

Pontius, Geraldine Architectural Collection

Geraldine Pontius Architectural Collection

1966-1990



Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2021.003

Unit Date

1966-1990

Language

English .

Abstract

The Geraldine Pontius Architectural Collection contains individual renderings and drawing sets for 24 projects worked on by Pontius and 3 construction drawing sets she collected while working at I.M. Pei and Partners.

Creator

Pontius, Geraldine

Extent

1.75 Cubic Feet 19 oversize folders

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to publish material from the Geraldine Pontius Architectural Collection must be obtained from Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech. Ms. Pontius requests that anyone wishing to reproduce these materials do so under the terms of a CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 Creative Commons license, i.e., they must only use images for non-commercial purposes, derivatives are prohibited, and they must properly attribute them. Copyright for the collected I.M. Pei drawing sets was not transferred to the archives, and any right to reproduce these images must be sought from the originating firm.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Geraldine Pontius Architectural Collection was donated to the International Archive of Women in Architecture in late 2020.

Processing Information

Materials in the Geraldine Pontius Architectural Collection were arranged and described in spring of 2021.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Geraldine Carol Pontius was born on January 24, 1947, in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, to parents Paul Edward and Doris Norma (née Hesselmeyer) Pontius. She studied mathematics at Barnard College, earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1968, an education that informed her analytical and geometric approach to design. She continued her studies at the New York Studio of Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture before obtaining a Master of Architecture from Columbia University in 1975. Her early academic projects, including the American University Library and Welfare Island Housing, demonstrated a strong command of site planning and axonometric projection that would shape her professional work.

Pontius has worked as an architect, artist, and lecturer. Early in her career, she frequently collaborated with performance artist Laurie Anderson, appearing in the 1974 film *Dear Reader: How to Turn a Book into a Movie* and the multimedia production *United States, I-IV*, which premiered at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1983.

As an architect, she maintained a private practice while also working as a designer and draftsman for major firms including I.M. Pei and Partners, RTKL Associates, and Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates. Her independent projects included residential renovations, loft conversions, and commercial interiors, noted for careful spatial sequencing and detailed construction documentation. While at I.M. Pei and Partners and Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, she contributed to large institutional and urban projects through schematic design and development studies. At RTKL Associates, she served as lead architect for a South Street Office Tower (Commerce Place) in Baltimore, overseeing the development of what became the fourth tallest skyscraper in the city. She also contributed to numerous federal and civic courthouse projects in the 1990s, reflecting her engagement with public architecture, advanced building systems, and historically sensitive design.

Her work has been featured in exhibitions and publications including *Architectural Record*, *Progressive Architecture*, *Art in America*, and *Metropolis*. In 2015, she collaborated with poet Sarah Smith on a submission to *The Light Ekphrastic*, which paired Smith's poem with Pontius's photographic work from the Oklahoma City National Memorial. She continues to work as a visual artist and architect, splitting her time between Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Content Description

This collection consists primarily of architectural drawings and related project documentation created by Geraldine C. Pontius during her work with I.M. Pei and Partners, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF), RTKL Associates, Spillis Candela/Warnecke, and her independent practice. Materials include blue-line and mylar drawings, schematics, plans, elevations, sections, construction documents, renderings, notebooks, and limited printed and photographic materials.

Projects span residential, commercial, institutional, urban development, and federal courthouse work from the 1970s through the mid-1990s, including documentation related to Commerce Place and multiple county and U.S. courthouse projects. Her academic projects and select professional reference materials are also

included.

Keywords

International Archive of Women in Architecture (IAWA)
History of Women in Architecture

Accruals

Additional donations expected.

Arrangement

Items are arranged into Three series: project records (from projects Pontius worked on), other collected drawing sets (all created by I.M. Pei and Partners, collected and not worked on by Pontius, for reference or other purposes), and Personal Papers (her personal academic work, Published work, and a collection of work from Kohn Pedersen Fox). The first series is divided by architectural firm and further organized by project date. All of the documents are stored flat in map cases.

