



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the David Berger Papers, circa 1939-1986, in the Archives of American Art

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	David Berger papers
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1939-1986
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.bergdavi
<b>Creator:</b>	Berger, David, 1920-1966
<b>Extent:</b>	3.8 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of Massachusetts painter, sculptor, and educator David Berger measure 3.8 linear feet and date from circa 1939 to 1986. His career as an artist and professor are documented through biographical material, personal business records, scattered correspondence, gallery files, exhibition catalogs, news clippings, and other printed material, as well as nine sketchbooks and photographs depicting Berger, his family, and artwork.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 2010 by Ellen Berger Rainville, David Berger's daughter.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed in 2012 by Erin Kinhart.

### Preferred Citation

David Berger papers, circa 1939-1986. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions on Access

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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## Biographical Note

David Berger (1920-1966) was a painter, sculptor, and educator in Boston, Massachusetts. Berger was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and earned a B.S. in education from the Massachusetts College of Art in 1946. In 1950 he received a master of fine arts degree from Cranbrook Academy of Art. He was a professor of art at Framingham State College from 1946 to 1957, and a professor of painting and illustration at Massachusetts College of Art from 1957 until his death on November 15, 1966.

Berger had numerous gallery exhibitions and won several awards in juried shows. He was represented in New York by the Cober Gallery, and in 1967 DeCordova Museum held a memorial exhibition of his work. In 1956 he was selected as one of the "100 Outstanding New Talents in U.S.A." by *Art in America*.

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## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Massachusetts painter, sculptor, and educator David Berger measure 3.8 linear feet and date from circa 1939 to 1986. His career as an artist and professor are documented through biographical material, personal business records, scattered correspondence, gallery files, exhibition catalogs, news clippings, and other printed material, as well as nine sketchbooks and photographs depicting Berger, his family, and artwork.

Biographical material consists of Veterans Administration records, interview transcripts, student records, diplomas, and documents from the memorial service held for Berger in 1966. Personal business records include of his employment records, scattered financial documents, and files documenting his submissions for juried art exhibitions. Also found here are inventory and sales records for Berger's artwork and documentation on the construction of Berger's house and studio in the late 1950s, designed by architect Marvin E. Goody.

Correspondence is with art galleries, professional organizations, publishers, Cranbrook Academy of Art, and individuals who purchased works by Berger. These letters primarily concern the sale and exhibition of David Berger's artwork as well as his education and teaching career. Gallery files include correspondence, price lists, artwork sales and loan records, exhibition planning documents, notes, and gallery publications.

Printed material consists of news clippings documenting David Berger's career, catalogs and announcements for exhibitions of works by Berger and others, as well as publications from Massachusetts College of Art and Cranbrook Academy of Art. One children's book includes illustrations by David Berger. Photographs depict Berger at art exhibitions and with his wife and daughters at home and in his studio. Also found are numerous photographs of his artwork. Nine sketchbooks contain various figure studies in pencil, ink, pastel, and charcoal.

Many of these files in this collection were maintained by Berger's wife, Ruth, after his death in 1966 and include her correspondence and notes.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 7 series:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1939-1966 (Box 1, 5; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 2: Personal Business Records, 1941-1981 (Box 1, OV 6; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 3: Correspondence, 1945-1986 (Box 1-2; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 4: Gallery Files, 1953-1985 (Box 2; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1943-1975 (Box 2-3, 5; 1.1 linear feet)
- Series 6: Photographs, circa 1949-1960s (Box 3-5; 0.6 linear feet)
- Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1956-1960s (Box 4-5; 0.3 linear feet)

## Names and Subject Terms

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

### Subjects:

Educators -- Massachusetts -- Boston  
Painters -- Massachusetts -- Boston  
Sculptors -- Massachusetts -- Boston

### Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Photographs  
Sketchbooks  
Transcripts

### Names:

Cranbrook Academy of Art

### Functions:

Artists' studios -- Massachusetts

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1939-1966

#### 0.3 Linear feet (Box 1, 5)

Scope and Contents: Biographical material consists of Veterans Administration records, student transcripts, enrollment correspondence, diplomas from Massachusetts School of Art and Cranbrook Academy of Art, and other student records. Also found are obituaries and documents from the memorial service held for Berger in 1966. Also of note are a transcript of an interview with Berger and a script for a video on Boston printmakers which features Berger.

