Philip M. Denman Photographs

SOUTHEASTERN ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVE
COLLECTION 17

SCOPE and CONTENTS

Photographic prints, typescripts, etc.
1969 – 2017
2 boxes

The collection consists primarily of photographic series taken by Philip M. Denman, dating from


One group pertains to the historic plantations Laurel Valley and Seven Oaks. The majority document Laurel Valley Plantation, located along Bayou Lafourche in Thibodaux, Louisiana. These photographs show the complex as it existed between 1978 and 1980. A smaller body of photographs record extant plantation structures as of 2005, and a group from 2017 show the plantation at its most recent. A smaller set of images chronicle Seven Oaks/Zeringue Plantation, located in Westwego, Louisiana, before its 1977 demolition. For both plantations, Denman also gathered historical information regarding building typologies and land ownership.

A second series highlights New Orleans, Louisiana. Dating from 1969-1973, these photographs record such historic landmarks as St. Louis Cathedral, the Beauregard-Keyes House, and Canal Street. Additional photographs reveal French Market produce, nocturnal activities on Bourbon Street, and local notables. Some of these images were reprinted for a 2011 New Orleans Photo Alliance exhibit held at 2600 Gravier Street.

Photographer Philip Marin Denman was born in New Orleans. He established a friendship with Clarence John Laughlin (1905-1985) following his graduation from Southeastern Louisiana College (B.A. 1969). This led to his participation in various Laughlin projects and his inclusion in the 1989 New Orleans Museum of Art exhibition, Exchanges in Imagination.

In 1978, Denman began photographing Laurel Valley Sugar Plantation, located along Bayou Lafourche in Thibodaux, Louisiana. For three consecutive summers, he took photographs of the extant plantation structures. Nicholls State University professor Paul Leslie provided a map and historical narratives regarding the complex. In 2005, Denman returned to Laurel Valley Plantation to photograph extant structures, and in 2017, he returned again to document the state of preservation and photographed the remaining family cottages and slave shotgun houses. Most remained, but were in decay.

**PROVENANCE**

Records were given by Philip Denman in 2016. Additional prints were given in 2017, along with original negatives and scans.

**ACCESS**

This collection is housed in Tulane University’s Southeastern Architectural Archive (SEAA) and requires an advance appointment for use. For further information, call (504) 865-5699, or email seaa@tulane.edu. The unauthorized use, including, but not limited to, publication of the materials
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PREFERRED CITATION

Philip M. Denman Photographs, Southeastern Architectural Archive, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University.

INVENTORY

Box 1.

Folder 1. Philip Denman biographical information.


Folder 2. Laurel Valley plantation history.

Laurel Valley Plantation, building reference map for main complex and bayou settlement. Paul Leslie, creator.


Box 2.

Seven Oaks Plantation.


French Quarter, New Orleans.

Clarence John Laughlin.


Convocation honoring Laughlin, Tulane University, 1976. 3 prints; invitation.

Outside French Quarter, New Orleans.


Folder 5.  Laurel Valley Plantation. Negatives and contact prints.