," undated
Aurele M. Gatti Incorporated, "Sapphire Products (4b)," undated
Scope and Content Note
Foreword by R. Buckminster Fuller; "prepared and visually designed" by Ladislav Sutnar; created as part of a direct mail campaign.

Carlyle Johnson Machine Company, "Maxitorq Floating Disc Clutch," undated
Craftint Manufacturing Company, "Craftint Doubletone Drawing Paper and Tracing Vellum (6a/4)," undated
Cuno Engineering Corporation, "Cuno Continuously Cleanable Filters (2h/8)," circa 1944
Foxboro Company, "Industrial Instrumentation," undated
Harco Steel Construction Company, "Glide Open Doors (4c/6)," undated
Keuffel & Esser Company, "Wyteface Steel Tapes," undated
Monsanto Chemical Company, "Monsanto Plastics (1B/7)," undated
New Jersey Zinc Company, "Design for Die Casting (1a/27)," 1945
Radio Corporation of America, 1944, undated
"Sound Systems (28/1)," 1944
"Radio Frequency Heating (4d/1)," undated
Traffic & Street Sign Company, "Tubular Masts for: Radar -- FM -- Television (3c/11)," undated
Children's publications and posters, 1969-1971
"The World of Shape," 1969
Scope and Content Note

Text, notes, correspondence, research
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx7*, Folder 8</th>
<th><strong>Sketches</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Includes title page, &quot;Shapes that grow in nature&quot; and &quot;Even shadows are shapes.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx6, Folder 1-8</th>
<th><strong>Poster series reinforcing good habits, 1970-1971</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Set of children's posters addressing hygiene, diet, safety and physical fitness; includes preliminary drawings, drafts of poster text and advertising copy, and mock-ups, as well as research on sourcing, vendors and pricing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx3, Folder 23</th>
<th><strong>Miscellaneous, 1944-1969, undated</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General, undated</td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes promotional leaflets for Golden Griffin Books and the Seven Arts Society, mailing label for the Printex Corporation, letterhead for Stephan Lion, and forms and cards for the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences in America, Inc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx5, Folder 2-6</th>
<th><strong>Oversize, 1944-1969, undated</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Includes informational graphics for newspaper and magazine articles, as well as advertising images.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Product design, 1927-1943, undated</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tableware, 1931-1940, undated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design drawings, 1931-1940, undated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glass tea set, 1931</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print of drawings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx8*, Folder 1-2</th>
<th><strong>Candlesticks, circa 1939</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Includes pricing information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx8*, Folder 3, Box 910005.bx8*, Folder 4</th>
<th><strong>Glass tumblers, circa 1940</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>Prints of manufacturing drawings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx5, Folder 1, Box 910005.bx10, Folder 2</th>
<th><strong>Printed matter with images of tableware designs, undated</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photographic negative, undated</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx3, Folder 24, Box 910005.bx3, Folder 25, Box 910005.bx3, Folder 26</th>
<th><strong>Toys, 1927-1943, undated</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building block sets, 1927-1943</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Factory Town,&quot; photograph of prototype, 1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;Build the Town,&quot; prints for promotion kit, circa 1941-1943</strong></td>
<td><strong>Photographs of various toys and puppet, undated</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Exhibition design, 1927-1968, undated** | |
|------------------------------------------|
Internationale Buchkunst Ausstellung, Leipzig, 1927

3rd International Book Fair, Florence, 1928

Contemporary Culture Exposition, "Modern Publicity," Brno, 1929
  Loose photographs
  Mounted photograph

Exposition de l’art appliqué et de l’architecture tchécoslovaque, Geneva, 1930

Exposition de l’art appliqué et de l’architecture tchécoslovaque, Bucarest, 1930

Exposition de l’art appliqué tchécoslovaque, Strassburg, 1931

Tjeckoslovakisk konst och nyttokonst, Stockholm, 1931

Tjeckoslovakisk konst och nyttokonst, Malmö, 1931

Triennale di Milano, Milan, 1936

Gas - Water - Sanitation Exhibition, Prague, 1937

Exposition internationale, l’art et la technique dans la vie moderne, Paris, 1937

International Aviation Exhibition, Belgrade, 1938

New York World’s Fair, 1939

Educational exhibit at the Pratt Institute, New York, circa 1946-1949
  Scope and Content Note
  While teaching graphic design at the Pratt Institute, Sutnar mounted an educational exhibition of his work.

