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GEORGE R. LEIGHTON (1902-1966)

COLLECTION, 1928-1971
(bulk 1958-1965)
10 linear feet

ACQUISITION: The collection was donated by Richard Barnhart in 2006.

ACCESS: The collection is open for research.

PHOTOGRAPHS: In boxes 1-2. Also consult photograph collection in Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, 1851-1940.

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Background

George R. Leighton became interested in world's fairs as an eight year old boy when he looked through a photo view book from the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. From that time on, he remained fascinated with world's fairs even though he never actually attended a world's fair until he went to the New York 1939-1940, and later the New York 1964-1965, expositions. An author of several books and articles, Leighton decided to do a photographic history of international expositions in 1958. His book, tentatively titled "Brief Paradise: One Hundred Years of World's Fairs," was to cover expositions from the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London to the 1964-1965 New York exposition. He was later persuaded to expand the book into a full history of expositions as no comprehensive history of international expositions existed at the time. Leighton did extensive research and corresponded with numerous librarians, curators and various people connected with or interested in world's fairs across the U.S., Great Britain and Europe. One of his correspondents was Richard Barnhart, a fellow world's fair enthusiast who helped him with his research and encouraged him in his work. Leighton's sister, Barbara Leighton, also assisted him as did several paid researchers.

After Leighton's death in 1966, Barbara carried on his work although the book was never published. Before he died, Leighton wrote three articles on expositions; two of them were published in *Harper's Magazine* in 1960, one remained unpublished.

In 1974, remembering how supportive and helpful Richard Barnhart was to his father, Leighton's son, John F.G. Leighton, sent all of his father's research materials to Barnhart in Daly City, California. The collection remained there until Barnhart decided to donate it to the Special Collections Library at California State University, Fresno in 2006.

Scope and Content Note

The George R. Leighton collection measures 10 linear feet and dates from 1928 to 1971. The collection is comprised mainly of Leighton's research materials for his proposed book, "Brief Paradise: One Hundred Years of World's Fairs." There is also a typed manuscript of the book and a photograph index (Leighton had planned to use photographs extensively). The correspondence encompasses letters both to and from his many associates and advocates. In the Miscellaneous correspondence folder a letter to Romana Javitz at the New York Public Library explains Leighton's initial interest in world's fairs and another letter, to a professor in Massachusetts, reveals that by 1959 he had already spent \$5000 on his research. In still another letter, architect Gordon Bunshaft declined to talk to Leighton about world's fairs saying that they were "an obsolete form of communication."

The research materials are most extensive for the New York 1939-1940, Brussels 1958, Seattle 1962, and New York 1964-1965 world's fairs although they begin with London 1851 and end with Osaka 1970 (obviously added after Leighton's death).

Related Collection

All books and photographs for expositions from 1851 to 1940 that were donated with the George R. Leighton collection have been incorporated into the Donald G. Larson Collection on International Expositions and Fairs, 1851-1940. The numbers Leighton assigned to the photographs have been retained and can sometimes be used to reference their placement in his proposed book. Books and photographs for expositions past 1940 have been retained in the Leighton collection.

H.L. Mencken collection, New York Public Library (letters from George R. Leighton, ca. 1960)

Box no. Description

Box 1

Biographical information, 1966 and undated

Book

Book jacket ideas, 1960, 1961, 1963, and undated

Chapters, undated

London 1851

Paris 1855 and 1867

Philadelphia 1876

Paris 1878 and 1889

Chicago 1893

Omaha 1898

Paris 1900

St. Louis 1904

Paris 1925

Chicago 1933-1934 (Barbara Leighton)

New York 1939-1940

Brussels 1958

Seattle 1962

New York 1964-1965

Montréal 1967

San Antonio 1968

Miscellaneous chapters (2 folders)

Outline and proposal, 1962-1966, and undated

Partial manuscript, undated

Photographs

Captioned

London 1851-Paris 1867

Vienna 1873-Chicago 1893

Chicago 1893-St. Louis 1904

St. Louis 1904-Paris 1925

Box 2

Paris 1925-Brussels 1958

Brussels 1958-New York 1964-1965

Uncaptioned

London 1851-New York 1939-1940 [housed with Larson collection photos]

Box no. Description

Box 2 (cont.)

