Descriptive Summary

Languages: English

Contributing Institution: Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive
La Jolla 92093-0175

Title: Bruce Berger Papers

Creator: Berger, Bruce

Identifier/Call Number: MSS 0783

Physical Description: 2 Linear feet (4 archives boxes, 1 card file box)

Physical Description: .108 GB of digital files

Date (inclusive): 1968-2015

Abstract: Papers of Bruce Berger, a nonfiction writer and poet, which document his travel and research in Baja, California from the late 1960s through 2015.

Scope and Content of Collection

Papers of Bruce Berger, a nonfiction writer and poet, which document his travel and research in Baja, California from the late 1960s through 2015. The collection consists primarily of short works such as typewritten journal entries and essays, supplemental research materials (clippings, reports and pamphlets), and a selection of manuscripts from Berger's books *Almost an Island* (1998), *Sierra, Sea and Desert: El Vizcaino* (1998), and *La Giganta y Guadalupe* (2010). The collection contains audiocassettes that record interviews conducted by Berger. Some of the material, particularly the supplemental materials, are in Spanish.

Arranged in four series: 1) SHORT WORKS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL, 2) BOOK EXCERPTS AND ESSAYS, 3) NOTEBOOKS and 4) AUDIOCASSETTES.

Biography

Bruce Nicolas Berger was born in 1938 in Evanston, Illinois. He earned his bachelor's degree in English from Yale in 1961. Berger pursued graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, but did not receive a degree. Instead, he settled in Francoist Spain from 1965 to 1967, learning Spanish and playing the piano to earn an income. In 1968, he made his first journey to Baja California. Over the next fifty years, he would reside alternatively between Baja and his home in Aspen, Colorado.

Berger has published over a dozen books, many of which consider themes of "the intersections of nature and culture, usually in desert settings" (bruceberger.net). His essays and poetry have appeared in publications such as *New Letters* and *Orion Magazine*. He was the recipient of the 1990 Western States Book Award for Creative Nonfiction, the 2006 Colorado Authors' League Award for Specialty Writing, and the 2014 Independent Publisher Book Award's Silver Medal for the Most Outstanding Nonfiction Book of the Year (for *The End of the Sherry*).

Preferred Citation

Bruce Berger Papers. MSS 783. Special Collections & Archives, UC San Diego.

Acquisition Information


Publication Rights

Publication rights are held by the creator of the collection.

Restrictions

Original audiocassette recordings are restricted for preservation. Researchers may request listening copies in advance of their visit.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Baja California (Mexico : Peninsula) -- Description and travel
La Paz (Baja California Sur, Mexico) -- Social life and customs
Berger, Bruce -- Archives
Berger, Bruce -- Travel -- Mexico -- Baja California (Peninsula)
SHORT WORKS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Scope and Content of Series
Series 1) SHORT WORKS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL: Excerpted journal entries, short articles and/or essays, writing fragments, correspondence, and secondary materials relating to events, people, and places in Baja. Topics include: La Paz, the capital of Baja California Sur; natural phenomena specific to Baja; prominent locals like Salvador Garcia Pineda (“El Jeque”); and environmental conservation. The titles of most folders are Berger’s own.

Box 1, Folder 1
Baja California - Environmental concerns ca. 1992-2009
   General note
   Includes pamphlets, reports, and writings.

Box 1, Folder 2
Baja California - Islands 1988-2004
   General note
   Includes Berger essay, "The Science of Desert Islands."

Box 1, Folder 3
Baja California - Presentations and talks 1997-2012
   General note
   In Spanish.

Box 1, Folder 4
Baja California missions undated, 2002
   Vertebrados de las islas del Pacifico de Baja California 2007
   General note
   Report by Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A. C.

Box 1, Folder 5
Baja California Sur
   Copper industry report, Santa Rosalía 2008, 2011

Box 1, Folder 6
Desmadre 2001
   General note
   Includes newspaper clippings and information on the environmental debate of Escalera Nautica (Nautical Steps).

Box 1, Folder 7
Development, culture and roads ca. 1994-2015
   General note
   Includes journals, Loreto development pitches.

