

2014

Robert A. German Collection

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Guide to Robert A. German Collection MSS.2005.04.09

Finding aid prepared by Xiaoda Wang



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05/16/2014

Title: Robert A. German Collection

Identifier/Call Number: MSS.2005.04.09

Contributing Institution: SJSU Special Collections & Archives

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 9.75 Linear feet(9 boxes, 6 flat file drawers)

Date (bulk): Bulk, 1990-2003

Date (inclusive): 1972-2005

Abstract: The collection contains architectural project files, blueprints, professional records, academic papers, portfolios, and biographical files that encompass the professional achievements of Robert Alan German (1957-2004). German, a San Jose State University (SJSU) alumnus, was a prolific Bay Area architect and industrial designer. After graduating from SJSU with a B.S. in Industrial Design and minor in Graphic Design in 1982, German's career progressed steadily over the years from working as draftsperson for various architectural firms to managing Pyramid Design Group as its Principal Architect. The bulk of the collection (1990-2003) is comprised of blueprints, project files, and administrative records that document German's process of designing and managing various commercial and residential projects. The 24"x36" blueprints reflect the sundry designs of German's residential projects and remodels, which incorporated orthodox styles such as American Craftsman, Spanish Revival, Victorian, and Colonial, as well as Modernist constructions reminiscent of those produced by Frank Lloyd Wright and Joseph Eichler. The rest of the collection includes German's professional records that document the administration of Pyramid Design Group and his academic and personal papers.

Physical Location: The collection is located in Vault 1, Range 29A, Bay 17. Series II is located in Vault 1, Flat Files Bay 5.

creator: German, Robert Alan, 1957-2004

Access

The collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], [Name of record group], Robert A. German Collection, MSS-2005-04-09, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

Processing Information

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Biographical History

Robert Alan German (1957-2004), a San Jose State University alumnus, was a prolific Bay Area architect and industrial designer. German was born on February 20, 1957 in Hawaii. Having finished Vintage High School in Napa, California in 1975, German was accepted to San Jose State University, where he completed his Bachelor of Science in Industrial Design, along with a minor in Graphic Design, in December 1982. During his studies at SJSU, German was introduced to drafting techniques and design theories in Industrial Design courses, such as Model Making, Contemporary Home Design, and Solar Energy Theories, as well as in various art and art history courses.

German started working in residential design since 1978. In the early stages of his career, German interned and worked as architectural draftsperson at several industrial development and architectural firms, wherein some of his main duties included preliminary-schematic and working drawings of residential and commercial buildings, interior space remodels, and site development. The sundry designs of German's residential projects and remodels incorporated orthodox styles such as American Craftsman, Spanish Revival, Victorian, and Colonial, as well as Modernist constructions reminiscent of those produced by Frank Lloyd Wright and Joseph Eichler. During his mid-career between 1982 and 1989, German was given management roles at subsequent firms, where he was in charge of bidding, space planning, design, and production of various industrial office projects in the Bay Area. In 1988, German received certification from The California State Board of Architectural Examiners. From 1991 onward, German was the Principal Architect of Pyramid Design Group, a firm that offered architectural and interior design services for residential and commercial clients in the Bay Area. In this more holistic

role, German oversaw all design phases, which included meeting with clients during preliminary design, preparing drawings and coordinating with consultants during design development, construction documentation for contractor bidding, bid assistance and negotiation, and construction administration. German passed away on May 16th, 2004 in Menlo Park, California.

