



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Bill Barrett Papers, 1930-2013, bulk 1950-2013, in the Archives of American Art

Joy Goodwin

2014 May 23

Archives of American Art  
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<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Bill Barrett papers
<b>Date:</b>	1930-2013 (bulk 1950-2013)
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.barrbill
<b>Creator:</b>	Barrett, Bill, 1934-
<b>Extent:</b>	8.9 Linear feet 2.7 Gigabytes
<b>Language:</b>	Most of the collection is in English; some records are in German and Japanese.
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of Bill Barrett measure 8.9 linear feet and 2.70 GB and date from 1930-2013, with the bulk of the material dating from 1950-2013. The collection consists of biographical material, lectures, exhibition files, scrapbooks, printed and digital material, artwork, sketchbooks, and photographic materials that document Bill Barrett's career as a sculptor and painter.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2014 by Bill Barrett.

### Processing Information

This collection was processed to a minimal level and a finding aid prepared in 2014 by Joy Goodwin. The Archives of American Art has implemented minimal processing tactics when possible in order to increase information about and access to more of our collections. Minimal processing included arrangement to the series and folder levels. Generally, items within folders were simply verified with folder titles, but not arranged further. Folders within boxes were not numbered. The collection was rehoused in archival containers and folders, but not all staples and clips were removed. Born-digital materials were processed by Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner in 2019 with funding provided by Smithsonian Collection Care and Preservation Fund.

### Preferred Citation

Bill Barrett Papers, 1930-2013, bulk 1950-2013. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

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## Biographical / Historical

Bill Barrett (1934-) is a sculptor and painter in New York and New Mexico.

Harry Stanford Barrett IV, known as Bill Barrett was born in Los Angeles, California in 1934. His father, Stan Barrett was a painter and teacher; his mother, Theodora Barrett was a homemaker. Bill Barrett attended the University of Michigan from 1958-1960 receiving a Bachelor of Science in Design, a Master in Science, and a Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture. By the late 1950's, Barrett had gained recognition for his welded sculptural works. His work was included in group shows at the Indiana Art Center and the Detroit Institute of Arts; his sculptures were acquired by museums and universities for their collections. During this period, Barrett held teaching positions at the Cleveland Institute of Art (1963-1964), the University of Michigan (1960-1968), and City College of New York (1970).

Bill Barrett had his first exhibition in New York at the Jason Gallery in 1967. By the 1970's, Barrett had set up a studio in New York City's Tribeca neighborhood and his fabricated aluminum sculptures were featured in the 1970 Whitney Biennial as well as in group exhibitions at the 10 Downtown, Andre Emmerich Gallery, and the Benson Gallery. In the 1980s, Bill Barrett's style evolved from abstract, geometric shapes to more fluid, expressive designs. Also, the Shidoni Foundry in New Mexico was overseeing the fabrication of Barrett's larger sculptural works. He was invited by Debora Hicks, daughter of the Foundry's owner, Tom Hicks to show his work at the Shidoni Sculpture Gardens, and since then, he has been a regular exhibitor at Shidoni. In 1992, Bill Barrett and Debora Hicks married, setting up a home and studio in New Mexico. Influenced by the landscape of New Mexico, Bill Barrett returned to painting and he has had several exhibitions that featured both his paintings and sculptures. In recent years, Barrett also designs jewelry.

Bill Barrett has participated in over 100 exhibitions held at galleries, museums, and other arts venues in the United States, Europe, and Japan. He has received numerous commissions to design both indoor and outdoor sculptures from individuals, corporations, academic institutions, local and state governments. Barrett has served as the President of the Sculptors Guild and he is a member of the Century Club and the National Arts Club. He has been awarded the Audubon Artists Gold Medal of Honor in Sculpture, the Chaim Gross Foundation Award for Audubon Artists, the Hakone Open Air Museum Award in Tokyo, and the Reynolds Memorial Award for Sculpture.

Bill Barrett has two sons and a daughter from a previous marriage. He and Debora Hicks Barrett divide their time between New York and New Mexico.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of Bill Barrett measure 8.9 linear feet and 2.70 GB and date from 1930-2013, with the bulk of the material dating from 1950-2013. The collection consists of biographical material, lectures and a talk, exhibition files, scrapbooks, printed and digital material, artwork, sketchbooks, and photographic materials that document Bill Barrett's career as a sculptor and painter.