Ladislav Sutnar - Design, New York, AD Gallery, 1947

  Design sketches and drawings
  Wall text drafts and color proofs
  Poster for New York venue

Photographic documentation
  Small black-and-white prints
  Enlarged black-and-white prints
  Color prints and negatives

Printed matter and correspondence regarding the exhibit

Photographs of unidentified exhibitions, undated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx3, Folder 29</th>
<th>Exhibition notebook, 1938</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extensive notes and sketches relating to exhibitions in Rome, primarily the Mostra Augustea della Romanità, but also the Mostra dell'Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 9</th>
<th>Correspondence, 1958-1971, undated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Addo-x, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For related designs, see Series III, 2002.M.3.bx1, folder 1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 1</th>
<th>Albers, Josef, 1964</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 2</td>
<td>Breuer, Marcel, 1964-1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 3</td>
<td>Gerstner, Karl, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes publication announcement for <em>Die neue Graphik</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 9</th>
<th>Graphis Press, 1959</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 4</td>
<td>de Majo, W.M., 1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes printed matter relating to the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 5</th>
<th>Neumann, Eckhard, 1963-1966</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 6</td>
<td>Ohchi, Hiroshi, 1960-1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 7</td>
<td>Vlavianos, Basil, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 8</td>
<td>Weschler, Herta, 1964-1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 910005.bx4, Folder 9</td>
<td>Unidentified, 1971, undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series II. Ladislav Sutnar papers (Accession no. 2013.M.6), 1897-1976

Physical Description: 27.5 linear feet(19 boxes)

Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this series through the catalog record for this acquisition. Click here for the access policy.

Scope and Content Note
A broad range of professional and personal papers comprise this series, one of the five separate archives of Sutnar-related material held by the GRI. All areas of Sutnar's design projects are represented here, as well as his paintings and artwork. Beyond these creative works, a small quantity of miscellaneous professional papers and personal papers, such as visa applications and obituaries, helps elucidate Sutnar's career. The design projects in this series include elements from the three main areas of Sutnar's production: graphic design, product design and exhibition design. Of particular interest among the design projects are the early 1940s prototypes for the "Build the Town" childrens' block set and the extensive documentation of the Czechoslovakian pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair. The bulk of this acquisition relates to the painting and artwork to which Sutnar returned later in his life. Beginning in the early 1960s, as his design commissions faded, Sutnar focused on the creation of female nudes, executed in a roughly pop art style, which he called "joy-art." In addition to prints from his portfolio Strip Street, the archive includes numerous sketches, preliminary studies and small paintings for the geometrically constructed nudes of his Venus series.

Arrangement
Arranged by topic into four broad categories: design projects, painting and artwork, professional papers and personal papers. Design projects are further divided into graphic design, product design and exhibition design. Although almost all Sutnar projects involved some elements of graphic design, the projects categorized here as graphic design are almost solely that. Elements of graphic design as part of a larger product or exhibition design are included in those categories.

Acquisition Information

Preferred Citation

Design projects, 1930-1976, undated

Graphic design, 1930-1976, undated

Book design, 1930-1961, undated

Photographs of Czech books, 1930-1933

"Controlled Visual Flow," 1943
Scope and Content Note
Issued as Design and Paper, no. 13, as a promotional publication for a paper company, Marquardt & Company.

Visual Design in Action dust jacket, 1961
Scope and Content Note
Found used as wrapping material for correspondence.

"Minimum House" graphic, undated
Scope and Content Note
Later reworking with text in English of cover of 1931 book, Nejmenší dům.

Letterhead for Sutnar Office, 1968-1976
### Product design for "Build the Town," circa 1941-1943

**Scope and Content Note**
Restricted access, pending conservation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>2013.M.6.bx9*-bx9A*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block set 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exhibition design, 1939-1976

**New York World's Fair, 1939-1941**

**Identification card, 1939-1940**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>2013.M.6.bx16, Folder 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block set 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correspondence, 1939-1941**

**Letters**

Oversize clipping included with letters

**Pamphlet for the Czechoslovak Pavilion, 1939-1940**

**Scope and Content Note**
Includes pamphlet and drafts of text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>2013.M.6.bx16, Folder 2-3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photographs, 1939-1940</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scope and Content Note**
Photographs of the Czechoslovak pavilion and restaurant, displays and dignitaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>2013.M.6.bx16, Folder 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant, 1939-1940</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Logistics**

