



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the William and Ethel
Baziotes Papers, circa 1900-1992, bulk
1935-1980, in the Archives of American Art

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2018/11/06

Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	William and Ethel Baziotes papers
Identifier:	AAA.baziwill
Date:	circa 1900-1992 (bulk 1935-1980)
Extent:	6.3 Linear feet
Creator:	Baziotes, William, 1912-1963
Language:	English
Summary:	The papers of New York City abstract expressionist painter William Baziotes and his wife Ethel measure 6.3 linear feet and date from circa 1900-1992, bulk 1935-1980. The collection includes William Baziotes biographical material, correspondence, writings, printed material, and photographs. The papers of Ethel Baziotes consists of correspondence mostly dated after her husband's death regarding exhibitions of his work, along with limited biographical material and writings.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The William and Ethel Baziotes papers were donated by Ethel Baziotes, widow of William Baziotes, in several installments from 1969 to 1993.

Available Formats

The majority of this collection is available on 35 mm microfilm reels N70-21, N70-24, 347, and 4984-4985 at the 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.

The interview with Harry and Constance Baziotes was digitized for research access and is available at Archives of American Art offices.

Processing Information

The collection received a preliminary level of arrangement after donation. Multiple accessions were merged, processed, and a finding aid was prepared by Rihoko Ueno in 2018.

Preferred Citation

William and Ethel Baziotes papers, circa 1900-1992, bulk 1935-1980. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center.

Biographical / Historical

William Baziotes (1912-1963) was an abstract expressionist painter in New York City. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Baziotes moved to New York City in 1933, where he studied painting at the National Academy of Design, 1933-1936. He participated on the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project as a teacher, 1936-1938, and painted for the Easel Painting Project, 1938-1940.

In 1941 he married Ethel Copstein. He had his first one-man show at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century Gallery in 1944. The Samuel M. Kootz Gallery, Inc. held a solo show for Baziotes in 1946 and continued to exhibit his works until 1958.

Baziotes taught at Subjects of the Artist, 1948; the Brooklyn Museum Art School and New York University, 1949-1952; the People's Art Center at the Museum of Modern Art, 1950-1952; and Hunter College, 1952-1962. Baziotes died in 1963.

Scope and Contents

The papers of New York City abstract expressionist painter William Baziotes and his wife Ethel measure 6.3 linear feet and date from circa 1900-1992, bulk 1935-1980. The collection includes William Baziotes biographical material, correspondence, writings, printed material, and photographs. The papers of Ethel Baziotes consists of correspondence mostly dated after her husband's death regarding exhibitions of his work, along with limited biographical material and writings.

Biographical material on William Baziotes consists of a bibliography, teaching files, a sound recording of an interview, membership cards, sales records, a sketchbook, and other miscellaneous material. There is one folder regarding Ethel Baziotes containing a few certificates and her college diploma.

Correspondence consists of letters to William and Ethel Baziotes. Notable correspondents include Lawrence Alloway, Alfred Barr, Andre Breton, Clement Greenberg, Peggy Guggenheim, David Hare, Jean Helion, Maria and Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, and others. There are also letters from the Samuel M. Kootz Gallery regarding the sales of William Baziotes's artwork and letters written by William Baziotes to his brother Christos. Letters to Ethel Baziotes include condolence letters as well as letters from museum and galleries regarding exhibitions of her husband's work.

Writings include William Baziotes's notes on various subjects, a list of book titles, and a transcript for a speech. Writings by others include essays about William Baziotes and other subjects.

Printed materials consist of clippings, announcements, magazines, and many exhibition catalogs, mostly on group exhibitions which included artwork by William Baziotes.

