
Guide to the Neutra Notebook Collection, c. 1950 (bulk circa 1950)

Special Collections Department

Robert E. Kennedy Library
1 Grand Avenue
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Neutra Notebook Collection,

Date (inclusive): circa 1950 (bulk circa 1950)

Collection number: MS 140

Creator: Neutra, Dion, 1926—

Neutra, Dione Niedermann, 1901-1990

Neutra, Richard Joseph, 1892-1970

Extent: 1 letter and 8 holographic leaves in buckram notebook, 8"x 5.25"

Language:

English

Repository: Special Collections, Robert E. Kennedy Library

California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, California 93407

Abstract: Collection contains a bound volume with holographic notes, probably in the hand of noted architect Richard Neutra's son, Dion, relating to the proposed relocation of the family's architectural practice to Glendale, California, circa 1950. Neutra is referred to in the third person throughout (generally as "R.JN"), and his wife, Dione, is referred to as "Mother" at least once in the text, which comprises the first 6 remaining leaves of the notebook (chiefly rectos only, in pencil; with a pencil sketch on verso of second leaf). The remainder of notebook is blank except for the last 5 leaves, which contain sketches of televisions and radios. Also included in the collection is a typescript of the last letter Dione Niedermann wrote to Richard Neutra before their wedding, dated December 16, 1922.

Provenance

Purchased from dealer, 2005

Access

Collection is open to qualified researchers by appointment only. For more information on access policies and to obtain a copy of the Researcher Registration form, please visit the Special Collections Access page.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of Item]. Neutra Notebook Collection, Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Abbreviations Used:

c.: circa

Biography

Influential architect Richard Neutra was born in Vienna, Austria, on April 8, 1892, the youngest of four children. In 1917, he graduated from the Technische Hochschule in Vienna. In 1922, he married Dione Niedermann, who was born on April 14, 1901. With his bride, Neutra moved to the U.S. in 1923, eventually joining his college friend, noted architect Rudolf Schindler, in southern California. Neutra's most important early work, the "Health House," was built in Los Angeles for Dr. P.M. Lovell in 1927-29. Neutra's work through the 1930s and 1940s advanced the International style, leading to the creation of his masterwork, the Kaufmann House in Palm Springs, in 1946-47. He died on April 16, 1970, in Wuppertal, Germany. Dione Neutra died in Los Angeles on September 1, 1990.

Dion Neutra is the second son of Richard and Dione Niedermann Neutra, born in California on October 8, 1926. He began work at the age of 11 in his father's office, eventually graduating cum laude from the University of Southern California. After graduation, he went to work full-time at the family firm, Richard and Dion Neutra Architecture, where he continues to practice as of this writing (August 2008). Neutra states that his "current interest, and principal focus, is to work on the preservation and adaptation of Neutra projects with a view to conserving as many of these icons as possible in the face of their attrition in the name of progress and change."

Sources

"Dion Neutra, Architect," <http://neutra.org/consultingcont.html>

California Birth Index, 1905-1995, Ancestry.com

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains a bound volume with holographic notes, probably in the hand of noted architect Richard Neutra's son, Dion, relating to the proposed move of the family's architectural practice to Glendale, California, circa 1950. Neutra is referred to in the third person throughout (generally as "RJN"), and his wife, Dione, is referred to as "Mother" at least once in the text, which comprises the first 6 remaining leaves of the notebook (chiefly rectos only, in pencil; with a pencil sketch on verso of second leaf). The remainder of notebook is blank except for the last 5 leaves, which contain sketches of televisions and radios.

Pro/con arguments for the move are listed in two sections — one headed "Possibility I if office must move to Glendale" and the other "Possibility II if office is moved to Glendale." There are references to "VDL," the Neutra VDL Research House I, designed and built in 1932 on Silver Lake Boulevard. The house is named after Cornelius H. van de Leeuw, a Dutch industrialist who met Neutra in Europe and offered to make him a loan so that the young architect could build an experimental house for himself and his family. An electrical fire destroyed the house in 1963, and the Neutra VDL Research House II, now owned by Cal Poly Pomona, replaced it.

Also included in the collection is a typescript of the last letter Dione Niedermann wrote to Richard Neutra before their wedding, dated December 16, 1922.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Neutra, Richard Joseph, 1892-1970 -- Career in Architecture

Neutra, Dion, 1926- -- Career in Architecture

Architecture, Modern -- 20th century -- United States

Architecture -- California -- Los Angeles -- 20th century

Architects -- United States -- Biography

Architects -- United States -- Correspondence

International style (Architecture) -- California -- Los Angeles

International style (Architecture) -- United States

Genre and Forms of Materials

Bound notebook

Correspondence

Related Material

Related Collections:

University of California, Los Angeles

Finding Aid for the Richard and Dion[e] Neutra Papers, 1925-1970

Box 1, Folder 1 **Neutra Notebook, circa 1950**

Box 1, Folder 2 **Transcript, Letter from Dione Niedermann to Richard Neutra, 16 December 1922**