Box 1, Folder 8
Flora and fauna 1979-2002
   General note
   Includes clippings, reports, and Berger writings

Box 1, Folder 9
Presentations and talks 1997-2012
   General note
   Includes Berger essay, "On Translating Estela Davis."

Box 1, Folder 10
Problems and criticism 2000-2008
   General note
   Original title included following terms: Exploration, dispossession/despojo, privatization salt project in Laguna San Ignacio Aerocalifornia, charcoal/carbon, officials eating Caguama.

Box 1, Folder 11
Violence 2014-2015

Box 1, Folder 12
Water undated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1, 13       | Balandra 2005-2008  
  General note  
  Includes clippings, writings, correspondence. |
| 1, 14       | Carbon Ironwood/Palo Fierro ca. 1993-2011 |
| 1, 15       | El Vizcaino - Peninsular pronghorn and osprey 1984-1995  
  General note  
  Includes Berger essays, “Ex Portadora de Sal” and “Guerrero Negro.” |
| 1, 16       | Estela Davis translation ca. 2000 |
| 1, 17       | Evaporation (salt) plant and gray whales, San Ignacio Lagoon 1995-1999 |
| 1, 18       | “La Virgen de El Coyote“ and “Burning Eye“ - Unpublished short essays undated |
| 2, 1         | The Sheik of La Paz ca. 1995  
  General note  
  Unpublished essay. |
| 2, 8         | Castorena Davis, Lorella - Presentación del Avance de Investigación de ”Palabras e Imagenes de la Ciudad de La Paz, 1900-1959“ undated  
  General note  
  In Spanish. |
| 2, 7         | Writings 1990-2015  
  General note  
  Includes journal entries. |
| 2, 6         | Piano concert - ”La Paz Intermezzo“ 1973 |
| 2, 5         | Drug violence 2014-2015  
  General note  
  Includes translation of letter from Fernando Aceves Garcia. |
| 2, 4         | Journal entries - Bahia Magdalena travel 1987 January-February |
| 2, 3         | Journal entries - Art and music 1992-1997 |
| 2, 2         | Short clippings and writings 1976-2004 |
| 2, 9         | Means, Tim and Nora White - Conversation 1991-1993  
  General note  
  Operators of Baja Expeditions. Includes descriptive writings and correspondence. |
| 2, 10        | Niparajá 2003-2010 |
| 2, 11        | Niparajá - Socieda de Historia Natural Niparajá AC financial report 2003 March  
  Niparajá 2003-2007  
  General  
  Assorted files in a variety of format (PDF, Word, Excel, JPEG), primarily documenting environmental and conservation activities. Includes 2003 San Diego Natural History Museum Binational Multidisciplinary Expedition conservation report, and other reports on the Corredor San Cosme-Punta Mechudo, in Spanish. |
| 2, 12        | Pineda, Salvador Garcia - ”El Jeque, Distiller of Damiana“ 1992  
  General note  
  A well-known La Paz distiller and winemaker. Includes photos. Related audiocassettes in Box 5. |
| 2, 13        | Planeta Peninsula - Miguel Angel de la Cueva 2003  
  Problems of carbon in flora and fauna ca. 2004 |
SHORT WORKS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Box 2, Folder 15-16  
**San Cosme-Punta Mechudo corridor 1993-2003**  
General note  
Various environmental studies and reports; correspondence with Tim Means.

Box 2, Folder 17  
**San Ignacio 1975-2005**  
General note  
Includes journal entries, writings, clippings, and a reproduction photograph.

Box 2, Folder 18  
**San Ignacio - "Night of the Gueras" 1988**  
General note  
Includes journal entries.

Box 3, Folder 1  
**Santa Rosalía church 1992-1997**  
General note  
Includes clippings and notes.

Box 3, Folder 2  
**Whales and whale watching ca. 1983-1995**  

Box 1, Folder 19  
**Winemaking in the Comondus / The winemaking tradition in Los Comondú - Profile by Francisco López Gutiérrez on the Murrillo Pérpuli family and mission-style wines**

BOOKS AND ESSAYS

Scope and Content of Series


**Almost an Island**

Box 3, Folder 3  
"Isolmania" - Alternative introduction undated

Box 3, Folder 4  
Chapter 2 - Annotated draft undated

Box 3, Folder 5  
Chapter 4 - Annotated draft 1977

Box 3, Folder 6  
**The Curse of the Chingadero** undated  
General note  
Unpublished manuscript. Material within informs Chapter 4, pages 58-67.

