

# Ferne Koch:

## An Inventory of Her Papers and Photography Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

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### Descriptive Summary

- Creator:** Koch, Ferne, 1913-2001
- Title:** Ferne Koch Papers and Photography Collection
- Dates:** 1931-2000
- Extent:** 7 document boxes, 7 cartons, 11 flat boxes (28.3 linear feet)
- Abstract:** Photographic prints, negatives, slides, correspondence, printed material, scrapbooks, and ephemera document the life and work of American photographer and fashion consultant Ferne Koch.
- Call Number:** Photography Collection PH-01251
- Language:** English
- Access:** Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials. **Part of this collection is housed off-site and may require up to three business days' notice for access in the Ransom Center's Reading and Viewing Room. Please contact the Center before requesting this material: [reference@hrc.utexas.edu](mailto:reference@hrc.utexas.edu).** Negatives cannot be paged to the Reading and Viewing Room without advance notice and curatorial permission. For additional information, please contact the Curator of Photography: [photography@hrc.utexas.edu](mailto:photography@hrc.utexas.edu).
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## **Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation:** Ferne Koch Papers and Photography Collection (PH-01251). Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

**Acquisition:** Gift, 2000 (00-05-015-G)

**Processed by:** Kevin O'Sullivan, 2010

**Repository:** [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

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## Biographical Sketch

Ferne Koch (née Goodman) was an American photographer and fashion consultant born in Houston, Texas, on April 8, 1913. Her interest in photography began in the 1940s as an aid to her work in the New York fashion industry, but it quickly expanded to all areas of her life.

In 1947, she married Arthur C. Koch, an engineer and World War II veteran with a strong interest in the arts. The two traveled extensively throughout their lives together, exploring Europe, the Caribbean, Mexico, and the United States. Ferne also traveled extensively on her own while working as a fashion consultant researching lace, bridal designs, and new clothing styles. During every excursion she took many photographs both in the course of her work and in artistic pursuits.

During the Korean War, Arthur Koch was recalled by the Army and stationed at Ft. Rucker in Daleville, Alabama. As Ferne adjusted to the life of a war bride, she photographed the lives of the residents of the Wiregrass region. These images, and others taken throughout the southeast, would go on to earn her national recognition. From 1951 to 1961, she was represented by the New York photographic agency, Pix, and she exhibited her work in Houston, Seattle, and New York.

From the 1960s through the mid-1980s, her work was not exhibited, but in 1986 she began printing and exhibiting her photographs once more. In 1989, she was an invited exhibitor in the 20th Rencontres International Photographie, in Arles, France. The following year, her work was exhibited in Houston, Texas, at the international FotoFest Biennial. And when Atlanta hosted the Summer Olympics in 1996, her work was featured in a show at the High Museum of Art.

Ferne Koch passed away on October 13, 2001, in Friendswood, Galveston County, Texas.

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## Sources

Dallas Museum of Art. *Beaux Arts Ball* [auction catalog]. Dallas, Tex.: Dallas Museum of Art, 1997.

Koch, Ferne. *Photographic Studies: Daleville & Blakely 1950-51, Paris 1948-1955*. Dallas, Tex.: Documentary Arts, Inc., 1990.

"Ferne Koch," Afterimage Gallery, accessed August 3, 2021, <https://afterimagegallery.com/koch.htm>.

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## Scope and Contents

Photographic prints, negatives, slides, correspondence, printed material, scrapbooks, and ephemera document the life and work of Ferne Koch. The collection is organized into the following four series: I. Photographic Materials; II. Fashion Files; III. Personal Files; and IV. Works by Others.

Koch's photographic output is arranged chronologically, with materials being grouped by location per the creator's original order. Large prints are housed together in flat boxes, and all negatives have been separated to box 14. Featured prominently are photographs taken in Daleville, Alabama, Blakely, Georgia, and Paris, France. Also present are photographs taken during several trips to Europe, throughout the United States, Mexico, and the Far East, among others.

Koch devoted most of her professional life to fashion. Series II. documents her work in this field with both photographic, print, and manuscript materials. Included are 35mm slides that Koch used as presentation tools. Also present are research materials and materials relating to her involvement with Fashion Group, a professional organization that caters to those working in the fashion industry.

Series III. contains materials pertaining to the exhibition of Ferne Koch's photographs, several of the Koch family's homes, their travels and involvement in the arts, as well as family photographs, scrapbooks, and correspondence. The exhibition materials contain mostly snapshot photographs of Koch at events in the 1980s and related printed materials. Some of these appear again in scrapbooks, as do an array of materials related to travel, fashion, and the arts. The correspondence, which dates from 1942 to 1997, pertains to all areas of Koch's life and work.

Included in Series IV. are prints by other photographers, including Jameson Baker, P. Greenberg, and Debora Hunter.

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## Related Material

An additional photographic print (991:0028:0001) by Koch is located in the Ferne Koch Photography Collection (PH-02458).

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## Separated Material

Housed separately, for preservation purposes, are 58 home movies Koch made during her travels between the 1940s and 1980s. For more information, please contact the Center's Reference and Research Services staff: [reference@hrc.utexas.edu](mailto:reference@hrc.utexas.edu).

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## Index Terms

**People**

Koch, Ferne, 1913-2001.

**Subjects**

Fashion.

Travel.

Women photographers.

**Places**

Blakely (Ga.).

Daleville (Ala.).

Paris (France).

**Document Types**

Clippings.

Gelatin silver prints.

Genre pictures.