Scope and Content Note
Includes materials relating to the menu, sourcing and pricing of food and liquor supplies, operational expenses, staffing, budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>2013.M.6.bx8*, Folder 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floor plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ladislav Sutnar - Design, New York, AD Gallery, 1947

### Visual Design in Action, traveling exhibit, 1961-1968

### Joy-Art, 1969

### Redisplay of Ladislav Sutnar and the New Typography, 1975-1976

**Scope and Content Note**
Materials relating to unrealized project to restage Sutnar's 1934 exhibition Ladislav Sutnar and the New Typography, for which the display panels had recently been discovered in the Museum of Decorative Arts (Umelecko-Prumyslove Museum) in Prague. Materials include documentation, Sutnar's CV and correspondence with museum officials in Prague and potential exhibit sites, as well as Eckhard Neumann.
Painting and art work, 1962-1972, undated

*The Strip Street*, 1962-1963

Complete portfolios

Signed Version A

Scope and Content Note

Portfolio signed and numbered, 12 of 25; all prints signed and numbered. Restricted access; requires special handling.

Version A

Version B

Partial portfolios and individual prints

Drafts, proofs and copies of text layout

Distribution

Scope and Content Note

Includes distribution lists, title labels, cover letters to accompany distributed portfolios and thank-you letters.

Venus project, 1966-1972, undated

Gouache paintings on 16 x 20 inch board, 1971-1972, undated

Scope and Content Note

Paintings are 9 x 4.5 inches, oriented either vertically or horizontally.

Matted, 1971-1972, undated

Scope and Content Note

Some paintings signed, dated and titled on the mat. Titles include Venus/part of a triptych, Venus/and the [illegible] moon, Venus/regal and Venus/fiesta.

Not matted, 1971, undated

Scope and Content Note

Includes occasional date and title on board, as well as other notes. Titles include Venus/up through the roof, Venus/regal, and Venus/anything goes.

Gouache paintings on 10 x 15 inch board, 1966-1969, undated

Scope and Content Note

Paintings are generally 8.75 x 5.25 inches, oriented either vertically or horizontally. Most paintings are matted, with some signed and dated on the mat. A few paintings have titles either on the mat or on the back of the board. Titles include Venus/in boots, Venus/of the red sea, and Venus/ in a "petit boutique."

Preliminary studies, undated

Scope and Content Note

Materials and techniques include gouaches, pencil sketches, measured drawings and color studies, as well as images of models cut from magazines.

General
Box 2013.M.6.bx8*, Folder 1

Oversize

Other sketches, undated

Professional papers and correspondence, 1975-1976, undated
Who's Who in Graphic Art entry, 1976

Caricature of Sutnar by Augustin Tschinkel, undated

Scope and Content Note
Damaged photocopy.

"Fenomén 1930," 1975

Scope and Content Note
Photocopies of translation of a section of an article referring to Sutnar.

Art Director's Club, 1975-1976

Contact and address lists, undated

Miscellaneous, 1975-1976

Personal papers, 1897-1976
Visa application, 1939-1941

Selective Service registration, 1942

Correspondence, 1939-1942

Scope and Content Note
Letters received from and copies of letters sent to his family in Prague, or correspondence with others regarding the welfare of his wife and children.

Official documents, 1897-1954

Scope and Content Note
Includes copy of Sutnar's birth certificate and his wife's immigration documentation.

Materials related to Františka Sutnar, 1967-1968

Scope and Content Note
Includes address book, letters received, documents and materials relating to her death.

Materials related to the death of Ladislav Sutnar, 1976

Scope and Content Note
Includes death notice and list of recipients, obituaries and condolence letters to the family.

General

Box 2013.M.6.bx18, Folder 7
### Series II. Ladislav Sutnar papers (Accession no. 2013.M.6), 1897-1976

#### Oversize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>2013.M.6.bx8*, Folder 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


**Physical Description:** 0.4 linear feet (1 box)

**Request Materials:** Request access to the physical materials described in this series through the [catalog record](#) for this acquisition. Click here for the [access policy](#).

**Scope and Content Note**

Examples of Ladislav Sutnar's graphic design work in the United States form this series, one of the five separate archives of Sutnar-related material held by the GRI. The bulk of the material consists of work for commercial clients from the 1940s and 1950s in the form of industrial catalogs, advertising and corporate identity work. However, this series also includes a number of specialized small publications such as *Transport* and *Design and Paper*. Paper and printing companies produced these booklets as promotional materials to showcase their products and services and distributed them to printers, art directors and others in the industry.