Photographs are of William Baziotes, Ethel Baziotes, family and friends, their residence, and his artwork. There are also photographs of Meir Bernstein, Samuel Kootz, Paul Bodin, Maria Motherwell, Pablo and Maya Picasso, Rudi Blesh, Nathan Halper, Ethel Schwabacher, Clyfford Still, and others.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 5 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1933-1982 (Box 1; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1936-1988 (Boxes 1-2; 1 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings, circa 1950-1992 (Box 2; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1944-1992 (Boxes 2-7, 9; 4.1 linear feet)
- Series 5: Photographs, circa 1900-1979, bulk 1940-circa 1963 (Boxes 7-9; 0.7 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Abstract expressionism
Art, Abstract
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Photographs
Sketchbooks
Sound recordings

Names:

Alloway, Lawrence, 1926-1990
Barr, Alfred H., Jr., 1902-1981
Baziotes, Christos
Baziotes, Ethel
Baziotes, Harry
Bernshṭin, Me'ir, -1978
Blesh, Rudi, 1899-1985
Bodin, Paul, 1910-1994
Canaday, John, 1907-1985
Castano, Giovanni, 1896-1978
Greenberg, Clement, 1909-1994
Guggenheim, Peggy, 1898-
Halper, Nathan
Hare, David, 1917-1992
Hélion, Jean, 1904-1987
Janis, Harriet Grossman
Kamrowski, Gerome
Kootz Gallery (N.Y.)
Kootz, Samuel Melvin, 1898-1982
Lee, Francis P.
Licht, Michel, 1893-1953
Matta, 1912-2002
Motherwell, Maria
Motherwell, Robert

Museum of Modern Art (New York, N.Y.)
Namuth, Hans
Onslow-Ford, Gordon
Paneth, Donald
Peter A. Juley & Son
Peterson, Charles
Picasso, Pablo, 1881-1973
Pollock, Jackson, 1912-1956
Ricci, F.
Ruiz-Picasso, Maya
Schumm, Gertrud
Schwabacher, Ethel, 1903-1984
Sievan, Maurice
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
Still, Clyfford, 1904-1980
Vazakas, Byron
Zulieta, Orlando

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1933-1982

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)

This series includes biographical material on William Baziotes such as a bibliography, a sound cassette of an interview with Harry Baziotes discussing William Baziotes, a list of sales records and a ledger, a sketchbook, membership cards, teaching files from Hunter College, and other miscellaneous material. Also found is a memorial exhibition file that contains clippings, correspondence, announcements, list of artworks, and photographs. One folder regarding Ethel Baziotes contains a few certificates and her college diploma.

Box 1, Folder 1	Bibliography, circa 1969
Box 1, Folder 2-4	Hunter College Teaching Files, 1955-1962
Box 1, Folder 5	Interview with Harry Baziotes regarding William Baziotes, 1982 <i>1 sound cassette</i>
Box 1, Folder 6	Membership Cards, 1937, 1956-1960
Box 1, Folder 7	Obituaries, 1963
Box 1, Folder 8	Sales Records and Ledger, 1953-1956
Box 1, Folder 9	Sketchbook, 1960-1961
Box 1, Folder 10	William Baziotes Memorial Exhibition at the Guggenheim, 1964-1965
Box 1, Folder 11	Ethel Baziotes Certificates and Diploma, 1933-1936
Box 1, Folder 12	Murray Hantman Resume, circa 1979

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1936-1988

1 Linear foot (Boxes 1-2)

Correspondence mostly consists of letters to William Baziotes, with a limited number of outgoing letters. Letters to Baziotes are from Lawrence Alloway, Alfred Barr, Andre Breton, Clement Greenberg, Peggy Guggenheim, David Hare, Jean Helion, Maria and Robert Motherwell, Charles Peterson, Jackson Pollock, and others. Other notable correspondents in this series include John Canaday, John (Giovanni) Castano, Gerome Kamrowski, Gordon Onslow-Ford, Gertrud Schumm, Ethel Schwabacher, and Byron Vazakas. It should be noted that there are usually only one or two letters from most of the correspondents. There are also numerous letters from the Samuel M. Kootz Gallery regarding the sales of his artwork.

Especially noteworthy are William Baziotes's letters to his brother Christos. Baziotes encourages Christos and another brother Harry in their art, and discusses employment on the WPA Easel Project, the New York art scene, teaching at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences and at New York University, his relationships with Paul Bodin, Clement Greenberg, Samuel Kootz, Francis Lee, Joan Miro, and Robert Motherwell.

Also included in this series are condolence letters to Ethel Baziotes upon the death of her husband. There are letters to Ethel from friends and artists, as well as museums and galleries regarding retrospective exhibitions at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Newport Harbor Museum.

