



## **DESIGN LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

### **R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER COLLECTION**

**Collection #: MS MSS 23**

**Location: DESIGN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

**Papers: c. 1930s - 1970s**

**No. of items: 4 boxes and 1 oversize item, c. 2.0 linear feet**

### **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

**R. Buckminster Fuller was born on July 12, 1895, in Milton, Massachusetts. He attended both Harvard and the United States Naval Academy. As a distinguished engineer, mathematician, inventor, designer, mechanic, writer, and philosopher, he became one of the most controversial personalities of the machine age. His creations included the Dymaxion House (1927), the Dymaxion Steel Igloo (1935), and a three wheeled automobile with rear engine (1940). He designed geodesic structures for the U.S. Armed Forces and Ford Motor Company. In the 1960s he designed the New York World's Fair Pavilion Dome and the U.S. Pavilion for Expo '67 in Montreal, Canada.**

**Author of numerous books, "Bucky" Fuller lectured at leading schools of architecture and design throughout the country, such as Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Michigan, and University of California. Lecture topics included his revolutionary new ideas regarding lightness and economy in construction and housing as a crucial world engineering problem, among others. His numerous honors included the Award of Merit from the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (1952), the Centennial Award from Michigan State University (1955), the Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architects (1960), and the Creative Achievement Award from Brandeis University (1964). R. Buckminster Fuller died in Los Angeles, California in 1983.**

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

**This collection consists mostly of photocopies of materials covering a wide range of Dr. Fuller's work. The collection spans from the 1930s to the 1970s, but the vast majority of material concentrates on the late 1960s, when Dr. Fuller was at the apex of his long and successful career. The four boxes of material are arranged in five series: 1) General Correspondence, 2) Manuscripts, 3) Printed Matter, 4) Lectures, and 5) Miscellany.**

**SERIES ONE** consists of correspondence with colleagues and clients. Correspondents include John Lennon, Yoko Ono, the Minister of Tourism in India, politicians, and his longtime research associate, Constance Abernathy. **SERIES TWO** is of major importance in that it contains manuscripts of what would eventually be a large body of published books and articles. **SERIES THREE** is an extensive collection of printed matter accumulated by Constance Abernathy. It includes an original package of material relating to the World Exposition in Montreal in 1967, as well as articles on Dr. Fuller and his work published in a variety of periodicals. Also included in this series are two articles by Dr. Fuller published in *Shelter* magazine in 1932 which provide a basis for understanding some of his early influences and ideology. **SERIES FOUR**, Lectures, is perhaps the most important part of this collection in that it provides insight into Fuller's complex and innovative mind. Included in **SERIES FIVE**, Miscellany, is autobiographical information as well as poetry. Each item in this collection has an identification number which matches it to the master list of collection contents found in Folder 3 of the Miscellany series.

The collection was purchased from book dealer F.A. Bernett of Boston, Massachusetts in December 1997.

## DESCRIPTION

### BOX ONE

#### **SERIES ONE      GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

**FOLDER 1    General Correspondence, 1967-1970**

#### **SERIES TWO      MANUSCRIPTS**

**FOLDER 1    "Change in Curriculum Intended to Prepare the Individual to Take the Design Initiative in Economic, Scientific, and Industrial Technology Matters," c. 1966**

**FOLDER 2    "How Little I Know," October 1966**

**FOLDER 3    "Seventeen Pages for Seventeen Men," c. 1967**

**FOLDER 4    "The Bear Island Story," June 1967**

**FOLDER 5    "Age of the Dome," January/February 1968**

**FOLDER 6    "Architecture, the Present Scene," March 12, 1968**

**FOLDER 7    "Generalized Laws of Design," April 22, 1968**

- FOLDER 8 "The Better to See You My Dear," June 21, 1968
- FOLDER 9 "Design Philosophy," January 1969
- FOLDER 10 "Wealth," January 1969
- FOLDER 11 "Chapter 6 Science and Technology," April 1969
- FOLDER 12 "Ever Evolving Reality," May 1969
- FOLDER 13 "An Introduction to Edward Higbee," October 1969
- FOLDER 14 "Charles Fort Introduction," October 1969
- FOLDER 15 "Architecture, the Present Scene," n.d.
- FOLDER 16 "Chapter 6 Architecture as Infra-Ultra-Invisible Reality," n.d.
- FOLDER 17 "Comprehensive Anticipatory Design Science and the Future of Man," n.d.
- FOLDER 18 "Southern Illinois University," n.d.
- FOLDER 19 "Utopia or Oblivion," n.d.

**SERIES THREE PRINTED MATTER**

- FOLDER 1 Misc. Printed Matter, 1944-69
- FOLDER 2 Misc. Printed Matter (includes biographical info), 1945-70

**BOX TWO**

**SERIES THREE PRINTED MATTER**

- FOLDER 3 Misc. Printed Matter, 1967-69
- FOLDER 4 Printed Matter (*Shelter*), 1932
- FOLDER 5 Printed Matter, 1969 (?)
- FOLDER 6 Printed Matter (3 copies of 50 Years of the Design Science Revolution and the World Game), 1969
- FOLDER 7 Printed Matter, 1967 Expo (includes photos)

**SERIES FOUR      LECTURES**

**FOLDER 1      Lectures (includes "The Changing Role of Man in The Universe" and "Conserving the Assets of Spaceship Earth"), 1970**

**BOX THREE**

**SERIES FOUR      LECTURES**

**FOLDER 2      Lectures (includes "The Universal Designer and The Future Environment of Man" and "Higbee"), 1965-67**

**FOLDER 3      Lectures (includes "An Operating Manual For Spaceship Earth"), 1967**

**FOLDER 4      Lectures (includes "The City, The Good Life, and Education"), 1967**

**FOLDER 5      Lectures (includes "Nehru Memorial Lecture"), 1969**

**FOLDER 6      Lectures, 1965**

**BOX FOUR**

**SERIES FOUR      LECTURES**

**FOLDER 7      Lectures (includes "World Man" and "Vision 65"), 1965-66**

**FOLDER 8      Lectures (includes "Systems") , 1967-68**

**SERIES FIVE      MISCELLANY**

**FOLDER 1      Biographical Material & Poetry, 1966-69**

**FOLDER 2      Misc. Geodesic Domes, etc. (includes photos), 1920s-69**

**FOLDER 3      Misc. (includes shipping list of collection contents), 1956-1960s**

**ENVELOPE 1 (OVERSIZE)**

**"R. Buckminster Fuller Thinks Out Loud" Society of Typographic Arts, 1967 (33 LP record album)**

**Finding aid by Brent C. Harris, February 3, 1998**

**Updated by Harold Housley, November 3, 2015**