Other graphic designs in this series were created in conjunction with Sutnar's product design and exhibition design ventures. These include prints for the marketing of his unrealized children's building block set, "Build the Town," as well as the Sutnar-designed invitation to the 1969 exhibition of his paintings, *Joy-Art*.

**Arrangement**

Arranged by topic into two broad categories: design projects, and miscellaneous designs and publications. Design projects are further divided into graphic design, product design and exhibition design. Although almost all Sutnar projects involved some elements of graphic design, the projects categorized here as graphic design are almost solely that. Elements of graphic design as part of a larger product or exhibition design are included in those categories.

**Acquisition Information**


**Preferred Citation**


### Design projects, 1942-1969, undated

#### Graphic design for commercial clients, 1942-1964, undated

**Addo-x, 1958, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Includes color brochures, as well as a signature related to Sutnar's Addo-x work from his book *Visual Design in Action*. Also included is a photograph, with explanatory text attached, of Sutnar's design for the Addo-x showroom in Mexico City (for related correspondence, see Series I, box 910005.bx4, folder 9).


**Scope and Content Note**

Foreword by R. Buckminster Fuller; "prepared and visually designed" by Ladislav Sutnar; created as part of a direct mail campaign.

**Carr's Department Stores, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Signature related to Sutnar's work for Carr's from his book *Visual Design in Action*.  

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Sutnar.Combined 16
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 4 | **Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences in America, 1964**  
Scope and Content Note  
Cover design for publication of *Tři Noci* by Egon Hostovský. |
|---|---|
| Box 2001.M.3.bx1, Folder 5 | **Marquardt & Company, 1943-1945**  
*"Controlled Visual Flow,"* 1943  
Scope and Content Note  
Issued as *Design and Paper*, no. 13, as a promotional publication. |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 6 | **"Shape, Line and Color," 1945**  
Scope and Content Note  
Issued as *Design and Paper*, no. 19, as a promotional publication. |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 1 | **River Ledge garden apartments brochure, undated** |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 18 | **Sutnar & Hall and Sutnar Office, letterhead, undated** |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 1 | **Sweet's Catalog Service, 1942-1960, undated**  
*"Why, What, How: Essential Product Information,"* 1942  
*"Designing Information,"* 1947  
*"Checklist for Development of Catalog Design,"* circa 1950  
*"Marketing Efficiency through Improved Catalog Procedure,"* circa 1958  
*"Questionnaires and Checklists for Use in Developing Catalog Systems,"* undated  
*"Catalog Design Guide for Clients of Sweet's Catalog Service,"* undated  
**Publication advertising, 1954**  
**Various Sweet's printed ephemera, 1943-1960, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
Includes brochures and leaflets, advertisements, forms and guides, as well as examples of Sweet's stationery. |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 19 | **Theatre Arts magazine, 1960 July**  
Scope and Content Note  
Cover design by Sutnar. |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 16 | **Vera, undated**  
Scope and Content Note  
Printed marketing materials and signature related to Sutnar's work on Vera scarves from his book *Visual Design in Action*. |
**Product design for "Build the Town" block set, circa 1941-1943**  
Scope and Content Note  
Prints for promotion kit and postcard from Canadian Centre for Architecture depicting one of the prints. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition design for Joy-Art, 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening reception invitations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 22 |
| Box 2002.M.3.bx1, Folder 23 |
| Miscellaneous designs and publications, 1956-1976 |
| New Years card designs, 1959-1976 |
| "Commercial Symbols in Architecture," 1956 |
| Scope and Content Note |
| Offprint of article by Sutnar in Architectural Record. |


| Physical Description: 2.5 linear feet(2 boxes) |
| Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this series through the catalog record for this acquisition. Click here for the access policy. |
| Scope and Content Note |

Examples of Ladislav Sutnar’s graphic design work in the United States form this series, one of the five separate archives of Sutnar-related material held by the GRI. Graphic design for commercial clients in the 1940s and 1950s, either through Sweet’s or Sutnar’s independent firm, comprises the bulk of the material, primarily in the form of industrial catalogs, but also including promotional brochures, advertisements, posters and corporate identity work. Other graphic designs in this series were created in conjunction with Sutnar’s product design or exhibition design ventures: prints for the marketing of his unrealized children’s building block set, “Build the Town,” and material related to the Visual Design in Action exhibition.

