

Weström, Hilde, Architectural Collection

Hilde Weström Architectural Collection

1952-2000



Title Statement

Weström, Hilde, Architectural Collection Hilde Weström Architectural Collection 1952-2000 Ms.1987.061

Author: Amy Shaffer, Archivist

Publication Statement

Publisher: Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries (0434)
560 Drillfield Drive
Newman Library, Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
Business Number: 540-231-6308
specref@vt.edu
URL: <http://spec.lib.vt.edu>



2004 (CC0 1.0)

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-07-30 07:03:33 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1987.061

Unit Date

1952-2000

Language

The materials in the collection are in German.

Abstract

The Hilde Weström Architectural Collection consists of biographical information about Weström's career and personal life, original watercolors she painted after her retirement, articles written by her and about her, photographs of Weström and her buildings, architectural drawings for nine of her projects, and some professional conference papers presented by other women at the 1984 UIFA meeting in Berlin. Weström (b. 1912) was an architect in Berlin, Germany.

Creator

Weström, Hilde, b. 1912

Extent

3.3 Cubic Feet 1 box; 4 oversize folders

Physical Characteristics

Some materials in the collection were matted for inclusion in "Glass Ceilings: Highlights from the IAWA Center" an exhibit held at the Virginia Center for Architecture, Richmond, VA, 2010.

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use

The copyright status of this collection is unknown. Copyright restrictions may apply. Contact Special Collections and University Archives for assistance in determining the use of these materials. Reproduction or digitization of materials for personal or research use can be requested using our reproduction/digitization form: <http://bit.ly/scuareproduction>. Reproduction or digitization of materials for publication or exhibit use can be requested using our publication/exhibition form: <http://bit.ly/scuapublication>. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives (specref@vt.edu or 540-231-6308) if you need assistance with forms or to submit a completed form.

Source of Acquisition

The Hilde Weström Architectural Collection were donated to the Special Collections in 1987 by their creator. Additions to the collection were given in 1988, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2006.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the Hilde Weström Architectural Collection was completed in March 2001. Reprocessing for EAD took place in September 2004.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Hilde Weström Architectural Collection, 1952-2000, Ms1987-061, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Hilde Weström (alternate spellings Westrom or Westroem, nee Eberle) was born in 1912 in Neisse, Upper Silesia, Germany (now part of Poland). She was one of the few women to enroll in the architectural program in 1932 at the Berlin-Charlottenburg Polytechnic Institute, where she studied under Heinrich Tessenow and Walter Andrea. Weström transferred to the Dresden Technical University in 1936. While still a student, she worked on the preservation and restoration of several churches.

After completing her studies in Dresden in 1938, Weström returned to Berlin. She established her own professional practice and married Jurgen Weström. In 1939, the first of her four children was born. Weström and her family moved to Breslau (now Wroclaw) in 1942, and returned to West Berlin at the end of World War II. She established an office and worked on designing toys and furniture. She also became involved in the evaluation and reconstruction or demolition of damaged buildings. Her interest in social housing projects was fueled by Berlin's need to rebuild after the war. Her public housing buildings were noted for their consideration for families and working mothers.

In 1952, Weström won a competition for her design of a housing project for the elderly in Berlin. In 1957, she designed a much-admired display apartment for the "City of Tomorrow" (die Stadt von Morgen) section of the international architectural exhibition "Interbau" that Berlin hosted. Over the next 30 years, Weström designed over 800 condominiums, apartment buildings, and subsidized housing units. She also entered and won numerous design competitions.

Though best known for designing functional and comfortable modern housing, Weström was interested in many facets of social building design, and in education and child development. She designed some schools, including an adaptive reuse project converting a bomb shelter into an elementary school (1950). She incorporated kindergarten and ballet spaces into social housing projects (1953). And she designed the Berlin-Zehlendorf kindergarten and music school and the Linthal school in Switzerland. She also designed housing for the elderly, student dormitories, and churches. Weström was interested in renovation and reuse of buildings as well as designing completely new structures.

Weström focused on the use of colors and forms to articulate space in all her projects. Her designs were at their most expressive when designing houses for poets and artists that incorporated their artistic goals, such as the home of Ursula Hanke-Forster, a Berlin sculptress (1964).

Weström retired in the mid 1980s, but continued to lead an active life, taking up painting and organizing a commemorative exhibition of works by her friend, artist Gerda Rotermund. Weström was a member of the BDA (Association of German Architects), GEDOK (Federation of Women Artists and Patrons of the Arts), UIFA (International Union of Women Architects), and IAWA (International Archive of Women in Architecture). In 2000, the Verborgene Museum at the Berlin-Pavilion held a retrospective exhibition of her work entitled "Hilde Weström - Structures 1947-1981."

For additional information, refer to the IAWA Database Entry for Hilde Weström.

