Call for Proposals
Research Project: Ed Ruscha's "Streets of Los Angeles"
Proposals due: January 19, 2018

Scholars from a wide range of fields are invited to submit proposals for research projects investigating Ed Ruscha's "Streets of Los Angeles" archive—including, but not limited to digital humanities, cultural geography, architecture, art history, photography, and visual culture. Interdisciplinary approaches and team-based projects are particularly encouraged. Selected researchers would collaborate with Getty Research Institute (GRI) staff as part of a larger research-technology project, which seeks to digitize and make publicly-accessible a portion of the archive in innovative ways. The goal is to publish resulting scholarship at the close of the project.

The Ed Ruscha Streets of Los Angeles archive is almost certainly the most significant artistic attempt to record the urban fabric of a city in the postwar era. The archive comprises over half a million images to date—including negatives, digital files, hundreds of contact sheets and the complete production archive Ruscha's seminal artist book, *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966)—and results from the systematic and ongoing effort by one of the best-known living artists to document the architecture and thoroughfares of Los Angeles. Tracking the distinctive elements of the Los Angeles cityscape such as its façades, building typologies, and street signage, the project spans five decades and records many of its major streets, including Hollywood Boulevard, Melrose Avenue, and the iconic Sunset Boulevard. Although Ruscha's book on the Sunset Strip is well known, the larger photographic project was virtually unknown before the archive entered the Special Collections of the GRI in 2012. The GRI is currently digitizing a significant portion of the photographs as well as designing an innovative, web-based application compatible with the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF). This application will facilitate access to the archive as well as enable new points of access through a designed user interface and software that will display the 130,000 images from the first digitization campaign. The application will make the images navigable via keyword, geographic coordinates, and possibly additional attributes such as building type or optically-recognized text from signage that appears in the photographs.

As part of the larger digitization project, the GRI will investigate the research potential of this archive, considering questions such as: how could the images be explored for the purposes of scholarship? In what ways does the archive impact conceptions of postwar photography, vernacular architecture, and the city of Los Angeles? What visual, textual, or quantitative information will be meaningful to research? How might the data generated from this body of work be leveraged in innovative ways? What research questions will be raised in these investigations? Answers to such questions identified in the research project will inform parallel development of a public-facing digital humanities platform, thus ensuring that the applications built for the archive correspond closely to the needs and expectations of the community of scholars who might be accessing these images. At the same time, we hope to explore and demonstrate the potentials of advanced computing tools and workspaces for digital image research and analysis through collaboration with this group of scholars as they work on projects related to the "Streets of Los Angeles" archive using the technologies we develop for its access.

Selected scholars will collaborate with the project team for a period of one to three years. To enable their research, they will receive advance access to the digitized archive as well as facilitated access to metadata, including GIS information, that is being generated for the project. They will be asked to provide feedback on user interface designs and prototypes throughout the duration of the project according to a schedule worked out in

advance by the scholars and project leads. The scholars may also be invited to the GRI to participate in workshops or other group meetings, where there will be opportunities to present and share research and meet with the project team. The current plan is for the collaboration to conclude with a publication in a format to be determined with GRI staff based on scholars' input.

Interested researchers should submit a 1000-word project description, including a work plan and a CV by January 19, 2018. Proposals are especially welcome from interdisciplinary approaches such as digital humanities, history of urban planning, cultural geography, historians of Los Angeles, in addition to allied fields of art history, photography, architecture, and visual culture. In addition, projects are sought that will consider the collection as a teaching tool, develop unique methodological approaches, and/or employ advanced computing tools or techniques, such as computer vision or data visualization. Questions and proposals can be referred to the GRI's Digital Art History team via gridah@getty.edu.