

(Collection 217)

Louis I. Kahn, 1901-1974

A Finding Aid for  
Sketches for the Kimbell Art Museum, 1967-69  
in  
The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

December 5, 2001

## Archival Description

### Descriptive Summary

Title: Sketches for the Kimbell Art Museum, 1967-1969.

Coll. ID: 217

Origin: Louis I. Kahn, 1901-1974, architect.

Extent: Architectural drawings 34 originals, 6 prints.

Repository: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania  
102 Meyerson Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6311  
(215) 898-8323

Abstract: This collection comprises design and presentation drawings (34 originals and 6 rendered prints) for the Kimbell Art Museum, Louis I. Kahn, 1901-1974, architect. Twelve drawings in the collection have been identified as sketches by Kahn.

Indexes: This collection is included in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project, a searchable database of architectural research materials related to architects and architecture in Philadelphia and surrounding regions:  
<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>

Cataloging: Collection-level records for materials in the Architectural Archives may be found in RLIN Eureka, the union catalogue of members of the Research Libraries Group. The record number for this collection is PAUP01-A44.

Publications: Drawings from this collection are published in the following two books:

Ronner, Heinz; Jhaveri Sharad and Alessandro Vasella. *Louis I. Kahn: Complete Work 1935-1974*. Stuttgart and Basel, Birkhaeuser Verlag for the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, 1977.

Ronner, Heinz; Jhaveri Sharad and Alessandro Vasella. *Louis I. Kahn: Complete Work 1935-1974*. Birkhaeuser Verlag, Basel and Boston, 1987. 2nd revised and enlarged edition.

## Biographical/Historical Sketch

Louis I. Kahn was born in Estonia and raised in Philadelphia. He was trained in architecture in the Beaux-Arts tradition at the University of Pennsylvania under Paul Philippe Cret. As a mature architect, Kahn was distinguished from his contemporaries (in a period dominated by the International Style) by his unique personal philosophy of architecture and a style marked by a profound sense of history and pure geometry in design and the texture of materials in construction. His legacy is as much in his teaching and his unbuilt designs as in his major built works. He lectured and wrote on architecture beginning in the 1930s. He taught at Yale University (1947-1955) and was Cret Professor of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania from 1956 until his death.

## Scope and Content Note

This collection comprises design and presentation drawings (34 originals and 6 rendered prints) for the Kimbell Art Museum, Louis I. Kahn, 1901-74, architect. At least twelve drawings in the collection have been identified as sketches by Kahn (many are signed and dated 1967 and one is dated 1969). These drawings include exterior and interior perspectives, plans, and section studies and were likely used to present the evolving design to the Kimbell Art Foundation in 1967. The drawings are rendered in either charcoal and pencil or color pastel on yellow tracing paper or diazotype print. These drawings are exceptional examples of Kahn's later graphic technique and are perhaps among his best architectural drawings.

A significant number of original drawings have been identified as sketches by Marshall D. Meyers, who was project architect for the Kimbell. The bulk of drawings by Meyers are design studies focusing on the section and the "natural light fixture."

Researchers studying the Kimbell Art Museum should also consult materials in another collection in the Architectural Archives: Kahn, Louis I., 1901-1974. *Architectural Records and Personal Papers, ca. 1908-1984*. (Coll. 030). That collection, the primary archive of Kahn's professional work, contains design drawings for the Kimbell Art Museum by Kahn and by members of his office as well as construction drawings and photographs. All drawings by Kahn in that collection are cataloged at the item level in seven published volumes. *The Louis I. Kahn Archive: Personal Drawings: the Completely Illustrated Catalogue of the Drawings in the Louis I. Kahn Collection*. New York: Garland, 1988. It should be noted that the drawings which are the subject of this present finding aid are not represented in that published work.

**Access Points for Indexing**

Kahn, Louis I., 1901-1974.

Meyers, Marshall D. (Marshall David), 1931-2001.

Kimbell Art Museum--Buildings.

Architects--Archives.

Architectural design--History--20th century--Sources.

Architectural drawing--United States.

Architecture, Modern--20th century--United States--Designs and plans.

Art museums--United States--Designs and plans.

Fort Worth (Tex.)--Buildings, structures, etc--History--Sources.

**Administrative Information**

Restrictions on access: This collection is available for research by appointment only.

Preferred citation: Louis I. Kahn Collections (Coll. 217), The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition: Anonymous gift, 2001. Acquisition number: 2001.18.

Processing: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by William Whitaker, Nancy Thorne and Emily Cooperman.

**Container list****Series I. Drawings by Louis I. Kahn.**

Extent: 1 folder (10 originals).

Call#	Descriptive Title
[217.1]	Kimbell Art Museum; design and presentation drawings delineated by Kahn, dated 1967-1969 (10 originals).
217.1.1	Perspective, unsigned & undated pencil, negro lead, and pastel on yellow tracing paper 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> x 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> inches
217.1.2	Perspective, "LouK '67" pencil, negro lead, and pastel on yellow tracing paper 20 x 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> inches
217.1.3	Perspective, "LouK '67" charcoal, negro lead, pastel on yellow tracing paper, mounted on white paper 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 19 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> inches
217.1.4	Site Plan, unsigned & undated charcoal and pastel on yellow tracing paper 31 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> x 18 inches (irregular)
217.1.5	Perspective, "LouK '67" pencil and negro lead on yellow tracing paper mounted on white paper 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 18 inches
217.1.6	Perspective, "LK" charcoal on yellow tracing paper 25 x 17 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> inches
217.1.7	Site plan, elevation, and partial section, "K.A.M. LK 3/13/67" charcoal on yellow tracing paper 29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 23 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> inches
217.1.8	Site Plan, "LK July 17, 1969, Kimball Site Plan" charcoal on yellow tracing paper 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 23 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> inches (irregular)
217.1.9	Elevation of Maillol sculpture "L'aire", undated & unsigned charcoal on yellow tracing paper 18 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> x 12 inches (irregular)
217.1.10	Section & perspective, unsigned & undated pencil on yellow tracing paper

12 x 10 inches

**Series II. Architectural Drawings attributed to Marshall Meyers.**

Note: Some may be by Kahn.

Extent: 1 folder (22 originals, 4 prints).

Call#	Descriptive Title
[217.2]	Kimbell Art Museum; design and presentation drawings attributed to Marshall D. Meyers, dated 1967 (22 originals, 4 prints).

**Series III. Oversized Architectural Drawings**

Note: Includes 2 drawings identified as by Kahn. Stored in an oversized folder.

Extent: 1 folder (2 originals, 2 rendered prints).

Call#	Descriptive Title
[217.3]	Kimbell Art Museum; design and presentation drawings delineated by Kahn, dated 1967 (2 originals, 2 rendered prints).