Scope and Content

The Hilde Weström Architectural Collection consists of biographical information about Weström's career and personal life, original watercolors she painted after her retirement, articles written by her and about her, photographs of Weström and her buildings, architectural drawings for nine of her projects, and some professional conference papers presented by other women at the 1984 UIFA meeting in Berlin.

The biographical information about Weström includes vitae information and a portfolio scrapbook that lists her major works with accompanying articles and images. The "Interbau" model apartment is featured. In addition to the material about what she created in her professional career, this collection contains six landscape watercolors that Weström painted during her retirement.

Articles written by Weström review the situation of housewives and possible house plans for family living. There is also an autobiographical account of her life and philosophy. The articles about her include newspaper articles about her projects in the 1960s and 70s and articles about the exhibition of her work in 2000. Photographs in the collection show Weström at professional gatherings, as well as a 1957 cornerstone ceremony, interior views of her 1957 "Interbau" model home, and exterior views of buildings, many of which are not identified.

Drawings for nine of Weström's projects are included in this collection, representing schools, a university dormitory, housing projects, a parsonage, an apartment with an atelier and a home for the elderly. Drawings for each project may include site layouts, elevations, cross-sections and floor plans.

Weström also retained copies of the papers that speakers presented at the 1984 UIFA Congress held in Berlin. These papers and brief biographical sketches of four Czech women architects are also available in this collection.

Separated Material

The following items were transferred to SCUA's Rare Book Collection:

Hilde Weström: die Berliner Architektin: Bauten 1947-1981 (Berlin: Verein Das Verborgene Museum e.V., 2000).

Saure, Gabriele and Hilde Weström. *Gerda Rotermund: Leben und Werk*. (Berlin: Schwarz auf Weiss, 1985).

The following items were transferred to SCUA's Media Collection:

Hilde Weström Berlin Architektin, VHS, 1997

Portrait der Berliner Architektin, Hilde Weström, VHS, 2004

Related Archival Material

Additional information about Weström and her architectural projects is held by the Berlinische Galerie - Landesmuseum für moderne Kunst, Fotografie, und Architektur in Berlin, Germany.

Keywords

Architects

Architectural drawings (visual works)

International Archive of Women in Architecture (IAWA)

Women -- History

International Union of Women Architects

Existence and Location of Copies

Some of this collection has been digitized and is available online.

Rights Statement for Archival Description

The guide to the Hilde Weström Architectural Collection by Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, is licensed under a CC0 (<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/public-domain/cc0/>).

Arrangement

The collection is arranged according to format.

Description of Subordinate Components

Series I. Professional Papers

Unit Date 1957-2000

Articles about Weström

Unit Date 1965-2000

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Articles written by Weström

Unit Date 1967-1985

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Biographical Information

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Images of Weström at a cornerstone ceremony and in professional settings

Unit Date 1957-1965

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Portfolio

Unit Date 1967-1980

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

UIFA Congress, Berlin

Unit Date 1984

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 6-7 (folder)

UIFA Architects (Czech), biographical sketches of four Czech women

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Series II. Project Records

Unit Date 1954-1970

List of project plans in collection

box-folder 1 (box)
Container 9 (folder)

Project 90, Rudolf-Steiner-Schule in Berlin-Dahlem

Unit Date 1959
oversize Folder 1

Project 106, Blockbebauung for Block XVII at Berliner Strasse (now Otto-Suhr-Allee)-Gierkezeile-Schustehrusstrasse in Berlin-Charlottenburg

Unit Date 1954-1958
oversize Folder 2

Project 133, Haus der musischen Erziehung in Berlin-Zehlendorf

Unit Date 1962-1963
oversize Folder 1

Project 134, Studentenwohnhaus Clay-Allee 190 in Berlin

Unit Date 1963-1965
oversize Folder 1

Project 134a, Studenten-Campus at Garystrasse and Ecke Clay-Allee

Unit Date 1962-1963
oversize Folder 1

Project 140, Pfarrhaus Sudende at Ellwangerstrasse 11

Unit Date 1962-1964
oversize Folder 2

Project 144, Rontgenstrasse 13 in Berlin-Charlottenburg

Unit Date 1963-1965
oversize Folder 2

Project 145, Altenwohnheim at Eyke von Rebkowplatz 2

Unit Date 1964-1965
oversize Folder 1

Project 145, Altenwohnheim at Eyke von Rebkowplatz 2, drawings, matted

oversize Folder 4

Project 154, Bildhauer-Atelier mit Wohnung for Ursula Hanke-Forster at Teltower Damm 139 in Berlin-Zehlendorf

Unit Date 1965-1966
oversize Folder 1

Project 161, Primarschule Linthal in Glarus, Switzerland

Unit Date 1969-1970
oversize Folder 2

Unidentified Sketch

Unit Date n.d.
oversize Folder 1

Photographs of the Interbau project

Unit Date 1957

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Photographs of various projects

Unit Date 1952-1966

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Series III. Artwork

Unit Date 1965-1998

Eight works of art

Unit Date 1965-1998

oversize Folder 3