



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Barbara Aubin  
Papers, circa 1867-2014, bulk 1940-2014,  
in the Archives of American Art

Sarah Mundy

2024/02/13

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Barbara Aubin papers
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1867-2006 (bulk 1940-2014)
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.aubibarb
<b>Creator:</b>	Aubin, Barbara, 1928-2014
<b>Extent:</b>	5.1 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of painter, teacher and curator, Barbara Aubin, measure 5.1 linear feet and date from circa 1867-2014, with the bulk of the material dating from 1940-2014. The collection comprises biographical materials, correspondence, writings, exhibition files, professional files, printed materials, scrapbooks, artwork, and photographic materials.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The Barbara Aubin papers were donated in 2016 by the Barbara Aubin estate via Amie Hyman, executor and in 2023 by the Union League Club of Chicago via Mark Tunney, General Manager, and Jane Stevens, trustee.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed, and a finding aid prepared by Sarah Mundy in 2024.

### Preferred Citation

Barbara Aubin papers, circa 1867-2014, bulk 1940-2014. 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. Researchers interested in accessing born-digital records or audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

Barbara Aubin (1928-2014) was a painter, teacher, and curator in Chicago, Illinois known for her work with postcard art and collage.

In 1949, she received a B.A. in sociology from Carleton College in M.N. She went on to earn both a B.A. and M.A. in art education from the School of the Art Institute in Chicago in 1954 and 1955 respectively. After graduation, she traveled to France and Italy on the George D. Brown Foreign Travel Fellowship in 1955-1956 and to Haiti for a Fulbright Fellowship in 1958-1960.

Aubin taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1956-1958 and 1960-1967, Chicago State University in 1971-1991, and was a visiting artist at St. Louis Community College in 1980-1981. She was a member of the Chicago Artists Coalition, Chicago Society of Artists, and was a founder of the Chicago Women's Caucus for Art.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of painter, teacher and curator, Barbara Aubin, measure 5.1 linear feet and date from circa 1867-2014, with the bulk of the material dating from 1940-2014. The collection comprises biographical materials consisting of student records from the Art Institute of Chicago, planners and address books, resumes, and unidentified material on electronic discs; correspondence with galleries regarding exhibitions, with friends including Kathy Kucera, and others; writings including drafts and notes for articles, and poems by Aubin; exhibition files containing planning documents, promotional material, and video recordings for *Send a Postcard to Barbara* (1980), *Women's Day* (2004, 2005), and a retrospective of Aubin's work at Elmhurst College (2008); professional files consisting of 4+ *Decades of Art* project material, membership records, Candidate for Professor binders, letters of support from colleagues, and a files for other professional activities; printed materials mainly featuring Aubin and her artwork; scrapbooks consisting of printed materials, photographs, and other material relating to Aubin's exhibitions and career; artwork consisting of collages by Aubin, prints, and vintage paintings; and photographic materials with slides, photographic prints, and negatives of Aubin, personal snapshots of friends and family, exhibitions, and works of art.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 9 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1952-2006 (0.2 linear feet; Boxes 1, 7)
- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1944-2010 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 3: Writings, 1960-2006 (0.2 linear feet; Box 1)
- Series 4: Exhibition Files, 1979-2012 (0.5 linear feet; Boxes 1-2)
- Series 5: Professional Files, 1966-2012 (0.8 linear feet; Box 2)
- Series 6: Printed Materials, circa 1950-2014 (0.6 linear feet; Boxes 2-3)
- Series 7: Scrapbooks, 1950s-2000s (1.2 linear feet; Boxes 3-4, 7)
- Series 8: Artwork, circa 1867-circa 2000s (0.2 linear feet; Box 4)
- Series 9: Photographic Materials, circa 1880s-2000s (1.2 linear feet; Boxes 4-7)

## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

- Women artists
- Women educators
- Women painters

### Types of Materials:

- Scrapbooks
- Video recordings

### Names:

- Art Institute of Chicago. School
- Kucera, Kathryn

### Occupations:

- Art museum curators -- Illinois -- Chicago
- Educators -- Illinois -- Chicago
- Painters -- Illinois -- Chicago

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1952-2006

#### 0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 1, 7)

Scope and Contents: Aubin's biographical materials include 2 address books, resumes and related material, 2 planners, identification documents, student records and a diploma from the Art Institute of Chicago, a 50th anniversary reunion book from Carleton College, and unidentified digital material on 2 electronic discs.

Box 1, Folder 1	Address Books, circa 1980s, circa 2001 Notes: The folder contains two books. One book is covered in red and white fabric and includes notes regarding sales.
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Box 7, Folder 1	Art Institute of Chicago, Diploma, 1955
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Box 1, Folder 2	Art Institute of Chicago, Student Records, 1955
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Box 1, Folder 3	Carleton College, Reunion Book, 1999
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Box 1, Folder 4	Identification Documents, 1958-1995
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Box 1, Folder 5	Planners, 1996-1999 Notes: The folder contains 2 planners.
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Box 1, Folder 6	Resumes and Related Materials, 1952-2002
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Box 1, Folder 7	Unidentified Digital Material, 2006 2 Electronic discs (CD)
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## Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1944-2010

### 0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence includes letters from Aubin's father regarding her schooling, the Fulbright Association, galleries regarding exhibitions and artwork submissions, the Newberry Library, thank you notes to Aubin after her donation of a printer, and letters with artist friends including Kathy Kucera. Folders may include exhibition announcements, clippings, and other printed materials, as well as collages and postcards created by Aubin.