Biographical material documents Barrett's awards from Audubon Artists and the Hakone Open Air Museum. Also included is an interview with Bill Barrett. Lectures and a talk consist of recordings on five videocassettes. Four lectures by Barrett were presented in conjunction with exhibition installations featuring his work. There

is also a talk about public art given to a local community board in Sarasota, Florida. Exhibition files record openings of installations at galleries and the homes of private collectors via nine video cassettes and one digital recording. Nineteen scrapbooks document Barrett's solo and group exhibitions, public and private commissions as well as teaching positions and speaking engagements from circa 1970-2013.

Printed material includes some laminated display cards advertising Barrett's sculptures, a few reproductions of sculptures, and a monograph on the artist's work. Artwork by Bill Barrett consists of five pencil sketches of sculptures and five drawings that were used as preliminary studies for Barrett's paintings. Thirteen sketchbooks mostly contain preliminary studies for Barrett's sculptures; a few of the sketchbooks are annotated. Photographic materials include slides of artwork from 1959-1979 and a portfolio of digital prints of Bill Barrett's sculptures and paintings.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 8 series.

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1987-1994 (Boxes 1, 11; 0.1 linear ft.)
- Series 2: Lectures and Talk, 1978-1987, 2000-2003 (Box 1; 0.3 linear ft.)
- Series 3: Exhibition Files, 1978-2012 (Boxes 1-2; 0.8 linear ft., ER01; 1.08 GB)
- Series 4: Scrapbooks, circa 1930-2013 (Boxes 2-7; 6.1 linear ft., ER02; 0.872 GB)
- Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1990-2011 (Boxes 7-8, 11; 0.2 linear ft., ER03; 0.746 GB)
- Series 6: Artwork, 1971, 1995-2002 (Boxes 8, 11; 0.2 linear ft.)
- Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1950s-1995 (Boxes 8-9; 1.0 linear ft.)
- Series 8: Photographic Materials, 1959-1979, circa 2012-2013 (Box 10; 0.2 linear ft.)

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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:

Painters -- New Mexico -- Santa Fe  
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Photographs  
Scrapbooks  
Sketchbooks  
Sketches  
Video recordings

Names:

Audubon Artists (New York, N.Y.)  
Hakone Bijutsukan

Occupations:

Sculptors -- New Mexico -- Santa Fe

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, 1987-1994

#### *0.1 Linear feet (Boxes 1, 11)*

**Scope and Contents:** Biographical material includes awards from Audubon Artists, Chaim Gross Foundation, and the Hakone Open Air Museum. There is also a recording of an interview with Bill Barrett conducted in 1987 on one videocassette; the interviewer is unidentified. Biographical materials can also be found in Series 4: Scrapbooks.

**Arrangement:** Items are arranged by subject and filed in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 1	Interview with Bill Barrett, 1987 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 1, Folder 2	Award Plaque from the Hakone Open Air Museum, 1987 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 11
Box 1, Folder 3	Title Plates from Audubon Artists, Chaim Gross Foundation Award, 1987, 1992
Box 1, Folder 4	Audubon Artists, Medals of Honor, 1990, 1994
Box 11	Oversized Award Plaque from the Hakone Open Air Museum from Box 1, Folder 2, 1987

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## Series 2: Lectures and Talk, 1978-1987, 2000-2003

### 0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)

**Scope and Contents:** This series consists of recordings on five videocassettes. Included are four lectures by Bill Barrett that were given in conjunction with exhibitions featuring his work. Barrett's talk, "Art and Public Places" was presented to community board members in Sarasota, Florida.

**Arrangement:** This series is arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 5            Lecture at Cuyahoga Community College (1978 May 3), 1978, 1984-1985  
1 Videocassettes (VHS)  
**Notes:**                Includes recordings of exhibitions at Schulman Sculpture Garden, White Plains, New York and Bellevue Hospital Sculpture Garden, New York.

Box 1, Folder 6            Lecture at Goddard Center, Installation of "El Grande", 1987  
1 Videocassettes (VHS)

Box 1, Folder 7            "The Grounds for Sculpture Lecture Series", 2000  
1 Videocassettes (VHS)

Box 1, Folder 8            Lecture and Slide Presentation for "The Grounds for Sculpture Lecture Series" , 2000  
1 Videocassettes (VHS)

Box 1, Folder 9            Talk -- "Art in Public Places", 2003  
1 Videocassettes (VHS)

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## Series 3: Exhibition Files, 1978-2012

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

#### 1.08 Gigabytes (ER01)

**Scope and Contents:** This series consists of 9 videocassette recordings and one digital recording of several installation openings held at galleries and at the private homes of collectors. The video recordings were made by Bill Barrett for his personal use. Additional documentation on exhibitions can be found in Series 4: Scrapbooks.

