Title: Nicholas Olsberg Research Papers on Southern California

Identifier/Call Number: 0000361

Contributing Institution: Architecture and Design Collection, Art, Design & Architecture Museum

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 7.0 Linear feet (13 boxes)

Date (inclusive): circa 1910-circa 2015

Location note: ADC Reg: Boxes 1-12

creator: Olsberg, R. Nicholas, 1943-

Scope and Contents note

This collection of Nicholas Olsberg's architectural research contains slides, photocopies of published and ephemeral materials, and notes and inventories. The bulk of the collection materials were accumulated for a planned exhibition about Southern California architecture and urban pattern. The exhibition, "Moving Image," was to be focused on architecture in the golden age of Hollywood, 1915-1964, with a prologue on 1910-1915, and an epilogue on the Watts Rebellion of 1965. Topological themes include roadside architecture, signage, the corridor and the highway, the house on the beach and the slope, the open campus. Other themes include, the dispersal of recreation and culture, dwelling clusters and colonies, movie architecture, the subcenter, the desert and mountain dwelling, the film and tv studio, and the emergence of aerospace and tech facilities.

Olsberg gathered research on this exhibition between 1999 and 2005. Although the exhibit did not take place, it was planned as a joint venture of IFA/Cite d'Architecture in Paris and Casa del Caritat in Barcelona, with funding from several sources.

Other materials relate to Olsberg's research on Cliff May, for a book and exhibition at UC Santa Barbara (2012); his research on John Lautner for the catalogue and exhibition he curated with Frank Escher for the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2010). Lastly, inventories and writings relate to the architectural illustrator, Carlos Diniz, whose archive Olsberg helped bring to UCSB's Art Design & Architecture Museum.

Major resources for Olsberg's research were UCSB's Architecture and Design Collection at the AD&A Museum and the Huntington Library, Pasadena. Other archives include: the Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley, Special Collections in the Research Library at UCLA, the Architecture archives at Cal Poly Pomona, Armet Davis collection, the Lautner Foundation (the Lautner archive is now at the Getty Research Institute), the University of Texas at Austin, the Getty Research Institute, the downtown Los Angeles Public Library, the Library of Congress, and the California Historical Society, among others.

Rights

Nicholas Olsberg holds copyright to his writings. Other third party rights have not been fully evaluated; contract repository for information regarding rights and permissions to publish.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Gift of Nicholas Olsberg, 2018.

Biographical/Historical note

Nicholas Olsberg is a curator, historian, and archivist who has written on Frank Lloyd Wright, John Lautner, Cliff May, Carlos Diniz, Ernest and Esther Born, and other topics related to the architecture and urbanism of California. He worked as a curator at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles; and the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

Conditions Governing Access note

Open for use by qualified researchers.

Preferred Citation note


Custodial History note

Materials were collected by Nicholas Olsberg from various California archives and published sources and donated by him in 2018.

Related Archival Materials note

Carlos Diniz Archive, Architecture and Design Collection, AD&A Museum, UC Santa Barbara
John Lautner Papers, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles
Cliff May Papers, Architecture and Design Collection, AD&A Museum, UC Santa Barbara
Research for the "Moving Image" exhibition: architecture and urbanism of Southern California circa 1910-circa 2005

Scope and Contents note
Series contains transparencies of drawings and other materials found in California collections and archives, notes, and photocopied published material about architects and around topological themes that illuminate the growth of Southern California between 1910 to 1965. The research was gathered for a planned exhibition, "The Moving Image," which never was realized, though Olsberg generated a number of writings from his research. Olsberg gathered this material between 1999 and about 2006 from archives, libraries, personal collections across the state but especially from archives in Southern California.

Box 1-2
Architect files circa 1910-circa 1965
Scope and Contents note
Notes and copies from archival sources

Box 3-5
Topics circa 1910-circa 2006
Scope and Contents note
Notes and copies from archival sources, secondary materials

Box 6
Lists of slides and projects circa 1910-circa 2006
Scope and Contents note
Inventories and surveys of architects and projects, including some copies of drawings, documents and photographs

Box 7-8
Slides of drawings from various sources circa 1910-circa 2006
Scope and Contents note
Includes lists and inventories of drawings

Box 9
Photos of built landscape circa 1910-circa 2006
Scope and Contents note
Primarily from the Los Angeles Public Library and the California Historical Society

Box 10
Further readings on topics circa 1910-circa 2006

Box 11
John Lautner research circa 1940-circa 2010
Scope and Contents note

Box 12
Cliff May research circa 1920-circa 2012
Scope and Contents note
Series contains some of Olsberg's notes and research for the exhibition and catalog, "Carefree California: Cliff May and the Romance of the Ranch House," which he initiated at UCSB's Art, Design & Architecture Museum, 2010-2012.
Carlos Diniz inventories circa 2013-circa 2015

Scope and Contents note
Series contains inventories of the drawings and other materials in the Carlos Diniz Archive. Included is a May/June 2013 issue of *Art, Ltd.*

Olsberg was contracted by the family to inventory the archive, help the family sell some renderings, and place the bulk of the archive. The family donated the Carlos Diniz archive to UCSB’s Architecture and Design Collection in 2016.