



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

American Museum of Natural History,  
Dept. of Anthropology correspondence  
with Barnett Newman and Betty Parsons

Archives of American Art  
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	American Museum of Natural History, Dept. of Anthropology correspondence with Barnett Newman and Betty Parsons
<b>Date:</b>	1944-1946
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.amermuse
<b>Creator:</b>	American Museum of Natural History. Department of Anthropology
<b>Extent:</b>	26 Items ((on partial microfilm reel))
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Lent for microfilming by the American Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, 1992.

### Related Materials

The Archives of American Art also hold the Betty Parsons Gallery records and personal papers, circa 1920-1991, bulk 1946-1983 and the microfilmed Barnett Newman papers, 1943-1971.

### Available Formats

35mm microfilm reel 4588 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

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## Biographical / Historical

The American Museum of Natural History Department of Anthropology was established in 1873, four years after the founding of the museum in New York, NY. It holds objects related to people of the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific Islands.

Barnett Newman (1905-1970) was an abstract expressionist painter associated with the New York School and Color Field painters. He is known for his characteristic "zips," or thin vertical bands that separated areas of color.

Betty Parsons (1900-1982) was an art dealer in New York, N.Y. Parsons was director of the Wakefield Bookshop Gallery, 1940-1944, and director of the contemporary section of the Mortimer Brandt Gallery, 1944-1946. She opened Betty Parsons Gallery in 1946 and represented many abstract expressionists. The gallery closed in 1983.

## Scope and Contents

The microfilmed American Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology correspondence with Barnett Newman and Betty Parsons contains correspondence between painter Barnett Newman and gallerist Betty Parsons with Harry L. Shapiro, Chair of the Department of Anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History regarding two exhibitions of Native American art: *Pre-Columbian Stone Sculpture* at Wakefield Gallery in 1944 and *Northwest Coast Indian Painting* at Betty Parsons Gallery in 1946. Newman wrote essays for the catalogs of both shows stressing the affinity between Native American and modern art. The exhibition catalogs and announcements are also included in the collection.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Names:

Betty Parsons Gallery  
Newman, Barnett, 1905-1970  
Parsons, Betty  
Shapiro, Harry L. (Harry Lionel), 1902-1990  
Wakefield Gallery

### Functions:

Natural history museums -- New York -- New York