

Seaver Center, NHMLAC Gary Leonard Photograph Collection Finding Aid

Overview of the Collection

Title: Gary Leonard Photograph Collection

Dates: 1992-

Collection number: P-285

Creator: Leonard, Gary

Extent: Extent: Boxes: 1 letter (29 prints, 1 compact disc, one email); 3,152 digital images

Repository: Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
900 Exposition Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90007
Phone: (213)763-3359
Email: Seavercenter@nhm.org
URL: <https://nhm.org>

Abstract: The Gary Leonard Photograph Collection is comprised of 29 photographic prints and over 3000 digital images. The prints are of various places and people in the Los Angeles area; most of the digital images document the pre-demolition, demolition, and the new construction of the Los Angeles Sixth Street Bridge.

Language: English

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access:

Open for research. All requests to access Special Collections materials must be made in advance by telephone or online.

Conditions Governing Use:

Property rights to the physical objects belong to the Seaver Center for Western History Research. All other rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder, Gary Leonard.

Preferred Citation:

[Identification of item], Gary Leonard Photograph Collection (Collection P-285). Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Acquisitions Information: The bulk of the collection was compiled, catalogued, and donated to the Museum by Gary Leonard between 1992 and 2020. The later additions to the collection were purchased from Leonard.

Processing Information

The collection was numbered, re-housed, digitized, described, and arranged by Brent Riggs and Prithvi Dinesh Chandra. The cataloguing terms and full finding aid were created by Jacqueline Morin.

Biographical Note

Gary Leonard is a recognized name in the world of photography and photojournalism, particularly in Los Angeles and Southern California. His photographs have been published in many publications including *Rolling Stone Magazine*, *People Magazine*, *Der Spiegel*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Life Magazine*, *Los Angeles Magazine*, *The Downtown News*, and *L.A. Observed*.

Raised in Encino, California, Leonard states that he took his first photograph at Dodger Stadium when he was eight years old. He attended the University of California, Los Angeles from which he graduated in 1973 with a B.A. in Film/Video and Photographic Arts. His career began in those early years of the 1970s, working as both a press and freelance photographer, documenting politics, music, city events, architecture, construction, and all things Los Angeles. Of particular interest to Leonard was the emerging local punk rock scene, especially dominant in the 1980s, during which time Leonard captured the faces and places of bars and clubs in Hollywood, Silverlake, Santa Monica, the Crenshaw district, etc. with notable personalities such as Top Jimmy and the Rhythm Pigs, The Go-Go's, Carlos Guitarlos, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Leonard's *Make the Music Go Bang* showcases L.A.'s punk rock scene during this period.

Notable political figures figuring in Leonard's work include every U.S. president from Richard Nixon to Barack Obama, every California governor from Pat Brown to Jerry Brown (both terms), and every Los Angeles Mayor from Sam Yorty to Eric Garcetti. He also captured the images of foreign dignitaries such as Leonid Brezhnev, Prince Charles, and the Dalai Lama. However, Gary Leonard seemed most personally engaged when his lens was trained on the faces that make up the city of Los Angeles and the neighborhoods that comprise it. Homeless persons, Hollywood stars, sports heroes, and artists all populated Leonard's photographs, whether they were filmed sitting on a bench, addressing a crowd, working a craft, or lying on the sidewalk.

Leonard detailed the construction and/or demolition of several historic Los Angeles landmarks such as the construction of the Walt Disney Hall from its groundbreaking in 1992 until its opening in 2003. The result was the publication by Angel City Press of his photo essay, "Symphony in Steel," in 2003. His extensive documentation of the demolition and reconstruction of the Sixth Street Bridge photos concluded with the depiction of the Grand Opening Celebrating of the Sixth Street Viaduct in July of 2022. The photos can be viewed at <https://engineering.lacity.gov/about-us/major-projects/sixth-street-viaduct-replacement-project>.

In addition to his lifetime devotion to photography, Leonard collects artifacts which represent the physical environment of Los Angeles as well as its ever-changing culture and technologies. Some of his acquisitions include a brick from the Zandra Madre (the original aqueduct that brought water to the Los Angeles pueblo), a fragment of sandstone from the City Hall that was on Broadway from 1889 to 1928, steel and cement pieces from the Sixth Street Bridge, an early Sony Walkman, and photos of punk rock musicians and athletes. Leonard photographs many major construction projects from the air, flying out of Van Nuys Airport.

