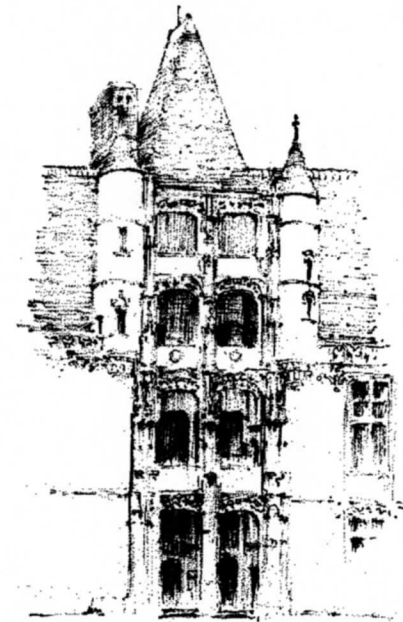


Quick Studies:
Sketches and Sketchbooks
by Pittsburgh Architects



Chapelaudum -
Apr 14, 1905.

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Sketches and Sketchbooks
by Pittsburgh Architects

Hunt Library
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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An Exhibit of the
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Carnegie Mellon University Libraries

Cover sketch by William Boyd.

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Curated by Martin Aurand, Archivist
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Architecture is ultimately and inevitably a cooperative process involving not only an architect or architects and client or clients but draftsmen, engineers, contractors, and laborers as well. The common products of architectural practice — working drawings and, subsequently, buildings — are most often the products of many hands.

Many architects, however, also create things that can be attributed to them alone, often made only with the aid of paper and a pen or pencil.¹ The act of sketching is generally a solitary act, explored perhaps as a child, exercised as a student, and for some, become a lifelong means of personal expression. Here is reflected none of the permanence of building, but rather the sudden grace of discovery and the flash of inspiration. Here the prevailing mode of operation is the quick study.

The sketch is often relegated to a scrap of tracing paper, or maybe a scratch pad from a supplier of building products. The sketchbook may be a spiral-bound notebook from Woolworth's, or an artists' quality leather-bound book. Sketches and sketchbooks may keep company with cost calculations, written notations, and hotel receipts. They are subject to coffee stains. But they serve vital if transitory purposes for the sketcher.

* * *

A primary impetus to sketching has long been travel. Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, those in the western world who could, traveled abroad. Initially these were travels of discovery, to lands whose culture and antiquities were little recorded. In the nineteenth century the practice of travel came to be viewed as a measure of professional competence for fledgling architects and became institutionalized through foreign competitions and fellowships. Sketching one's way through Europe became a common preoccupation of architecture students — in its most extravagant form, the so-called "Grand Tour." Those not able to travel abroad traveled their own city streets, or nearby rustic byways. All had a tendency to record their surroundings and exercise (or exorcise) their impressions and inspirations on paper.²

The value of travel and sketching was eloquently attested to by the noted architect and traveler Le Corbusier who wrote:

When one travels and works with visual things — architecture, painting or sculpture — one uses one's eyes and *draws*, so as to fix deep down in one's experience what one has seen. Once the impression has been recorded by the pencil, it stays for good, entered, registered, inscribed.... To draw oneself, to trace the lines, handle the volumes, organize the surface... all this means first to look, and then to observe and finally perhaps to discover... and it is then that inspiration may come.... *Others* stood indifferent — but you *saw!*

In short,

By working with our hands, by drawing, we enter the house of a stranger and are enriched by the experience. We learn.³

* * *

The learning and the sketching was intended to carry over into the architect's professional life as well. The Ecole des Beaux Arts, for a century the world's premier architecture school, taught a method of design that was rooted in the *esquisse*, a small-scale sketch plan which was to form the basis for an entire architectural design. For many architects, the so-called thumbnail sketch — or ideogram, or *parti*, which may summarize an entire project in a few loose strokes, is the earliest phase of the design process. It is a means of stimulating thought and exercising the first flickers of imagination — graphic thinking as it were. This is what architects reputedly draw on napkins in smoky restaurants. A group of thumbnail sketches may represent disparate approaches to a design program, subtle variations in the working out of a single theme, the chronological development of a design, or a range of possibilities from which a final design may be assembled.⁴

H. H. Richardson, for instance, explored his architectural ideas in tiny thumbnail sketches which he then turned over to his designers and draftsmen for development and drawing. The sketches alone are in Richardson's hand.⁵ For other architects, sketch techniques may influence their formal rendering style.

