Bruce Buttfield renderings and photographs, circa 1930s-circa 1950s
KA.0007

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February 28, 2017
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
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Collection Overview

Repository Kellen Design Archives

Creator Buttfield, Bruce

Title Bruce Buttfield renderings and photographs

Date [inclusive] circa 1930s-circa 1950s

Extent 2.4 linear ft: 2 boxes, 4 oversize folders

Summary Interior decorator Bruce Buttfield (1897-1969) made his mark in the 1930s by creating distinctive furniture and rooms. In 1931, he designed the interior of the original Whitney Museum building on Eighth Street in New
York City. The collection includes photographs and color renderings of Buttfield interiors.

Preferred Citation note

[Identification of item], [date (if known)], Bruce Buttfield renderings and photographs, KA.0007, box __, folder __, New School Archives and Special Collections, The New School, New York, New York.

Biographical note

Arthur Bruce Buttfield (1897-1969) was born in Plainfield, New Jersey. He is known for his decoration of the original Whitney Museum, including furniture and administrative offices. The interior of the museum was unusual for its time in its resemblance to a private residence more than an institution. In 1929, Buttfield decorated rooms in the New York Junior League headquarters. Among his residential clients were Juliana R. Force, Charles S. McVeigh, G. Macculloch Miller, and John Nickerson.

The offices of Bruce Buttfield, Inc. -- billed as "interior architects and decorators"-- were located on East 73rd Street. Buttfield designed original furniture for clients.

Scope and Contents of Collection

The collection consists of photographs and renderings of residential spaces and furniture. The collection also includes a certificate from the American Institute of Interior Decorators, a client list, and a clipping about a residential project. The collection is divided into two main series by format.

The photographs are black and white prints, many by Samuel H. Gottscho. They depict bathrooms, bedrooms, decorative elements and furnishings, and living rooms. There is also one photograph of a swimming pool area. Many of the photographs and renderings in this collection are unidentified and undated. Identified photographs include Buttfield's clients: the Whitney Museum, Charles S. McVeigh, and G. Macculloch Miller, the architect of the Whitney Museum. Photographs of the Whitney feature various areas of the facility.

Renderings consist primarily of small-scale interior elevations, furniture, and three exploded plans. Several are signed, "F. Haag." Many of the elevations are unidentified by project, although furniture renderings are identified by client. Clients include the architect J. Lakin Baldridge, Madame Helena Rubinstein, and Lady Holton. None of the renderings feature dates.
Organization and Arrangement

Organized in 3 series:
I  Biographical, 1931-1935, undated
II  Photographs, circa 1930s-circa 1940s
III  Renderings, circa 1930s-circa 1950s

Administrative Information

Publication Information
Kellen Design Archives August 31, 2010

Conditions Governing Access note
Collection is open for research use. Please contact archivist@newschool.edu for appointment.

Use Restrictions
To publish images of material from this collection, permission must be obtained in writing from the New School Archives. Please contact: archivist@newschool.edu.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note
Collection donated to the Gimbel Library of Parsons School of Design prior to the establishment of the New School Archives.

Two renderings and a photograph received with donation of Stanley Barrows papers (KA.0002). These materials possibly constituted part of the original donation to Gimbel Library.

Related Materials
The Museum of the City of New York holds photographs taken in the early 1930s of interiors designed by Bruce Buttfield.

Keywords for Searching Related Subjects

Corporate Name(s)
• Whitney Museum of American Art. -- Pictorial works

Genre(s)
• Photographs.
• Renderings.

Subject(s)
• Furniture design -- United States -- 20th century -- Pictorial works.
• Interior decoration rendering.
• Interior decoration -- United States -- 20th century -- Pictorial works.
• Interior decorators.

Other Finding Aids note
For selected item-level description and images from the Bruce Buttfield renderings and photographs, see The New School Archives Digital Collections at http://digitalarchives.library.newschool.edu/index.php/Detail/collections/KA0007.

Collection Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series I. Biographical 1931-1935, undated</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate from American Institute of Decorators, 1931 and client list, undated</td>
<td>k_3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clipping: McCullough Miller apartment decorated by Buttfield, 1935</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series II. Photographs circa 1930s-circa 1940s</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General, 1920s-1940s</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>k_3</td>
<td>13-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation and editorial photographs, circa 1930s</td>
<td>OSx-1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six matted, black and white prints, possibly created in conjunction with Buttfield's affiliation with the American Institute of Interior Decorators, and three prints, which may have been furnished to Vogue magazine.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table setting, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whitney Museum and apartment of Juliana Force, 1930s</td>
<td>k_3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<p>| Series III. Renderings circa 1930s-circa 1950s |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploded plans</td>
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<td>Furnishings: General</td>
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<td>4-6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>k_OSx-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furnishings: Lady Holton [London]</td>
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<td>Interior elevations</td>
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<td>k_3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shells</td>
<td>k_3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 cut-outs shaped and painted as seashells.