Box 1, Folder 8	Family, 1947-1958
Box 1, Folder 9	General, circa 1944-1987
Box 1, Folder 10	General, 1997-2010, undated
Box 1, Folder 11	Kucera, Kathy, 1980s-2000s
Box 1, Folder 12	Newberry Library Regarding Donations of Books, 2003
Box 1, Folder 13	Thank You Notes to Aubin Regarding Donation of a Printer, 2004

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## Series 3: Writings, 1960-2006

### 0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of poems, a draft of an article for *Format* magazine, and notes on music composers, Chicago Women's Caucus for Art meetings, an article titled, "You are Not Alone in Your Tussle with Technology," and teaching notes.

Box 1, Folder 14      Draft, "Dear Old M.U...", *Format* Magazine, 1980  
Notes:                Includes a published copy of the magazine.

Box 1, Folder 15      Notes, General, 1960-2006  
Notes:                The folder includes Aubin's teaching notes, and a notebook with notes on music composers and CWCA meeting notes.

Box 1, Folder 16      Notes for the Article "You Are Not Alone in Your Tussle with Technology", 2004

Box 1, Folder 17      Poems, 1978-2006

Box 1, Folder 18      Thesis on Regional Women Artists by Loretta Swanson, 2000  
Notes:                Aubin was 1 of 12 women who answered a questionnaire for Swanson's research. However, Aubin and the other women artists are not identified in the paper.

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## Series 4: Exhibition Files, 1979-2012

### 0.5 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2)

Arrangement: The series is arranged in chronological order by exhibition year.

Scope and Contents: The series contains sketches, photographs and slides of artwork, artwork submission forms, artist statements, exhibition announcements and clippings, artwork and exhibitor lists, correspondence, and other planning materials for exhibitions of Aubin's artwork and exhibitions organized by Aubin. Notable exhibitions are *Send a Postcard to Barbara* (1980), *Women's Day* (2004, 2005), and a retrospective of Aubin's work at Elmhurst College (2008).

Box 1, Folder 19	Send a Postcard to Barbara (1980), 1979-1980
Box 1, Folder 20	The Artist Collects (1983-1984), Illinois Arts Council, 1982-1984
Box 1, Folder 21-22	Alive and Lively - Over Forty (1985), circa 1985-2001
Box 1, Folder 23	Later Impressions (1994, 2006), 1994-2006
Box 1, Folder 24	Art for the Next Millennium (1997), Co-Curator, 1997
Box 1, Folder 25	Chicago Women's Caucus for Art Members' Exhibitions, 1997-2012
Box 1, Folder 26	"Women '71 Revisited" (1997), 1996-1997
Box 1, Folder 27	Redefining Feminism (1999), Women's Caucus for Art Conference and Exhibition, 1999
Box 1, Folder 28	Senior Artists Network Members Exhibitions, 2001-2006
Box 1, Folder 29	Women's Day (2004), Oakton Community College, 2004
Box 1, Folder 30	Women's Day, (2004, 2005) Oakton Community College, 2004-2005 3 Videocassettes (VHS) Notes: The folder contains 2 videos of the 2004 exhibition and 1 video of the 2005 exhibition.
Box 1, Folder 31	Art Club of Chicago 81st Exhibition of Artist Members, 2005
Box 1, Folder 32	Wish You Were Here IV (2005), 2003
Box 1, Folder 33	Retrospective at Elmhurst College (2008), 2007-2008
Box 2, Folder 1	Various Exhibitions and Guest Books, 1993-2006

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## Series 5: Professional Files, 1966-2012

### 0.8 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Aubin's professional files consist of files labeled Candidate for Professor of Art, letters from colleagues regarding her dismissal from the Art Institute of Chicago and to the IRS, files for Woman Made Gallery and Marquis Who's Who, membership records detailing meetings and other activities for the Chicago Artists' Coalition and Chicago Women's Caucus for Art, artist statements and material for a book plate project with research material on artist Kurt Schwitters, and material for the project *4+ Decades of Art* which resulted in a publication by Jane Stevens.

Box 2, Folder 2	4+ Decades of Art, Community Arts Assistance Program Grant Project , 2002
Box 2, Folder 3	Artist Statements, 1966-2007
Box 2, Folder 4	Book Plates Project, Kurt Schwitters, 2004-2005
Box 2, Folder 5-7	Candidate for Professor of Art, Book 1, circa 1986
Box 2, Folder 8-10	Candidate for Professor of Art, Book 2, circa 1986
Box 2, Folder 11	Chicago Artists' Coalition, Membership, 1976-1997
Box 2, Folder 12	Chicago Women's Caucus for Art, Membership, 1997-2012
Box 2, Folder 13-14	Letters Regarding Aubin's Dismissal from Art Institute of Chicago, 1967-1968
Box 2, Folder 15	Letters Regarding Aubin from Colleagues to the IRS, 1986
Box 2, Folder 16	Marquis Who's Who, 2003-2012
Box 2, Folder 17	Woman Made Gallery, 2003-2012

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## Series 6: Printed Materials, circa 1950-2014

### 0.6 Linear feet (Box 2-3)

Scope and Contents: The majority of the series consists of material relating to Aubin and her career including clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs, exhibition posters, flyers, and a few other miscellaneous items. The series also contains exhibition announcements and catalogs for other artists.