Box 1, Folder 1	Diplomas, 1946, 1950 Notes: Oversized item housed in box 5, folder 6
Box 1, Folder 2	Interview Transcript, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 3	Medal, Richard Mitton Memorial Award, 1955
Box 1, Folder 4	Medical Records, 1957-1958
Box 1, Folder 5	Memorial Service Documents, 1966
Box 1, Folder 6	Obituaries, 1966
Box 1, Folder 7	Script, "Museum Open House: Boston Printmakers", 1965
Box 1, Folder 8	Student Assignments, circa 1946
Box 1, Folder 9-10	Student Records, circa 1939-1951 2 Folders
Box 1, Folder 11	Veterans Administration, 1949-1960
Box 5, Folder 6	Oversize Diploma, 1950 Notes: Oversized item from in box 1, folder 1

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## Series 2: Personal Business Records, 1941-1981

### 0.6 Linear feet (Box 1, OV 6)

**Scope and Contents:** Personal business records consist of Berger's employment records for his teaching positions, as well as scattered financial documents such as bills, receipts, and royalty statements for book illustrations. Also found are files documenting his submissions for juried art exhibitions, including letters notifying of awards and rejections. Inventory and sales records consist of lists of works, price lists, and documents regarding works sold by galleries. Also included is a separate sales notebook. These records were maintained by Berger's wife, Ruth, after his death. Additional records document the construction of Berger's house and studio in the late 1950s, designed by architect Marvin E. Goody.

**Arrangement:** Files are arranged alphabetically. Items within each folder are arranged in rough chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 12	Banking Records, 1956-1958
Box 1, Folder 13	Bills, circa 1960s
Box 1, Folder 14-17	Documentation on Berger House, 1955-1958, 1980, 1965-1972 4 Folders Notes: Oversized items housed in OV 6
Box 1, Folder 18-20	Employment Records, 1945-1966, 1941 3 Folders
Box 1, Folder 21	Furniture Orders, 1951-1953
Box 1, Folder 22-25	Inventory and Sales Records, 1955-1981 4 Folders
Box 1, Folder 26	Letters of Recommendation, 1966
Box 1, Folder 27	Notes and Writings, circa 1954-1967
Box 1, Folder 28-30	Receipts, 1954-1956 3 Folders
Box 1, Folder 31	Royalty Payments, 1966, 1958-1962
Box 1, Folder 32	Sales Notebook, 1954-1978
Box 1, Folder 33	Scholarship Fund, circa 1966-1976
Box 1, Folder 34-41	Submissions for Juried Exhibitions, 1945-1966 8 Folders
Box 1, Folder 42	Taxes and Insurance Records, 1964-1966
Box OV 6	Oversize Documentation on Berger House, 1956, 1965

Notes: Oversized items from box 1, folders 14-17

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## Series 3: Correspondence, 1945-1986

### 0.3 Linear feet (Box 1-2)

**Scope and Contents:** Correspondence primarily concerns the sale and exhibition of David Berger's artwork. Early correspondence also concerns his education and teaching career. Correspondence after Berger's death in November, 1966 is addressed to his wife Ruth. Letters are from art galleries, professional organizations, publishers, Cranbrook Academy of Art, and individuals who purchased works by Berger. Also found are a few greeting cards which he designed. Researchers should note that additional correspondence can be found within the gallery files in Series 4 and among the personal business records in Series 2.

**Arrangement:** Correspondence is arranged chronologically.

Box 1, Folder 43-47	Correspondence, 1945-1965 5 Folders
Box 2, Folder 1-4	Correspondence, 1966-1986 4 Folders
Box 2, Folder 5	Undated Correspondence, circa 1950s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 6	Cards Designed by David Berger, circa 1950s-1960s

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## Series 4: Gallery Files, 1953-1985

### 0.6 Linear feet (Box 2)

**Scope and Contents:** Gallery files include correspondence, price lists, artwork sales and loan records, exhibition planning documents, notes, and gallery publications. After Berger's death in 1966, files were maintained by his wife Ruth and include her notes and correspondence with galleries.

**Arrangement:** Files are arranged alphabetically by gallery name. Documents are arranged in rough chronological order within each folder.