| Arrangement |
| Arranged by type of design, and then by client. |

| Acquisition Information |

| Preferred Citation |

Graphic design for commercial clients, 1942-1959, undated

| Addo-x, posters, circa 1956-1959 |
| Chicago Pneumatic Tool Company, "Compressors and Vacuum Pumps," undated |

| Cuno Engineering Corporation, 1945-1946 |
| "Cuno Continuously Cleanable Filters: For Mechanical and Process Industries," 1945 |
| "Cuno Continuously Cleanable Filters: For Product Designers," 1946 |

| Daggett & Ramsdell, undated |
| Scope and Content Note |
| Color sale advertisements for shampoo, cold cream and cleansing cream. |

| Foxboro Company, "Industrial implementation," undated |
| Maurice Holland, Industrial Research Adviser, "Industrial Coordination," undated |

| Masonite Corporation, "Cellufoam Insulation," 1952 |
Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 6
Raymond Concrete Pile Company, “Concrete Piles,” undated

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 7
Robertshaw-Fulton Controls Company, undated
“Robertshaw Electric Oven Control with Auxiliary Top-heat Switch”

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 8
“Robertshaw Gas Thermal Eye® Control”

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 21
Sutnar Office, "Get in touch with me" client contact form, undated

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 9
Sweet's Catalog Service, 1942-1950

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 10
"An Experiment in Sweet's Advertising," 1942 April 30
Scope and Content Note
Memo to Sweet's district managers from L.V. Brooks announcing the new approach
to design introduced by Sutnar.

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 11
Promotional brochure for Catalog Design: New Patterns in Product Information,
1944
Scope and Content Note
Book by K. Lönberg-Holm and Ladislav Sutnar published by Sweet's.

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 12-13
Promotional brochures for Catalog Design Progress, 1950
Scope and Content Note
Book by K. Lönberg-Holm and Ladislav Sutnar published by Sweet's.

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 14
Warren Telechron Company, 1944-1947, undated
"Telechron Electric Clocks, Time Control Systems Clock Installation Details
(28/15)," 1944

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 15
"Telechron Electric Clocks, Time Control Systems Clock Installation Details
(30c/3)," undated

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 16
"Synchronous Motors, Instrument Movements, Gear Trains (Speed Changers),
Industrial Clock Equipment (3a/16)," circa 1947

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 22
Product design for “Build the Town” block set, circa 1941-1943
Scope and Content Note
Copies of print for promotion kit.

Box 2013.M.7.bx1, Folder 1
Exhibition design for Visual Design in Action, 1961
Scope and Content Note
Draft of text for exhibition pamphlet at the New York venue, the Pepsi-Cola Exhibition
Gallery.
Series V. Ladislav Sutnar correspondence with Jan Tschichold (Accession no. 980003), 1941-1946

Physical Description: 0.2 linear feet (1 box)

Scope and Content Note

Letters between Jan Tschichold and Ladislav Sutnar, dating from 1945 to 1946 form the bulk of this series, one of the five separate archives of Sutnar-related material held by the GRI. In two letters, Tschichold informs Sutnar that he was able to produce some work during the War years; thanks Sutnar for including their collaborative work on posters in the 1944 exhibition marking the 15th anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art, Art in Progress; states that he is currently writing, designing and publishing books rather than posters; and tells of the whereabouts of friends and artists since the end of World War II. Copies of two letters from Sutnar thank Tschichold for sending him copies of his books.

The acquisition also includes a 1941 letter from Jaroslav Joseph Polivka addressed to Mr. Director, presumably intended for Sutnar, discussing New York. Polivka, a Czech structural engineer who had designed pavilions for the Czech contributions to the 1937 Paris Exposition and the 1939 World's Fair, had also emigrated to the United States in 1939.

Arrangement

Arranged by writer.

Acquisition Information

Acquired in 1998.

Preferred Citation

Ladislav Sutnar correspondence with Jan Tschichold, 1941-1946, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, Accession no. 980003.

Box 980003.bx1, Folder 1
Letters from Sutnar to Tschichold, 1945-1946

Box 980003.bx1, Folder 2
Letters from Tschichold to Sutnar, 1945-1946

Box 980003.bx1, Folder 3
Letter from Jaroslav Polivka to Sutnar, 1941