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Special Collections & Archives**

**Luther Eskijian Architectural Collection
MS0166**

Collection ID: MS0166

Title: Luther Eskijian Architectural Collection

Dates: 1947-1992

Creator: Luther Eskijian (1 November 1913 – 7 April 2007)

Extent: ~73 LF

Abstract: Commercial and residential architectural drawings and plans created by Luther Eskijian, an Armenian architect, whose work is located primarily in southern California. His work included the Pasadena Jewish Community Center and the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church in Pasadena.

Language: English

Repository: California Polytechnic State University
Robert E. Kennedy Library
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Historical Note:

Luther Eskijian was born on 1 November 1913, in a small village named Ekiz-Oluk in the mountains of Syria where his father, Reverend Hovhannes Eskijian was called to his first ministry. His father was killed in 1916. In 1920, Luther emigrated to the U.S. with his widowed mother and his brother John through Ellis Island. As a young man struggling to help support his family he cleaned and repaired rugs. Luther eventually established himself in business and obtained an education as an architect. While still in Junior College, Luther designed the early Cilicia Armenian Church in Pasadena, California at no charge to the community (it is still standing). At the age of 24 he designed and built a commercial and apartment building in Pasadena, that was later a source of retirement income for himself and his wife. He had several other investments and development projects underway when World War II began. When the U.S. began taking a role in the war, a restriction on steel was imposed in the U.S. and his development projects were interrupted. Luther was then drafted into the U.S. armed forces and served from October 1942 to January 1946. He married his fiancée, Anne Hotzakorgian, in November of 1943 at the base chapel of Camp Monroe, North Carolina prior to being shipped overseas.

In retirement, Mr. Eskijian spent many years in the planning and construction of an outstanding edifice of ancient Armenian architecture, a Sanctuary and Museum, in Los Angeles. The sanctuary is unusual in that it used modern materials, but incorporated ancient designs, with beamed ceilings, a central copula with an ancient Armenian gold cross on top, stained glass windows of Biblical scenes, natural split face blocks and marble altar. The lower floor of the sanctuary contains the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, which houses many historical Armenian artifacts from before the time of Christ, along with European and Middle Eastern artifacts, handcrafts of the Armenian people, art and sculpture. The collection includes an outstanding sculpture outside the Museum conceived by Mr. Eskijian called "Mother Armenia Arising out of the Ashes," dedicated to both those who survived and perished in the Armenian Genocide of 1915. His work has been featured in *Masonry Magazine*, and became a study for college students.

Scope and Content:

Professional records created by Luther Eskijian. Commercial and residential architectural drawings and plans for buildings located in southern California including Pasadena, San Gabriel, Downey, Fresno, and the Los Angeles region.

Arrangement:

Original organization of the records has been preserved where possible. Materials may have been reorganized or rehoused for preservation and access purposes. List of materials in this finding aid is organized by city in which the project is located.

Related Collections:

None.



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Sources:

Ararat-Eskijian Museum. Retrieved from <https://www.ararat-eskijian-museum.com/luther-eskijian/>

Pasadena Star-News. Luther Eskijian obituary. Retrieved from <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/pasadenastarnews/obituary.aspx?n=luther-eskijian&pid=87180769>

Access:

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