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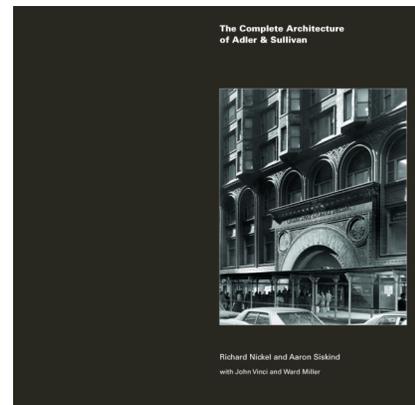
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**ARCHIVE OF ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHER RICHARD NICKEL GOES TO ART
INSTITUTE'S RYERSON AND BURNHAM LIBRARIES**

Significant Collection Includes Contact Sheets, Documents, Drawings, and More

The **Richard Nickel Committee**—a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and making accessible the images and research work of architectural photographer **Richard Nickel** (1928–1972)—has recently donated Nickel's archive documenting the work of Dankmar Adler, Louis H. Sullivan, and other noted Chicago architects to the Art Institute of Chicago's Ryerson & Burnham Libraries. The **Richard Nickel Archive** includes approximately 15,000 negatives, photographs, contact sheets, items of correspondence, documents, architectural drawings and reproductions, digital image files, realia, and other effects, including Nickel's personal library. Everything in the archive was created or owned by Richard Nickel or by the Richard Nickel Committee.



The acquisition of the Nickel archive makes the Art Institute the premier repository in the nation for architectural photography and enhances its holdings of materials on Adler & Sullivan, already the strongest collection in the world. Jack Perry Brown, Director of the Ryerson & Burnham Libraries at the Art Institute, said of the Nickel Committee gift: "Adler & Sullivan is central to the story of American architecture and their work remains of enduring interest. As they have since the 1920s, scholars will now more than ever come to the Burnham Library of Architecture to take fresh inspiration from the rich resources available here and nowhere else. We are deeply grateful

to the Richard Nickel Committee for this gift, which accomplishes Richard Nickel's own wish that his work be housed at the Art Institute."

Richard Nickel dedicated his life to photographing the buildings of the architectural firm of Adler & Sullivan as well as other significant architects of the Chicago School movement. Nickel began documenting many of these buildings with his camera in the 1950s as part of his graduate work and thesis project at Chicago's Institute of Design. This initial work resulted in a lifelong passion for identifying buildings by this firm, photographing and salvaging ornamental components, making their loss known through his images, and publicly protesting their destruction. Nickel's efforts gave rise to a new public awareness that served as a catalyst to recognize, preserve, and protect many of these significant buildings.

The central focus of the Richard Nickel Archive is the photographs and historical files pertaining to the architecture of Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan, known during their partnership from 1880 to 1895 as Adler & Sullivan Architects. The collection also highlights the individual projects of both Adler and Sullivan separately after 1895. The buildings of Louis Sullivan, working alone, are documented in their entirety, from such early works as the Bayard Building in New York and the Carson Pirie Scott Store (originally the Schlesinger & Mayer Store) in Chicago to individual residences, churches, and small banks located throughout the Midwest in Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, and Indiana. The individual works of Dankmar Adler, both before and after the partnership, were also photographed and documented by Nickel. Since the start of Nickel's photographic documentation in the 1950s, many of the buildings by these two seminal designers have been destroyed. The archive arguably remains the preeminent resource collection on the firm's many architectural projects.

Other architectural firms and architects of the day, including William LeBaron Jenney, Daniel Burnham and John Wellborn Root (Burnham & Root), and John Holabird and Martin Roche (Holabird & Roche) were also practicing and contributing to this building movement known as the Chicago School. A large number of photographs of buildings by these notable firms are a part of the Richard Nickel Archive as well. "This material will be part of a phase II gift to the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries in the coming months. The current donation of the voluminous material relating to Adler & Sullivan, comprising the heart of the collection, is most critical and was timed to coincide with and celebrate the publication of *The Complete Architecture of Adler & Sullivan*," stated Ward Miller, Executive Director of the Richard Nickel Committee and coordinator of this

seminal archive and gift to the Art Institute of Chicago, along with board member and Chicago architect John Vinci.

In addition to the material related to Adler and Sullivan and the architects of the Chicago School, the collection is particularly rich in the work of the Prairie School architectural movement. Nickel's interest in documenting these works came from the links between these architectural firms and that of the Adler & Sullivan office. The collection is also notable for work associated with firms like George Elmslie and William Gray Purcell who had worked in and continued associations with Sullivan's office. The impending loss of buildings by Sullivan and others further motivated Nickel's interest in photographing many of these buildings.

Richard Nickel's photographs are artistic images as well as technical documents. They provide focused views that emphasize the overall power and strength of these structures along with many intricate details of the buildings. Capturing the sheer beauty of these buildings, the images also convey, as in the case of many Adler & Sullivan projects, the artistic detail of Louis Sullivan's stylized and foliated ornament and provide extensive documentation of a building's many features. These images, along with additional historic documentation, became the basis of Nickel's earliest work in the archive.

Since its founding in 1972, the Richard Nickel Committee has been involved in opening its collections to a wide range of scholars who have used this collection as a resource for many publications, including more than 300 books and published articles on architecture; seven video productions, including a documentary directed by Margie Newman and Jay Shefsky for PBS; two stage plays; and a film, recently produced by Mark Smith and Whitecap Films. The committee has also previously participated in publication of books related to the life and work of Richard Nickel: *They All Fall Down: Richard Nickel's Struggle to Save America's Architecture* (1993); *Richard Nickel's Chicago* (2008); *Aaron Siskind and Louis Sullivan: The Institute of Design Photo Section Project* (2008); and *Crombie Taylor: Modern Architecture, Building Restoration and the Rediscovery of Louis Sullivan* (2010). In September 2010, the long-awaited publication, *The Complete Architecture of Adler & Sullivan*, was released by the Richard Nickel Committee. The impetus of the book was formulated in the 1950s at the Institute of Design (now a part of Illinois Institute of Technology) by Aaron Siskind and Richard Nickel; the publication was continued and completed by John Vinci and Ward Miller. A beautiful hardcover edition with 472 pages and 815 photographs, the volume includes a catalogue raisonné of the work of architects

Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan. The book is available at the Art Institute's Museum Shop for \$95.

The Burnham Library of Architecture, founded at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1912 with a bequest from architect and city planner Daniel H. Burnham, is one of the premier collections of published and archival materials on the history of architecture. The library holds approximately 45,000 published titles on all aspects of architecture around the world and 3,000 linear feet of documentary archival materials focused on the architecture of Chicago and the Midwest. Holdings including primary source materials on Louis Sullivan, Daniel H. Burnham, Frank Lloyd Wright, Bruce Goff, and many other individual architects and firms from the Chicago School.

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