Book (cont.)

Photographs (cont.)

Uncaptioned (cont.)

Brussels 1958
Seattle 1962
New York 1964-1965
Montréal 1967
San Antonio 1968
Osaka 1970
Unidentified
Miscellaneous

Negatives

London 1851 [oversize: in box 11]
Paris 1855 [oversize: in box 11]
Paris 1867
Vienna 1873 [oversize: in box 11]
Philadelphia 1876 [oversize: in box 11]
Paris 1878
Melbourne 1880
Paris 1889
Chicago 1893 [oversize: in box 11] [2 glass negatives in filing cabinet O
drawer 1]
Omaha 1898
Paris 1900
Buffalo 1901
St. Louis 1904 [oversize: in box 11]
Portland 1905
Jamestown 1907
Seattle 1909
San Francisco 1915
Rio de Janeiro 1922
Paris 1925
Chicago 1933-1934
Paris 1937
New York 1939-1940
Brussels 1958
Seattle 1962 [oversize: in box 11]
New York 1964-1965 [oversize: in box 11]
Montréal 1967

Box no. Description

Box 3

Book (cont.)

Photograph index, undated

Correspondence

Atlantic Monthly Press, 1961

Australia, 1959

Buffalo, 1955-1962

Chicago 1893, 1958-1962

Chicago 1933, 1962-1964

Crown Publishers, 1958, 1961-1964

George Eastman House, 1958

H.G. Hotchkiss Essential Oil Company, 1958-1961

Jamestown, 1955, 1959-1961

Library of Congress, 1958-1959

Lichten, Jack, 1958-1959

London, 1958, 1963

Magazine fan mail, 1960-1964

Manufacturing exhibitors, 1958-1960

New York Public Library, 1958-1959

Omaha, 1958-1962

Purcell, William G., 1960, 1961

Philadelphia, 1958-1962

Rio de Janeiro, 1959

St. Louis, 1958-1964

University of Minnesota, 1958

Miscellaneous, 1958-1966

Magazine articles, 1960 and undated

Research materials and notes

Congressional appropriations, 1963-1966

Exhibitors, undated

Expositions

London 1851, undated

Paris 1855 and 1867, 1965-1970, and undated

Philadelphia 1876, undated

Box 4

Paris 1878 and 1889, 1965 and undated

Chicago 1893, 1964 and undated

Omaha 1898, undated

Buffalo 1901 and St. Louis 1904, 1966 and undated

San Francisco 1915 and Rio de Janeiro 1922, 1964-1965 and undated

Box no. Description

Box 4 (cont.)

Research materials and notes (cont.)

Expositions (cont.)

Paris 1925, 1956, 1960-1964

Chicago 1933-1934 (3 binders), 1933-1934, 1963-1965 and undated

Box 5

New York 1939-1940

Barbara Leighton

Binder, undated

Miscellaneous, 1935, 1962-1963

Binders

1928-1940, 1961-1966

1938-1945

1939-1942, 1958-1966

Clippings, 1938-1940 (2 folders)

Brussels 1958

Architectural drawings, 1958 [oversize: map case A drawer 13]

Binders (2), 1956-1966

Books

Mémorial Édité par le Commissariat General du Gouvernement Près

'Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Bruxelles 1958, 1959-1962

L'organization et le Fonctionnement

Box 6

Le Messages et le Congrès

Les Participations Étrangères et Belges

L'architecture, les Jardins et l'Éclairage

Les Arts

De Wetenschappen

De Boodschap aan de Jeugd

Synthèse

Brochures and booklets, 1958

Congressional records, 1958

Maps, 1958 [oversize: map case A drawer 13]

Newspaper supplements

Belgique Joyeuse, 1958 [oversize: map case A drawer 13]

Official Programs, 1958

Periodicals

Paris Match, 1958 [oversize: in box 12]

The Engineer, 1958 [oversize: in box 12]

Box no. Description

Box 6 (cont.)

Research materials and notes (cont.)

Expositions (cont.)

Brussels 1958 (cont.)

