



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with Will Barnet

Archives of American Art  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Will Barnet
<b>Date:</b>	1968 January 15
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.barnet68
<b>Creator:</b>	Barnet, Will, 1911-2012 (Interviewee) Cummings, Paul (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	78 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Will Barnet, 1968 January 15, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

This interview is part of the Archives of American Art Oral History Program, started in 1958 to document the history of the visual arts in the United States, primarily through interviews with artists, historians, dealers, critics and others.

### Available Formats

Transcript: 35mm microfilm reel 3196 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

### Restrictions

Transcript: Patrons must use microfilm copy.

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## Biographical / Historical

Will Barnet (1911-) is a painter and graphic artist in New York, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Will Barnet conducted 1968 January 15, by Paul Cummings, for the Archives of American Art.

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## Scope and Contents

Barnet speaks of his youth and early interest in art, studying at the Boston Museum School and the Art Students League of New York, where he later taught, artists who influenced him early in his career, moving to New York City, and building his reputation as a graphic artist. He comments on American politics in the

1930s and 1940s and their effect on art, changes in the art scene in the 1940s and the influence of the Surrealists, teaching at the Cooper Union School, dealers and galleries he has been affiliated with and his involvement with the American Abstract Artists group. He discusses the influence of pre-Columbian art on his work, his exhibitions, and his philosophies of teaching and painting.

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## General

Originally recorded 3 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 12 digital wav files. Duration is 6 hr., 26 min.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

- Abstract expressionism
- Art, Modern -- 20th century -- United States
- Painters -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews
- Politics in art -- United States
- Printmakers -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews
- Surrealism

### Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

### Names:

- American Abstract Artists
- Art Students League (New York, N.Y.)
- Cooper Union Museum for the Arts of Decoration

### Occupations:

- Art teachers -- New York (State) -- New York -- Interviews