* * *

Occasionally such work has been published. Volumes of journals and sketches document Benjamin Henry Latrobe's early travels in the United States, and sketches of exotic lands and local subjects were commonly published in architectural periodicals such as *Pencil Points*, particularly during the Depression years.⁶ A multi-volume series documents countless sketches by Le Corbusier, and his sketchbook series *Voyage d'Orient*, initially published at his behest, has recently been republished in a facsimile edition that shows every original smudge.⁷ Critical commentary has appeared on sketches by architects such as Erich Mendelsohn and Louis Kahn.⁸ Sketches by contemporary architects such as Norman Foster have been published in sumptuous editions, and the Canadian Centre for Architecture recently mounted an exhibition of architects' sketches.⁹

More commonly, architects' sketches and sketchbooks have been relegated to forgotten corners of house and studio. Since their principle value to their maker lay in their making, that spent, they are often forgotten. Nevertheless, when they are preserved, they provide personal insight into the mind of the architect and are of great value to students and scholars.

* * *

This exhibit features a selection of sketches and sketchbooks produced by architects in the Pittsburgh area who have made the quick study a vital part of their lives and careers.

Notes:

¹ Architects may also employ other means of personal expression such as painting or the crafting of models and other three-dimensional objects. See, for example, *Architects + Artifacts* (Pittsburgh: The Society for Art in Craft, 1991).

² See Edward Kaufman, "Architecture and Travel in the Age of British Eclecticism," in Eva Blau and Edward Kaufman, eds., *Architecture and Its Image: Four Centuries of Architectural Representation* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1989), 58-85.

³ Le Corbusier, *Creation is a Patient Search* (New York: Praeger, 1960), 37, 203.

⁴ See Paul Laseau, *Graphic Thinking for Architects and Designers* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1989).

⁵ See James O'Gorman, *H. H. Richardson and His Office* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard College Library, 1974), 2-36.

⁶ Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *The Journals of Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1799-1820* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); Irving K. Pond, "Traveling with a Fountain Pen," *American Architect* 130 (1926), 349-356, 435-442.

⁷ Le Corbusier, *Le Corbusier Sketchbooks* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981); Le Corbusier, *Voyage d'Orient: Carnets* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988).

⁸ Hans Rudolf Morgenthaler, *The Early Sketches of German Architect Erich Mendelsohn (1887-1953): No Compromise with Reality* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1992); Jan Hochstim, *The Paintings and Sketches of Louis I. Kahn* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991).

⁹ Norman Foster, *Norman Foster: Sketches* (Basel and Boston: Birkhäuser, 1992); Carol McMichael Reese, et. al., *The Architect's Sketchbook: Current Practice* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1992).

Frederick J. Osterling (1865-1934)

A few items of juvenilia are all that remain of the personal work of this important and well-traveled Pittsburgh architect. They are ironic survivors among the architect's records, many of which were lost in floods that inundated his riverfront studio and office. Drawing exercises executed in the format of a published system of drawing instruction, and freehand sketches of a rose, a horse named Dan, and a trio of European (?) scenes reveal Osterling's early self-education with a pencil and doubtless represent numerous similar childhood creations of architects-to-be.

One sketch, signed *Fred*, includes the youthful sketcher's own tombstone. The date on the tombstone — January 21, 1881 — may date this drawing to Osterling's 15th year.

Exhibits:

- exercises: ornamental forms and spiral lines, n.d.
- exercises: historical ornament, n.d.
- sketch, 1881 (?)

Gift of Osterling's grand-nephew, John Axtell.