**Arrangement:** This series is arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 10	Larrabee Group - Bill Barrett (1978 May 3), 1978, 2006 1 Videocassettes (U-matic) Notes: Includes pop-up exhibition announcement
Box 1, Folder 11	Lux Installation, 1984 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 1, Folder 12	Installation of Tres Grande, Repose, and Coupling (Rendezvous), Bellevue Hospital Sculpture Garden (1985 March 17) , 1985 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 1, Folder 13	Baille Merengue, 1989 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 2, Folder 1	Shidoni Gallery Opening and Party (1990 September 28), 1990 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 2, Folder 2	L.A. Baroque Installation (1992 February), 1992 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 2, Folder 3	Saggamore Party, Installation at Barry Head's House (1993 May 20) , 1993 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 2, Folder 4	Dersh's Installation (1993 May 31) and The Cline Gallery Opening (1993 July 2) , 1993 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box 2, Folder 5	Nardin Gallery, 1997 1 Videocassettes (VHS)
Folder ER01	Lew Allen Gallery Opening and Barrett Studio and Sculpture Garden, Digital Video Recording , 2012 1.08 Gigabytes (Three computer files)

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## Series 4: Scrapbooks, circa 1930-2013

### 6.1 Linear feet (Boxes 2-7)

#### 0.872 Gigabytes (ER02)

**Scope and Contents:** Scrapbooks document Barrett's professional activities as a sculptor, painter, educator, and lecturer. Files include a variety of materials, e.g., biographical material, correspondence, proposals, lists, sales information, contracts and agreements, sketches, schematic diagrams, and printed and digital material. Also included are photographs, slides, and negatives of artwork.

Biographical material includes awards and personal photographs of Barrett as a child and youth as well as photographs of his family members. Business related correspondence includes letters with museums, galleries, and arts venues relating to proposed projects, scheduling of exhibitions, and requests to lecture and teach. Among the printed materials are press releases, clippings, reviews of Barrett's work, exhibition catalogs, brochures, invitations, and gallery guides. Many of the photographs are annotated with the title, date, and owner of the work.

**Arrangement:** Scrapbooks were received in three-ring binders and the original order of the material has been maintained. Scrapbooks are arranged in chronological order.

Box 2, Folder 7-10	Scrapbook, "1964" , circa 1950-1964, circa 1930
Box 3, Folder 1-4	Scrapbook, "1965-1969" , 1964-1969
Box 3, Folder 5-7	Scrapbook, "1970-1976" , 1969-1976, 2002
Box 3, Folder 8-9	Scrapbook, "1977-1978" , circa 1977-1979
Box 3, Folder 10-12	Scrapbook, "1979" , 1979
Box 4, Folder 1	Scrapbook, "1980" , 1980
Box 4, Folder 2-5	Scrapbook, "1981-1982" , 1981-1986
Box 4, Folder 6-9	Scrapbook, "1983-1986" , 1982-1987
Box 4, Folder 10-12	Scrapbook, "1987-1989" , 1987-1989
Box 5, Folder 1-2	Scrapbook, "1987-1989" , 1988-1989
Box 5, Folder 3-6	Scrapbook, "1990-1991" , 1990-1992
Box 5, Folder 7-10	Scrapbook, "1992-1994" , 1992-1995
Box 5, Folder 11-14	Scrapbook, "1995-1996" , 1995-1996
Box 6, Folder 1-4	Scrapbook, "1997-1998" , 1997-1998
Box 6, Folder 5-7	Scrapbook, "1999" , 1998-2000

Box 6, Folder 8-10	Scrapbook, "2000" , 2000
Box 6, Folder 11-13	Scrapbook, "2001" , 2001-2003
Box 7, Folder 1	Scrapbook, "2001" , 2001
Box 7, Folder 2-4	Scrapbook, "2002" , 2001-2002
Box 7, Folder 5-9	Scrapbook, "2003-2009" , 2002-2009 Includes born-digital records, see ER02
Folder ER02	Bill Barrett, Sculptor, 2003, Digital Video Recording, 2003 0.872 Gigabytes (Two computer files)
Box 7, Folder 10-12	Scrapbook, "2010-2013" , 2006-2013

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## Series 5: Printed Material, circa 1990-2011

*0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 7-8, 11)**0.746 Gigabytes (ER03)*

Scope and Contents: This series includes laminated display cards advertising Barrett's sculptures in *Art in America* and *Art News*. A file on the musical dedication of Bill Barrett's painting *Polyphonic Abstraction* at the University of Iowa includes printed material, programs, an invitation, and a musical score. Also included is a recording of the concert in digital format. Additional printed material can be found in Series 4: Scrapbooks.

