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## **Bruce Berger Papers**

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La Jolla 92093-0175

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**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 GBof 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 Vizcaíno* (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**

Acquired 2015, 2017.

**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)

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**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	<p><b>Baja California - Environmental concerns ca. 1992-2009</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes pamphlets, reports, and writings.</p>
Box 1, Folder 2	<p><b>Baja California - Islands 1988-2004</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes Berger essay, "The Science of Desert Islands."</p>
Box 1, Folder 3	<p><b>Baja California - Presentations and talks 1997-2012</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>In Spanish.</p>
Box 1, Folder 4	<p><b>Baja California missions undated, 2002</b></p> <p><b>Vertebrados de las islas del Pacífico de Baja California 2007</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Report by Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A. C.</p>
Box 1, Folder 5 Box 1, Folder 6	<p><b>Baja California Sur</b></p> <p><b>Copper industry report, Santa Rosalía 2008, 2011</b></p> <p><b>Desmadre 2001</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes newspaper clippings and information on the environmental debate of Escalera Nautica (Nautical Steps).</p>
Box 1, Folder 7	<p><b>Development, culture and roads ca. 1994-2015</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes journals, Loreto development pitches.</p>
Box 1, Folder 8	<p><b>Flora and fauna 1979-2002</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes clippings, reports, and Berger writings</p>
Box 1, Folder 9	<p><b>Presentations and talks 1997-2012</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes Berger essay, "On Translating Estela Davis."</p>
Box 1, Folder 10	<p><b>Problems and criticism 2000-2008</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Original title included following terms: Exploration, dispossession/despojo, privatization salt project in Laguna San Ignacio Aerocalifornia, charcoal/carbon, officials eating Caguama.</p>
Box 1, Folder 11 Box 1, Folder 12	<p><b>Violence 2014-2015</b></p> <p><b>Water undated</b></p>

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Box 1, Folder 13	<p><b>Balandra 2005-2008</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes clippings, writings, correspondence.</p>
Box 1, Folder 14 Box 1, Folder 15	<p><b>Carbon Ironwood/Palo Fierro ca. 1993-2011</b></p> <p><b>El Vizcaino - Peninsular pronghorn and osprey 1984-1995</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes Berger essays, "Ex Portadora de Sal" and "Guerrero Negro."</p>
Box 1, Folder 16 Box 1, Folder 17 Box 1, Folder 18	<p><b>Estela Davis translation ca. 2000</b></p> <p><b>Evaporation (salt) plant and gray whales, San Ignacio Lagoon 1995-1999</b></p> <p><b>"La Virgen de El Coyote" and "Burning Eye" - Unpublished short essays undated</b></p> <p><b>La Paz</b></p>
Box 2, Folder 1	<p><b>The Sheik of La Paz ca. 1995</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Unpublished essay.</p>
Box 2, Folder 8	<p><b>Castorena Davis, Lorella - Presentación del Avance de Investigación de "Palabras e Imagenes de la Ciudad de La Paz, 1900-1959" undated</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>In Spanish.</p>
Box 2, Folder 7	<p><b>Writings 1990-2015</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes journal entries.</p>
Box 2, Folder 6 Box 2, Folder 5	<p><b>Piano concert - "La Paz Intermezzo" 1973</b></p> <p><b>Drug violence 2014-2015</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Includes translation of letter from Fernando Aceves Garcia.</p>
Box 2, Folder 4 Box 2, Folder 3 Box 2, Folder 2 Box 2, Folder 9	<p><b>Journal entries - Bahia Magdalena travel 1987 January-February</b></p> <p><b>Journal entries - Art and music 1992-1997</b></p> <p><b>Short clippings and writings 1976-2004</b></p> <p><b>Means, Tim and Nora White - Conversation 1991-1993</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>Operators of Baja Expeditions. Includes descriptive writings and correspondence.</p>
Box 2, Folder 10 Box 2, Folder 11	<p><b>Niparajá 2003-2010</b></p> <p><b>Niparajá - Socieda de Historia Natural Niparajá AC financial report 2003 March</b></p> <p><b>Niparajá 2003-2007</b></p> <p><b>General</b></p> <p>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.</p>
Box 2, Folder 12	<p><b>Pineda, Salvador Garcia - "El Jeque, Distiller of Damiana" 1992</b></p> <p><b>General note</b></p> <p>A well-known La Paz distiller and winemaker. Includes photos. Related audiocassettes in Box 5.</p>
Box 2, Folder 13 Box 2, Folder 14	<p><b>Planeta Peninsula - Miguel Angel de la Cueva 2003</b></p> <p><b>Problems of carbon in flora and fauna ca. 2004</b></p>