Letters to William Baziotes are at the beginning of the series, followed by letters from William Baziotes, letters to William and Ethel Baziotes, condolence letters to Ethel Baziotes, and finally letters to Ethel Baziotes. The letters are mostly arranged chronologically within each grouping.

Box 1, Folder 13-18	Letters to William Baziotes from Various Correspondents, 1940-1963
Box 1, Folder 19-20	Letters to William Baziotes from Samuel M. Kootz Gallery, 1952-1959 Includes 3 letters from William Baziotes
Box 1, Folder 21	Letters to William Baziotes from Work Projects Administration, 1940-1941
Box 1, Folder 22	Letters from William Baziotes to Christos Baziotes - Undated, circa 1936-circa 1950
Box 1, Folder 23-29	Letters from William Baziotes to Christos Baziotes, 1936-1950
Box 1, Folder 30-32	Envelopes for William Baziotes Letters to Christos Baziotes, 1937-1956
Box 1, Folder 33	Letters from William Baziotes to Ethel Baziotes, 1940-1941
Box 1, Folder 34	Letters from William Baziotes to the Museum of Modern Art, 1949-1955
Box 1, Folder 35	Letters to William and Ethel Baziotes - Undated, circa 1950-circa 1963
Box 1, Folder 36-37	Letters to William and Ethel Baziotes, 1940-1963
Box 1, Folder 38-39	Condolence Letters to Ethel Baziotes, 1963
Box 1, Folder 40	Envelopes for Condolence Letters, 1963
Box 1, Folder 41	Letters to Ethel Baziotes - Undated, circa 1960-circa 1988

Box 1, Folder 42-51	Letters to Ethel Baziotes, 1960-1975
Box 2, Folder 1-7	Letters to Ethel Baziotes, 1975-1988
Box 2, Folder 8	Envelopes for Letters to Ethel Baziotes, 1962-1972

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Series 3: Writings, circa 1950-1992

0.2 Linear feet (Box 2)

Writings include William Baziotes's notes on various subjects, a list of book titles which interested him, and a transcript for a speech. Writings by others include essays about William Baziotes and other subjects. There is one folder of writings by Ethel Baziotes, mostly about her husband. The writings in this series are by William Baziotes unless otherwise noted.

Box 2, Folder 9	List of Book Titles, circa 1950-circa 1963
Box 2, Folder 10	Notebook of Book Titles, circa 1950-circa 1960
Box 2, Folder 11	Notes on Boxing, 1965
Box 2, Folder 12	Notes on "Favorite Quotations", circa 1950-circa 1960
Box 2, Folder 13	Notes on Various Subjects, circa 1950-circa 1960
Box 2, Folder 14	Typescript of Untitled Speech for Television Program, circa 1957
Box 2	Writings by Others
Box 2, Folder 15	Essay on William Baziotes by Clyfford Still, circa 1970-circa 1980
Box 2, Folder 16	Essay on William Baziotes by David Hare, 1964
Box 2, Folder 17	Essay on William Baziotes by Donald Paneth, circa 1961
Box 2, Folder 18	"William Baziotes: A Denial of His Classification as a Surrealist" by Alice R. Ray, 1964
Box 2, Folder 19	Essays by Ethel Schwabacher on Her Artwork, 1971-1972
Box 2, Folder 20	Essay on Hans Namuth by Jerome Kamrowski, circa 1950-circa 1970
Box 2, Folder 21	Symphony Poem by Jozef Dylewski, 1965
Box 2, Folder 22	Writings by Ethel Baziotes, circa 1950-circa 1992

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Series 4: Printed Material, 1944-1992

4.1 Linear feet (Boxes 2-7, 9)

Printed materials consist of clippings, announcements, magazines, and many exhibition catalogs, mostly on group exhibitions which included artwork by William Baziotes. Most of the material in this series is either about William Baziotes, includes an article about him, or at least mentions his artwork and includes an image. Material that is not about Baziotes is usually noted in the folder title.