Henry Hornbostel (1867-1961)

Having graduated from Columbia University, and worked for a time in an architectural office, Henry Hornbostel commenced upon a tour of Europe in the Spring of 1893 before taking up additional study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris the following Fall. Hornbostel's travels in Morocco, Spain, Italy, and France were recorded in great detail in a sketchbook and diary, portions of which survive. These were organized according to the itinerary of travel, the major elements of which can be recreated in part as follows:

Gibraltar → Tangiers → Gibraltar → Granada → the Alhambra → Seville → Cordova → Gibraltar → Genoa → Naples → Pompeii → Amalfi → Salerno → Sorrento → Naples → Palermo → Rome → ... → Tivoli → Pisa → Bologna → Venice → ... → Chartres → Chateaudun → Vendome → Tours → Blois → Orleans → ... → Paris

Sketches range from entire building elevations to minor brick details, and diary entries include elaborate architectural descriptions. The notation *Idea* appears repeatedly in both diary and sketchbook, often with an explanation of a likely subsequent use for the item in question (e.g. this elevation would be good for a bank; or this motif could be executed in Guastavino tile). Hornbostel was not merely soaking in his surroundings, but was thinking ahead to the application of what he had learned. These notations should ultimately be studied for their relationships, if any, to Hornbostel's later professional work.

Young Henry was not totally preoccupied by architectural observation, however — the diary includes a running mention of encounters with fair members of the opposite sex, a not uncommon feature of young men's (and young architects') diaries. And the sketchbook includes five pages of expense accounts (including gondola charges) from May 1893.

At the Ecole, Hornbostel became known as *l'homme perspectif* ["Mr. Perspective"] because of his drawing ability, and went on to become one of his generation's

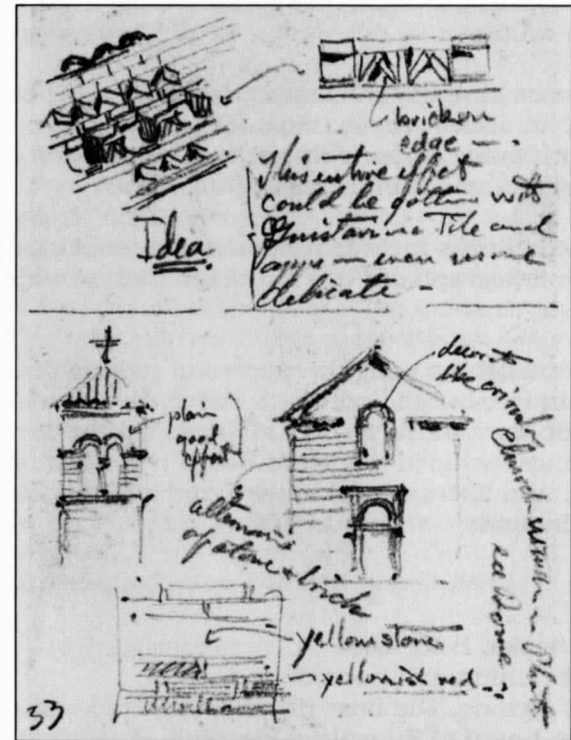
most admired architectural renderers, successful architectural competitors, and respected architectural designers.¹ Among his greatest achievements was the campus of Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon University).

¹ See Francis S. Swales, "Master Draftsmen / XVII-Henry Hornbostel," *Pencil Points* 7:2 (February 1926), 73-92.

Exhibits:

- diary, 1893
- sketchbook, 1893

Gift of Hornbostel's granddaughter, Martha Hornbostel.



William Boyd (1882-1947)

Three sketchbooks record William Boyd's travels in Europe in circa 1907-1909. There is one sketchbook each for France, Italy, and England. Each has a distinct character. All contain exquisite pencil sketches and occasional watercolors, e.g. of stained glass. Subjects run the full gamut of architectural perspectives, elevations, and details of buildings.

In the vicinity of Tours, France, for example, Boyd recorded architectural subjects ranging from cathedrals to the Home of Tristan the Hermit (1450). He made numerous drawings of hardware, such as hinges, and included pencil rubbings made on-site from brass plates (especially in England). Boyd also had an eye for the scenery, plantings, and native peoples encountered along the way — from a woman washing her clothes along a city curb, to a French waiter.

Boyd must have lingered longer over his sketchbook in France than elsewhere, as this book is superior to the others with many pages of fine artistic work. In Italy, Boyd lingered mostly on ceiling details.

The sketchbooks include partial itineraries. One has a glued-in photograph of Boyd and a companion with their touring bicycles.

After establishing a highly successful professional practice in Pittsburgh (Ingham & Boyd), Boyd continued his artistic work in the form of etchings and watercolors. His etchings included the firm's Board of Education Building, and likenesses of himself and his partner, Charles Ingham.