Description of Subordinate Components

Project records

I.M. Pei and Partners

Schematics, Kapsad Development, Tehran, Iran (12 Sheets)

Unit Date June 25, 1977 - February 14, 1978

oversize Folder 1

Design development drawing set, Gem City and Home Savings Headquarters, Dayton, OH (64 Sheets)

Unit Date July 14, 1978 - January 29, 1979

oversize Folder 2

Schematic presentation drawings, Charles Shipman Payson Building, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME, (12 Sheets)

Unit Date March 1979

oversize Folder 3

Construction drawing set, Charles Shipman Payson Building, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME (47 Sheets)

Unit Date July 21, 1980

oversize Folder 4

Partial plans, drawings done by Pontius, Charles Shipman Payson Building, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME (12 Sheets)

Unit Date June 25, 1981 - November 21, 1981

oversize Folder 5

Schematics, Square 290 (now known as Metro Center), Washington, D.C. (18 Sheets)

Unit Date November 13, 1981 - May 7, 1982

oversize Folder 6

Schematic drawings, National Gallery of Art - East Wing, Washington, D.C. (10 sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 7

Building and site schematics, Inmobiliaria Refotib, Mexico City (11 sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 7

Window wall diagrams, I.M. Pei and Partners - Window Wall Study (2 Sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 7

Elevations and sections of light fixture (Fisher Marantz Designers reference), Light Fixture Study, New York, NY (4 sheets)

Unit Date August 10, 1981

oversize Folder 7

Geraldine C. Pontius, Architect

Drawings for various projects, New York, NY

Unit Date 1976 - 1980

oversize Folder 8

Scope and Contents

Projects in this folder include

Schematics and schedules, Artist's Loft, 10 Leonard St., May 27, 1976 - July 26, 1976 (4 Sheets)

Schematics and schedules, Eakins/Martin Loft, Gilsey House, New York NY, July 1, 1981 (9 sheets)

Construction drawings, schematics, details, notes and plans, Apartments for Anne Parks, 211 West 22nd St., New York City, NY, September 9, 1980 - October 26, 1980 (26 sheets)

Plans, sections, and permit drawings Ayala Medical Office 211 West 22nd St., New York, NY, April 6, 1981 - May 11, 1981 (2 Sheets)

Plan and partial electrical layout, 533 Greenwich St., New York, NY March 13, 1978 (1 sheet)

Drawings for various projects, New York, NY

Unit Date 1982 - 1987

oversize Folder 9

Scope and Contents

Projects in this folder include:

Schematic drawings, elevations, sections, perspectives, and design alternates (Danola Residence feature), Danola Residence, Larchmont, NY, [July–November 1982] (56 sheets)

Plans and sections, 30 West 26th St., 12th Floor (Geraldine C Pontius Office Renovation), New York, NY, c. April 1981 (4 sheets)

Existing plans and preliminary drawings, Weiner Residence, New York, NY, January 29, 1987 (9 sheets)

Alteration plans, Unidentified residence, 507 W. 111 St., Apt. 2, August 6, 1983 - December 8, 1983 (5 sheets)

Drawings for various projects, New York, NY

Unit Date 1987 - 1989

oversize Folder 10

Scope and Contents

Projects in this folder include:

Bid set, Midtown Gourmet, One Penn Plaza Lobby, Midtown Candy Company, Inc., 500 E 83rd St., New

York City, NY, March 24, 1987 (15 sheets)

Plans, Pearman Renovation, 575 Park Ave., Apt. 1503, New York City, NY, October 23, 1987 - December 2, 1987 (1 sheet)

Schematics, Bergman Residence, 29-35 W 90 St., Apts. 9F and 9G, New York City, NY, March 22, 1988 - June 1, 1989 (2 sheets)

Drawings for various projects, New York, NY

Unit Date 1988 - 1989, undated

oversize Folder 11

Scope and Contents

Projects in this folder include:

Bid set, Sarut, Inc., Store, Offices, and Showroom, 107 Horatio St., New York City, NY, August 16, 1988 - April 4, 1989 (9 sheets)

Axonometric section and floor plan, Barricini Shop, New York, NY, April 1, 1988 (2 Sheets)

Floor plan, Sarut Offices and Showroom, New York, NY, August 12, 1988 (1 sheets)

Plans, Hwong Residence, 148 W 23rd St., New York City, NY, September 13, 1988 (1 Sheet)

Elevation, plans, and sections, Ziegler Residence Foyer and Stair, 9 Jones St., New York, NY, December 1988 (8 sheets)

Plans and notes, Ceppos and Rambaud Residence, 366 W 11th St., Apt. 10F, New York City, NY, December 7, 1988 - March 3, 1989 (1 Sheet)

Zoning Study and Diagram, Acosta and Gamba Townhouses, 451 Union St., Brooklyn, NY, December 22, 1988 (7 sheets)

Cabinet shop drawings and interior detailing, Glenn Partition, New York, NY, January 26, 1989 (7 sheet)

Schematics, Sullivan Residence, 822 Madison Ave., Third Floor, New York City, NY, March 27, 1989 (1 sheets)

Plans and sections, Incitti Residence, New York, NY, March 15, 1989 - July 28, 1989 (42 Sheets)

Measured drawing, Unidentified residence, 277 West End Ave., Apt. 10C, undated (1 sheets)

Site plans and housing calculations, Pueblo Nuevo (Housing Association Study), New York, NY, [undated] (2 Sheets)

Floor plans, Loft Conversion, 100 Houston St., New York, NY, [undated] (1 Sheet)

Drawings for various projects, NJ, PA, IL, MD, Unknown

Unit Date 1974 - 1996, Undated

oversize Folder 12

Scope and Contents

Projects In The Folder Include

Design development drawing set, Wilson Residence, Annandale, NJ August 16, 1974 (13 Sheets)

Plans, site plans, and elevations, Highway 31 Commercial Center, Clinton, NJ, October 18, 1974 (3 sheets)

Plans and elevations, Lamendola's Farmhouse, Clearfield, PA, [1975] (3 sheets)

Bathroom plans and reflected ceiling plan, Hunter's Rest, January 20, 1975 (3 sheets)

sectional drawings, News Stand Competition (Briggs Koshido and Pontius, Finalist Team), August 8, 1988 (1 sheets)

Massing plans, sections, and shaping sketches, 900 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL, [1989] (7 sheets)

Plans and elevations, Moose Mountain Farm, July 15, 1996 (2 sheets)

Kitchen plan and sections, Marilyn Pontius Kitchen February 1987 (4 sheets)

Yellow notebook from private practice, Geraldine C. Pontius Architects 1987

box-folder 1 (box)

Full Architectural Drawing Set, Commerce Place, Baltimore, MD (273 sheets)

Unit Date June 13, 1989 - January 1993

oversize Folder 13

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Design development drawing set and construction drawings, Reston Gallery, Reston, VA (13 sheets)

Unit Date October 23, 1990

oversize Folder 13

Design development drawing set and Notes A and S Roosevelt Field, Garden City, NY (16 sheets)

Unit Date February 18, 1991 - November 27, 1991

oversize Folder 13

box-folder 1 (box)

oversize 2 (box)

Front elevation drawing, A and S Federal Department Store, Brooklyn, NY (1 sheet)

Unit Date June 13, 1991

oversize Folder 13

Design sketches, Office Building, (8 Sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 13

Kohn Pedersen Fox

Office Work

Orange notebook with contact information, daylight evaluations, and schematics for a project, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, 1983

box-folder 1 (box)

Process and Finalized Construction Drawings, Park Center Development, Calgary, CA (24 Sheets)