Motion pictures.

Negatives.

Scrapbooks.

Transparencies.

**Series I. Photographic Materials, 1931-1991, undated**

## Filling Station during Depression, 1931

Negatives **Container 14.1**

## Northeastern United States, 1943

Contact prints **Container 1.1**Slides **Container 7.1-4**

## Mexico, 1945-1949

Prints **Container 1.2-3**Large prints **Container 15**Contact prints **Container 1.4**Slides **Container 7.5-7**

## Jamaica, 1947

Prints **Container 1.5**

## New Orleans, 1947

Prints **Container 1.6**

## Cuba and cruise, 1947

Prints **Container 1.7**Large prints **Container 15**Negatives **Container 14.10**

## Paris and France, 1948-1955

Prints **Container 1.8-10**Large prints **Container 15-16**

Oversize prints

2003:0045:0001 -- Cimetière de Montmartre, Paris, 1948. Gelatin silver print, **Container**  
 27.7 x 27.74 cm. **24**

2003:0045:0002 -- Jardin des Tuileries, Paris, 1948. Gelatin silver print, 37.7 x 27.6 cm.	<b>Container</b> 25
2003:0045:0003 -- Salon Dior, Paris, 1948. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0004 -- Avenue de l'Opéra, Paris, 1948. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0005 -- Café de la Paix, 1948. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0006 -- Place de la Madeleine, Paris, 1948. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0007 -- Salon de Haute Couture Jacques Heim, Paris, 1955. Gelatin silver print, 50 x 40.5 cm.	<b>Container</b> Flat File
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Slides	<b>Container</b> 7.8-9
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Prints	<b>Container</b> 1.20
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Holland, 1948	
Prints	<b>Container</b> 1.22
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Negatives	<b>Container</b> 14.10
Geneva, Switzerland, 1948	
Contact prints	<b>Container</b> 1.25
Slides	<b>Container</b> 7.10

Negatives	<b>Container 14.10</b>
Haiti, 1940s	
Prints	<b>Container 1.26</b>
New York, 1940s	
Prints	<b>Container 1.27</b>
Yosemite National Park, 1940s	
Prints	<b>Container 1.28</b>
Slides	<b>Container 7.11</b>
Negatives	<b>Container 14.10</b>
Daleville, Alabama, 1950-1951	
Prints	<b>Container 1.29-3.6</b>
Large prints	<b>Container 16-18</b>
Oversize prints	
2003:0045:0011 -- Southern Alabama Grist Mill, 1951. Gelatin silver print, 35.4 x 27.7 cm.	<b>Container 25</b>
2003:0045:0012 -- Boy in Church, Southern Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 29.3 x 27.9 cm.	
2003:0045:0013 -- Great Rocker, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0014 -- Southern Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.4 x 27.6 cm.	
2003:0045:0015 -- Porch Barber, Daleville, Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0016 -- Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.3 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0017 -- Youth, Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.	
2003:0045:0018 -- Daleville, Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 41.9 x 40.4 cm.	<b>Container 24</b>



2003:0045:0019 -- Their First Picture, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.3 x 27.7 cm.

2003:0045:0020 -- Goin' Fishin', 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.3 x 27.9 cm.

2003:0045:0021 -- Southern Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 28.3 x 27.7 cm.

2003:0045:0022 -- Pickin' a Chicken, Alabama, 1951. Gelatin silver print, 27.8 x 35.5 cm.

2003:0045:0023 -- Daleville Jeweler, Alabama, 1950 or 1951. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.8 cm.

2003:0045:0024 -- Drummer Boy, Southern Alabama, 1951. Gelatin silver print, .

2003:0045:0025 -- Left Behind, Alabama, 1951. Gelatin silver print, .

2003:0045:0026 -- Easter Sunday, 1951. Gelatin silver print, 27.8 x 35.3 cm.

2003:0045:0027 -- Alabama Boy, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.

2003:0045:0028 -- Left Behind, Alabama, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 50.5 x 40.5 cm. **Container Flat File**

2003:0045:0029 -- Easter Sunday, 1950. Gelatin silver print, 40.4 x 50.5 cm.

2003:0045:0030 -- Pickin' a Chicken', 1951. Gelatin silver print, 25.6 x 88.9 cm.

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Catalog lists **Container 3.8-4.2**

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## Oversize prints

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2003:0045:0009 -- Plutocrat, Blakely, Georgia, 1951. Gelatin silver print, 35.5 x 27.7 cm.

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**Series II. Fashion Files, 1946-1986, undated**

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**Container 8.3**

Fashion Group [tours], 1984, 1987

Photographs

**Container 8.4-5**

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**Container 14.11-12**

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**Container 8.6-9**

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**Container 8.10**

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Large prints

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**Ferne Koch--Bar Code Index**

- 1--059188000024966
- 2--059188000024955
- 3--059188000024944
- 4--059188000024933
- 5--059188000024922
- 6--059188000024911
- 7--059188000024900
- 8--059188000024897
- 9--059188000024886
- 10--059188000024875
- 11--059188000024864
- 12--059188000024853
- 13--059188000024842
- 14--[Negatives and transparencies, kept on site at HRC]
- 15--059188000024762
- 16--059188000024773
- 17--059188000024784
- 18--059188000024795
- 19--059188000024809
- 20--059188000024810
- 21--059188000024820
- 22--059188000024831
- 23--059188000025460
- 24--[Oversize prints, kept on site at HRC]
- 25--[Oversize prints, kept on site at HRC]