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*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Gretchen Bender Papers,  
1980-2004, in the Archives of American Art

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2006 December 12

Archives of American Art  
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# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Container Listing .....	3
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1996.....	3
Series 2: Correspondence, 1985-2003.....	4
Series 3: Personal Business Records, 1985-1990.....	5
Series 4: Project Files, 1982-2002.....	6
Series 5: Writings, 1983-1988.....	8
Series 6: Notebooks, 1980-2000.....	9
Series 7: Printed Material, 1981-2004.....	10
Series 8: Photographs, 1984-1989.....	11
Series 9: Artwork, 1984-1985.....	12

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Gretchen Bender papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.bendgret
<b>Date:</b>	1980-2004
<b>Extent:</b>	2.8 Linear feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Bender, Gretchen, 1951-2004
<b>Language:</b>	Collection is in English.
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of Gretchen Bender measure 2.8 linear feet and date from 1980-2004. This material documents her career as a filmmaker and multimedia artist through biographical materials, correspondence, personal business records, writings, notebooks, printed material, photographs, slides and transparencies, and artwork. Also included are project files detailing Gretchen's collaborations with dancer/choreographer Bill T. Jones, as well as a handwritten transcription of a conversation between Bender and Cindy Sherman.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Donated 2005 by Kate Bender, Gretchen Bender's sister.

### Processing Information

Collection processed in 2006 by Justin Brancato. The finding aid was finalized by intern Christen Brown in 2015.

### Preferred Citation

Gretchen Bender papers, 1980-2004. 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. Contact Reference Services for more information.

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## Biographical / Historical

Gretchen Bender (1951-2004) was a New York City based filmmaker, multimedia, and conceptual artist. Bender borrowed from elements found in advertising, television, popular contemporary art, and computer graphics to explore issues of race, gender, politics, and culture in her work. During the 1990s, Bender worked with choreographer/dancer Bill T. Jones as a co-director, set designer, and filmmaker on a number of theater and television projects. Bender was a director, editor, and producer for television, primarily working on music videos. Bender participated in solo and group exhibitions at Metro Pictures and Nature Morte in New York.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of Gretchen Bender measure 2.8 linear feet and date from 1980-2004. This material documents her career as a filmmaker and multimedia artist through biographical materials, correspondence, personal business records, writings, notebooks, printed material, photographs, slides and transparencies, and artwork. Also included are project files detailing Gretchen's collaborations with dancer/choreographer Bill T. Jones, as well as a handwritten transcription of a conversation between Bender and Cindy Sherman.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 9 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1996 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 2: Correspondence/Letters, 1985-2003 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 3: Personal Business Records, 1985-1990 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 4: Project Files, 1982-2002 (Boxes 1-2, 5; 0.9 Linear Feet)
- Series 5: Writings, 1983-1988 (Box 2; 0.1 Linear Feet)
- Series 6: Notebooks, 1980-2000 (Box 2; 0.6 Linear Feet)
- Series 7: Printed Material, 1981-2004 (Boxes 3, 6; 0.3 Linear Feet)
- Series 8: Photographs, 1984-1989 (Boxes 3-4, 0.3 Linear Feet)
- Series 9: Artwork, 1984-1985 (Boxes 4, 5; 0.2 Linear Feet)

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, 1996

#### *4 Folders (Box 1)*

Biographical material of Gretchen Bender can be found in this series. The documents found in this series pertains information of Bender concerning her education, medical information, and artist statements.

Box 1, Folder 1	Artist's Statements, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Curriculum Vitae, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Education, Class Assignment, Film Class, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	Medical Information, 1996

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 2: Correspondence, 1985-2003

### *4 Folders (Box 1)*

This series contains correspondence and letters of Gretchen Bender. Found here are business mailings related to Bender's profession and personal letters.

Box 1, Folder 5	Business related correspondence, various, 1985-2003
Box 1, Folder 6	John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Grant, 1997-1998
Box 1, Folder 7	Personal, 1989, 1991, 1996
Box 1, Folder 8	Letters from Margot Lovejoy, 1997

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 3: Personal Business Records, 1985-1990

### *4 Folders (Box 1)*

The Personal business records series contains valuable information documenting Gretchen Bender's career including legal briefings and opinions, metro pictures, and Gallery Nature Morte documents.

Box 1, Folder 9	Gallery Nature Morte, 1985-1988 <a href="#">Image(s)</a>
Box 1, Folder 10	Metro Pictures, 1988-1990
Box 1, Folder 11	Meyers/Bloom, 1989-1990
Box 1, Folder 12	Texas v. Johnson, US Supreme Court, Legal Brief and Opinion, 1989

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 4: Project Files, 1982-2002

### 0.9 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2, 5)

The project files series contains documents of Gretchen Bender's work. Found here are movie scripts from *Jumper*, documents from other works including *Sandy*, *So Much Deathless*, *Total Recall*, *Volatile Memory*, and *Wild Dead*. Also included here is work with Bill T. Jones, work with Martha Wash, miscellaneous notes, and miscellaneous receipts.