Scope and Contents

The Gary Leonard Photograph Collection spans the years between 1992 and 2022, with the bulk of the collection consisting of digital images of the Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project. In addition to the digital images, the collection holds one box of original photographic prints depicting images of the people and surroundings of the Los Angeles area. Though most of the digital images document the demolition and reconstruction of the Sixth Street Bridge, highlights of the photographic prints include scenes of Dodger Stadium and Vin Scully, the Los Angeles Coliseum, Jonathan Borofsky's "Clownerina" on a building in Venice, and a scene of a protest in Downtown L.A. led by Greta Thunberg, the young environmental activist.

Arrangement

The collection is organized into two series: 1. Los Angeles—People and Places, and 2. The Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project. Series 1 is comprised of both original prints as well as digital scans. Series 2 consists solely of digital images which are accessible online through the following link: <https://collections.nhm.org/seaver-center/>

Related Materials in the Seaver Center of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

- Los Angeles Conservancy Collection (GC 1281)
- Leonard, Gary: *Symphony in steel : Walt Disney Concert Hall goes up* (2003)
- Leonard, Gary: *Take my picture, Gary Leonard: Los Angeles* (1998)
- Snowden, Don, ed. and Gary Leonard, photographs: *Make the music go bang!* (1997)

Related Materials in Other Institutions

Huntington Library::Architecture Collections

Southern California Regional Planning Collection 1909-2003. (Collection no. 605982)

Los Angeles Public Library

Louis Jacinto Collection, 1976-2008 1976-2008. (GPC_b118_f001 - f005, GPC_b119_f001 - f007)

ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives

Sallie M. Fiske Papers and Photographs. (Coll. 2010.005)

UC Berkeley::Bancroft Library

Reports on historic bridges in Los Angeles made in preparation for seismic retrofits. (Coll. BANC PIC 1997.081—PICLOCAL)

UCLA::Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library

- o American Hotel (The) and Al's Bar Project records (Collection no. LSC.2305)
- o Griffin (S.A.) collection of underground poetry, Scott Wannberg, and TheCarma Bums (Collection no. LSC.2248)
- o Music Center records (Collection no. LSC.3261)

Subjects and Indexing terms

Names

Alvin, Dave
Alvin, Phil
Biden, Joseph R., Jr.
Blasters (Musical group)
Borofsky, Jonathan, 1942-
Boyle, Greg
Bryant, Kobe, 1978-2020
CVS/pharmacy (Firm)
Cole, Carolyn Kozo
Cooder, Ry
Fickett, Edward H. 1916-1999
Fickett, Joycie
Floyd, George, 1973-2020
Forest Lawn Memorial-Parks & Mortuaries (Glendale, Calif.)
Garcetti, Eric, 1971-
Hershiser, Orel
Hill, Rich
Holter, Darryl
Homeboy Industries (Organization)
Kershaw, Clayton
King, Rodney, 1965-2012

Koufax, Sandy, 1935-
Kruger, Barbara, 1945-
Leonard, Gary
Librarians—California—Los Angeles
Miller, Colette
Red Hot Chili Peppers (Musical group)
Scully, Vin, 1927-2022
Shirley, Kenneth
Simons, Maxine
Soriano, Victor Jaramillo
Thunberg, Greta, 2003-
Wyman, Rosalind Wiener
Yudain, Raymond

Subjects

Alcoholics—Rehabilitation.
Architecture—California—History—20th century
Architecture—California—Los Angeles.
Baseball players—United States
Bee culture.
Bees & honey
Beverly Hills (Calif.)
Bobble head dolls.
Boyle Heights (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Bridges—California—Los Angeles—History—Photographs
Bridges—Design and construction—History—21st century.
Bridges—Design and construction—Photographs
Bridges—History.
Bridges—United States—Design and construction.
Bridges—United States—History
Bus stops
Cemeteries—California—Los Angeles.
Chevrolet automobile
Chinatown (Los Angeles, Calif.)—Photographs
City Halls—California—Los Angeles—Photographs
Climate change.
Concrete bridges.
Concrete bridges--Design and construction.
Construction workers
Crime—California—Los Angeles.
Deer.
Dodger Stadium (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Email
Experimental automobiles
Father's Day

Hollywood Hills (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Homeless persons.
Homeless persons—California—Los Angeles.
Honey.
Kinship House
Larchmont Boulevard (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Librarians—California—Los Angeles
Licorice pizza (Motion picture)
Los Angeles (Calif.)
Los Angeles (Calif.)—Buildings, structures, etc.
Los Angeles (Calif.). Police Department
Los Angeles (Calif.). City Council.
Los Angeles City Hall (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Los Angeles County (Calif.)—History—Photographs
Los Angeles County (Calif.)—Photographs
Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Metro Rail (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Motion picture theaters--California
Motion pictures—United States
Murals—California—Los Angeles—2000-2010.
Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Musicians—California—Los Angeles
Navajo Indians.
Neighborhoods—California—Los Angeles—Photographs
Photographers—California—Los Angeles
Protest movements--California--Los Angeles--2010-2020.
Public art—California—Los Angeles.
Reseda (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Santa Monica Boulevard (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Service stations—California—Los Angeles Metropolitan Area
Skid Row—California—Los Angeles—2010-2020.
Spray painting
Streets—California—Los Angeles—Photographs
Strikes.
Union Rescue Mission of Los Angeles
United States—National Guard
Viaducts
Viaducts—California—Los Angeles
Women politicians—California—Los Angeles

Genre Terms

Compact discs.
Digital images.
Photographs.