Box 2, Folder 7	Art for Industry, circa 1963-1965
Box 2, Folder 8	Casdin Gallery, 1965-1966
Box 2, Folder 9-13	Cober Gallery, 1959-1969 5 Folders
Box 2, Folder 14	Daniel Frishman Gallery of Art, 1975
Box 2, Folder 15	De Cordova Museum, 1955-1956, 1967-1971
Box 2, Folder 16	Galerie Irla Kert, 1962-1963
Box 2, Folder 17	Harold Ernst Gallery, 1974-1977
Box 2, Folder 18	Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for Aged, 1964-1966
Box 2, Folder 19-22	Horizon Gallery, 1963-1971 4 Folders
Box 2, Folder 23	I. F. A. Galleries, 1962-1966
Box 2, Folder 24	Impressions Graphic Workshop, 1962-1963
Box 2, Folder 25-26	The Little Studio, 1953-1958 2 Folders
Box 2, Folder 27	North Truro Art Gallery, 1961-1967
Box 2, Folder 28	Pace Gallery, 1961-1964, 1981
Box 2, Folder 29	Temple Beth Am, 1965-1973
Box 2, Folder 30-31	Weeden Gallery, 1963-1967 2 Folders
Box 2, Folder 32	Wenniger Graphics, 1976-1985

Box 2, Folder 33      Witte Memorial Museum, 1967

Box 2, Folder 34      Wright Designs and Associates, 1964-1972

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## Series 5: Printed Material, 1943-1975

### 1.1 Linear feet (Box 2-3, 5)

**Scope and Contents:** Printed material consists of magazines, newsletters, and news clippings documenting David Berger's career, as well as catalogs and announcements for exhibitions of works by Berger and other artists. Also found are newsletters, handbooks, programs, and other publications from Massachusetts College of Art and Cranbrook Academy of Art. One children's book includes illustrations by David Berger.

**Arrangement:** Material is arranged by type. Items are arranged in rough chronological order within each folder.

Box 2, Folder 35-37	Boston Arts Festival Programs, 1953-1964 3 Folders
Box 2, Folder 38	Children's Book, Swing Me Swing Tree, Illustrated by David Berger, 1959
Box 2, Folder 39-40	Cranbrook Academy of Art Publications, 1947-1973 2 Folders
Box 2, Folder 41	Exhibition Catalogs and Announcements, 1945-1949
Box 3, Folder 1-17	Exhibition Catalogs and Announcements, 1975, 1950-1968 17 Folders
Box 3, Folder 18	Magazines, 1962-1969 Notes: Oversized items housed in box 5, folder 7
Box 3, Folder 19-20	Massachusetts College of Art Publications, 1943, 1948, 1961-1967 2 Folders Notes: Oversized items housed in box 5, folder 8
Box 3, Folder 21-24	News Clippings, 1960-1967, 1950s 4 Folders
Box 3, Folder 25	Newsletters, 1964-1968
Box 3, Folder 26-27	Miscellaneous Printed Material, circa 1950s-1960s 2 Folders
Box 5, Folder 7	Oversize Magazines, 1962-1963 Notes: Oversized items from box 3, folder 18
Box 5, Folder 8	Oversize Massachusetts School of Art Publications, 1966 Notes: Oversized items from box 3, folder 19

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## Series 6: Photographs, circa 1949-1960s

### 0.6 Linear feet (Box 3-5)

Scope and Contents: Photographs depict David Berger at art exhibitions and with his wife and daughters at home and in his studio. Also found are numerous photographs of his artwork.

Box 3, Folder 28-30      Photographs of David Berger and Family, circa 1950s-1960s  
3 Folders  
Notes:                  Oversized items housed in box 5, folder 9

Box 3, Folder 31-32      Photographs of Artwork, circa 1950s-1960s  
2 Folders

Box 4, Folder 1-3        Photographs of Artwork, circa 1950s-1960s  
3 Folders

Box 4, Folder 4         Negatives, circa 1950s-1960s

Box 4, Folder 5         Slides, circa 1949-1960s

Box 5, Folder 9         Oversize Photographs of David Berger and Family, 1960s  
Notes:                  Oversized items from box 3, folders 28-30

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## Series 7: Sketchbooks, circa 1956-1960s

### 0.3 Linear feet (Box 4-5)

Scope and Contents: Nine sketchbooks contain various figure studies in pencil, ink, pastel, and charcoal.

Box 4, Folder 6	Sketchbook, circa 1956
Box 4, Folder 7	Sketchbook, 1959-1960
Box 4, Folder 8	Sketchbook, 1961
Box 4, Folder 9	Sketchbook, 1960s
Box 5, Folder 1	Sketchbook, 1960s
Box 5, Folder 2	Sketchbook, 1960s
Box 5, Folder 3	Sketchbook, 1960s
Box 5, Folder 4	Sketchbook, 1960
Box 5, Folder 5	Sketchbook, 1961

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