Professional Timeline:

1991-2004: Principal Architect at Pyramid Design Group, Menlo Park, CA
1988-1989: Project Architect at John Stewart Associates, San Carlos, CA
1987-1988: Vice President of Architectural Design and Engineering at Landbank Investment International, Redwood City, CA
1982-1987: Project Manager at Cabak Randall Jasper Griffiths Associates, Menlo Park, CA
1982: Draftsperson/Designer at Stoecker & Northway, Inc., Portola Valley, CA
1980-1982: Draftsperson at Robert Peterson Architects, Inc., Menlo Park, CA
1978-1980: Draftsperson/Design-Planner at Northland Investments, Sunnyvale, CA
1979-1980: Draftsperson/Job Coordinator at Shohfi Properties, Santa Clara, CA
Summer 1979: Draftsperson (Internship) at Cabak Associates, Menlo Park, CA

Scope and Content of Collection

Robert A. German Collection documents the academic and professional achievements of Robert A. German from 1972 to 2004. This collection contains German's architectural project files, blueprints, professional records, academic papers, portfolios, and biographical files. The bulk of the collection (1990-2003), in Series I, documents the commercial and residential projects that Robert German had designed and managed. Each project folder consists of materials used in various stages of architectural design (preliminary design, design development, construction documentation, bid negotiation, and construction administration), such as floor-plans, construction drawings, invoices, home appliance and décor catalogs, insurance and county council reports, specifications, correspondence, meeting minutes, and photographs. Series II contains 24"x36" blueprints that accompany the aforementioned projects in Series I, as well as industrial designs and drawings German had produced for college courses. Series III consists of Robert German's professional records from Pyramid Design Group, whereof he was the principal architect. It includes client contract templates, time cards, promotional brochures, and other records used for organizational administration. Series IV includes Robert German's academic and personal files, such as academic records and course work from SJSU and Cañada College, his portfolios of architectural projects and artworks, awards, photographs, planners, resumes, and references.

Arrangement

Robert A. German Collection is arranged into four series. Series I: Project Files, 1972-2005, bulk 1990-2003; Series II: Blueprints and Drawings, 1978-2002, bulk 1994-2002; Series III: Professional Records, circa 1981-2004; Series IV: Academic and Personal Papers, 1975-2005, bulk 1990-1991.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Architecture - California, Northern
San Jose State University -- Alumnae and alumni

Series I: Project Files, 1972-2005, bulk 1990-2003

Language of Material: English

Scope and Content of Collection

Series I contains textual and visual documents used in the preliminary design, design development, construction documentation, bidding, negotiation, and construction administration of architectural projects. The contents include invoices, architecture services outlines, design sketches, product recommendations (appliances, heating systems, décor, etc.), structural calculations, floor plans, correspondences, energy reports, construction details, client call sheet and agreement forms, community development guidelines, zoning information, contract work records, photographs, and transmittals.

Arrangement

Series I is arranged by architectural type, then by project title.

Box 1, Folder 1: Commercial - Carolyn Bean Publishing (Petaluma, CA), 1990-1991
Box 1, Folder 2: Commercial - Horizon Center (San Jose, CA), 1993