Exhibits:

- sketchbooks, 1907-1908
- copy of etching, self-portrait, n.d.
- copy of etching, The Boss [Charles Ingham], n.d.
- etching, Board of Education Building, Pittsburgh, 1933

Gift of Boyd's son, William Boyd, Jr.

Frederick G. Scheibler, Jr. (1872-1958)

Frederick G. Scheibler, Jr. was said to have been fond of drawing when a child; but he never traveled abroad — or much of anywhere else, and his tutelage as an apprentice was little given to self-exploration. Nevertheless, Scheibler developed into a creative designer, inspired by the progressive architectural movements of turn-of-the-century Europe, which he learned about from architectural publications.

Scheibler commonly laid out his initial ideas in sketches on scrap paper. A series of Scheibler's sketches and notes survives on pages of a 1915 calendar from Dodge Reports, a distributor of information on construction projects. These sketches depict the working out of the floor plan and elevation of a house, and include ideas for the custom-designed art glass that grace his delightful houses and apartment buildings.

A sketch of Scheibler's Highland Towers apartment building is found on a large sheet of paper that Scheibler was using to work out some structural details for the building. Presumably, the building design was already established by this time and the sketch was merely a spontaneous exercise, a momentary spot-check. It succinctly explores the massing of the building in a combination of two two-point perspectives. The point of view changes from the left two-thirds of the sketch to the right third of the sketch.

Exhibits:

- sketches, 1915
- photograph of sketch, Highland Towers, circa 1914

Loaned by Thomas Sutton. Gift of Franklin West.

Edward B. Lee (1876-1956)

An extraordinary output of over 1500 sketches, most completed between 1920 and 1945, reveal Edward B. Lee's affection for sketching as a tool for recording his surroundings and as a recreational and artistic pursuit. As recalled by Lee's son:

... the love of his life was his sketchbook.... His life was his work; and he saw beauty in industry, dignity in being busy and useful, and a sense of orderliness and uplift that stemmed from being able to do his sketches after an accomplished task, as some would enjoy a walk at twilight after a good day's work.... He was never without his full set of colored pencils (he even carried a duplicate set), his standard sketch pad, ruler, knife and board. He could set up shop instantly almost anywhere, although it must be presumed that many of his sketches were made from the window of a Pullman car as he traveled by train to his various jobs in different towns around the tri-state area. He worked methodically and he never started a new sketch until the old one was completed.¹

As noted by fellow architect and habitual sketcher Robert M. Schmertz:

Mr. E. B. Lee is the originator, promoter and winner hands down of [the] Kohinoor Derby, with the rest of us sketchers trailing so far in the rear that we could be indicated by a well-sharpened 6-H pencil.... To glance through the sketch books is a revelation. We continually come upon expert delineations of subjects which we ourselves always intended to sketch ourselves someday if the sun happened to be out, or if it was not too hot or cold, or if we could manage to get up some Sunday morning. Again and again we received the impression of a ghostly sketcher filtering in through key-holes, suddenly appearing here in the aisle of a church, there in a littered back-alley, or far afield in a country lane... All of the sketches are done in the dash 'em off and forget 'em manner which gives them vim, zip, and hoop-oo-p-a-doop...²

Lee's sketch technique also appeared in sketch renderings for some of his professional projects, such as the Elks Temple at Punxatawney, Pennsylvania.

¹ Edward B. Lee, Jr., *A Pencil in Penn: Sketches of Pittsburgh and Surrounding Areas* (Pittsburgh: 1970), 9.

² Robert M. Schmertz, "About Sketching and Sketchers, One in Particular," *Charette* (January 1930), 1-2.

Exhibits:

- sketch, Koppers Building, Pittsburgh, n.d.
- sketch, First Baptist Church, Pittsburgh, 1925
- sketch, B&O R. R. from Mgt. [Morgantown] to Pgh. [Pittsburgh], near Connellsville, 1926
- sketch, High & Walnut Streets, Morgantown, 1923
- sketch rendering, Elks Temple, Punxatawney, circa 1922
- Edward B. Lee, Jr., *A Pencil in Penn: Sketches of Pittsburgh and Surrounding Areas* (Pittsburgh: 1970)

Gift of Lee's son, Edward B. Lee, Jr.