Arrangement: Files are arranged by format and thereafter in chronological order.

Box 7, Folder 13-14	Advertising Display Cards, 1994-circa 2008, undated
Box 8, Folder 1	Reproductions of Sculptures, circa 1990-circa 2008
Box 8, Folder 2	Book, Bill Barrett: Evolution of a Sculptor, 2003 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 11
Box 8, Folder 3	Poster Board - Dedication of Polyphonic Abstraction, 2011 Includes born-digital records, see ER03; oversized material housed in Box 11
Folder ER03	Polyphonic Abstraction, composed by Jeffrey Prater, Ames Piano Quartet, Digital Audio Recording, 2011 0.746 Gigabytes (Ten computer files)
Box 11	Oversized Book, Bill Barrett: Evolution of a Sculptor from Box 8, Folder 2, 2003
Box 11	Oversized Poster Board - Dedication of Polyphonic Abstraction from Box 8, Folder 3, 2011

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## Series 6: Artwork, 1995-2002, 1971

### 0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 8, 11)

Scope and Contents: Artwork by Bill Barrett consists of five pencil sketches sealed in Plexiglas, including sketches of his *Circle Series* and *Manhattan Series*. Also found are five preliminary drawings of paintings done in ink, crayon, and color pencils. Additional sketches can also be found in Series 4: Scrapbooks.

Arrangement: Files are arranged in chronological order.

Box 8, Folder 4-8      Sketches, 1971

Box 8, Folder 9      Drawings - Studies for Paintings, 1995-2002  
Notes:              Oversized material housed in Box 11

Box 11              Oversized Drawings from Box 8, Folder 9, 1995-2001

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## Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1950s-1995

### 1 Linear foot (Boxes 8-9)

**Scope and Contents:** Thirteen sketchbooks include preliminary drawings of sculptures as well as sketches of portraits and landscapes. There are a few sketches of the home of Bill Barrett's father, Stan Barrett in Sewanee, Tennessee, where he was an artist-in-residence at the University of the South. Interspersed among the pages are loose sketches and Barrett's notes on preserving the finish of fabricated sculptures and instructions for the casting and coloring of brasses. Some of the sketches are annotated with sales prices.

**Arrangement:** Sketchbooks are arranged in chronological order.

Box 8, Folder 10	Sketchbook 1 , circa 1950s-circa 1970s
Box 8, Folder 11	Sketchbook 2, circa 1960-circa 1970
Box 8, Folder 12	Sketchbook 3, circa 1960-circa 1970
Box 8, Folder 13-14	Sketchbook 4 , circa 1960-circa 1970
Box 8, Folder 15	Sketchbook 5, circa 1970-circa 1980
Box 8, Folder 16-17	Sketchbook 6 , circa 1970-circa 1984
Box 8, Folder 18	Sketchbook 7, circa 1976
Box 8, Folder 19	Sketchbook 8, 1977
Box 9, Folder 1	Sketchbook 1, circa 1979
Box 9, Folder 2	Sketchbook 2, 1986
Box 9, Folder 3	Sketchbook 3, circa 1990s
Box 9, Folder 4	Sketchbook 4, circa 1990s
Box 9, Folder 5	Sketchbook 5, 1995

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## Series 8: Photographic Materials, 1959-1979, circa 2012-2013

### *0.2 Linear feet (Box 10)*

Scope and Contents: Photographic materials include slides of Barrett's sculptures from 1959-1979. The portfolio contains digital prints of Barrett's work. Researchers can also find photographs and slides in Series 4: Scrapbooks.

Arrangement: This series is arranged by format, in chronological order.

Box 10, Folder 1      Slides of Artwork, "1950s-1960s", 1959-1969

Box 10, Folder 2      Slides of Artwork, "1969-1979" , 1968-1979

Box 10, Folder 3      Bill Barrett, Portfolio Archive, circa 2012-2013  
Notes:                  This series is arranged by format, in chronological order.  
                                Researchers can also find photographs and slides in Series 4:  
                                Scrapbooks.

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