Unit Date February 7, 1983 - March 18, 1983

oversize Folder 14

Full Architectural Drawing Set, Hyatt Regency, Greenwich CT July 16, 1984 - May 24, 1985 (29 Sheets)

Unit Date July 16, 1984 - May 24, 1985

box-folder Folder 14 (oversize)

Isometric views, elevations, plans, and building area tabulations, Penn's Landing Marina Booklet, Philadelphia, PA (10 sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 14

Office Records

Monograph documenting approximately 50 major projects with illustrations and project documentation (text by Paul Goldberger), Kohn Pedersen Fox Buildings and Projects, New York, NY

Unit Date 1976 - 1986

box-folder 1 (box)

Cochran Stevenson Donkerroet Architects

Rendered elevation and rendered site plan, Maryland Public Safety Training Center, Maryland, (1 sheet)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 15

Rendered elevation using Piranesi software, High School Addition, (1 sheet)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 15

Rendered site using Piranesi software, Fells Point Development, Fells Point, Baltimore, (1 sheet)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 15

Spillis Candela/ Warnecke

Firm profile and career overview materials, including Geraldine Pontius profile, Spillis Candela / Warnecke, (1 Folder)

Unit Date 1981 - 1986

box-folder 1 (box)

Design philosophy and methodological overview, project team information, axonometric drawings, and site plans, U.S. Courthouse, Beckley, WV (1 Folder)

Unit Date 1994

box-folder 1 (box)

Photographs of mechanical systems and glass roof, explanatory material on the Pilkington Planar roof system, plans, poster, and project brochure, Anne Arundel County Courthouse, Anne Arundel County, MD (1 Folder)

Unit Date March 11, 1994 - November 15, 1994

box-folder 1 (box)

box-folder 3 (box)

Developed site and floor plans, with newspaper clipping and project brochure, Northumberland County Courthouse, Northumberland County, VA (1 Folder)

Unit Date March 21, 1994 - May 31, 1994

box 1

Comprehensive project documentation including drawings, diagrams, renderings (Winter Garden and Courtyard), site photographs, and 1994 standard billing rates, Erie Federal Courthouse and Post Office, Erie, PA (1 Folder)

Unit Date April 20, 1994

box 1

Photographs and historical documentation of murals, including Pocahontas Saving John Smith by Paul Camus and Stuart's Raider at the Swollen Ford by Jared French, with proposed layout plans, U.S. Courthouse and Annex, Richmond, VA

Unit Date September 14, 1994 - October 10, 1994

box-folder 1 (box)

Firm timeline, written design concepts, and management plans for Block 10, U.S. Federal Building and Courthouse, Youngstone, Ohio, (1 Folder)

Unit Date January 1995 - December 1995

box 1

Collected drawings from I.M. Pei and Partners

Construction drawing set, FAA Air Traffic Control Tower, O'Hare Field, Chicago, IL (75 sheets)

Unit Date July 15, 1966

oversize Oversize Folder 16

Construction drawing set, Church Center Development, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, MA (15 sheets)

Unit Date July 22, 1968

oversize Folder 17

Construction drawing set, John Hancock Tower, Hancock Place, Boston, MA (45 sheets)

Unit Date August 4, 1969 - November 11, 1971

oversize Folder 18

Personal Papers

Student Projects

Site Plans, Plans, and Axonometric, American University Library, (11 sheets)

Unit Date 1973

oversize Folder 19

Design development drawing set, Wilson House Addition, (5 sheets)

Unit Date 1974

oversize Folder 19

Site plan, Indian Point Visitors Center, (1 sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 19

Project information and axonometric projection, Welfare Island Housing, (3 sheets)

Unit Date [undated]

oversize Folder 19

Biographical Entry

Issue featuring Kohn Pedersen Fox projects and work, Progressive Architecture Magazine, Stamford, Ct

Unit Date October 1983

box-folder 1 (box)

Biographical entry, Who's Who of American Women, 13th Edition

Unit Date 1983 - 1984

box 1