Benno Janssen (1874-1964)

At the 1907 Pittsburgh Architecture Club exhibition, Benno Janssen exhibited travel sketches from his years of European study, and project sketches from the early years of his professional career. These "broadly-handled pencil or sanguin studies" were praised in a review in the *American Architect*.¹ (Sanguin is red crayon or chalk.) Subsequently, a biographical sketch of Janssen, published in 1915, expressed admiration for his "remarkable ability of architectural expression" and his "rapidly made drawings."²

Janssen's professional career encompassed a wide range of prominent buildings for prominent clients, and his firm often hired professional renderers. His houses seem to have been closest to his heart, however, and these were drawn in his own hand, in a manner recognizable from the above descriptions. Handsome sketch renderings display a freehand style of bold simple lines and lots of white space, rapidly executed in pen and reddish watercolor wash. This style was highly consonant with the sharp outlines and planer surfaces of his county house manner, and in Janssen's case, his sketching may have literally influenced his designing.

¹ G. B. Ford, "A Great Exhibition," *American Architect* 92:1666 (November 30, 1907), 178.

² *The Brickbuilder* 24:5 (May 1915), 128.

Exhibits:

- plates of sketches, Country Club at Ross Mountain, PA and Vauclain house, in Pittsburgh Architecture Club, *Catalog of the Fourth Exhibition* (Pittsburgh: 1907)
- sketch rendering, Sketch for Country House, 1925
- sketch rendering, Sketch for Country House and Farm Buildings, 1925

Gift of John E. Pekruhn.

Dahlen K. Ritchey (1910-)

Dahlen K. Ritchey is known for his large-scale urban architecture of Pittsburgh's Renaissance era, projects such as Mellon Square, the Civic Arena, and Three Rivers Stadium. But Ritchey has been sketching since his youth and the walls of his home are covered with his drawings and watercolors. Many of the sketches were done during Ritchey's travels in Europe in 1935 while he resided in Rome (with roommate Eero Saarinen). He sketched both historic and contemporary subjects. Two contrasting examples were published in *Charette*, the magazine of the Pittsburgh Architectural Club.

Ritchey continued to sketch on later trips abroad, and continues today in retirement.

Exhibits:

- plate of sketch, Petit Palais, Paris, in *Charette* 16:7 (July 1936)
- sketch, Petit Palais, Paris, 1935
- plate of sketch rendering, Rotterdam, in *Charette* 17:8 (August 1937)
- sketch, St. Mark's, Venice, 1969

Gift of Dahlen K. Ritchey.

Peter Berndtson (1909-1972)

Peter Berndtson was trained at Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin East where he absorbed Wright's principles of architectural design. Berndtson first explored his ideas in thumbnail sketches of floor plans, sketched in pencil on whatever paper was handy, and often accompanied by cost calculations and notes. Plans were drawn, drawn over, revised, and started again.

Berndtson's plans are generally based on a geometric form utilized as a repetitive module. In sketches for the Fenton house, he utilized a diagram to indicate desired relationships between certain components of the house.

Exhibits:

- sketches, Fenton house, circa 1967
- sketches, Lipkind Cabin, circa 1969

Gift of Berndtson's daughters, Indira Berndtson and Anna Berndtson Coor.

Arthur Lubetz (1940-)

Arthur Lubetz and his associates like to explore new ideas with models — sketch models as it were — made of cardboard, plastic, wood, and other materials, which can be easily manipulated for spatial variations.

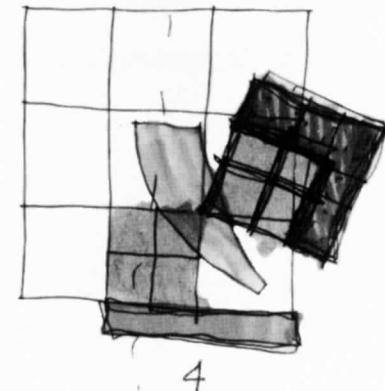
They also sketch, however, to systematically and not-so-systematically explore ideas. As Lubetz's architecture is very much a matter of volumes, the sketches focus primarily on plans and perspectives, searching for a bold geometry. And the sketches are colorful, as are the buildings. Most are on tracing paper, though at least one, exhibited here, is on a post-it note.

