

City of Arts & Innovation

Museum of Riverside Board Memorandum

TO: MUSEUM OF RIVERSIDE BOARD **DATE:** SEPTEMBER 24, 2025

FROM: MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO ACCESSION INTO THE PERMANENT COLLECTION
TWENTY-FOUR (24) BLACK-AND-WHITE PRINTS BY PHOTOGRAPHER
PHILIP ADAM AND ONE (1) PENCIL SKETCH BY ARTIST ROBERT HERLITZ

ISSUE:

To recommend to the City Council to approve accession into the permanent collection of twenty-four (24) black-and-white photographs by photograph Philip Adam and one (1) pencil sketch by artist Robert Herlitz

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Museum of Riverside Board recommends that the City Council approves accession into the permanent collection of twenty-four (24) black-and-white photographs by photograph Philip Adam and one (1) pencil sketch by artist Robert Herlitz

BACKGROUND:

The photographs were taken by photographer Philip Adam who lived in Riverside in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He worked at UCR in the Department of Photographic Services. One of the many subjects he photographed during this period was the redevelopment of Main Street. He also had an exhibition at the then-named Riverside Municipal Museum during this time when he worked with Vince Moses before he left Riverside in 1981. His photographs are held by other organizations, such as UC Berkeley, UC Davis, the Vacaville Museum, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

At its meeting on July 9, 2025, the Museum of Riverside's Collection Committee voted unanimously in support of recommending that the Museum of Riverside Board forward the recommendation regarding the archival items to the City Council.

DISCUSSION:

To “accession” an object is the process of including it formally in a museum’s permanent collection, which is the category of collection for which the greatest effort will be made to preserve the object in perpetuity and document it fully.

The Museum of Riverside’s Collections Development Plan explicitly notes that the “Museum will not collect fine art, fine craft, or decorative art primarily for aesthetic reasons.” However, the Museum collects art for reasons that may be identified as historic or cultural. In the case of the current recommendation, Philip Adams’s photographs serve as documentation of aspects of Riverside’s history.

The Museum’s archives lack items from the mid- to late 20th century, and these photographic prints would help fill that gap. This donation provides a glimpse of Riverside during a period of change and redevelopment. The prints focus on subjects across Riverside from 1979-1981: Main Street redevelopment, the Mission Inn, Oyster House, Riverside homes, American Fruit Growers Association, and other locations.

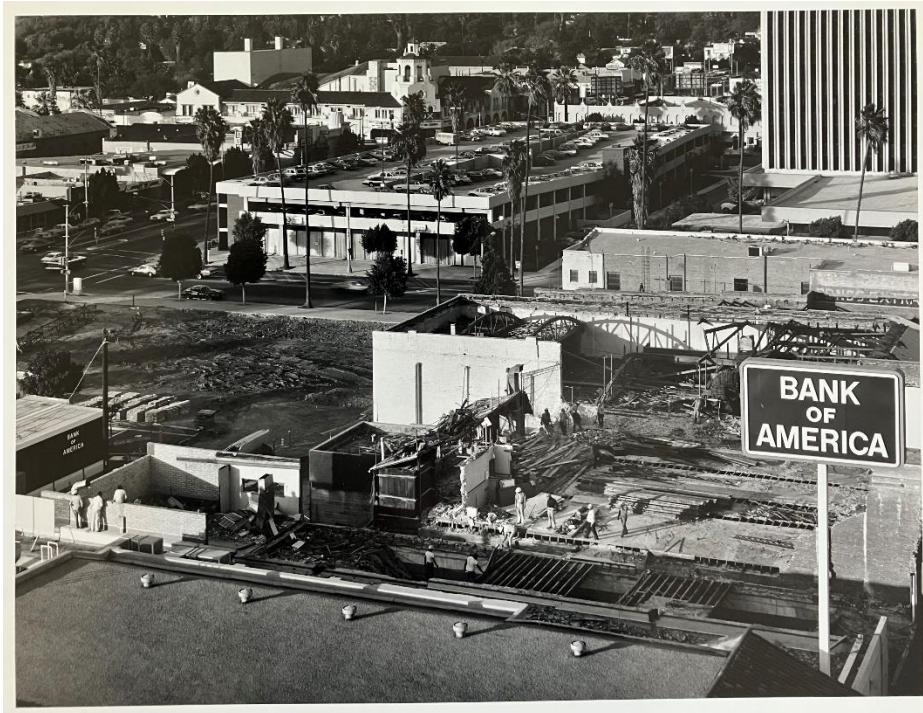
The pencil sketch is a portrait of the donor, Philip Adam, and was done by Robert Herlitz, a local artist. The donor met Mr. Herlitz through his high school art teacher in 1975. Mr. Herlitz had an art studio in a building on Main Street that was demolished during redevelopment during 1979-1980. Mr. Herlitz left after he lost his studio to the redevelopment.