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Box 2, Folder 15-16	<b>San Cosme-Punta Mechudo corridor 1993-2003</b> <b>General note</b> Various environmental studies and reports; correspondence with Tim Means.
Box 2, Folder 17	<b>San Ignacio 1975-2005</b> <b>General note</b> Includes journal entries, writings, clippings, and a reproduction photograph.
Box 2, Folder 18	<b>San Ignacio - "Night of the Gueras" 1988</b> <b>General note</b> Includes journal entries.
Box 3, Folder 1	<b>Santa Rosalía church 1992-1997</b> <b>General note</b> Includes clippings and notes.
Box 3, Folder 2 Box 1, Folder 19	<b>Whales and whale watching ca. 1983-1995</b> <b>Winemaking in the Comondus / The winemaking tradition in Los Comondú - Profile by Francisco López Gutiérrez on the Murrillo Pérpuli family and mission-style wines</b>
	<b>BOOKS AND ESSAYS</b> <b>Scope and Content of Series</b> Series 2) BOOKS AND ESSAYS: Drafts of a selection of Berger's major published works, including the books <i>Almost an Island</i> (1998), <i>La Giganta y Guadalupe</i> (2010), and <i>Sierra, Sea and Desert: El Vizcaíno</i> (1998).
Box 3, Folder 3 Box 3, Folder 4 Box 3, Folder 5 Box 3, Folder 6	<b><i>Almost an Island</i></b> <b>"Islomania" - Alternative introduction undated</b> <b>Chapter 2 - Annotated draft undated</b> <b>Chapter 4 - Annotated draft 1977</b> <b>The Curse of the Chingadero undated</b> <b>General note</b> Unpublished manuscript. Material within informs Chapter 4, pages 58-67.
Box 3, Folder 7-8	<b>Son of the River Journal Meets Baja 1968</b> <b>General note</b> Two versions of a chronicle of the first trip to Baja. Evolved into first chapter of <i>Almost an Island</i> .
Box 3, Folder 9-10 Box 3, Folder 11	<b>Baja California Precludes undated</b> <b>First Trip to Baja California with Katie Lee 1968</b> <b><i>La Giganta y Guadalupe</i></b> <b>Drafts undated</b>
Box 4, Folder 1 Box 4, Folder 3 Box 4, Folder 4 Box 4, Folder 5	<b>Interviews and background material 2008-2009</b> <b>Original and final texts with bios and captions 2008-2009</b> <b>Lico (Federico Savín Talamantes)/Sierra Le Gigante 2001-2012</b> <b>General note</b> Uncompleted manuscript and journals: "Rancho San Juan, Santa Martha/San Carlos."
Box 4, Folder 7 Box 4, Folder 8 Box 4, Folder 9	<b><i>Sierra, Sea and Desert: El Vizcaíno</i> - Typescript 1998</b> <b><i>Sierra, Sea and Desert: El Vizcaíno</i> - Interviews and background material 1995-1998</b> <b>Miscellaneous unpublished manuscripts undated</b>

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**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  
Box 4, Folder 11

**Cueva Pentada 1977 October**  
**Total solar eclipse 1991-1992****General note**

Includes background materials and research.

Box 4, Folder 12  
Box 4, Folder 13  
Box 4, Folder 14  
Box 4, Folder 15

**Cave paintings, Sierra San Francisco, Santa Rosalía and San Ignacio 1995**  
**El Vizcaíno, Guadalajara, Puerto Chale, misc. ca. 1990-1999**  
**Isla Cedros, la Reforma, notes on habitat 2003**  
**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

Box 5, Folder 10	<b>Consuelo (Hymno de las Mujeres Profesionistas) undated</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 11	<b>Paul Lorem (7/10) Walter (7/11) Abrams family undated</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 12	<b>Jose Luis Leon 2009 March 30</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 13	<b>Fermin 2009 April 3</b> <b>General note</b> Possibly defective tape. <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 14	<b>Fermin 2009 April 3</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 15	<b>Organico Alevanra Nieto - Gari Bay undated</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 16	<b>Carmen Vazquez 2009 May 1</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 17	<b>Fco DLMOS 2009 May 6</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 18	<b>Aaron 2009 May 7</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply
Box 5, Folder 19	<b>Paty Galino/Sergio Alvarez 2009 May 8</b> <b>Access</b> Restrictions Apply