



# Smithsonian Gardens

## Boris V. Timchenko collection

Alanna Natanson

2020

Archives of American Gardens  
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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Arrangement.....	3
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	3

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Gardens
<b>Title:</b>	Boris V. Timchenko collection
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAG.TIM
<b>Date:</b>	1919-1975
<b>Extent:</b>	3 Cubic feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Timchenko, Boris V., 1898-1975 Boris Timchenko and Associates
<b>Language:</b>	Multiple languages  English, Russian, French, German
<b>Summary:</b>	The Boris V. Timchenko collection includes project files, business records, and personal papers of Boris Timchenko, a modernist landscape architect based in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area known for his work on The Watergate Development and the annual National Capital Flower and Garden Show.

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Boris Timchenko deeded his professional records and personal papers to his sister, Varvara V. Sukacev, who lived in Washington, D.C. Sukacev in turn deeded the materials to her caregiver. The caregiver deeded them to her niece, Sandra Fletcher. Fletcher gave the collection to Gayley Knight, a researcher writing a history of The Watergate Complex for its fiftieth anniversary. Knight donated the collection, along with digital surrogates of the documents, several translations of foreign-language documents, and a timeline from her research, to the Archives of American Gardens.

### Processing Information

Digital surrogates of collection holdings were processed by Archives of American Gardens intern Alanna Natanson in 2020.

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Gardens, Boris V. Timchenko Collection.

### Restrictions

Access to original images by appointment only. Researcher must submit request for appointment in writing. Certain items may be restricted and not available to researchers. Please direct reference inquiries to the Archives of American Gardens: [aag@si.edu](mailto:aag@si.edu).

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## Biographical / Historical

Boris Timchenko (1898-1975) was a modernist landscape architect based in the Washington, D.C. area. Boris Vladimir Timchenko, who occasionally spelled his last name "Timtchenko" early in his life, was born in Tambov, Russia on October 1, 1898 to Vladimir Peter Timchenko and Nataly Nazarewsky. He lived in Lipetsk, Russia until he attended Moscow University from 1916-1918. From 1918-1920, he served in the White Russian Army but fled to France when Communist Bolsheviks defeated his army. He studied landscape architecture at what he termed a "Horticulture School" (possibly the École Nationale Supérieure d'Horticulture) in Versailles until 1924, and earned a degree in Agricultural Engineering at the École Nationale de Agriculture de Grignon in Grignon, France in 1926. A year later, he emigrated to the United States and worked for a landscape contractor, A. Gude Sons & Company, in Washington, D.C.

Timchenko started his own landscape architecture firm, Boris Timchenko and Associates, in Washington in 1938. Along with his colleague Leonard Bartlett, Jr., Timchenko designed outdoor spaces in the D.C. metropolitan area, Pennsylvania, and coastal Florida. He is perhaps best known as being the landscape architect for The Watergate Development in Washington, D.C. and the consulting designer for the National Capital Flower and Garden Show from 1950 to 1967. He also created private gardens for notable clients such as former First Lady Mamie Eisenhower and the Auchincloss family, owners of Hammersmith Farm in Newport, Rhode Island. Organizations and businesses, such as the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in D.C. and the historic Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria, Virginia, hired him as well. Timchenko was a member of professional organizations including the American Institute of Landscape Architects (later American Society of Landscape Architects) and the Texas Association of Nurserymen, and he was a founding member of the Russian Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in D.C. By the time he died in 1975, Timchenko had contributed significantly to the design of D.C.'s urban landscape.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection contains the professional files of landscape architect Boris V. Timchenko. These include architectural drawings and photographic prints from landscape design projects; a client list; brochures Timchenko used to promote his firm; and photographic prints showing him at work. There are a few architectural drawings related to his work on The Watergate Development in 1965 and many photographic prints from the National Capital Flower and Garden Show dated 1950-1961. The collection also contains some personal papers, including forms and licenses Timchenko acquired from the Russian and United States governments; certificates from a French university he attended; correspondence; portraits and photographic prints of his leisure activities; and newspaper profiles and obituaries about him. The collection documents only a portion of Timchenko's known professional design work and personal life.

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged into three series. Series 1: Project Files (arranged alphabetically by state and city). Series 2: Business Records (arranged by format, with Subseries 3: Photographs arranged alphabetically by state and city, then event). Series 3: Personal Papers (arranged by format).

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Department stores
- Flower shows
- Gardens -- United States
- Hotels -- Washington (D.C.)
- Landscape architecture
- Landscape design
- Office buildings

### Types of Materials:

- Application forms
- Architectural drawings
- Brochures
- Certificates
- Clippings
- Correspondence
- Diplomas
- Photographs
- Plans (drawings)

### Geographic Names:

- Watergate Gardens (Washington, D.C.)