Box 3, Folder 7-8  
**Son of the River Journal Meets Baja 1968**  
General note  
Two versions of a chronicle of the first trip to Baja. Evolved into first chapter of *Almost an Island*.

Box 3, Folder 9-10  
**Baja California Precludes** undated

Box 3, Folder 11  
**First Trip to Baja California with Katie Lee 1968**

**La Giganta y Guadalupe**

Box 4, Folder 1  
Drafts undated

Box 4, Folder 3  
Interviews and background material 2008-2009

Box 4, Folder 4  
Original and final texts with bios and captions 2008-2009

Box 4, Folder 5  
**Lico (Federico Savín Talamantes)/Sierra Le Gigante** 2001-2012  
General note  
Uncompleted manuscript and journals: "Rancho San Juan, Santa Martha/San Carlos."

Box 4, Folder 7  
**Sierra, Sea and Desert: El Vizcaíno - Typescript 1998**

Box 4, Folder 8  
**Sierra, Sea and Desert: El Vizcaíno - Interviews and background material 1995-1998**

Box 4, Folder 9  
Miscellaneous unpublished manuscripts undated
NOTEBOOKS
Scope and Content of Series
Series 3) NOTEBOOKS: Berger's notebooks, which include observations on topics ranging from the total solar eclipse of 1991, to cave paintings in Baja. Titles are Berger's own.

Box 4, Folder 10 Cueva Pentada 1977 October
Box 4, Folder 11 Total solar eclipse 1991-1992
General note
Includes background materials and research.

Box 4, Folder 12 Cave paintings, Sierra San Francisco, Santa Rosalía and San Ignacio 1995
Box 4, Folder 13 El Vizcaíno, Guadalajara, Puerto Chale, misc. ca. 1990-1999
Box 4, Folder 14 Isla Cedros, la Reforma, notes on habitat 2003
Box 4, Folder 15 Miscellaneous Baja notebooks undated, 1991

AUDIOCASSETTES
Scope and Content of Series
Series 4) AUDIOCASSETTES: Sound recordings of Berger's interviews with Bajan locals, including personalities featured in Berger's writings, such as El Jeque. Identifying notes from the original cassettes were transcribed for the finding aid description.

Box 5, Folder 1 DR at Eclipse, Robert Fadal 1992 April 2
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 2-3 El Jeque 1992 May 15
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 4 Ruben 1993 March 23
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 5 Alev and Rina 1993 May 5
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 6 Mary and Mac - El Meson 1993 May 15
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 7 Bertine 1993 May
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 8 Victor Sanchez Sotomayor undated
Access
Restrictions Apply

Box 5, Folder 9 Consuelo (entrevista y trando Puerto de Ilusion) 1994 April
Access
Restrictions Apply
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<tr>
<th>Box, Folder</th>
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<tr>
<td>5, 10</td>
<td>Consuelo (Hymno de las Mujeres Profesionistas) undated</td>
<td>Access</td>
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<td>5, 11</td>
<td>Paul Lorem (7/10) Walter (7/11) Abrams family undated</td>
<td>Access</td>
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<tr>
<td>5, 12</td>
<td>Jose Luis Leon 2009 March 30</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Restrictions Apply</td>
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<td>5, 13</td>
<td>Fermin 2009 April 3</td>
<td>Access</td>
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<td>5, 14</td>
<td>Fermin 2009 April 3</td>
<td>Access</td>
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<tr>
<td>5, 15</td>
<td>Organico Alevanra Nieto - Gari Bay undated</td>
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<td>5, 16</td>
<td>Carmen Vazquez 2009 May 1</td>
<td>Access</td>
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<td>5, 17</td>
<td>Fco DLMOS 2009 May 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>5, 18</td>
<td>Aaron 2009 May 7</td>
<td>Access</td>
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<tr>
<td>5, 19</td>
<td>Paty Galino/Sergio Alvarez 2009 May 8</td>
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