Portrait photographs.
Prints–Color.

Container List:

BOX 1

- Folder 1: A.11663.2019-001. **National Guard Troops at 1st and Alameda, Los Angeles, California.** Three National Guardsmen carrying rifles cross the intersection of 1st Street and Alameda during the 1992 civil unrest following the acquittal of police officers for the Rodney King beating. Barbara Kruger's mural, "Who is above the Law?", is visible on the exterior wall of the Museum of Contemporary Art behind the guardsmen. May 7, 1992.
- Folder 2: A.11663.2019-002. **The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Downtown Los Angeles.** Anthony Kiedis, Flea, John Frusciante, and Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, pose in front of Colette Miller's "Angel Wings" mural on Main Street. December 5, 2018.
- Folder 3: A.11663.2019-003. **Figueroa Street and Wilshire, Downtown Los Angeles.** A homeless man sleeps on a bus stop bench bearing a public service announcement about food waste in the U.S., while pedestrians walk by. May 8, 2019.
- Folder 4: A.11663.2019-004. **Dodger Stadium, Old-Timers Game, Downtown Los Angeles.** Current and former Dodger pitchers (left to right) Orel Hershiser, Rich Hill, Clayton Kershaw, and Sandy Koufax sit in the dugout at Dodgers Stadium. May 12, 2018.
- Folder 5: A.11663.2019-005. **Downtown, Los Angeles, California.** A man walks past The Union Rescue Mission and a painted sign of the city seal and the text, "Skid Row CITY LIMIT, POP Too Many, ELEV 2008." January 26, 2019.
- Folder 6: A.11663.2019-006. **Downtown, Los Angeles, at Flower and 4th.** Construction workers pose on a Metro Rail construction site. January 17, 2018.
- Folder 7: A.11663.2019-007. **Chinatown, Downtown Los Angeles.** Two young ethnic Chinese girls pose in front of K.G. Lowe Co. Art. One of the girls is wearing Chinese Opera make-up. October 7, 2017.
- Folder 8: A.11663.2019-008. **Broadway near 4th Street, Downtown Los Angeles.** A barefoot homeless woman poses on the sidewalk in front of a construction barricade covered with movie posters for "Death Wish." February 10, 2018.

- Folder 9: A.11663.2019-009. **Cesar Chavez at Broadway, Downtown Los Angeles.** Building construction site at Cesar E Chavez Avenue and Broadway, with City Hall visible in the background. May 25, 2018.
- Folder 10: A.11663.2019-010. **Darryl Holter at Felix Chevrolet, Downtown Los Angeles.** Darryl Holter stands next to a classic Chevrolet in a Felix Chevrolet service bay. August 14, 2019.
- Folder 11: A.11663.2019-011. **Vin Scully, "Bobblehead Night," Dodger Stadium.** Vin Scully holds a bobble head doll of himself, on the field at Dodger Stadium. There is a rainbow visible beyond the outfield scoreboard. August 30, 2012.
- Folder 12: A.11663.2019-012. **Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood Hills.** A deer eats flowers left at a burial site at Forest Lawn.
- Folder 13: A.11663.2019-013a. **Dodger Stadium, Los Angeles.** Vin Scully speaking from a podium at Dodger Stadium during the dedication ceremony of Vin Scully Avenue. April 11, 2016.
A.11663.2019-013b. **Dodger Stadium, Los Angeles.** Vin Scully, Mayor Eric Garcetti, and others hold a Vin Scully Avenue sign during the dedication ceremony at Dodger Stadium. April 11, 2016.
- Folder 14: A.11663.2020-014. **Kenneth Shirley blessing City Hall, Indigenous People's Day, Downtown Los Angeles.** Kenneth Shirley dances in a traditional Plains Indian costume at the Indigenous People Blessing City Hall ceremony. October 10, 2019
- Folder 15: A.11663.2020-015a. **Portrait of Maxine Simons.** Portrait of Maxine Simons outside her house in Reseda, California, designed by architect Edward H. Fickett. August 24, 2019.
A.11663.2020-015b: **Portrait of Jocyie Fickett.** Portrait of Jocyie Fickett, widow of architect Edward H. Fickett, outside her house in Beverly Hills, California. August 24, 2019.
- Folder 16: A.11663.2020-016. **The El Sereno Honey Man, Victor Jaramillo Soriano.** Victor Jaramillo Soriano, the El Sereno Honey Man, selling his honey jars near his home in El Sereno. November 12, 2019
- Folder 17: A.11663.2020-017. **Greta Thunberg, Downtown Los Angeles.** Greta Thunberg and a crowd of protestors at the Youth Climate Strike outside City Hall in Grand Park. November 1, 2019.
- Folder 18: A.11663.2020-018a. **Mayor Garcetti endorses Vice-President Joe Biden for President.** Mayor Garcetti endorsing Joe Biden for President at United Firefighters of Los Angeles City, Local IAFF 112. January 10, 2020.
A.11663.2020-018b. **Mayor Garcetti endorses Vice-President Joe Biden**

