



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Alfons Bach Papers

NMAH.AC.1272

NMAH Staff

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Alfons Bach Papers
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1272
Date:	1934 - 1992
Extent:	6 Cubic feet (5 boxes)
Creator:	Bach, Alfons, 1904-1999
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

All materials were donated by Alfons Bach in 1993.

Provenance

The collection was transferred to the Archives Center from the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in 2012.

Related Archival Materials

431 drawings of designs for furniture, textiles, lamps, pianos, clocks, appliances, and retail, office, and home interiors., Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Drawings and Prints Department.

Processing Information

Collection is unprocessed.

Preferred Citation

Alfons Bach Papers, 1934-1992, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

Collection open for research on site by appointment. Unprotected photographs must be handled with gloves.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Industrial designer, architect, and painter. Born in Germany, 1904. Bach studied film directing and design in Europe. He turned to industrial design upon immigrating to the United States in 1926. His design work from 1932-53 include a Philco radio, furniture for Heywood-Wakefield, carpets for Bigelow-Sanford, and appliances for General Electric. Bach designed and built his own home in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1938.

In the late 1940s, he developed a plan for one of the first shopping malls in America, the Ridgeway Center of Stamford. He remodeled the interior and exterior of Sach's furniture store, 1948-49, and redesigned the Seneca Textile Building on 34th Street in Manhattan in 1952. Bach moved to Florida in 1959, where he designed the Palm Trail Plaza, a marina apartment complex in Delray Beach, completed in 1961. In addition, Bach was also a noted painter. His watercolors were featured in numerous exhibitions in the United States and Europe.

Scope and Contents

Biographical files cover the period from 1938-1989 and include resumes, clippings, correspondence, certificates, awards, speeches, brochures for exhibitions, and artwork. Project files cover the period from 1934-1961 and contain clippings, catalogs, brochures, and scrapbooks. This collection documents Bach's work as an industrial designer, architect, and painter from 1934-1992.

The files on the Ridgeway Center mall are particularly extensive. Photographs cover the period from 1937-1961 and document Bach's design projects, particularly the Ridgeway Center, his house in Stamford, and the Miami and New York offices of Callaway Mills. Portraits of Bach and his family are included as well. Glass lantern slides document seven of Bach's interior and exterior design projects. Also included are several signed and numbered prints of Bach's watercolor scenes of the Riviera.

Arrangement

Materials are arranged chronologically within four series.

Series 1: Biographical files, 1938-1989

Series 2: Project files, 1934-1961

Series 3: Photographs, 1937-1961

Series 4: Glass Slides

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Apartment houses
Architecture -- Designs and plans
Carpets -- United States

Design, Industrial -- United States
Display of merchandise
Furniture design -- United States
Interior decoration -- United States
Radio -- Receivers and reception
Shopping malls -- United States
Watercolor painting -- United States

Types of Materials:

Aerial Photographs
Awards
Certificates
Clippings
Exhibition catalogs
Photographs -- 20th century
Plans
Proposals
Scrapbooks
Sketches
Slides
Speeches
Writings

Names:

Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company
Callaway Mills
Cooper-Hewitt Design Archive
General Electric Company
Heywood-Wakefield Company
Palm Trail Plaza
Philco Corporation
Ridgeway Center
Sach's New York
Seneca Textile Building

Occupations:

Architects -- United States
Industrial designers -- United States

Container Listing

Box 1	Biographical files, project files
Box 2	Photographs
Box 3	Biographical files, project files, photographs
Box 4	Biographical files, project files
Box 5	Lantern slides (glass)