Box 1, Folder 3-4: Commercial - Hunting Gate Investments (Menlo Park, CA), circa 1994-1996
Box 1, Folder 5-13: Commercial - Korean Presbyterian Church (Santa Clara, CA), circa 1996-2002
Box 1, Folder 14: Commercial - Lowen, Robert, M.D. (Mountain View, CA), 1997-1998
Box 1, Folder 15: Commercial - Menkes, Andrew (Mountain View, CA), 1996-1999
Box 2, Folder 1-4: Commercial - Menkes, Andrew (Mountain View, CA), 1996-1999
Box 2, Folder 5: Commercial - Microsource Inc. (Santa Rosa, CA), circa 1986
Box 2, Folder 6-9: Commercial - Nightrider/Hunting Gate (Mountain View, CA), 1995-1996
Box 2, Folder 10: Commercial - Quinn (Fremont, CA), 2000
Box 2, Folder 11: Commercial - Randy Street Parking Structure (Petaluma, CA), 1991
Box 2, Folder 12-16: Commercial - Red Cross Facility (San Jose, CA), 1991-1993
Box 3, Folder 1: Commercial - Save Smart (Mountain View, CA), 1996-1997
Box 3, Folder 2: Commercial - Silicon Valley Eye Physicians (Sunnyvale, CA), 1997-1999
Box 3, Folder 3: Commercial - Singh, Romy, D.D.S. (Sunnyvale, CA), 1997-1998
Box 3, Folder 4: Commercial - Stanford Telecom (Sunnyvale, CA), 1993
Box 3, Folder 5-8: Commercial - Tegal Corporation (Petaluma, CA), 1986-1987
Box 3, Folder 9: Commercial - Tolfa Corporation (Mountain View, CA), 1995
Box 3, Folder 10-11: Commercial - Vanier/Reynolds & Reynolds (Livermore, CA), 1997
Box 3, Folder 12: Miscellaneous Projects, circa 1996-2003
Box 3, Folder 13: Residential - Armbrust, Chris (Boulder Creek, CA), 1993
Box 3, Folder 14: Residential - Arnold (Benninger), Christine (Woodside, CA), 2000-2001
Box 3, Folder 15: Residential - Beers, Dan (Mountain View, CA), 2000-2001
Box 3, Folder 16-18: Residential - Benninger, Christine (Woodside, CA), circa 2001-2003
Box 4, Folder 1-4: Residential - Benninger, Christine (Woodside, CA), circa 2001-2003
Box 4, Folder 5: Residential - Chan, Patrick (Palo Alto, CA), 1995-1996
Box 4, Folder 6: Residential - Chin, Norman (Palo Alto, CA), 2001
Box 4, Folder 7: Residential - DeBenedetti, Jay (Atherton, CA), 1997-1998
Box 4, Folder 8: Residential - English, Robert, & Zara, Anna (Menlo Park, CA), 1998-2001
Box 4, Folder 9: Residential - Essy, Eddie (Walnut Creek, CA), 1994-1995
Box 4, Folder 10: Residential - Germinario, Franko (Hillsborough, CA), 1977, 1997-1998
Box 4, Folder 11-13: Residential - Groff, John (San Carlos, CA), 1996-1997
Box 4, Folder 14-15: Residential - Hart, Nick (Los Altos, CA), 1999-2005
Box 5, Folder 1: Residential - Hickey, Jerry (Palo Alto, CA), 1980-1996
Box 5, Folder 2-3: Residential - Holmes, Pat (Penngrove, CA), 1996-1999
Box 5, Folder 4-6: Residential - Holoyda, Olaf (Belmont, CA), 2003-2004
Box 5, Folder 7: Residential - Hott, David (Redwood City, CA), 1999-2001
Box 5, Folder 8: Residential - Ju, David (Foster City, CA), 1992-1999
Box 5, Folder 9-10: Residential - Klein, Rick (Palo Alto, CA), 1994-1995
Box 5, Folder 11: Residential - Kopisch, Manfred (Menlo Park, CA), 2000-2001
Box 5, Folder 12-13: Residential - Loo, Anna (Saratoga, CA), 1988-2000
Box 5, Folder 14-15: Residential - Mantel, Charles (Montera, CA), 2001-2002
Box 6, Folder 1-2: Residential - Moos, Danny (Palo Alto, CA), 1972, 1990-2001
Box 6, Folder 3: Residential - Ottoes, Scott (Los Altos, CA), 1999
Box 6, Folder 4: Residential - Ronan, Greg (Palo Alto, CA), 1997-1998
Box 6, Folder 5: Residential - Roper, Preston (Los Altos, CA), 1995-2001
Box 6, Folder 6-10: Residential - Schmidt, Steve (Los Altos, CA), 1993-2000
Box 6, Folder 11: Residential - Typical Construction Details, circa 1991
Box 6, Folder 12-13: West, Blondin (Palo Alto, CA), 2002-2003
Box 6, Folder 14: Residential - Zicker, John (Menlo Park, CA), 1994-1995

Series II: Blueprints and Drawings, 1978-2002, bulk 1994-2002

Scope and Content of Collection

Series II includes 24"x36" architectural blueprints used for the planning of Robert German's commercial and residential projects. It also contains furniture designs, industrial designs, and miscellaneous drawings that German had produced in courses at San Jose State University and local community colleges.