for President. Mayor Garcetti endorsing Joe Biden for President at United Firefighters of Los Angeles City, Local IAFF 112. January 10, 2020.

- Folder 19: A.11663.2020-019. **Kinship House, 501 Park Front Walk, Los Angeles.** Portrait of Father Boyle and Raymond Yudain on the front steps of Kinship House, 501 Park Front Walk, Los Angeles. June 30, 2019.
- Folder 20: A.11663.2020-020. **Kobe Bryant Day in the Los Angeles City Council Chambers, City Hall.** Kobe Bryant, with his wife and children, is presented a plaque by Mayor Garcetti and the Los Angeles City Council. August 21, 2016.
- Folder 21: A.11663.2020-021. **Email from Raymond Yudain to Gary Leonard regarding Kinship House.** Email from Raymond Yudain to Gary Leonard regarding Kinship House (a sober living house) and its relationship to Father Boyle. Kinship House provides housing to some Homeboy Industries employees. January 16, 2020.
- Folder 22: A.11663.2020-022. **7th Street, Downtown Los Angeles.** "I CANT BREATH" is spray painted on 7th Street, in response to the George Floyd killing by police officers. May 30, 2020.
- Folder 23: A.11663.2020-023. **Larchmont Blvd. and Beverly Blvd. Los Angeles, California.** A woman wearing a Covid mask crosses the intersection past a sign reading "HAVING A BAD YEAR?" and a telephone number. December 23, 2020.
- Folder 24: A.11663.2020-024. **Venice, California.** Police stand outside a Venice CVS store on Main Street that has been looted. The store is below the public sculpture called "Ballerina Clown", also known as "Clownerina," by artist Jonathan Borofsky. May 31, 2020.
- Folder 25: A.11663.2020-025. **Ry Cooder and Carolyn Kozo Cole, Downtown Los Angeles.** Portrait of Ry Cooder and Carolyn Kozo Cole standing outside of glass doors. June 14, 2005.
- Folder 26: A.11663.2020-026. **Gary Leonard with Roz Wyman.** Gary Leonard with Roz Wyman at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum during stadium renovations. Photographed by Diandra Jay-Lopez, Courtesy of Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. April 25, 2019.
- Folder 27: A.11663.2020-027. **Beverly Hills, California.** A concept car at the intersection of Crescent Drive and Santa Monica Boulevard South. Photographed during a Father's Day parade. June 20, 2021. (See A.11663.2019-029 for a black and white print of this image.)

- Folder 28: A.11663.2020-028. **Downtown Los Angeles.** The groundbreaking for the 2021-22 building addition to Felix Chevrolet. Pictured is the Holter family, owners of the dealership at that time, and staff members of Felix Chevrolet. July 23, 2021.
- Folder 29: A.11663.2020-029. **Beverly Hills, California.** A concept car at the intersection of Crescent Drive and Santa Monica Boulevard South. Photographed during a Father's Day parade. June 20, 2021. (See A.11663.2019-029 for a color print of this image.)
- Folder 30: A.11663.2020-030. **Movie Premiere, Westwood, California.** Movie Premiere of "Licorice Pizza" in Westwood, a neighborhood in Los Angeles, California. November 26, 2021.
- Folder 31: A.11663.2020-031. **The Blasters Live 1986.** Compact disk, released in 2011, of the 1986 Blasters live album, recorded at The Coach House in San Juan Capistrano. Cover portrait of the band by Gary Leonard. Circa 1986.
- Unfolded: Leonard, Gary: *Symphony in steel : Walt Disney Concert Hall goes up* (2003)
Leonard, Gary: *Take my picture, Gary Leonard: Los Angeles* (1998)
Snowden, Don, ed. and Gary Leonard, photographs: *Make the music go bang!* (1997)