



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Berenice Abbott
Photographs relating to *Changing New York*,
1936-1960s, in the Archives of American Art

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Berenice Abbott Photographs relating to <i>Changing New York</i>
Date:	1936-1960s
Identifier:	AAA.abbobere
Creator:	Abbott, Berenice, 1898-1991
Extent:	0.8 Linear feet
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated anonymously in 1957.

Related Materials

Additional material may be found in the Berenice Abbott papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

The Archives of American Art also holds the Elizabeth McCausland papers, 1838-1995, bulk 1920-1960, which contain an additional set of photographic prints relating to *Changing New York*.

Available Formats

The collection is available on 35mm microfilm reel 376 at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

The photographs were microfilmed on reel 376 after receipt. The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Jayna Josefson in 2023 with support from the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative.

Preferred Citation

Berenice Abbott photographs relating to *Changing New York*, 1936-1960s. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

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Biographical / Historical

Berenice Abbott (1898-1991) was a photographer in New York City, New York. Her photographs were included in *Changing New York* (1939).

Abbott was born in 1898 in Springfield, Ohio. She began studying at the Ohio State University and moved to New York City in 1918. Later, she studied sculpture in Paris and became an assistant to Man Ray. By the late 1920s, Abbott began taking photographs of New York City. In 1935, she was hired by the Works Progress Administration, Federal Art Project, to document the city's architecture, neighborhoods, and population. *Changing New York*, a guidebook aimed at visitors to the New York World's Fair, included ninety-seven of Abbott's photographs with captions written by Elizabeth McCausland, an esteemed art critic and Abbott's partner of over thirty-years.

Berenice Abbott died in Maine in 1991.

Scope and Contents

The Berenice Abbott Photographs relating to *Changing New York* measure 0.8 linear feet and date from 1936 to the 1960s. Found are photographs of New York City taken by Berenice Abbott for the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration and sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York.

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection the papers are arranged as one series.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Women artists
Women photographers

Names:

Federal Art Project (New York, N.Y.)

Occupations:

Photographers -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: *Changing New York* Photographs, 1936-1938, circa 1960s

0.8 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Found are photographs of New York City taken by Berenice Abbott for the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration and sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York. Included are exterior and occasional interior views of churches, business areas, stores, docks, bridges, public houses, residences, and theaters in Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island. Also found is a numbered index of titles and exact locations where the photos were taken. Negatives were likely produced by the Archives of American Art.

Box 1, Folder 1	Inventory of Photographs, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 2	Photographs, R1-L32, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographs, 32-66, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 4	Photographs, 67-92, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 5	Photographs, 93-122, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 6	Photographs, 123-147, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 7	Photographs, 147-167, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 8	Photographs, 171-202, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 9	Photographs, 203-240, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 10	Photographs, 243-279, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 11	Photographs, 280-304, 1936-1938
Box 1, Folder 12	Photographs, 306-312, 1936-1938
Box 2, Folder 1-5	Photographs, Duplicates, 1936-1938
Box 2, Folder 6	Photographs, Negatives, circa 1960s

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