Box 2, Folder 23	Auction Catalogs, 1965-1992
Box 2, Folder 24	Clippings - Undated, circa 1945-circa 1988
Box 2, Folder 25-32	Clippings, 1945-1988
Box 2, Folder 33-34	Clippings and Magazine Articles, 1948-1971
Box 2, Folder 35	Clippings on <i>Seventeen Contemporary American Painters</i> , 1958-1959
Box 2, Folder 36	Clippings on Peggy Guggenheim, 1979-1987
Box 2, Folder 37	Clippings on Others, 1968-1986
Box 2, Folder 38	Exhibition Announcements, circa 1946-1988
Box 2, Folder 39-41	Exhibition Catalogs for One Man Shows, 1947-1987
Box 2, Folder 42-47	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows, 1944-1950
Box 3, Folder 1-18	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows, 1951-1958
Box 4, Folder 1-14	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows, 1958-1976
Box 4, Folder 15-22	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows, 1977-1983
Box 5, Folder 1-5	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows, 1984-1987
Box 5, Folder 6-9	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows, 1987-1992
Box 9, Folder 1	Oversized Exhibition Catalogs, 1976, 1987
Box 5, Folder 10-11	Exhibition Catalogs for Group Shows - Undated, circa 1950-circa 1992
Box 5, Folder 12-15	Exhibition Catalogs for Other Artists, 1969-1986
Box 5, Folder 16-19	Magazines, 1944-1958
Box 6, Folder 1-4	Magazines, 1959-1969
Box 6, Folder 5-9	Magazine Articles, 1974-1991
Box 6, Folder 10	Magazine Articles - Undated, circa 1945-circa 1991

Box 6, Folder 11	Magazine Articles on Other Artists, 1971-1988
Box 6, Folder 12	Press Releases and Reports, 1947-1989
Box 6, Folder 13	Sheet Music for Piano Waltz Dedicated to Ethel Baziotes, 1978
Box 6, Folder 14	Transcripts of Radio Programs that Mention William Baziotes, circa 1971
Box 6, Folder 15	Memorial Service Programs for Alfred Barr and Rene d'Harnoncourt, 1968-1981
Box 7, Folder 1-2	Miscellaneous Printed Material, 1944-1988

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Series 5: Photographs, circa 1900-1979 (bulk 1940-circa 1963)*0.7 Linear feet (Boxes 7-9)*

Photographs are of William Baziotes, Ethel Baziotes, family and friends, his residence, and his artwork. There are a few photographs of Meir Bernstein, Sam Kootz, Paul Bodin, Michel Licht, Maria Motherwell, Pablo and Maya Picasso, Orlando Zulueta, Rudi Blesh, Nathan Halper, Harriet Janis, Ethel Schwabacher, Maurice Sievan, Clyfford Still, and others. The bulk of the material in the series consists of photographs, but there are also a few slides and negatives.

Box 7, Folder 3	William Baziotes, circa 1912-circa 1960
Box 9, Folder 2	Oversized William Baziotes Photographs, circa 1947-circa 1957
Box 7, Folder 4	William and Ethel Baziotes, 1946-circa 1955
Box 7, Folder 5	William and Ethel Baziotes with Jane and Sam Kootz, 1954-1957
Box 7, Folder 6	Ethel Baziotes, circa 1920-1973
Box 7, Folder 7	Ethel Baziotes Grandparents, circa 1900
Box 7, Folder 8	Baziotes Family, circa 1918-circa 1934
Box 7, Folder 9	Christos Baziotes, 1948, circa 1972
Box 7, Folder 10-12	Friends of William and Ethel Baziotes, circa 1935-circa 1979
Box 9, Folder 3	Oversized Photographs of William Baziotes, Family, and Friends, 1943-1971, circa 1918
Box 7, Folder 13	Baziotes Residence, circa 1971-1974
Box 7, Folder 14	Baziotes Residence - Slides, circa 1967
Box 7, Folder 15	William Baziotes Grave, circa 1973
Box 7, Folder 16	Meier Bernstein's Studio, circa 1976
Box 7, Folder 17	Crystal Murals at Crystal Restaurant in Reading, Pennsylvania, 1941-1942
Box 8, Folder 1-3	Paintings by William Baziotes, circa 1940-circa 1960
Box 8, Folder 4-6	Drawings by William Baziotes, circa 1934-circa 1962
Box 8, Folder 7	"Kirkegaard" Painting by Maurice Sievan, 1968

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