Box 1, Folder 13	Bill T. Jones, <i>Freedom of Information</i> , 1984-1987
Box 1, Folder 14	Bill T. Jones, Printed Material, various, 1984-1994
Box 1, Folder 15-17	Bill T. Jones, <i>Still/Here</i> , 1990-2000
Box 1, Folder 18-19	Bill T. Jones, Survival Workshop Notes, 1993-1994
Box 1, Folder 20	<i>Dumping Core</i> , 1984-1991
Box 1, Folder 21	<i>Flash Art</i> , 1987
Box 1, Folder 22	Goldhuber and Latsky, 2000
Box 1, Folder 23	<i>Jumper</i> , 1999-2000
Box 1, Folder 24	<i>Jumper</i> , Script, 2002
Box 1, Folder 25	<i>Jumper</i> , Early Script and Treatments, undated
Box 1, Folder 26	<i>Jumper</i> , Sundance Institute Proposal, 2001-2002
Box 1, Folder 27	<i>Jumper</i> , Notes, 1999-2002
Box 1, Folder 28	Martha Wash, Music Video, 2000
Box 1, Folder 29	Martha Wash, Production Binder, 2000
Box 1, Folder 30-32	Miscellaneous Notes, 1982-1997
Box 1, Folder 33	Miscellaneous Receipts, 1997-1999
Box 1, Folder 34	Nanjo and Associates, 1997
Box 1, Folder 35	New Media Theater, Notes, undated



Box 2, Folder 1	Note Cards, undated
Box 2, Folder 2	People in Pain, 1988
Box 2, Folder 3	Press Releases, 1987-1988, 2001-2002
Box 2, Folder 4	<i>Sandy</i> , 1984
Box 2, Folder 5	<i>So Much Deathless</i> , 1997 Oversized items housed in Box 5, Folder 1
Box 2, Folder 6	Southwestern Bell Commission Agreement, 1987
Box 2, Folder 7	<i>Total Recall</i> , undated
Box 2, Folder 8	<i>Volatile Memory</i> , 1986
Box 2, Folder 9	<i>Wild Dead</i> , 1984
Box 5, Folder 1	Oversize <i>So Much Deathless</i> from Box 2, Folder 5, 1997

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 5: Writings, 1983-1988

### *0.1 Linear feet (Box 2)*

The Writings series contains interview drafts about Gretchen Bender, poems, miscellaneous films, a publication in *Political Entertainment*; *Breakdown*, a script by Sandra Tait, and other various drafts of scripts.

Box 2, Folder 10	<i>Breakdown</i> , A Script by Sandra Tait, undated
Box 2, Folder 11	Miscellaneous Films, 1983
Box 2, Folder 12	<i>Ian Hamilton Finlay, An Exhibition on Two Themes</i> , 1988
Box 2, Folder 13	<i>Major Beats</i> , Draft of Script, undated
Box 2, Folder 14	Poems, undated
Box 2, Folder 15	<i>Political Entertainment</i> by Gretchen Bender, undated
Box 2, Folder 16	Interview Drafts, Gretchen Bender and Aimee, 1988
Box 2, Folder 17	Interview Drafts, Gretchen Bender and Cindy Sherman, undated
Box 2, Folder 18	Interview Drafts, Gretchen Bender: An Engaged Artist, interview by Alexander Gray, 1988
Box 2, Folder 19	Interview Drafts, Gretchen Bender, Interview by Tim Druckrey, undated

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 6: Notebooks, 1980-2000

*0.6 Linear feet (Box 2)*

The notebooks series contains notebooks written by Gretchen Bender.

Box 2, Folder 20-34      Notebooks, 1980-2000

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 7: Printed Material, 1981-2004

### *0.3 Linear feet (Boxes 3, 6)*

This series contains announcements, catalogs, magazine and newspaper clippings about Gretchen Bender and others, reference materials, and stickers from Dykes Against Military Exploitation (D.A.M.E.).

Box 3, Folder 1	Announcements, 1982-1994, 2000-2004
Box 3, Folder 2	Catalogs, 1986-1992
Box 3, Folder 3-4	Magazine and Newspaper Clippings on Gretchen Bender, 1981-2004
Box 3, Folder 5	Magazine and Newspaper Clippings, Miscellaneous, 1982-1995
Box 3, Folder 6	Materials for Reference, circa 1990s
Box 3, Folder 7	Sticker, Dykes Against Military Exploitation (D.A.M.E.), undated
Box 6, Folder 1	Oversize Brooklyn Opera House Blue Print, 1986

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 8: Photographs, 1984-1989

### *0.3 Linear feet (Boxes 3-4)*

The photograph series contains photos from Gretchen Bender's personal life, Bill T. Jones exercises and gallery installations. Also included here are photographs of artwork, slides of installations shots, photographs, rehearsals, performances, events, and transparencies of artwork and negatives.

Box 3, Folder 8	Photographs of Bill T. Jones and Company, undated
Box 3, Folder 9	Exercises, undated
Box 3, Folder 10	Installation, Dreamnation, Meyers/Bloom Gallery, 1989
Box 3, Folder 11	Installation, Gallery Nature Morte, 1984
Box 3, Folder 12	Installation, general, undated
Box 3, Folder 13	Personal Photographs, undated
Box 3, Folder 14	Photographs of Artwork, various, 1984-1985
Box 4, Folder 1	Photographs of Artwork, various, 1984-1985
Box 4, Folder 2	Slides, Installation Shots, undated
Box 4, Folder 3	Slides, Photographs, undated
Box 4, Folder 4	Slides, Rehearsals, Performances, Events, undated
Box 4, Folder 5	Transparencies, Artwork, undated
Box 4, Folder 6	Negatives, undated

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 9: Artwork, 1984-1985

### *0.2 Linear feet (Boxes 4, 5)*

This series contains various artwork by Gretchen Bender including: video and photographic work, drawings, silk screens, and a layout: Heros in the Air.

Box 4, Folder 7	Drawings, undated
Box 4, Folder 8	Miscellaneous Artwork, undated
Box 4, Folder 9	Silk screens, Women's Action Coalition, undated
Box 5, Folder 2	Oversize Drawings, Prints and Watercolors, undated
Box 5, Folder 3	Oversize Layout: Heros in the Air, undated
Box 5, Folder 4	Oversize Video and Photographic Work, 1984-1985

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*