Arrangement

Series II is arranged by genre, then by project title.

- Drawer 1, Folder 1: Commercial - Baxter/Eder (Mountain View, CA), circa 1994**
- Drawer 1, Folder 2: Commercial - Compumotor Corporation (Petaluma, CA), 1983**
- Drawer 1, Folder 3: Commercial - E.M. Systems (Fremont, CA), 1986**
- Drawer 1, Folder 4: Commercial - Hunting Gate Investments (Menlo Park, CA), 1994-1995**
- Drawer 1, Folder 5: Commercial - Hunting Gate Investments (Menlo Park, CA), 1995-1996**
- Drawer 1, Folder 6-10: Commercial - Korean Presbyterian Church (Santa Clara, CA), 1999-2002**
- Drawer 2, Folder 1: Commercial - Lowen, Robert, M.D. (Mountain View, CA), circa 1997**
- Drawer 2, Folder 2-3: Commercial - Menkes, Andrew, M.D. (Mountain View, CA), 1996-1998**
- Drawer 2, Folder 4: Commercial - Microsource Inc. (Santa Rosa, CA), 1986**
- Drawer 2, Folder 5: Commercial - Nightrider (Mountain View, CA), 1995-1996**
- Drawer 2, Folder 6: Commercial - Save Smart (Mountain View, CA), 1996-1997**
- Drawer 2, Folder 7: Commercial - Silicon Valley Eye Physicians (Sunnyvale, CA), 1997-1999**
- Drawer 2, Folder 8: Commercial - Singh, Romy, D.D.S. (Sunnyvale, CA), 1997-1998**
- Drawer 2, Folder 9: Commercial - Tolfa Corporation (Mountain View, CA), 1995**
- Drawer 2, Folder 10: Commercial - Vanier/Reynolds & Reynolds (Livermore, CA), 1986, 1997**
- Drawer 3, Folder 1: Residential - Baldwin, Patrick (Atherton, CA), 1988**
- Drawer 3, Folder 2: Residential - Beers, Dan & Peterson, Katie (Mountain View, CA), 2000-2002**
- Drawer 3, Folder 3-5: Residential - Benninger, Christine (Woodside City, CA), 2001-2002**
- Drawer 3, Folder 6: Residential - Chan, Patrick & Rosanna (Palo Alto, CA), 1995-1996**
- Drawer 4, Folder 1: Residential - DeBenedetti, Jay (Atherton, CA), 1991, 1997-1998**
- Drawer 4, Folder 2: Residential - English, Robert & Zara, Anna (Menlo Park, CA), 1998-2001**
- Drawer 4, Folder 3: Residential - Essy, Eddie (Walnut Creek, CA), 1994**
- Drawer 4, Folder 4: Residential - Garcia, Ron & Hott, David (Redwood City, CA), 2000-2001**
- Drawer 4, Folder 5: Residential - Germinario, Franko (Hillsborough, CA), 1998-1999**
- Drawer 4, Folder 6: Residential - Groff, John & Thatcher, Meg (San Carlos, CA), 1997**
- Drawer 4, Folder 7: Residential - Holmes, Patrick (Penngrove, CA), 1997-1998**
- Drawer 4, Folder 8: Residential - Holoyda, Olaf (Belmont, CA), 2003-2004**
- Drawer 5, Folder 1: Residential - Klein, Rick (Palo Alto, CA), 1994-1995**
- Drawer 5, Folder 2: Residential - Mantel, Charles & Cunningham, Susan (Montera, CA), 2001-2002**
- Drawer 5, Folder 3: Residential - Ottoes, Scott & Suzuki, Irene (Los Altos, CA), 1999**
- Drawer 5, Folder 4: Residential - Posadas, Rob & Loo, Anna (Saratoga, CA), 1999-2000**
- Drawer 5, Folder 5: Residential - Ronan, Greg & Anne (Palo Alto, CA), 1997**
- Drawer 5, Folder 6: Residential - Roper, Preston & Katherine (Los Altos, CA), 2000-2001**
- Drawer 5, Folder 7: Residential - Schmidt, Steve & Lisa (Los Altos, CA), 1994**