A representative sampling of the objects is illustrated below. The objects are in good and stable condition. The photographs—likely printed not long after they were taken—are gelatin silver print photographs on paper, which require cool, dry, flat storage. The gift does not include the negatives. The storage space requirements for these objects are minimal: sleeves, folders, and one box or flat file drawer. The donor is the photographer, and he will grant a non-exclusive license to reproduce the photographs as well as ownership of the physical prints.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

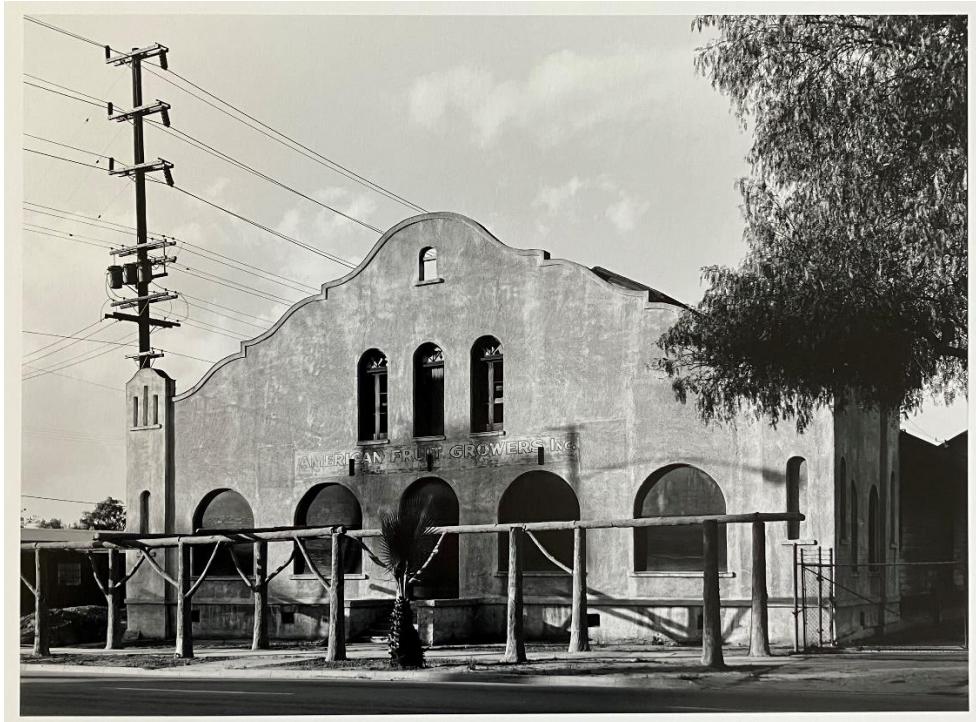
Prepared by: Robyn G. Peterson, Museum Director
Reviewed by: Ann Lovell, Manager of Operations



Riverside Redevelopment, Main Street, B of A, 1979



Mission Inn, 1980



American Fruit Growers Inc., 1979