In the Mistick house sketches, key geometric forms are arranged and rearranged in plan. In the Bennett Place sketch, key architectural components — plaza, monument, slab, house, and tower — are enumerated and then assembled into a plan, which ultimately formed the basis for the completed building.

Exhibits:

- sketch, Bennett Place, circa 1987
- sketches, Mistick house, circa 1989
- sketches, 24 Units in 9 Squares, circa 1988-1989

Gift of Arthur Lubetz.



UDA Architects

Ray Gindroz, principal of UDA Architects has an annual tradition of traveling abroad and recording his observations in a sketchbook. He then publishes a selection of his sketches in a small booklet called *Pages from a Sketch Book*.

This proclivity toward sketching is also evident in the products of the firm. UDA Architects produces illustrated reports for many of its planning projects, and the illustrations are largely drawn with sketch techniques, generally by Paul Ostergaard. In some cases, like the cover illustration for a report for the Crawford Square project in Pittsburgh, photography provides the basis for a sketch-like rendering. A slide is projected onto paper and the image is traced in a sketchy manner to provide a base drawing, which is then altered to depict the proposed project.

For a project in Hawaii, sketches by various UDA architects were incorporated into a study that analyzed traditional housing, and its relevance for future development in the region. These sketches are in the tradition of travel sketches, but function as project sketches.

Exhibits:

- Ray Gindroz, *Pages from a Sketch Book* (Pittsburgh: UDA, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992)
- report, Crawford Square, circa 1991
- report, North Beach Sketchbook, 1993
- sketchbook of Paul Ostergaard, circa 1992

Gift of UDA Architects. Loaned by UDA Architects.

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

Sketching is not *always* a solitary act.

With offices in Pittsburgh, Wilkes-Barre, Philadelphia, and Seattle, the architects of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson often communicate with one another through sketches. Architects in each office work collaboratively, and principal Peter Bohlin reviews and participates in the design of all major projects, whether around a drawing table, or by fax. Therefore, many BCJ sketches are overdrawn by more than one hand. Some of the sketches shown here, for example, are by Peter Bohlin, some are by Rob Pfaffmann, and some are by both. Bohlin drew the loose sketch shown below in order to loosen up the firm's preliminary designs for the University of Pittsburgh Biotechnology and Bioengineering Center.

The firm also tends to utilize a sketch-like rendering style as shown by the sketch rendering — a hand-colored photocopy — of the soon-to-be-built Carnegie Mellon Research Institute.

Exhibits:

- sketch, University of Pittsburgh Biotechnology and Bioengineering Center, Pittsburgh Technology Center, circa 1988-1989
- sketches, Carnegie Mellon Research Institute, Pittsburgh Technology Center, circa 1991-1992
- sketch rendering, Carnegie Mellon Research Institute, Pittsburgh Technology Center, circa 1992

Loaned by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson.



Bruce Lindsey (1953-)

Bruce Lindsey is Assistant Professor of Architecture at Carnegie Mellon, principal in the firm of Bruce Lindsey Paul Rosenblatt Associates, and an award winning metalsmith. He has been maintaining sketchbooks since he was directed to keep one for a class in art school in 1974. For Lindsey, sketchbooks have become a repository of the flotsam and jetsam of the artistic, architectural, and academic life. Richly varied, the sketchbooks include sketches of furniture and architectural designs, paintings, found and acquired items (pasted in), writings, found quotes, etc., as well as notes on architectural pedagogy and diagrams of the work of his students.

The sketchbooks exhibited here post-date Lindsey's arrival in Pittsburgh. Two document travel in Rome and others contain sketches for the Niches Project at Carnegie Mellon's College of Fine Art and other architectural projects.

Exhibits:

- sketchbooks, 1989-1992
- sketchbooks, Rome, 1990

Loaned by Bruce Lindsey.

Additional Exhibits

- A selection of sketches and sketchbooks submitted for publication in a special September 1993 "Doodles" issue of *Columns*, the magazine of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.
- Sketches and sketchbooks by Carnegie Mellon University students.

Carnegie Mellon University Architecture Archives

The Carnegie Mellon University Architecture Archives actively collects architectural records associated with Pittsburgh and the tri-state area. Collections include project files, photographs, and more than 10,000 drawings documenting work of hundreds of architects. The Architecture Archives welcomes research inquiries and gifts of architectural records.

For information call (412) 268-8165.

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