Drawer 6, Folder 1-2: Residential - West, Blondin & Katharine (Palo Alto, CA), 2002-2003

Drawer 6, Folder 3: Residential - Zicker, John (Menlo Park, CA), 1995

Drawer 6, Folder 4: Blueprints - Environmental Studies 116 Course, 1978

Drawer 6, Folder 5: Blueprints - Miscellaneous, circa 1978-1980

Drawer 6, Folder 6: Blueprints - Miscellaneous, circa 1989-2000

Drawer 6, Folder 7: Drawings - INTD 340 Furniture Design Course, 1991

Drawer 6, Folder 8: Drawings - Industrial Designs and Misc., 1979-1980

Series III: Professional Records, circa 1981-2004

Scope and Content of Collection

Series III contains professional principles, organizational procedures, policies, guidelines, templates, forms, and other documents essential to the administration of Pyramid Design Group.

Arrangement

Series III is arranged by document type.

Box 7, Folder 1: Architecture Business Guidelines, 1991-2000

Box 7, Folder 2: Forms and Templates, undated

Box 7, Folder 3: Business License Renewal Forms, 1991-2004

Box 7, Folder 4: Office Binder - Drawings, Schedules, Keys, Legends, undated

Box 7, Folder 5: Office Production Standards, 1990

Box 7, Folder 6: Pictorial Aid Binder for Client Needs, undated

Box 7, Folder 7: Preliminary Design Contracts, Agreements, Bid Proposals, Instructions, Fees, undated

Box 7, Folder 8: Professional Principles and Procedures, 1981-1996

Box 7, Folder 9: Project Costs and Notes, undated

Box 7, Folder 10: Promotional Folders, Service Descriptions, undated

Box 7, Folder 11: Business Cards, Letterheads, Logos, circa 1996

Box 7, Folder 12: Cost Breakdown Sample, undated

Box 7, Folder 13: To-Do Lists, circa 2003-2004

Series IV: Academic and Personal Papers, 1975-2005, bulk 1990-1991

Scope and Content of Collection

Series IV includes coursework, notes, planners, photographs, certificates, resumes, references, and various biographical materials relevant to German's academic career and personal life.

Arrangement

Box 8 of Series IV is arranged by document type. Box 9 is arranged chronologically.

Box 8, Folder 1: Awards and Recognitions, 1998-2001

Box 8, Folder 2: Binder - Industrial Design Course at Canada College, 1990

Box 8, Folder 3: Binder - Kitchen Design Course at Canada College, 1991

Box 8, Folder 4: Binder - Lighting Course at Canada College, 1991

Box 8, Folder 5: Binder - Kitchen Design Product Catalog, 1991

Box 8, Folder 6: Binder - Structural Technology Seminar, undated

Box 8, Folder 7: Biographies, Resumes, References, circa 1990, 2005

Box 8, Folder 8: Coursework - Real Estate Principles at Foothill College, 1995

Box 8, Folder 9: Obituaries and Memorial Program, 2004

Box 8, Folder 10: Personal Organizers, 1991, 1994

Box 8, Folder 11: Photographs - Frank Lloyd Wright Studio, undated

Box 8, Folder 12: Photographs - Mendocino Furniture Exhibition, 1990

Box 8, Folder 13: Photographs - Personal, undated

Box 8, Folder 14: Portfolio I, undated

Box 8, Folder 15: Portfolio - Commercial, undated

Box 8, Folder 16: Portfolio - Residential, undated

Box 8, Folder 17: SJSU Academic History, 1975-1979

Box 9, Folder 1: Diploma - San Jose State University, 1982

Box 9, Folder 2: Certificate - California State Board of Architectural Examiners, 1988
Box 9, Folder 3: Certificate - American Institute of Architects, 1991