Box 2, Folder 18	Artwork Reproductions and Postcards, circa 1980-circa 2010
Box 2, Folder 19	Clippings, circa 1950s-circa 2000s
Box 2, Folder 20	Event Programs, 1955-2009
Box 2, Folder 21-22	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Aubin, 1953-2014
Box 3, Folder 1-3	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Aubin, 1953-2014
Box 3, Folder 4	Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs, Other Artists, 1970s-1990s
Box 3, Folder 5	Exhibition Posters, Aubin, circa 1980s
Box 3, Folder 6	Flyers, circa 1975-2014
Box 3, Folder 7	Miscellaneous, 1957-2014

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## Series 7: Scrapbooks, 1950s-2000s

### 1.2 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4, 7)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of 8 scrapbooks. The books contain mostly printed material from Aubin's exhibitions, slides and photographs of artwork, and some correspondence. The series also includes books for "Breakfast with Barbara," "Postcards from Friends," and *Personal Symbols of Age*, an exhibition of Aubin's work in 2006. The original binders were removed from the scrapbooks, but the order of the contents remains the same.

Box 3, Folder 8-11	Scrapbook 1, 1950s-2000s
Box 3, Folder 12-14	Scrapbook 2, 1950s-2000s
Box 3, Folder 15-16	Scrapbook 3, 1950s-2000s
Box 7, Folder 4	Scrapbook 3, 1950s-2000s
Box 3, Folder 17	Scrapbook 4, 1986
Box 3, Folder 18	Scrapbook 5, 1950s-1970s
Box 7, Folder 2	"Breakfast with Barbara", 1997
Box 4, Folder 1-2	Personal Symbols of Age Exhibition, 2006
Box 7, Folder 3	"Postcards from Friends", 1979

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## Series 8: Artwork, circa 1867-circa 2000s

### 0.2 Linear feet (Box 4)

Scope and Contents: The artwork in the series is mainly digital prints of collage work by Aubin along with clippings and cut-outs from printed materials. Other artwork consists of a couple of prints by Aubin and a digital print signed by Terry Martin. Miscellaneous artwork includes a miniature portrait of "Joshua," presumably Aubin's relative, painted on ivory circa 1867.

Box 4, Folder 3 Collages and Collage Materials, circa 2000s

Box 4, Folder 4 Collages, Digital Prints and Copies, circa 2000s

Box 4, Folder 5 Miscellaneous, circa 1867-circa 2005  
Notes: The folder includes a couple of small portraits and a digital print signed by Terry Martin.

Box 4, Folder 6 Prints, circa 1960s-circa 1990s

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## Series 9: Photographic Materials, circa 1880s-2000s

### 1.2 Linear feet (Boxes 4-7)

Scope and Contents: The series consists of photographs of Aubin that includes a selection of photographs for the Union League Club and Midwest Gallery, family and personal photographs, classmates, pets, exhibitions, and works of art. A folder of travel photographs are most likely from Aubin's time in Haiti when she visited on a Fulbright fellowship in 1958-1960. The series also contains a folder with works by other artists that Aubin used for teaching.

Box 4, Folder 7	Aubin, circa 1940s-circa 2000s
Box 4, Folder 8	Aubin, Selection of Photographs for Union League Club and Midwest Gallery, 1920s-2000s
Box 4, Folder 9-11	Family, circa 1880s-circa 1890s
Box 4, Folder 12	Family, circa 1920s-circa 1960s
Box 7, Folder 5	Family, circa 1920-circa 1960
Box 4, Folder 13	Family, 1950s-1960s
Box 4, Folder 14-15	Family and Personal, circa 1930s-circa 1940s
Box 4, Folder 16	Classmates, circa 1940s
Box 4, Folder 17	Pets, 1930s-1990s
Box 4, Folder 18-19	Snapshots, 1980s-1990s Notes: Includes 2 photograph albums.
Box 4, Folder 20	Travel, 1960 Notes: The photographs are unlabeled but were most likely taken while Aubin was in Haiti for a Fulbright Scholarship.
Box 4, Folder 21	Countryside Art Center, Photo Album, 1986
Box 4, Folder 22	Exhibitions, Photo Albums, 1996-1997 Notes: The albums contain photographs from the exhibitions <i>Out of this World</i> and <i>Art for the Millennium</i> .
Box 5, Folder 1-7	Works of Art, Aubin, circa 1970s-2000s
Box 6, Folder 1-4	Works of Art, Aubin, 1970s-2000s

Box 6, Folder 5-6

Works of Art, Other Artists for Teaching, circa 1970-circa 1985

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