U.S. Commissioner General, 1957-1958

U.S.S.R section, 1958 and undated

Miscellaneous, undated

Seattle 1962

General, 1962 and undated (3 folders)

Binders (2), 1959, 1962

Box 7

Books

Art since 1950; American and international, 1962

Catalogue: Masterpieces of art; Fine Arts Pavilion, 1962

Morgan, Murray. *Century 21: the story of the Seattle world's fair*, 1962

City beautification, 1959-1962

Clippings, 1961-1963 (2 folders)

Correspondence, 1942, 1959-1965 (2 folders)

Final bound report, 1962

"A Night in Paradise," 1962

Official guides, 1962

Posters, 1962 [oversize: in map tube]

U.S. Science Exhibit, 1962

Miscellaneous, 1962-1963 and undated (2 folders)

New York 1964-1965

General, 1963-1967

Binders, 1963-1968

Box 8

Volumes 1-5

Box 9

Volumes 6-9

Books

Clark & Rapuano. *Preparation of the Site for the World's Fair 1964-1965*
[oversize: in box 12]

Laurence, William L. ed. *Science at the Fair*, 1964

Olshchki, Leo S. *Official Art Book of the World's Fair, 1964-1965*, 1964
[oversize: in box 12]

Brochures and booklets

Issued by exhibitors, 1964-1965

Issued by the fair, 1964-1965

Box no. Description

Box 9 (cont.)

Research materials and notes (cont.)

Expositions (cont.)

New York 1964-1965 (cont.)

Clippings, 1959-1965, 1971

Correspondence, 1961-1965

Ford Motor Company, 1965

IBM Pavilion, 1964 [oversize: in box 12]

Manuals, 1964

Maps, 1964-1965

Menus, 1964-1965

Newspaper supplements

The Herald Tribune, 1964 [oversize: in box 12]

New York Journal American, 1965 [oversize: in box 12]

New York Sunday News, 1964 [oversize: in box 12]

New York Times, 1964 [oversize: in box 12]

New York World-Telegram, 1965 [oversize: in box 12]

Official bulletins, 1964

Official guides, 1964-1965

Periodicals

Look, 1964 [oversize: in box 12]

New York Times Magazine, 1964 [oversize: in box 12]

Saturday Evening Post, 1961

This Week Magazine, 1961

Time, 1964

Record albums

The Greatest of the Johnny Mann Singers at the Bottom of the Fair,
undated

[oversize: in box 12]

Reports, 1963-1965

Miscellaneous, 1964-1965 and undated [oversize: in box 12]

Montreal 1967

Books

Wilding, Will. *Beyond/Au Delà*, 1967

Official guide, 1967

Periodicals

Interiors, 1967

Reports, 1967

Box no. Description

Box 10

Research materials and notes (cont.)
Expositions (cont.)
San Antonio 1968
Binder, 1963-1970
Congressional records, 1965, 1967
Periodicals
Business Screen, 1968 [oversize: in box 12]
Osaka 1970
Clippings, 1970
Periodicals
Newsweek, 1970
United States Pavilion, 1970
Miscellaneous, 1963, 1965 and undated

Box 11

Oversize:
Book
Negatives
London 1851
Paris 1855
Vienna 1873
Philadelphia 1876
Chicago 1893
St. Louis 1904
Seattle 1962
New York 1964-1965

Box 12

Oversize:
Research materials and notes
Expositions
Brussels 1958
Periodicals
Paris Match, 1958
The Engineer, 1958
New York 1964-1965
Books
Clark & Rapuano. *Preparation of the Site for the World's Fair 1964-1965*
Olshchki, Leo S. *Official Art Book of the World's Fair, 1964-1965*, 1964

Box no. Description

Box 12 (cont.)

Oversize:

Research materials and notes (cont.)

Expositions (cont.)

New York 1964-1965 (cont.)

IBM Pavilion, 1964

Newspaper supplements

The Herald Tribune, 1964

New York Journal American, 1965

New York Sunday News, 1964

New York Times, 1964

New York World-Telegram, 1965

Periodicals

Look, 1964

New York Times Magazine, 1964

Record albums

The Greatest of the Johnny Mann Singers at the Bottom of the Fair,
undated

Miscellaneous, 1964-1965 and undated

San Antonio 1968

Periodicals

Business Screen, 1968